

Gifford Community Council – Draft Minutes

Date: 8th June 2026

Location: Village Hall

Chair: *Adam White*

Attendance:

Apologies Anne Stunzner

1. Welcome & Recording of Meeting

The Chair confirmed that the meeting would be recorded and welcomed all attendees.

2. Apologies

- Secretary (travelling to Italy). No other apologies were received.

3. Approval of Previous Minutes

The previous minutes were approved:

- **Proposed:** Nev, **Seconded:** Paul

Minor amendments from last month will be incorporated.

4. Matters Arising

To be covered within standard agenda items.

5. Project Updates

5.1 Renewable Energy – Newlands Hill

- Wording updated in the planning report to emphasise that the **oral hearing will take place in the Village Hall during the week of 12 October**, running for the full week.
- Anyone who submitted comments has been notified.
- The Council will publicise nearer the time, including via Facebook.

5.2 Graveyard Extension

- No update this month, testing will take place **after harvest in October**.
- Location clarified as a corner of Hugh's field near the lay-by opposite Gifford Golf Course.

5.3 Airfield Memorial Platt

- No further update.
- Josh will collect the item discussed previously.

6. External Reports

6.1 Police Report

- No new police report received.
- Previous speeding concerns remain noted.

6.2 Yester Estate

- Open Gardens event was very well attended.
- Estate intends to run the event annually.

6.3 Community Woodland

- Newsletter issued.
- Upcoming volunteer days: **20 June, 4 July**, and further dates in August.
- Woodland AGM scheduled for **6 September** (location weather-dependent).
- Forest therapy and forest bathing events advertised on the website.

7. Councillor Reports

7.1 Cllr Tom

- Ongoing case regarding an empty private house with an overgrown garden.
- Upcoming meetings: Petitions Review, Common Good Committee, Licensing, Audit & Governance.
- Final meeting before holiday will be PPRC on 16th.

7.2 Cllr John

- Cemetery condition raised again; recent work around the war memorial is good, but graveyard maintenance remains inconsistent.
- Provided updates on recent civic visits including the Lord High Commissioner, Japanese and Chinese consuls, and Twinning Association visitors.
- Petition lodged regarding pausing parking proposals.
- Licensing team aware of new Premier Shop licensee; environmental health monitoring issues and commercial interest exists in the Goblin Hotel (details confidential).

7.3 Cllr George

- Minor village issues being reported promptly and addressed.

7.4 Cllr Shamin

- Multiple housing repair and accessibility cases being followed up.
- Engaging with Premier Shop manager regarding licensing, stock levels, and building condition.
- Council officers (Mike Foy & Tony) willing to meet regarding recurring graveyard issues and Keep Scotland Beautiful preparations.
- Highlighted consultations on violence against women and girls.
- Updated on Integration Joint Board strategic plan for older people's services.

8. General Business

8.1 Premier Shop Alcohol Licence

Concerns raised about alcohol sales without a confirmed licence. Cllr Shameen advised the licence is under review.

8.2 Driving Test Availability

A resident highlighted severe delays in booking driving tests, impacting youth employment in rural areas. Councillors agreed to raise the issue with MPs and East Lothian Works.

8.3 Goblin Hotel – Potential Change of Use

Discussion on whether the Community Council should prepare for a change-of-use application. Councillors explained planning and licensing processes, noting the village would be a statutory consultee.

9. Roads, Footpaths, Lighting & Drains

- Alan reported multiple issues resolved, including:
- Streetlight outages
- Drainage problems
- Missing railings
- Broken bench
- Ongoing bus reliability concerns
- Filming-related road restrictions and signage

10. Filming in the Village

Residents raised concerns about short-notice parking restrictions and lack of clarity on conditions. Councillors explained the approval process via Roads and Economic Development teams and agreed to seek clearer communication and earlier notification.

11. Planning

- One application: replacement timber windows with identical-appearance UPVC (permitted development).
- Park Road windows/doors approved (doors required full permission).
- Yester stables extension progressing slowly.

12. Finance

- Healthy balance; no concerns raised.

13. Resilience & Community Support

- Coffee with Dogs event well attended.
- Lunch Club had 26 attendees; new management working hard.
- Fish & Chips service continues to be popular.
- Art Group exhibition proceeds will support Soup & a Smile.

14. Correspondence

- Response received from Gifford Road Race organiser; Chair to reply after internal discussion.
- Broken seat reported and being handled.
- Filming correspondence noted.

15. Any Other Business

15.1 Graveyard Maintenance

Strong disappointment expressed regarding recurring poor maintenance during the same period each year. Councillors will escalate.

15.2 Right-to-Roam Concern – Over Newton

Residents reported gates removed, cattle grids installed, and access restricted. Nick Morgan advised it is a grey area but likely still covered by access rights. Council ranger to be asked to assess; estate owners will be informed.

15.3 Carers Week

Awareness raised of local events and support available through Carers of East Lothian.

15.4 Beautiful Scotland Application

- Wild orchids appearing across the village; area fenced off to protect them.
- Positive community feedback; potential wildflower meadow discussed.
- Judges have visited; entry will reflect the village “as found”, including the Goblin’s condition.
- Coordination required with council mowing teams.

16. Date of Next Meeting

13th July 2026