

**Minutes of the Gifford Community Council Meeting  
held on 14<sup>th</sup> April 2025 at Gifford Bowling Club**

**Participating** Adam White (Chair), Eleanor Hulme, Richard Austin, Alan Fortune, Dave Griffiths  
Nev Kilkenny, Paul Smith and Jill Hyslop

**In Attendance** Councillor John McMillan, Councillor George McGuire, Councillor Tom Trotter,  
Josh Farrell (Yester Estate) and 5 local residents

**Apologies** Wendy Ferguson, Councillor Shamin Akhtar and Mandy Harrington (VCEL)

**1 Minutes of last meeting**

The meeting approved the minutes of 10th March 2025 (approved by Paul and Nev).

**2 Items completed since last meeting**

**2.1 New light installed by the bus stop**

The new light has been installed but hasn't been connected yet.

**3. Matters arising**

**3.1 Thermal Imaging Surveys**

Volunteers in Garvald and Morham have completed an East Lothian Climate Hub initiative to carry out free thermal imaging surveys to help improve home insulation. Gifford CC might be able to borrow the camera. This will be discussed at a future meeting.

**3.2 Renewable Energy Projects**

No update since last month. See attached planning report for current status.

**3.3 Smart Meter Connectivity**

No update since last month.

**3.4 Graveyard extension**

No update since last month.

**3.5 Antisocial Behaviour**

One of the antisocial behaviour issues in the village has now been resolved. Antisocial behaviour was also covered under the Police Report.

**3.6 Goblin Ha' and Village Store**

The council has received a Provisional Licence application from the Premier Store. Staff have told some residents that there will be a new leaseholder this month. *Councillor McMillan confirmed after the meeting that the provisional licence application will go before the Licensing Board in May. No alcohol can be sold until the licence is approved.*

Both the Goblin Ha' and the Tweeddale Arms are now up for sale.

**3.7 Airfield Memorial Plaque**

The landowner at Townhead is happy in principle to accommodate the plaque, provided there is some additional wording/signage telling people to stay off crops. The landowner has raised an issue about the fact the airfield was available for use during WW1, but was never actually used. Jill to speak to the Airfields of Britain Conservation Trust about this.

**4. External Reports**

**4.1 Police**

As there was no Police Report in March, figures have been given for the period 1st February - 31st March 2025. There were 40 calls to the area, which resulted in the police recording 7 crimes: 4 x Vandalism, 1 x Assault and 2 x Theft. There have been two reports of theft of heating oil in rural locations around the Gifford area. At last month's CAPP meeting, the vandalism and wilful fireraising at Broadwoodside and surrounding community woodland were raised. The police have not been able to identify who was responsible and ask that residents report any anti-social behaviour to police via 999 or 101 or online through the Police Scotland website. There are concerns that this may escalate again during the Easter Holidays and better weather.

The police initiative 'Coffee with a Cop' had its first date on Tuesday 1st April in the Lanterne Rouge. The next date will be posted on the Police Scotland Facebook page and the Lanterne Rouge Facebook page. Adam had received mixed feedback from residents about this initiative. Jill to ask PC Edmond how many people attended.

#### **4.2 Yester Estate**

The new Estate Manager, Josh Farrell, came to the meeting to introduce himself. He has recently started the role and is looking forward to getting to know the local community. The estate will shortly be advertising summer intern roles and hope that local residents will apply. The estate will be fencing the field at Sunnyside, so walkers will not be able to cross the field and must instead stick to the path.

#### **4.3 Gifford Community Woodland**

The woods have held some very productive volunteer days. They have completed the back orders for logs and can now take new orders. The next Open Woods Meeting will be on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> June.

Details of all events and volunteer dates can be found at:

[www.giffordcommunitywoodland.com/events](http://www.giffordcommunitywoodland.com/events)

#### **4.4 East Lothian Council**

The council is currently in recess. The councillors have been dealing with housing inquiries, particularly in relation to council houses that are sitting empty. A resident at the meeting spoke about how she had slipped on loose ground on the steps at the back of the school. She dislocated her knee and banged her head on the railings. She has reported the incident but hasn't heard back from the council. Councillor Trotter suggested that the email should be forwarded directly to the councillors so that this can be followed up as a priority.

### **5 Internal Reports**

#### **5.1 Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs)**

Eleanor has checked the AEDs at the Garage and the Bowling Club and they are in working order. Josh confirmed that there are 2 defibs on the Yester Estate. Eleanor will contact the estate to confirm the details. Nobody got in touch about the possibility of 1st Responder training that was advertised on Facebook, so this will be left for now. Eleanor would like to put a sign on the fence at the Bowling Club to highlight the location of the defib. Nobody objected, so Eleanor will arrange that. The electrician has not sent an invoice for the work done on the garage defib. Dave will remind him.

#### **5.2 Roads and Footpaths.**

The council is working on footpath repairs at Walden Terrace. Council officials were seen taking measurements at the path between Station Road and Tweeddale Crescent, but no details about any repairs have been confirmed.

#### **5.3 Lighting, Drains and Signs**

As reported above, the new lamp post has been installed at the bus stop next to the Goblin Ha, but it has not yet been connected. No drainage problems reported. Dave highlighted that several Diversion signs haven't been collected after the relevant roadworks have been completed. Councillor McMillan emailed Alan Stubbs about this during the meeting.

#### **5.4 Planning**

Please see attached report for planning applications within and outwith GCC Area. Richard asked if anything further was known about the agritourism applications which have been in the system for a while. Councillor McMillan agreed to ask about these.

#### **5.5 Finance**

Wendy was not at the meeting, so an update will be given next month.

#### **5.6 Resilience**

The Soup & Smile service has stopped for the summer and will re-start in autumn. 28 people attended the April Lunch Club.

### **6 Correspondence**

#### **6.1 Disabled parking spaces.**

The council has circulated a list of disabled parking spaces for annual review. CC is not aware of any changes that need to be made to the Gifford list.

## **7 AOB**

### **7.1 Revised Bus Timetable**

The 123 route has been taken over by East Coast Buses. The revised timetable has dropped the 7am service, which several people in the village used to get to work. Councillor McMillan said that anyone affected by the changes can email him directly. Prentice have extended the 101 route, which will now run between Gifford and Haddington Retail Park. The first bus will leave Gifford at 8.40am. Prentice may be able to look at additional journeys if the community support the route. The councillors emphasised that the service is 100% commercial and is not subsidised by the council, so there will need to be sufficient users for the service to be viable. Jill to advertise the new service on Facebook.

### **7.2 How to report problems with horse dung**

There is no legislation that requires horse riders to uplift dung dropped on a public road or pathway. Although horse dung is generally thought to present a lower risk to human health than dog poo, Eleanor pointed out that horse dung can contain dangerous bacteria. It can also cause accessibility issues when left on footpaths. Problems caused by horse dung on roads should be reported to Alan Stubbs. Problems with horse dung on paths can be reported to Eamonn John or Ed Hendrickson.

### **7.3 Speeding/Parking problems**

Any instances of speeding or illegal parking should be reported to PC Kiera Edmond.

### **7.4 Recent Cycle Race**

Nev had a near miss incident at Cockles Brae due to race cyclists being on the wrong side of the road. Adam asked Nev to report the matter to Jon Fleetwood of the Council's Safety Advisory Group, as he is collating feedback about the event. Adam reiterated his support for race marshalls to have powers to control the traffic to make the event safer for everyone.

### **7.5 Damaged tree on grassed area at Park Crescent**

Dave asked about council plans to deal with a damaged tree at Park Crescent. *After the meeting, Councillor McMillan confirmed that the council is aware of the damage and Mike Foy's team will deal with it when their schedule allows.*

**Date of next meeting: Monday 12<sup>th</sup> May.**

## APPLICATIONS WITHIN GCC AREA

	Date Validated	GCC first discussed	Comments	Status
25/00257/P   Extension to house   Lime Grove High Street Gifford East Lothian EH41 4QU	14/03/25	Apr 2025	Single storey 2m extension to rear, clad in weathered larch.	Awaiting decision.
25/00219/P   Replacement doors   5 Walden Place Gifford East Lothian EH41 4RA	17/03/25	Apr 2025	Replacement of front and rear doors in similar style and colour.	Awaiting decision.
25/00201/P   Alterations, extension to house, formation of hardstanding and erection of car port   The Willows Duns Road Gifford EH41 4QW	07/03/25	Mar 2025	Single storey extension to rear, new dormer window to rear for new master bedroom in attic space, free-standing car port to east of house.	Approved with minor conditions.
25/00098/P   Conversion of derelict farm buildings to form a short term holiday let   Skedsbush Farm Yester Gifford East Lothian	06/02/25	Feb 2025	Conversion of derelict farm buildings to create a two-bedroom holiday let.	Awaiting decision.
24/01273/P   Change of use of grass verge to form vehicular access and agricultural land for the siting of 4 glamping units for holiday let and associated works   Land South East Of Redshill Farm Gifford East Lothian	18/12/24	Jan 2025	Off-grid glamping development comprising four re-purposed horse lorries at land south of Redshill Farm. Application includes details of improved access from the public road and the proposed drainage provision.	Awaiting decision.

## APPLICATIONS OUTWITH GCC AREA

None

## OTHER PLANNING MATTERS

### Newlands Hill Wind Energy Hub (Belltown Power)

The S36 application for the Newlands Hill project was submitted in November 2023 and is under consideration by the Energy Consents Unit (ECU). The full application is available on the Scottish Government's Energy Consents Unit website [www.energyconsents.scot](http://www.energyconsents.scot), reference ECU00004603.

On 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2024 the East Lothian Planning Committee met to discuss the report prepared by their Planning Department into the proposals. This report recommended that East Lothian Council should object to the granting of consent for reasons of adverse landscape and visual impact, adverse impact on the historic environment, adverse impact on the mountain hare population, impact on core paths and unacceptable access route for exceptional loads during construction. The Planning Committee voted to accept the report in full as East Lothian Council's consultation response to the ECU. Given the fundamental conclusions of the report, it seems unlikely that any modifications to the development scheme would be sufficient to cause ELC to withdraw its objection. In the event that the ECU wishes to grant consent against the recommendation of ELC, then the matter may be determined by a Public Inquiry.

The earliest Belltown expect a decision from ECU is mid 2025 and this would slip considerably if a Public Inquiry were to be called. As previously advised, GCC have been told by the ECU that public representations, either for or against the development, will be considered right up until the point at which a decision is made.

A consultation event was held in the Village Hall on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2024 on behalf of SP Energy Networks regarding the grid connection from Newlands Hill to the Fallago Rig substation. This would be a 132kV connection over approximately 6km, supported on 'double H' wood poles. The poster boards from this event can be viewed at <https://www.spenergynetworks.co.uk/userfiles/file/Newlands-Hill-Wind-Energy-Hub-132kV-Connection-Project-I-Consultation-Board.pdf> Presumably, the grid connection would not be required were the Newlands Hill Wind Energy Hub not be consented.

### **Dunside Wind Farm (EDF)**

Proposals were submitted to Scottish Government in July 2023 and are being considered. The full application is available on the Scottish Government's Energy Consents Unit website, reference ECU00003436. On 7<sup>th</sup> August, EDF submitted supplementary environmental information based upon feedback from consultees. This information can be viewed on the ECU website and the EDF project site.

### **Crystal Rig Wind Farm (Fred Olsen Renewables)**

Crystal Rig Solar. Plans for this solar array within the existing Crystal Rig windfarm have now been submitted to the Energy Consents unit and can be viewed under application reference ECU00004759. All information, including additional submissions made on 8<sup>th</sup> April, is also available on the project website at [www.crystalrigwindfarm.com](http://www.crystalrigwindfarm.com).

Crystal Rig I Repower. **Public Exhibitions are to be held on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 4pm – 9pm at Longformacus Village Hall and Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> March 3pm – 7pm at Innerwick Village Hall.** The earliest phase of Crystal Rig has been operational for over 20 years and the operator is now exploring the opportunity to repower the site and use better, more modern technology. The existing Crystal Rig I wind farm comprises 25 turbines with a maximum blade tip height of 100m and the proposed repowering would involve replacing them with up to 10 much larger turbines each with a tip height of up to 250m. An Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Report has been submitted to ECU (application ECU00005089).

Crystal Rig IV Construction. In 2021 the developer was granted consent for an 11 turbine extension to Crystal Rig. Construction of this extension will start soon.

### **Longcroft Wind Farm (Renewable Energy Systems)**

This proposed development of 24 turbines would be approximately 9km north of Lauder in the Scottish Borders, lying to the south west of the existing Fallago Rig Wind Farm and to the west of the proposed Dunside Wind Farm. The northern edge of the development is some 15km south of Gifford. Project website is [www.longcroft-windfarm.co.uk](http://www.longcroft-windfarm.co.uk). The full application is available on the Scottish Government's Energy Consents Unit website, reference ECU00004774.