

Gifford Community Council

Minutes

of the meeting of Monday, 14th February 2011,
held in the Todrick Room of the Village Hall at 7.30pm.

1. Welcome: John O'Connor (JOC), Chair, welcomed those present: Elizabeth Whiteford (EW) Treasurer (taking notes), Andrew Gilmour (AG), Margaret McDougall (MMcD), Shona Thomas (ST), Margaret Maslowski (MMas), ELC Cllrs Ludovic Broun Lindsay and Sheena Richardson (both part-time), and 3 members of the public.
2. Apologies: Julian Tennent, AMcClung, John Wrinn, Cllr Tom Trotter, and WPC Deborah Gray.
3. Minutes of the meeting of 13th December 2010 Draft 1: proposed by MMcD, seconded by MMas. *Agreed.*
4. Matters arising: None
5. Police: WPC Deborah Gray had e-mailed her apologies and sent a Report, as follows:
...."I have looked at incidents for the Gifford area, since the last meeting, and there is only one thing to report, which I attended to with my colleague, Lynn Black. At the beginning of January this year, we received a complaint from a member of the public in Walden Terrace, Gifford regarding youths playing football in the street there and kicking their ball into gardens. We traced the youths concerned and warned an 8-year old and a 13-year old youth. Again, if there are any issues arising at the meeting which I can assist with, please don't hesitate to contact me at Haddington Police Station."...
The WPC was thanked for her report, which was noted.
JOC noted, that there had been some very inconsiderate parking during the snowy/icy conditions, and appealed for greater responsibility, so that snow ploughs were not obstructed, as they do an essential job for us all. Also parking had been such, that snow ploughs were likely to damage the very inconsiderately parked vehicles (one in the Main Street was 3 metres from the pavement), and that other vehicles were likely to slide into and damage vehicles, that had been parked on bends.
6. Giffordonline: JOC expressed his gratitude to Mike Gower, who had fully updated the website as requested. All the Minutes for 2007, 2008, 2009, and 2010 up to November could now be accessed there on www.giffordonline.co.uk by clicking on the "Village page" link above a nice photograph of Gifford Main Street. Other improvements are expected to follow.

A Mission Statement for inclusion on the website was agreed as follows:

The purpose of Gifford Community Council shall be to ascertain, co-ordinate and express to East Lothian Council, and to other public authorities, the views of the residents of Gifford Community Council Area, in relation to matters for which those authorities are responsible, and to take such action in the interests of these residents, as appears to it to be expedient and practicable."

7. Correspondence:

- (i) Cycle Races: There would be Super 6 Cycle Races through the village on Saturday 5 March 2011 with finish line beyond the golf course corner for greater safety.
- (ii) Litter: JOC expressed thanks to all, who picked up litter round the Village.
- (iii) Bleachfield Wall: We had been advised by ELC, that we had been awarded £3,700 for the repairs to the wall, and work had already started.
- (iv) Bleachfield Play Area refurbishment. Liz Stewart gave a presentation on this, stating that a cost of £43,000 was involved. This would include the provision of a children's roundabout, which we have been without for several years now since ELC removed it for safety reasons. The action of JOC and herself in applying to ELC for part funding was approved. GCC committed to fund this refurbishment to the extent of £1,000. This refurbishment will require a lot of support by villagers and fundraising. Alastair McClung and Liz would co-ordinate the project. We would approach our ELC Councillors for expressions of support, and Graeme Nicolson of Longyester Quarry for a financial contribution. It was agreed that all suggestions for fundraising, and offers of help would be welcomed.
- (v) Yester Woodlands Sale: There was extensive discussion of this. Nick Morgan mentioned Lochend Wood at Dunbar, but it is smaller, and said we should set up a trust with a business plan. He is concerned at the implications of any sale for the core paths, with which he deals at ELC. There are possibilities of funds from the Lottery Fund and Green Corridors. AG stated that it was a precious asset and that we should contact Scottish Natural Heritage, join the Woodlands Association, and seek to have the sale delayed.
Cllr. Ludovic Broun Lindsay stated, that the Goblin Ha' and Castle had been built circa 1300 for the Norman lord Hugo De Giffard by French or Belgian stonemasons, whose methods were so in advance of local knowledge, that they thought there must be magic or the devil involved!!, and that it was a Scheduled Monument of Gothic North European style. He said, that there had been no repair visible for many years. It was noted, that it was now collapsing in parts. He doubted our ability to acquire and open to the public this precious asset, although he wished us very well.
Cllr. Sheena Richardson, said that although it *might* be possible to buy it, and try to run it with public access, we needed to get professional advice, and should consult Alba trees: there could be Scottish Government funds available. She would advise us on whom to contact.

The following decisions were reached:

- a. Ask the agent Galbraith to delay the sale, so that we could make a bid.
 - b. Join the Community Woodlands Association as a basic member at £10 p.a.
 - c. Set up a sub-committee consisting of Nick Morgan, David Habgood, if agreeable, JOC, and Colin Calvert, if agreeable
 - d. Ask for advice/support from David Bellamy (his son lives in Garvald, and he takes an interest here), Historic Scotland (in the light of the inclusion of the castle ruin and the Goblin Ha' - a Scheduled Monument), Alba Trees, Green Corridors, Lottery Fund, Scottish National Heritage, the Lochend Woods people at Dunbar, the Pishwanton Woods people (especially Dr. Margaret Colquhoun - they have many high profile supporters), Michael Williams, and Mike McDowell at Townhead, who is a practising environmentalist. Also Liz Stewart may be able to help with fundraising advice, and has asked to be kept informed.
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- (vi) Recycling area/bins: ELC will blast clean these bins, if we ask them too. But it was suggested that they are corroded, and not worth painting, as has been suggested. Their condition to be checked.
 - (vii) The Avenue trees: One tree was felled by ELC on 4 February due to its very dangerous uprooted condition. JOC expressed great thanks to all involved, including the Police, for a swift and effective response to this dangerous occurrence. There was an unconfirmed report, that ELC had written to Mr Menotti asking, that all trees in The Avenue be surveyed to see, if they are safe. JOC to seek a copy of the letter to pass it to interested householders nearby.
 - (viii) Gian Carlo Menotti Centenary Celebrations on 7-10/7/2011 in Italy . It was decided, that we could not allow our Coat of Arms to be used by the committee in Italy, but that JOC as Chairman would write a letter of good wishes. Also, that the Tait family would be asked, if they would write their memories of Gian Carlo, and allow them to be sent to Italy for display during the celebrations (they would be translated by Haddingtonian Jane Bowie, who lives there, and is helping to plan the celebrations).
 - (ix) Bleachfield toilets closure: the toilets had re-opened. JOC to pursue the outstanding problems.
 - (x) A request from a Haddington group for funding for the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme had been received: it was decided in the light of limited resources available, that no further funds, in addition to those already given for this purpose, could be given this financial year.
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8. Planning: (See the report, which appears at the end of these Minutes).
 - (i) Forbes Lodge: Cllr. Richardson had "called in" this application: all objectors would get notification. The GCC comments were again rehearsed. We do not accept the ELC view of the treatment of the trees, and think that BS5837 should be complied with. We also think the house is too big and too high in relation to Forbes Lodge, and would spoil its setting, and that

the granting of this application would set a precedent for the development of other garden ground in the Conservation Area.

- (ii) Duncanlaw Farm : agreed: no action.
- (iii) Speedyburn House: agreed: no action.
- (iv) Highwood: agreed: no action.
- (v) The Pirn: agreed: no action.
- (vi) Beechwood: concern was expressed that this proposed development, described as “ancillary accommodation”, actually consisted of a separate free-standing house, and as such amounted to backland development within a relatively small garden. The lack of any indication of the consequent subdivision of this garden is a matter of concern. A further reason for objecting to this application is the conflict of architectural character with the existing house, since Beechwood is without doubt the finest house in the High Street. AG was asked to write on these lines to ELC.

9. Reports: None.

10. Pot holes and repairs: Following the re-surfacing of the Village Square to a high standard, it was reported, that the surface was now smoother and therefore more slippery in frosty conditions. It was agreed that no action should be taken on this.

11. Christmas Tree 2010: Not discussed.

12. Ongoing items not covered elsewhere: Not discussed.

13. AOB: Balance Sheet to be discussed at next meeting.

14. Date of next meeting: Monday, 14th March 2011 at 7.30 pm in the Todrick Room of Gifford Village Hall.

Weekly Listings of Registered Applications over the past weeks since the last meeting contained the following application for work within the GCC area.

	Registered
16.12.10	nil
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06.01.10	nil
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13.01.10	2
10/00871/P	Alterations & extension to agricultural buildings to form 2 houses Duncanlaw Farm, Gifford EH41 4PQ for Mr & Mrs James Weddell <i>—discuss</i>
10/00964/P	Alterations and extension to house Speedyburn House, Station Road, Gifford EH41 4QL for Mrs Hinton <i>—discuss</i>
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20.01.11	1
10/01038/P	Replacement windows Highwood, Tweeddale Avenue, Gifford EH41 4QN for Mr John Wrinn <i>—not controversial</i>
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27.01.11	
10/01056/P	Extension to building and formation of hardstanding (retrospective)
10/01056/LBC	The Pirn, Duns Road, Gifford EH41 4QW for Mr Keith Hare <i>—note: retrospective!</i>
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03.02.11	nil
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10.02.11	1
11/00053/P	Erection of ancillary residential accommodation and hardstanding Beechwood, High Street, Gifford EH41 4QU for Mr Danny Meaney <i>—information tabled at meeting</i>

Andrew Gilmour
14 February 2011