

*Skirling Community Council*  
*Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2023, 7.30pm, Skirling Village Hall*  
*Agenda*

**Present:** Esther Daborn, David Galbraith, Isobel Hunter, Robert Laird, Katy Miller, Ross McIntyre, Sara van der Vat, Alison Leite, Councillor Viv Thomson, Andrew Clark, John Noble, Jo Noble, Arlene Galbraith.

**Apologies:** none.

**Approval of January 26th Minutes:** proposed IH, seconded RMc

- **Community Speed watch**

- **Communications from residents:** Secretary Skirling Gmail has received emails of complaint from Tim Janeway, John Noble and David Galbraith on speeding issues at the North End of the village with requests for the CC to do something about this, including investigating the use of temporary speed cameras.

DG said the situation has not improved with the SIDS (speed signs) as these do not monitor cars going above 40mph. It was brought to the attention of the CC that an altercation recently took place between a resident of Skirling and some reckless drivers. JN is concerned that it is the same regular users of the road (especially HGVs and Farmers) travelling in excess of 50/60mph (this is an observation). The villagers complained they are afraid. Residents are reluctant to let their grandkids play outside as there is no pavement. Many walk through the fields and farms instead beside road as it is so dangerous.

ED reported that she and AC had a consultation with Transport Safety (Nov 2021) where suggestions for pavements and islands for this side of the village were made. The response was that the road is not wide enough for islands, but that pavements could be considered in due course. It was agreed that enforcement and collection of evidence were crucial.

ED referred to the email about the re-instatement of Community Speedwatch from Sgt Corinne Bird which she had forwarded to TJ, JN, and DG for information. The email confirms that this programme is to be re-instated. Sergeant James Harrison of the Community Action Team is involved in this.

- A local community group is required to make a formal application for this and will need a minimum of three volunteers, one of which will be designated as lead volunteer who will be the contact for police.
- The volunteers will also need to be vetted before being trained.
- There will be trialling before the programme is rolled out. Sgt Bird will let us know how to go about making the formal application in due course.

ED asked for volunteers and a co-ordinator. JhN, DG, AL have volunteered.

VT thinks that community speed watch volunteers cannot monitor their own community. It was suggested that Skirling might work with Broughton.

KM suggested Skirling volunteer to take part in the trial.

The discussion continued as DG and AG said they feel like it is worse in Skirling than anywhere else. ED reported further on communications with Transport Safety regarding possible ways of addressing the speeding issues. She and DG had met with Karen McGrath about the SID in Howes Brae. The position of this SID cannot be moved further out of the

village as each village is allocated 2 and we have already been given 4 due to the two sections and speed zones of the village.

There was further discussion on how to collect evidence of speeding. ED and DG had asked for speed monitoring, but were told the unit was too busy. ED stated she had also passed on suggestions to move the speed limit boundaries but the rules are very strict: it is not possible to move the boundary further up the road as there are no houses. JnN expressed he is unhappy with the information the CC provided him and insisted more is done as he feels someone is going to get hurt.

- **Actions –**

- The CC will provide speed limit Stickers for bins. (ED to source and request SV to order)
- RMc has suggested hiring a private company to monitor traffic. He will research this and pass information to ED.
- DG suggested the CC purchase a speed gun to collect data ourselves. He will research the logistics of this.
- VT advised that Tweeddale West Councillors are meeting with South Lanarkshire Councillors and she will add the issue to the agenda. She and DB will look into the possibility of adding a pavement on this stretch of road. VT will also email other community councils and see if other villages are interested in partaking in the community speed watch training and perhaps work together.
- DG will put team of volunteers together and inform PC Carsley.
- ED will report to Sgt Bird when a team is ready and request that Skirling can be part of the trialling of the Community Speedwatch programme.
- ED to enquire with Karen McGrath again about monitoring vehicles.

- **New 40mph buffer, dragons teeth, roundels, countdown signs (ED).**

ED reported that following the installation of the 40mp speed buffer at Skirling Mill (14/02/2023), SBC have agreed to install countdown signs on the approach from Biggar. They also will install dragon's teeth at either end of the village and roundels in each speed zone.

ED thanked Findlay Leite for his illustrated 'Thank you' showing him on his bike, with a lorry and the 40mph sign. This picture has been put on the village website and published in the Peeblesshire News. Chloe Houston, a friend of the girl who died on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2022 responded to the report and asked for Findlay's contact details to thank him. Findlay's mother has replied and thanked Chloe.

- **Purchase / deployment of Pop-up Bob: (ED/ DG)**

Response from Sgt Bird - unfortunately the position remains the same on the CC purchasing their own to use, again due to it representing police, but more so due to the fact that they become ineffective if utilised too often as drivers become familiar with them. But she has asked PC Carsley to liaise with DG to deliver "pop up bob" for deployment at Goat Foot.

**Action:** ED will provide DG with contact details for PC Carsley to follow up.

- **Police report / Request Skirling becomes a 'No cold-calling Area'. (ED)**

No particular issues with police report.

Response from PC Bruce Anderson (Kelso) to request for 'No cold-calling Area. He visited Skirling 22.03.2023 to scope out possible sites for signage. He will contact ED with details of the procedure. It is necessary to send out letters to consult residents to get their agreement. ED asked opinions on survey distribution. SV is worried residents may be fatigued by excessive surveys since we are anticipating a survey for the Community Action Plan (CAP). She suggested combining surveys.

**Action:** ED to contact PC Anderson to let him know the CC decision and to request the Cold Calling survey is sent to SV so that it can be incorporated into village planning.

- **Funding**

- **Clyde Borders Windfarm application for Community Action Plan funding (SV/RL)**

Positive news regarding the application: we are waiting for confirmation that it has been successful. SV reported the funds available as follows: Clyde Windfarm fund stands at £620, Glen Kyrie is £960 and the SBC fund has £50.

- **Up to date guidelines for micro- grants (SV)**

SV has received up to date guidelines. SV will simplify application form procedures on the website. **Action SV**

- **Warm and Well fund (KM/ IH)**

This initiative is ending soon.

- **Kings coronation fund (KM/IH)**

Plans for this have been scrapped as the hall is booked. IH will look into bouncy castle for the car boot sale.

- **Community cost of living vouchers (ED/IH)**

The plan is to provide food vouchers (Co-op or Broughton Store) to community members struggling during the cost of living crisis. It was discussed how this should be done discreetly. It was agreed that the vouchers would be advertised on the funding page of the village website, funded initially from micro-grants. SV will send an email to residents to offer this assistance with discretion. It was agreed to offer up to £50 per household, but we will need to apply for more windfarm funds to cover this if demand is high.

**Action SV**

- **Village website and information dissemination (SV/KM)**

SV reported that she has been working on the Funding page for the website: the page will include Windfarm micro-grants and Youth Bursaries, the Pauline Fund and the SBC link to Community Funds of various types. As stated in the previous section, the information about the cost of living vouchers will also be included in that page. SV will put details together and send round CC for comments before posting. **Action SV**

IH and KM are looking into a new noticeboard for the village. **Action IH/KM**

- **Village Maintenance**

- **Resilience / Emergency planning** - Councillor Thomson was thanked for sending out links with Andy McLean (Emergency Planning Officer) at SBC to discuss any issues around resilience planning/supplies encountered during the recent flooding. KM and IH mentioned that they were already in touch with him as needed. KM mentioned that Skirling has flood defences in the form of sandbags etc stored in the Resilience Group shed. With reference to the **Flood prevention measures training day** it was agreed that new members are needed on the Resilience Group Committee.

**Action:** KM and IH/BH to recruit additional members to the Resilience Group Committee

- **‘No mow May’ SBC pilot** – ED explained the pilot and reported that Skirling is registered. There is already an agreement not to mow the triangle in front of Firknowe beside the village green. Request has been made for no mowing on the bank in the area beside the path between Solstice and Goatfoot.
- **Derelict house – Waulkmill** (IH / ED) - The letter to the solicitors was signed and will be despatched, with copies to Councillors, MSP and MP.
- **Tree felling/ re-planting** (IH/ AL) IH reported that this is not yet complete. Some need to be trimmed. New trees going to be planted. **Action AL** to enquire about free trees available from Broughton.
- **Subsidence on path to Skirling Mill** - (AC) AC will work with George Noble to repair this.
- **Retaining wall Skirling graveyard** (IH) Work is underway. IH informed the CC there are plans to put a toilet in at church, so investigations are underway for designing a soakaway.
- **BT Hut and Orphaned Land** - IH reported that she and BH had been in talks with George Carmichael about this and hoped to meet him shortly. **Action IH/BH**
- **Children’s playground** – (KM) no update. Possible CAP inclusion.
- **Howes Brae sign** - (SV) the council were presented a photo displaying issues. SV will email a copy to ED who will forward to Neil Pringle. **Action SV/ ED**
- **Howes Brae impromptu items uplift**– (AC) items have been removed.
- **Tubs for the village** AC suggested installing another tub in the Howes Brae area. This was agreed. In addition, 2 Tubs for the 40mph signs at Skirling Mill. £20 will be available to residents who adopt a tub. It was highlighted that last year Clydesdale plants offered discounts for community planters. **Action ED** to work with Joyce Clark to prepare this year’s ‘adopt a tub’ email with mention of Clydesdale discount and request to pass on receipts to SV  
ED suggested investigating a company that offers to create ‘village gateways’ such as Dolphinton’s. AC suggested signing that is unique to Skirling (such as the stained glass in

Lauder). IH suggested again we create brighter planters to draw attention to the fact people are entering a village. ED asked for ideas and someone to research possible planters. RMc agreed to investigate. **Action RMc**

- **A.O.B./ Correspondence received**

- A notification of a Felling Permission Application (Forestry and Land Management (Scotland) Act 2018) has come in for Cambwell Farm. RL clarified the nature of the application and ED will communicate 'no objection' to Forestry and Land Management Scotland. **Action ED.**
- Craig Hoy MSP is looking for nominations for a Community Champions reception in the Scottish Parliament to celebrate their work supporting the local community. There are three categories in health, sport and wellbeing, with an overall winner in each category. We have a link to nominate any community champions who should be considered for this event: <https://www.craighoy.co.uk/nominate-your-community-champion> - The council had no nominations.
- Health and Social Care Partnership Strategic Framework 2023-2026 has been circulated – ED to put a link on the website. **Action ED**
- Richard Callaghan, Outreach Development Adviser, Peebles & District Citizens Advice Bureau, Is looking to make connections with people running existing community projects in the area to see what we can do together to reach clients in different ways. Has met Isobel and Sarah and will attend April's community lunch  
**Action - IH** will mention when she advertises the lunch.
- Banks renewables proposal for a 38 Turbine Bodinglee Wind Farm and Battery Storage development near Douglas – report in Gazette 22<sup>nd</sup> Feb – Banks renewables proposal for a 38 Turbine Bodinglee Wind Farm and Battery Storage development near Douglas is to drive a community fund of more than 50million over its 40 year lifespan. A large portion of that money would be ringfenced for the creation of a community owned organisation Clydesdale Community Energy Transition Company. This would be set up to help people living locally to benefit from a range of energy efficiency improvements from insulation to air source heat pumps and solar panels.

IH mentioned that Community turbines in the village were previously discussed and it was established Skirling is not windy enough. Community energy such as Solar panels for this hall is being looked into and KM is waiting for more information. A car charging point in village is being discussed.

It was agreed that Community benefit from windfarm investment is important and green transition is a useful focus for the CAP.

- Houston buses for 101/102 route - new buses are on order and will be received at end of May.
- VT - Councillors are doing walk arounds and encouraging anyone with suggestions to get in touch. The BT hut ownership was suggested. VT advised planning applications likely to be deferred due to planning framework changing and this may therefore impact applications.
- VT mentioned that she and the other Tweeddale West Councillors are meeting with their SL counterparts to discuss shared issues. DG raised the issue of a public warning sign of costs at a charging point in Lanark being too small, resulting in a fine. This is unacceptable. VT noted the complaint.

- RL asked about solid white lines being painted on the road outside Toftcombs to prevent overtaking VT and ED advised this was not possible due to stringent rules and regulations.
- RL discussed the increase in parked cars at the war memorial. The congestion has made it impossible to move his tractors through the area. He is asking residents be mindful and please use driveways when possible. It was agreed to publicise this discreetly.
- Village clean up: reminder will go out that it is on April 2<sup>nd</sup>. **Action KM**
- The date of the next CC meeting was changed to June 8<sup>th</sup>.

End 9.30pm.

**2023 Meeting Dates:** June 8<sup>th</sup>, September 28<sup>th</sup>, November 30<sup>th</sup>, all at 7.30pm