

APPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, 12TH AUGUST 2021 AT HOLIDAY INN

Community Council		
Name	Position	Present
Mervyn Barr	Chair	✓
Malcolm Collie	Member	x
Heather Cook	Member	✓
Donald Davidson	Member	x
Becky Ferguson	Member	✓
Audrey Findlay	Member	✓
Ben Horsburgh	Associate Member	x
Kate Lumsden	Member	✓
Alan McCue	Member	✓
William Munro	Vice-Chair	✓ via zoom
Gordon Prentice	Treasurer	✓
Diane Priestley	Member	✓
Justin Reid	Member	✓
David Ritchie	Secretary	✓
Ken Stewart	Member	✓
Raymond Swaffield	Member	✓
CLlr David Aitchison	Ward 13 Councillor	x
CLlr Iris Walker	Ward 13 Councillor	✓
CLlr Ron McKail	Ward 13 Councillor	✓
CLlr Alistair McKelvie	Ward 13 Councillor	x

Members of Public- Tim Yeomans, David Dent, Freda Imrie (via zoom)

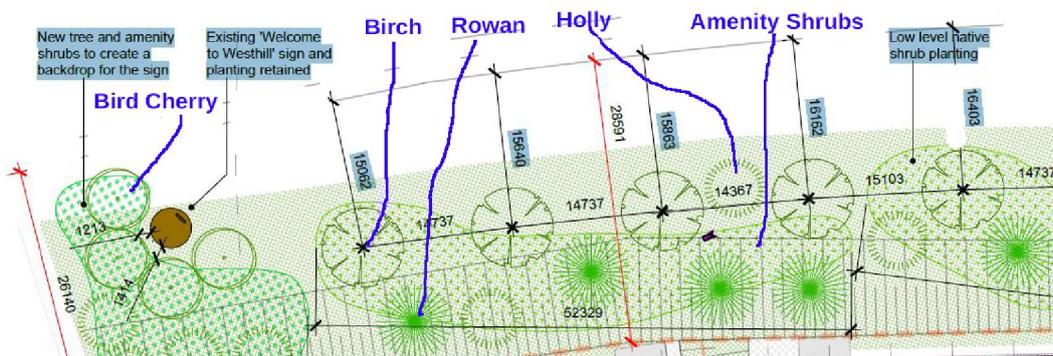
1	<p><u>Welcome and opening remarks</u></p> <p>Chair Mervyn Barr opened the meeting and welcomed everyone to the first face to face meeting since March 2020, with a special welcome to members of the public. Permission was granted to record the meeting. The room set-up with members all seated round the tables and guests on seats at the back will now be adopted as the preferred option.</p> <p>With the sad passing of our friend and colleague Hilary Benson in July, and in her memory, Mervyn proposed that we make donations to Hilary's 3 chosen charities. Donations of £40 to each of them was agreed.</p>
2	<p><u>Apologies and Declarations of Interest</u></p> <p>Apologies received from CLlr Aitchison, CLlr McKelvie, Malcolm Collie, Donald Davidson, Ben Horsburgh No Declarations of Interest</p>
3	<p><u>Approval of Minutes of Meeting 10th June 2021</u></p> <p>The minutes were approved. Proposed: Ken Stewart Secoded: Gordon Prentice</p>
4	<p><u>Matters Arising/ Actions Update</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Set-up of Micro-soft One-Drive or other options – Malcolm not present so this will be followed up in September 2. Queen's Green Canopy project- David reminded members that details of this were circulated in June and we need to decide if we are going to get involved. It is a project to celebrate Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee in 2022. Three million saplings are being provided free across the UK to community groups etc. CLlr McKelvie has advised that Aberdeenshire Council will not be running any major tree planting projects themselves, but will help with distribution. Audrey suggested we could get other

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	<p>local groups like Rotary, Scouts and schools involved. Ken Stewart offered to be the project lead for this.</p> <p>3. Seating for Denman Park. We applied for an AC grant in May, but did not get it. However we will be allowed to use the remaining £1600 of Phoenix Project funding for benches in the shopping centre and Denman Park. The park is considered to be an integral part of the 'town centre' and the seating will be a long-term, legacy and tangible benefit from the Phoenix project.</p>
5	<p><u>Correspondence</u></p> <p>Re the proposal at the June meeting to implement a Log of all correspondence received by the secretary, David will create this for August so that it can be reviewed at the September meeting. Longer term aim will still be to place the main correspondence in a private "cloud" drive that all members can access.</p> <p>New website wearewesthill.co.uk created by resident James Cruickshank- David recently circulated details of this. The website consists of lists of links to a wide variety of services in the Westhill area, under 22 categories. The creator James Cruickshank also runs the 'Wonderful Westhill' facebook page where almost every day he posts photos & videos of everyday life in Westhill area. His new website is largely what we would like to have in the 'Groups & Services' area of the WECC website but this has never been properly developed.</p> <p>Becky Ferguson expressed concern about the new website as the 'Wonderful Westhill' facebook page contains many images of people etc. who have not given permission to be photographed. Mr Cruickshank had caused some issues a few months ago by posting photos of Sclattiebrae. This led to us removing the link to the facebook page that we had on our website. There is currently no link to James's facebook page on his website. We need to agree if it is ok for us to promote the website on our Website and in the Westhill Bulletin. It was agreed by a clear majority that that currently we will not promote the website but will monitor it.</p>
6	<p><u>Co-option of Tim Yeomans</u></p> <p>Tim was a member of WECC previously for 6 months in 2016 and is keen to re-join. He is now the chef at Green Pastures Café and would like to see WECC have better connections with the Westhill business community. The co-option was approved unanimously, and Tim was welcomed as a Member</p>
7	<p><u>Police Report</u></p> <p>July report received after WECC meeting, now appended to this minute. Current priorities are anti-social behaviour, drugs and road safety.</p> <p>We are aware of a serious ASB incident at the shopping centre last weekend, causing damage to litter bins etc. MAPP Centre Manager Ben Horsburgh has sent in a report today of the increasing amount of ASB incidents, mainly at night. David read it out. There is also ASB issues in the Westdyke area. Kate is getting frequent facebook messages about it.</p> <p>Mervyn will invite Chief Inspector Gareth Hannan to attend next meeting to talk about policing in Westhill and format of the Police report.</p>
8	<p><u>Environmental Group Update</u></p> <p>Report from Raymond has been circulated, as below in italics:</p>

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- Our twice monthly organised Litter Picks have continued as planned. There has been slightly less litter, possibly because of holidays and the schools shut.
- After discussion with the Rotary Group, we have decided that they will try starting off at Carnie, to help spread out our area collected and to avoid duplication from our two groups.
- We are not aware of any development in the Denman Litter Bins provision.
- We have been concerned that the landscaping that was proposed for the south side of the A944, after the completion of the Industrial Buildings behind, has never been completed. The Silver birch trees, and a few others seem to be present but most of the other trees and all of the shrubs are absent. Is it now too late to chase up this slippage?
- I have copied a small part of the proposed plan shown near the Rotary Sculpture and indicated the trees that were to be planted. Most notable, is the absence of the shrubs, which were to be selected from the list below, and should cover most of the grassy areas between the trees. I have included a photo which I took last week, of the same area as on the plan, to contrast what we have got with what exists.
- This will demonstrate my concerns. Incidentally, the Rotary Sculpture surround seems to be the best planted section of the entire strip. We are not plant experts, but we were promised that the shrubs would provide a changing colourful display between the seasons. The only silver birches that seem to be thriving are those situated at the end of the strip nearer McDonalds



Re the planting scheme for A944, we are trying to establish why the plantings proposed in 2017 have only been partially implemented. The cost of it was to be funded by developer obligations from Knights Property Group. Cllr Walker thinks that the funding may have been diverted to the sculpture project.

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There was another proposed planting scheme drawn up by a lady in Landscape Services that was displayed in the WECC stand at the June 2017 Gala.

Extract from Minutes of WECC May 2017 meeting: _

Update on meeting with Landscape Services – 10th May 2017 - *This long awaited meeting was held yesterday with Doug Milne, along with representatives from Landscape Services, in order to investigate the funding from Knight Property Group for the planting along the A944. Doug Milne has taken the action away to contact the developer’s obligations team to investigate the location of this money.*

Recently, saplings have been planted which match the original plans, however it is unknown who planted these. This will also be investigated. The Landscape Services team will produce a mock-up of what planting could be done along this entrance to the A944, which we will have to take to the Gala. The saplings could be moved in the dormant season if required.

The Gateway Art Project can be connected to this planting along the A944, with co-ordinating planting in the area around the feature. In addition to this, the area of lock-block adjacent to the Tesco roundabout could also be rejuvenated and included in the project.

David will check the Sculpture project financial records re the sources of the funding.

Mervyn suggested that we can try to get more trees planted on the bank through the Green Canopy Project.

9 **Orbital Trail Project Update**

Report from Gordon has been circulated, as below in italics:

Route Completion

It is pleasing to report that following June’s meeting the revised routing of the eastern sector over Mains of Kinmundy Hill was completed on 9th July by installing six new posts and reorienting two waymarker disks at either end of the revised route.

Happily, AC’s cartographer produced a new leaflet/map – in hard copy and online - in perfect time for our soft launch last Wednesday 4th August. Links to the source file have been placed on our website and Facebook pages and a Press Release is about to be issued. Sally Davis also confirmed that she will fund an information board displaying the map in the town centre. I just need to agree location and dimensions with Ben Horsburgh.

Regarding the separate issue to access through Sclattiebrae, as far as we know, the residents of Sclattiebrae have upheld their part of the agreement by leaving the gate unlocked, although it would appear that many past users no longer feel comfortable walking through owing to deterring signage and some reports of a hostile reception. With nearby fields recently cropped, it is at least possible to take alternative routes.

However in the meantime, the question of right of responsible access remains, as do the continued displays of deterring signs and barriers on the Eastern sector. It is our intention as part of a planned project review and debrief on “lessons learned” to discuss and clarify with officials at Aberdeenshire Council, how these factors can be addressed.

Funding Update

As per the Project report, £1,731 of the £14,000 funding is uncommitted but needs to be spent by September or we need to apply for an extension as we still hope to deploy this on stiles, benches, bulbs and possibly a strimmer for ongoing Trail clearing.

As reported in the Treasurer’s Report we were successful with our application to AC’s Garioch Area Initiative Fund for 50% funding of £4,092 to help address the flooding and drainage issues at the north entrance to Lawsondale Woods.

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Land Ownership

As reported last month I am still trying to track down ownership of the strip of Lawsondale woodland that we need to work on. I believe it is now either AC or BP.

I am still awaiting an update from Ashdale Land & Property with regards to their anticipated batch disposal of a number of slivers of land in and around Westhill, some of which might have community interest.

Correspondence since last month's meeting

I have received five further email enquiries from residents asking why access through Sclattiebrae is troublesome. All have received a reply and have been asked to refer their complaint to the Local Access Officer.

We have also agreed with the Scouts that they can use some of the waymarker posts to permanently mark a number of orienteering routes around town. It's good to see that others are already building on the foundation that the WOT has provided.

Hill of Keir

A route over Hill of Keir remains part of the longer term plan but there has been no time to engage further with the farmer at Berryhill about access from east and west. Scottish Water's contractor is still on site.

Rotary [through Dave Dent] offered up to 4,000 purple crocus bulbs for planting in agreed sections of the Orbital Trail. Gordon to suggest options.

Mervyn thanked Cllr Mckail for his initial suggestion about an orbital trail, and Gordon Prentice for taking on the project lead role and all the tasks involved in that. Thanks also to Alan McCue and Councillors Walker & Mckelvie for their help in resolving some issues, and the many other volunteers who helped with path clearing etc.

Mervyn presented Gordon with a bottle of champagne and a box of chocolates

10 Planning Matters (Diane Priestly)

Report from Diane has been circulated, as below in italics:

*There have been very few **planning applications** since June in Westhill.*

*Wecc's comments were forwarded to the **Active Travel Route Survey consultation** and included the concerns that Donald had forwarded to me regarding Option 2, the northern route which would go through the Lawsondale Sports Facility.*

*The planning subgroup completed the Scottish Government consultation document re **Local Place Plans** and raised concerns about one of the questions; do you think there should be a requirement for the body to engage and seek the views of people to assist in the preparation of an LPP should be set out in law? We felt that it could lead to the opportunity for a legal challenge, and it could take away the communities ownership of a LPP.*

*Issues have again been raised again about the **role of the Reporter** who has overturned a decision made by Aberdeen councillors who had objected to a planning application made by Bancon homes to build 80 new homes in Milltimber. As with Carterra, Bancon appealed to the Scottish Government resulting in the planning decision being overturned and so the development will go ahead despite 800 local residents objecting to it. There are now calls for the law to be changed.*

*I have been in contact with Caroline Smith the Garioch Community Planning Officer about developing a **Community Action Plan** for Westhill, she has emailed me to say that she will be contacting me in a few weeks to arrange a meeting.*

<p>13</p>	<p>Ward 13 Councillors Updates</p> <p>Cllr Walker circulated report:- NHS Grampian seek your views <i>NHS Grampian (NHSG) are looking beyond the Covid-19 pandemic to recover and rebuild; working with partners and the public to improve the health and wellbeing of the people of Grampian. One of the challenges is that more and more people are living with diseases and long-term conditions like asthma or diabetes; what things do you do to keep well and in good health? Do you have any worries, concerns or disappointments about the way services were delivered during Covid-19? These are some of the questions you can respond to by completing the survey (Google the link below). This survey is the first stage of the consultation process with a further round in October/November. Please note this first survey closes 31st August.</i> NHSG Plan For the Future 2022-2028 (nhsgrampian.org)</p> <p>Report on recycling centres https://committees.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/committees.aspx?commid=495&meetid=19810 (item 8) <i>This report which will be discussed next week at ISC, outlines a planned review of the Household Recycling Centre (HRC) provision in Aberdeenshire. It details the plan to use a service design process to review the HRC provision for householders and to consider alternative disposal routes for traders. Councillors on the committee are recommended to consider and approve the planned scope of the Service Design review and agree that a further report with the outcome of the review return to ISC in January 2022. The report contains further information on the issues raised by residents. Members were asked to provide any additional feedback on HRC's by 16th September.</i></p> <p>Inspiring Aberdeenshire <i>Just a reminder that Inspiring Aberdeenshire is taking place online (will be available on Facebook) on Thursday 26th August at 6pm. You may catch some familiar faces! I'm looking forward to hearing all the volunteers' stories.</i></p> <p>Tour of Britain – Window Dressing Competition for retailers <i>A window dressing competition for businesses to support the Tour will take place across Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire with 3 prizes in each Authority. For more details see:</i> https://online.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/apps/news/release.aspx?newsid=8268</p> <p><i>There are also a number of school projects taking place to get young people involved in the event. This should be an exciting event to catch as they pass through our local towns and villages on 12th September.</i></p> <p>Gulls- the Council are looking at further measures they may be able to take re gulls. The public are encouraged to report any issues with gulls via the Council website</p> <p>Cllr Mckail commented on the success of the summer planting scheme.</p> <p>Mervyn acknowledged the assistance provided by Grant Williamson and his wife for letting us use his barn at Broomfold for temporary storage of the planters and compost etc. The Christmas lights have also been stored there for coming up to 10 years. Approval was granted for Mervyn to spend £40 on gifts for Grant & Dot.</p>
<p>13</p>	<p>Close of Meeting Meeting closed at 9.40pm Date of Next Meeting- 9th September, at 7pm, at Holiday Inn and via Zoom</p>

APPENDIX

**GARIOCH COMMUNITY POLICING TEAM
VISIBLE, ACCESSIBLE AND EFFECTIVE**

Community Council: Westhill and Elrick

Reporting Period: July 2021

Previous Reporting Period: June 2021

Current Policing Priorities:

Our current priorities have changed in response to emerging crime patterns and are as follows:

1. ASB – Proactive patrols to provide community reassurance and to deter and detect instances of ASB and Vandalism.
2. DRUGS – Intel gathering and disruption tactics to target those dealing drugs and related violence.
3. ROAD SAFETY – Preventative measures and enforcement action to ensure our roads are safe to use.



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Crime Overview and Explanation:

CRIME TYPE	CURRENT PERIOD	PREVIOUS PERIOD
Assault	6 crimefiles	2 Crimefile
House Breaking	0	0
Public Nuisance	13 incidents	11 incidents
Road Traffic	8 crimefile, 7 incidents	1 crimefiles 5 incidents
Drugs	2	1
Fraud	4	3

Assault – Includes all recorded instances of violence.

Housebreaking – includes all break in's to domestic and commercial premises, including attempted break in's.

Public Nuisance – All youth annoyance and calls in relation to anti-social behaviour.

Road Traffic – all calls in relation to Road Traffic Offences (speeding, illegal parking, obstruction etc).

Drugs – all reports incidents in relation to drugs dealing and use.

Fraud (NEW) – all different types of Frauds reported

This reporting period has seen

Assaults – 1 of the assaults was by staff on children at local nursery, another 1 was a child assaulting another child. There was 1 domestic assault, 1 assault on a police officer by a child and the other 2 were assaults outside licensed premises. There were no serious injuries and all assaults have been detected

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Housebreaking – none

Public Nuisance – Similar numbers as June with only 13 reports. 9 of the reports were of youths gathering in different areas of Westhill with most reported on a Friday or Saturday evenings. When Police attended most youths ran off but a few were traced and given suitable advice. Another 1 was an alleged Covid breach and the other 3 were reports of drunk people in the town.

Road Traffic Offences – 2 of the crimefiles relate to speeding, 2 were for no insurance, 2 were for drink or drug driving and the other 2 were for no MOT. 3 of the incidents related to minor non injury collisions, there were 2 reports of drivers drink driving and 1 for driving without insurance but no details of the cars were noted so none of them were traced.

Drugs – The 2 crimefiles relate to intelligence being gathered then drug search warrants were executed and controlled drugs were found at the 2 addresses.

Fraud – 4 reports of different persons being defrauded of small amounts of money.

Significant crime/issues within your community:

Nothing of note

Planned Community Policing Activity/Advice:

We will continue to patrol the Westhill community tackling youth annoyance. We try to have a dedicated unit for Westhill on a Friday and Saturday evening. Various youths have been traced as a result of these patrols and this is being supported by the residents calling in ongoing issues. We will continue to take robust action to target these individuals.

On 10 June, speed checks were done on Westhill Drive with 2 drivers warned regarding their speed.

On 21 July, speed checks were done on Hays Way beside the Academy with 2 drivers warned regarding their speed.

Conclusion:

Overall no serious crime was committed in Westhill but it is good to see the number of Public Nuisance calls have not increased too much.