

**Thornhill Community Council  
Minutes of Meeting held at Thornhill  
On Monday, 12/09/2011**

**Present:** Douglas Watters, David Kerr, Robert McGarva, Wille Lenza, Jeannette Kerr, Lorraine Murdoch, Davie Sharp

**Apologies:** Scott Jardine, Jason Davies, Jane Marchbank

**In attendance :** Sgt Gordon Orr, (D&G Constabulary), Mr. Greg Parker, Cllrs Jim Dempster and John Syme.

<b>1.</b>	<p><b>Nithsdale Mart Planning Application:</b>            DW welcomed Mr Greg Parker, a resident of Nithsdale View, who wished to address the CC on a proposal to build 3 largish houses on the Auction Mart Site. These are to be 3 x 1¼ storey houses, with detached garages, to be erected on the part of the Site nearest to the existing station. They have some good points, including the specification of slate roofs, but also some bizarre items, such as being partially clad in corrugated iron, apparently as a design 'nod' to the remaining Auction Mart buildings. Nithsdale View residents' objections include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only 1/10<sup>th</sup> of site being used for this, which suggests future intention of another 27 or so houses to go on the rest of the site.</li> <li>• Use of corrugated iron as a design feature.</li> <li>• Unique character of Nithsdale View and adjoining bigger house, Hikwa, which are a discrete set of buildings, sharing similar feaures</li> <li>• Although apparently this site counts as part of Thornhill settlement, they do not form part of an established building group and, really, constitute sporadic development in a rural scenic area.</li> <li>• There are problems with road access (railway bridge, sharp bend, narrow Thornhill → Gatelawbridge road), steep banks, mature trees, sewerage (existing houses drain to septic tank in Station yard, whose capacity unlikely to be adequate).</li> <li>• Residents suspicious of the process. From legislative point of view, this part of the site has no neighbours, so there has been no requirement of neighbour notification or consultation and it is feared that intention is to slip first part of development 'under the wire', after which expansion becomes much harder to oppose.</li> <li>• Residents feel the site is one of too much importance to be left to piecemeal speculation.</li> </ul> <p>Residents seek CC support in opposing this Development.            DW proposed we support Residents; LM seconded; <u>nem con</u>. DW to write to Planning Department.</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; width: 40px; margin: auto;">DW</div>
<b>2.</b>	<p><b>Police Report:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sgt Gordon Orr, from Sanquhar, introduced himself, standing in for PC Gary McDowall. He reported a 'quiet month':</li> <li>• 2x Vandalisms, 1x ASB, 1x RT, 2x Civic Govt (these latter related to the use, in our area, of a couple of Quad Bikes, previously stolen in Sanquhar, and by Sanquhar residents). 2 tyres had been slashed in Bennan Court; Police confident they have it detected but suspect not arrested yet.</li> <li>• Police looking for feedback as to how Drumlanrig Country Fayre had gone, from a general conduct and policing point of view. Sara Bain</li> </ul>	

	<p>reported that the whole thing, and particularly the policing, had been a great success.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Police also enquiring if we knew more of the situation re former WHA site. Cllr JD advised that Buccleuch Estates, to whom site is being transferred, have been given 4 months (expires end of October, 2011) to enter, and clear, those parts of the site which are to be cleared. Buccleuch had sought reduction of £100k in price they are paying in view of economic situation. This had been agreed, on condition that October deadline adhered to. Planning and Environmental Committee is meeting on 13/09/2011 and Cllr JD agreed to pursue the matter then and seek assurances from Rhona Wells that the matter is not being lost sight of. Cllr JD also advised that Thornhill is being used as a flagship for D&amp;GC's new procedure re disposal of surplus buildings, designed to prevent situation such as when the former Sanquhar Primary School was replaced but building stood empty for nearly 30 years. DW instanced example of similar situation in Crieff where former school was disposed of and site cleared within a few weeks.</li> <li>• [Davie Sharp arrived at this point]</li> <li>• In connection with the foregoing, Cllr JD advised that the One Stop Shop will almost certainly go, though its services will be transferred to the Library. DW asked if the CC were to be consulted on this. Cllr JD advised that it was part of an exercise which was due to be concluded in 2012, so he would expect we <i>would</i> be consulted before Christmas. Meantime, he also reported that Police and Ambulance Service had done a deal to relocate Ambulance Station to the One Stop Shop but, following representations, and for the reasons outlined in previous Minutes, D&amp;GC had now vetoed this move. D&amp;GC is spending £750k upgrading the Fire Station this year, which should go some way to removing Ambulance Service's objections to the adequacies of the Fire Station as a base for them.</li> <li>• [Police left here]</li> </ul>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; text-align: center;">Cllr JD</div>
<p><b>3.</b></p>	<p><b>Gala Report:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sara Bain and DS presented the accounts from the Gala. These show an overall profit of £1,000, which will be put towards making the next one bigger and better.</li> <li>• Meantime, feedback from residents and from visitors to the Gala from elsewhere had been extremely positive and DW congratulated and thanked the Gala Committee for its excellent work. The Committee in turn thanked the CC for its support and financial backing.</li> <li>• It was noted that the Committee has receipts for various items of expenditure, which could, in turn, be submitted to Solway Heritage or its successors (<i>infra</i>) for reimbursement.</li> <li>• It was noted that Doug Bowie had suffered a minor stroke, but is now back home, and recovering well. The CC wishes him well and a speedy and complete return to health.</li> </ul>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; text-align: center;">Sara Bain</div>
<p><b>4.</b></p>	<p><b>Minutes of the last two Meetings: June and September (latter tacked on to end of Website Launch event)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minutes approved. Proposed: JK, Seconded, RMcG.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>5.</b></p>	<p><b>Matters Arising from June Meeting:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trees: DK has drawn up a list of all the trees, but not yet conducted the survey, which will take a long time to do single-handed. Sara Bain, DS, WL and RMcG all offered to help; gratefully received. Noted that, on previous occasions, job had just been gone ahead</li> </ul>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; text-align: center;">DK, DS, WL, RMcG, Sara Bain</div>

	<p>with but, in present circumstances, contractors wished to be assured that consents had been obtained, to avoid complaints. We could also do with an up to date list of tree owners, anyway. Residents to be reassured that the tree maintenance will not cost them anything this time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Web Site: up and running; looks great. CC page to be used to keep those interested up to date with what we are doing; also to advise them of offers/opportunities that come in (such as the Adopt a Kiosk proposal from BT) that the CC does not have the time, or the personnel to pursue itself).</li> <li>• Hanging Baskets: Very good feedback from residents in general and from businesses who received them. How good they look has depended on how well looked after by business concerned. DK and LM will collect them back in at the end of September and store them in container for next year. Some discussion as to possibility of obtaining 'daleks', such as D&amp;GC have in Glasgow St. DS pointed out these were not as immune to vandalism etc as might appear as council employee who maintains them wins national awards and can devote a lot of time, money and labour to them. DK mentioned we had had a letter from the Royal Horticultural Society, mentioning various opportunities available to communities in connection with Britain in Bloom. No-one on CC really available to take this up, but letter will be scanned on to Website with invitation for any interested parties to contact us.</li> <li>• LEADER Halls event: DK had attended this LEADER-sponsored event in Moffat. Village of Douglas (Lanarkshire), about the size of Sanquhar and an ex-mining community, have taken over, and completely re-developed their Community Hall, a former 19<sup>th</sup> century primary school. State of the Art facility, due to open Christmas, 2011. What was clear was that there had been a substantial core of very committed people who had led, overseen and continued to run this project, which had led to its success. These were not, on the whole, CC people as the level of commitment seemed to preclude involvement in much else. A project of this type obviously a theoretical possibility for Thornhill, since we have legacy at least to start one, but no evidence, so far, of anyone prepared to head up a project of this size.</li> </ul>	<div data-bbox="1331 356 1449 434" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; text-align: center;">DK</div> <div data-bbox="1331 595 1449 674" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; text-align: center;">DK, LM</div>
6.	<p><b>Playparks:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LM had been approached by a local parent, who had been given to understand that D&amp;GC had a £13m underspend, which was to be allocated to the provision of playparks. Applicant wished to apply for play equipment etc for area beside Thornhill Community Centre, but needed CC endorsement of this. In fact, DW's research suggests the funds available are approximately £120,000, not £13m and Cllr JD confirms this. There seems to have been a fair amount of poor and unclear communication about the matter. Cllr JD advises the current position is to remove defective/dangerous equipment, but there is no budget for new, or replacement equipment. Thornhill playparks land and equipment owned by DGHP but maintained by D&amp;GC. There is currently an Open Space Audit going on but each Council Department has been instructed to save 5% this year. There is a proposal to save £160k this year. DW has application forms and LM is to liaise with the parent about completing them. Cllr JD warns that there will be a fair amount of demand for this money, so success</li> </ul>	<div data-bbox="1331 1888 1449 1966" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; text-align: center;">LM</div>

	<p>is not guaranteed. He suggests inviting Fraser Marshall (i/c Parks, Open Areas etc) and ask him to provide a design and a ballpark figure for what is wanted. NB: DGHP also have £5k grants available. DW says he will try to attend and Cllr JD will let Fraser Marshall know that we will be in touch.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• [Sara Bain left at this point]</li> </ul>	DW						
7.	<p><b>Christmas Shopping Night:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DW will arrange a sub-committee meeting in early October to organise this. Xmas Shopping Night usually first Monday in December. Hope to involve local business people, esp Paul O'Keefe, who did such a great job last year. Cllr JS advises Kirkconnel will be having theirs on 25 November, so no conflict there. This is probably the last year that money will be available from D&amp;GC for it. We also have valuable experience from last year.</li> </ul>	DW						
9.	<p><b>Tattoo 2012:</b> DW had chaired a first sub-committee last Wednesday, consisting of himself, Jane Marchbank and Ed Hunter. Tattoo will be either 22 September (preferred) or 29 September, 7-9pm. Date of Next Meeting: 18/10/2011. LM willing to help, but can't make next Meeting.</p>	DW						
10.	<p><b>Planning Applications</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See paper apart.</li> <li>• See also Item 1 re Auction Mart.</li> <li>• Noted also re the Auchencairn Windfarm Application: leaflets have been distributed in the area in the last day or so. Public Meeting dates on leaflet are wrong. There is to be one at Closeburn Community Hall on Wednesday, 21/09/2011, Thornhill Community Centre on Thursday, 22 September, both from 2-7pm. DW will liaise with Mike Steele re our response.</li> </ul>	DW						
11.	<p><b>Treasurer's Report:</b></p> <table> <tr> <td>Legacy Account:</td> <td>£257,397.08</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Investment Account:</td> <td>£ 5,344.73</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Current Account:</td> <td>£ 435.99</td> </tr> </table> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Since June, RMcG has met with Solway Heritage, submitted receipts etc. There is plenty of money, both from this year and from previous years, available and Solway Heritage keep asking for submission of outline spending plans for future years – but they have almost never, yet, reimbursed us for the claims we have submitted. See also previous Minutes re Solway Heritage's own situation. Cllr JD says that Solway Heritage is effectively being wound up in December (though they are still issuing material inviting applications etc., which gives no hint of their imminent demise). D&amp;GC have appointed someone to administer the Windfarm Community Benefit Fund after Solway Heritage cease trading and this should produce an improvement in the service. Meantime, he will contact Solway Heritage and 'rattle their cage'. DW will write also and ask them to send a representative to our next Meeting to explain what's going on. D&amp;GC have also renegotiated the deal with the Windfarm companies: £5k minimum is to be paid for every MWH produced. Half of this will go into a Scholarship scheme for young people anywhere in the Region; the other half split equally (not equitably) between qualifying communities; hence Thornhill (pop. 2500) and Tynron (pop 170) will both get the same. Unsatisfactory, but will be revisited in a few months. DW had lodged objections at the Meeting</li> </ul>	Legacy Account:	£257,397.08	Investment Account:	£ 5,344.73	Current Account:	£ 435.99	DW, Cllr JD
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	<p>held to determine distribution, but he, and others, had been ignored. Suggestion that we might involve the <i>Standard</i>. See how Cllr JD and DW get on meantime.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• [LM, JK and Cllrs JD &amp; JS left here]</li> </ul>	
12.	<p><b>Correspondence:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See paper apart. Also...</li> <li>• Community Councils Seminar: DW had lodged an objection to this being held on a weekday. Response was that this 'would be looked into'.</li> <li>• DW has submitted Application for Administration Grant.</li> <li>• Consultation re Disabled Parking Spaces: there are currently 1 space at the Community Centre, 1 at the One Stop Shop, 8 at WHA, 3 at WHPS and 1 at the Library. Suggested we might recommend 1 outside Chemists's. DW will submit this.</li> <li>• Noted also correspondence intimating sporadic closures of Coup sites, including Gatelawbridge, starting about 19 September, for improvements. Also to be advertised in press etc., but we will scan this and put it on Website.</li> </ul>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; width: fit-content; margin: 2px auto;">DW</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; width: fit-content; margin: 2px auto;">DK</div>
13.	<p><b>AOCB:</b> DW and SJ had been to Meeting with Health Board in July and had made Community's feelings felt with regard to Health Board policy.</p>	
14.	<p><b>Meeting Closed</b> at 9.30</p>	

## **Paper Apart:**

### **Planning Applications:**

- Extension to rear of house, 19 West Morton Street
- 17 Solar Panels to rear of house, 88 Drumlanrig Street
- Mast (70m, temporary), High Auldgirth (representations made, as agreed)
- Extension, front and rear of house, 1 Blackmire Terrace
- Alterations and extension to rear of house, 155 Drumlanrig Street
- 3x 1¼ storey houses & detached garages, Old Auction Mart
- Pending Application for Windfarm, Auchencairn Forest, Closeburn  
(Presentation on Wednesday, 21/09/2011, 2-7pm, Closeburn Village Hall and Thursday, 22/09/2011, Thornhill Community Centre, 2-7pm)

### **Correspondence:**

- D&GC: Community Councils Seminar: Closure of ASCC on 31/03/2012
- Admin Grant Application Form – Deadline 31/03/2012
- Consultation Document re Disabled Parking Spaces
- Buccleuch Woodlands – Forest Design Planning, Drop-In Sessions  
(Carronbridge Hall, Monday, 08/08/2011)
- D&GC: 'Fly-tipping' Grant Scheme – Deadline 26/08/2011 (less than 3 wks' notice)
- Solway Heritage: Clyde Windfarm Benefit (Awaiting hearing from other CCs in the area)
- NCVS June, July & August Newsletters; Roadshow at Easterbrook Hall on Thursday, 22/09/2011, 12-6pm (Notice for Board)
- Loreburn Housing Association: July & August newsletter.
- Colin Bell, Letter of thanks re Hanging Baskets
- Joan Kerr, Note of thanks (and contribution) re Hanging Baskets
- WHA – June, 2011 Newsletter
- Healthcare Scotland – Scottish Health Council Newsletter
- Southern Uplands Partnership – August Newsletter