



Dirleton Community Association
Minutes of
General Meeting (open) held 20th August 2026



General Meeting of the Dirleton Community Association.

Held on: **Thursday 20th August 2026**

Start Time: 1930hrs

Venue: The Castle Inn, Manse Road, Dirleton - The Function Room

Chairperson: Mike Howarth (MH)

Attendees: Mike (MH) & Naomi Howarth, Margaret & Jim Hutchinson, Janice McCleod (JM), Rosamund & Robert Barker, Allan Muir, Valerie Nimmo, Aiden Stokes, Dave Holloway, Steve Wilson, Judith Fisher, Alan & Caroline Clyde, Andevina Soave, Carol & Tom Drysdale, Anne Orr, Carol Tweedie, James Robertson, Simon Patterson-Brown (SP-B), Felicity Dingwall, Derek Carter (DC), Rhona Campbell, Ian Oliver, Fred McClintock (FM), Margaret Chynoweth, Dan Arnold (DA)

		Action Points
DCA-GM-25/26-42.	<u>Apologies:</u> Carl Hamer, Brian Moody, Tracey Lonie, Hazel Wager, Barry Thompson, Christian & John Lindsey	
DCA-GM-25/26-43.	<u>Minutes of Last General Meeting (11th June 2026)</u> <u>Minutes of EGM (11th June 2026)</u> These have both been circulated; MH signs off the minutes as factually correct.	
DCA-GM-25/26-44.	<u>Matters Arising</u> All matters arising are discussed within the meeting	
DCA-GM-25/26-45.	<u>Treasurers Report - SPB</u> SPB reports that significantly better position than last meeting. DCA have received a generous donation of £1200 from the Open Gardens event. £246 has been collected in subscription fees in the last two weeks. There is a significant donation to come from the Concerts in the Castle, once final bill has been received from the castle and payments have been completed.	



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DCA-GM-25/26-46.	<u>Membership - JM</u> JM reports that 46 out of 80 members have renewed for 2026-2027 so far. She will shortly be sending a gentle reminder email as well as a general invitation to the whole village to canvas for new members. JM is still waiting confirmation from Rachael as to whether family are included on new memberships or not for free entry to the castle. Question was raised about how to make a donation. SPB reports that some donors have just increased the membership amount on the payment form. This is fine as he can easily separate the fees from the donation amounts when checking the bank statements. JM reminds the meeting that gift aid will only be claimed on large donations of £100 or more, to justify the time taken on the process to recover the monies from HMRC. MJH states that he is aware there have been some problems with the emails but that they should be working again now. However there may be some test emails sent out so if received, please respond to them.	JM
DCA-GM-25/26-47.	<u>Dirleton Good Neighbours – JM</u> The DGN will recommence the Lunch Hub on the first Wednesday of September (Sept 2nd) Held in the kirk hall, it is a wonderful opportunity to meet up and make friends over a delicious meal of homemade soup, bread and cake, with tea or coffee for £6 per head. Doors open at 12 midday; last orders for soup at 1pm; doors close at 2pm.	
DCA-GM-25/26-48.	<u>Planning Updates - DC</u> Local Place Plan 2028 - 2038 DC reports that the Courier has published a map of the area showing the location of the planning applications for development. Lots of these areas are marked as unpreferred, which we hope will go no further. But many others are marked as "Alternative Sites" and we are unclear as to what this means. DC Committee writes to the council to request definition of alternative sites in this context. There are some areas of Archerfield marked as alternative sites, but elsewhere we have been assured that any development in Archerfield is for tourism not housing.	DC



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	The horse paddocks behind the kirk and all the. Fields between Yellowcraig carpark and Eel burn are marked as alternative. The area around Eel Burn is potentially a flood plain and part of the John Muir Way, so what does this mean? Ann Orr asks the question whether someone could re submit a planning application on an alternative site which had previously been refused? <u>Estate Agent Boards</u> MH invites Allan Muir (AM)to speak . AM explains that he has been in contact with the council regarding the extra signage that seems to proliferate around road junctions without the proper planning consent e.g. the Land For Sale sign at the Drem road junction on the triangle of land there. He finds them unsightly, therefore offensive, and potentially causing a danger by obscuring line of sight for road users at the junction. After investigation into the legality of such signage, AM reports that estate agents have to have planning permission for signage unless it is on the property for sale, but actually the council do not have enough personnel to monitor signage. The one enforcement officer needs public to report these signs one by one, then he can visit and investigate. AM has previously taken offending signs down himself, only to have the estate agents replace them. AM asks the residents of Dirleton for help to continue his campaign and keep reporting such signage. SPB asks whose land these extra signs is actually on; resident states that it used to be the case that if a sign is temporary, it does not need planning permission; DC states that if the landowner gives permission for the sign to be installed then there is no legal problem, regardless of aesthetics. Committee encourage public to register complaint to council if further signs appear to be a problem.	
DCA-GM-25/26-49.	<u>Fete & Games Update 2026 – FM</u> Fete & Games took place on Sat 20th June 2026, and was enjoyed by all who attended. The F & G Committee will be meeting in the next month to decide how to distribute donations to local charities and good causes. FM reminds the meeting that the F& G Committee is also responsible for the village Christmas tree and the	



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	fixed lights on three trees on the green. There are approx.. 2K LED lights on each tree. These lights are held in place by special cable ties and both lights and fixings are subject to squirrel damage and UV light degradation. Each set is expected to last approx. 5years before replacement. The current sets of lights have been in situ for six years so will definitely need replacing after this Christmas. The cost of replacement and installation last time was £10K for the three trees. F&G Committee also undertake the upkeep of the old phonebox library, which is a well used local facility. FM made a temporary repair to the door frsme last year but the frame now needs a full replacement. SPB suggests that the F&G keep their funds from this year in reserve so they are available to replace the lights as necessary; FM to put this to the F&G committee.	FM
DCA-GM-25/26-50.	<u>Project Update - Heritage Lighting – DC</u> DC reports that there are still some issues to sort out. There are three houses not yet connected to the new cabling, but this should be completed in the next two weeks. The two lamps outside the Castle Inn will be replaced with Heritage lamps as Scottish power have now put in the new power cable. DC is to push for two new lamps outside the old manse as well as the reconnection of the third street lamp. Email from Glen Kane of ELC: “We met with Scottish Power yesterday, they have some issues to still complete at the extremities of the village and are working on it at the moment. They have advised that there is possibly two weeks further work to finalise the project but they have been hampered by the availability of road opening permits. From our point of view we will change the fittings on the hotel as they are now on the new supply cable and look at refurbishing the unit in front of the old manse. We have highlighted the Christmas tree supply to Scottish Power and between us we should be able to come up with a resolution.”	



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DCA-GM-25/26-51.	<u>Project Update - Road Safety Works – DC</u> DC reports that the spoke to the councillor (Jeremy) and ELC Road Safety Works about the sight lines on the verges at the junctions. These have now been trimmed and should be better although residents report that it is still difficult (and dangerous) to turn out of the Station Road junction and the Castle Hill junction in particular, as the road curves back away towards North Berwick. DC states that although the verges have now been cut back by the statutory amount, this should be much deeper dependant on the curvature of the road. DC to check measurements. Jim asks who is responsible for cutting the verges; anecdotally it has been up to the farmers; DC states that it is up to the council. The remedial work on the verges next to the castle was to be rotavated and reseeded; as the verge has simply been cut back to tidy up for now, the planting of any bulbs will have to be postponed until work completed. Margaret Chynoweth has suggested that the junction signage be regraded to a stop sign, and the road white lines be repainted, to try to improve road safety. DA points out that the temporary reduction in speed limit to 30mph for the duration of the golf tournament made navigating the junctions much safer, and that measures to slow the speed of traffic on the bypass near the junctions would be beneficial. The onus is on drivers to stop at the junction as it really is difficult to turn out.	DC
DCA-GM-25/26-52.	<u>Post Box (Maxwell Road) – JM</u> JM reports that she has written to the Postal Services about the re-siting of the postbox from Maxwell Road, but has yet to have a reply. The matter is ongoing and will be pursued to conclusion. Tom Drysdale asks if the shrubbery obscuring the Maxwell Road sign can be cut back? DC asks if anyone knows whose responsibility this is, and whether this is privately owned.	JM DC
DCA-GM-25/26-53.	<u>Project Update – Old Village Hall – DC</u> DC reports that the CIF have asked applicants to wait until the 28th August for results. He states that we will	



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	have a £22K shortfall in funds even if we get the full amount applied for. Project moitoring is ongoing. DA reports that he will ask for a donation from the school at their next meeting to the community storage fund.	DC, MH DA
DCA-GM-25/26-54.	<u>A.O.B.</u> Former Workshops site:- The closed off road area by these properties could be used as visitor parking and the edge of the path is faced with landscape materials which are crumbling. DC reports that Jeremy Findlay has been contacted regarding remedial works to replace the edging with suitable materials whilst the surface repair work is being carried out on Station Road next to Castlemains Gardens. New Telegraph Pole at Exchange:- Carol Tweedie reports that this pole has a sign on it which says to write to certain address if need to compain about it. She understands that it is to mount some kind of broadband equipment but can find nothing on the council website referring to it, yet the workers claim it has full permission. It was reported that there is a similar pole at the edge of Ruthven Road. DC states that he can enquire at the Planning Department. MH and DC to investigate exactly what the poles are for, but it would appear that they are something to do with increasing broadband capacity in the village. Dirleton Primary School:- Brian Moody reports that the Living History Project will be restarting and encourages villagers to participate. Village Noticeboard:- Valerie Nimmo asks who keeps the keys for the village noticeboard as it is getting out of date. JM replies that she takes responsibility and will sort out. Village Phonebox Library:- Valerie also raises issue of the lhe library phonebox; it is in need of a refresh as it is getting rather shabby. DC notes that Keith Cornwell has a supply of phonebox red paint, but is not available to do the actual painting. Valerie suggests waiting until repairs completed then repainting the box.	DC, MH JM FM



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	Village Gardener:- DC wonders if there is a need for more contract gardeners in the village; could we create a need to employ someone? MH to email around community to gauge interest. Phone Mast Update:- Meeting raised the question of what is current status regarding mobile phone mast for village. Ian Oliver reminded everyone about the loss of traditional phone lines and the need to have a reliable mobile signal. SPB reports that he is monitoring a local solution in Portobello and waiting for information on the project. The phone companies are still being lobbied for provision and a suitable site has been identified (on the brow of Castle Hill) Thanks were given to DA for the Eclipse on the Green event and to SPB and DA for the Concerts in the Castle. Both events were extremely well received and village is looking forward to further concerts. MH states that the committee are aware that not all villagers are happy with using email/technology and that this can cause a hiccup in communications circulating. It has been suggested that we use email buddies, so if you know of someone who may be interested in joining in with the village activities but is not comfortable with technology then you could just keep them informed or maybe print off notices etc. The Committee is trying not to resort to walksort, which would cost £400 for one A5 leaflet, but use local intelligence to spread the word.	MH SPB, MH
DCA-GM-25/26-55.	The next public meeting will be held on Thursday 20th August 2026 at 1930HRS in the Castle Inn, Dirleton, directly followed by the Annual General Meeting when we will be electing new Trustees and re-electing/confirming existing Trustees. All Welcome to attend; only full (ordinary) members of the DCA will be eligible to vote on any matters. Details to follow nearer the date of meetings.	



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Signed as an accurate representation of the meeting

Print Name Dated

Notes:

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