



ELECTRICITY SUPPLY IMPROVEMENTS

Representatives from Innerleithen, Clovenfords and Walkerburn Community Councils met recently with the Head of Networks Improvement and Design and the Senior Project Engineer from Scottish Power Energy Networks (SPEN) to discuss progress on the upgrading work planned for the local energy network which will cost in the region of £11m.

It is all good news for Walkerburn! The contract for the work to take our electricity supply on the north side of the river underground should be set in June this year with work, hopefully, starting this Autumn. If all goes well, the work may be completed towards the end of 2025 but certainly by early 2026.

There will be disruption to traffic on the A72, possibly with 3 sets of traffic lights between Innerleithen and the Nest roundabout for up to 50 weeks whilst the cable is taken underground. However, by the end of the project we should have a stable and weather-proof electricity supply on the north side of the river. South of the river, the supply will remain above ground on poles, but it should be better than at present because of new equipment being installed in Peebles and Innerleithen which will help speed up repairs when there are weather problems.

The new cable will be routed under the river at the Yair Bridge and thence down the south side of the river to the Sub Station on the road to Selkirk.

The current sub-station beside the bridge at Walkerburn will be redundant and a new sub-station will be built beside Walkerburn Public Hall. Given that we have been concerned at the possibility of the present sub-station flooding, this is particularly welcome news.

Once the contractor is known, SPEN hope to arrange meetings which are open to the public so that people

get an opportunity to pose any questions they have.

IMPROVING THE CANCER JOURNEY SERVICE CONSULTATION

The Health and Social Care Partnership has launched a consultation to gather the views of people with a lived experience of cancer as well as their families and carers.

They Are looking for feedback to support the development of a Macmillan Improving the Cancer Journey (ICJ) service for the Borders. This will offer people an appointment with an ICJ Worker to complete a holistic assessment to discuss 'what matters to you' in their cancer journey. The aim is to help those affected by cancer to access appropriate sources of support for all their non-clinical needs – physical, practical, emotional, family or spiritual. It will build on services already provided through NHS Borders, such as a holistic approach to care planning through Single Point of Contact.

Have your say

* * * * *

The survey is open until Sunday 31st March 2024.

It can accessed online at:

www.smartsurvey.co.uk

Information is also available at:

<https://ow.ly/ci3350Qyc1R>

If you have any queries, please email:

ICJ@scotborders.gov.uk

WALKERBURN PUBLIC HALL TRUST

Walkerburn Public Hall Trustees and Management Committee would like to thank everyone who has already shown interest in supporting the Hall by becoming a Member or Trustee of the new SCIO.

Anyone else who wishes to become an ordinary Member or Trustee of the new SCIO can obtain an application form on request by contacting: walkerburnpublichall@gmail.com

WALKERBURN BOWLING & PETANQUE CLUB A.G.M.

The A.G.M. will be held in the clubhouse at 2.00pm on Sunday 24th March.

All members and residents of Walkerburn will be warmly welcomed.

This is an important meeting to elect a new committee and to make plans for the summer months. A number of Bowls and Petanque tournaments have been arranged and both the Bowlers and the Petanquers will be playing league matches. Please do your best to attend. Tea, coffee and biscuits will be available.

For more details, please contact George Thornton on 01896 870251 or email geoles2@tiscali.co.uk

Home Help With Jodie

DO YOU NEED HELP WITH SHOPPING, DROPPING AND COLLECTING YOUR PRESCRIPTIONS, CLEANING, RESPITE CARE? CALL US OR EMAIL US ON 07407 301 121 Jthomson15@hotmail.co.uk

WHAT'S ON IN THE HALL: March/April

Anyone interested in booking the hall, please contact walkerburnpublichall@gmail.com

Date	Event	Time
Mondays	Borders Buddies ("Outside the Box" initiative) 18/3 New Age Kurling Mindful Yoga For more info, please tel. Sue Cotterill on 07983 167075 or email reverendsusancotterill@gmail.com	10.00-12.00 18.00-21.00
Tuesdays (weekly)	Youth Club (except for last Tuesday every month) 19/3, Easter Break 2/4 and 9/4), 16/4 and 23/4	1800-2000
Wednesdays	Walkerburn and District Community Council Meeting – 20/3, 27/4	19
Thursdays	Cyrenians Community Pantry and Cook Club – No Cook Club on 28/3 and 11/4, only the Pantry on these dates. Citizens Advice Bureau in Ante Room fortnightly 21/3, 4/4, 18/4	1530–1730 15.30-17.30
Saturdays	Borders Arts Collective Workshops (limited spaces available) 6/4 and 20/4. For more info visit https://bordersartscollective.co.uk	
Sundays	ITW Church Service 17/3 Table Tennis	14.00-15.00 18.00-21.00

PEEBLES & DISTRICT CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

Appointments available at Walkerburn Public Hall, Thursdays from 3.30pm to 5.30pm.
Call: 01721-721 722 for an appointment.

HOMELESS CHARITY IN SCOTLAND/CYRENIANS

Weekly: Every Thursday 3.30 pm till 5.30 pm in the Walkerburn Public Hall.
You can see the latest updates regarding our pantry schedules on our *Facebook*, *Twitter* and *Instagram*.
For more info, visit: <https://cyrenians.scot> Please contact us at 0131 554 3900

USEFUL CONTACT DETAILS

Borders Storm Emergency Helpline 01835 826549	Pollution Report Line 0800-807060
SBC 0300-1001800 or 01896-752111 for out of hours emergency help	Electricity SPNetworks 0800 0929290 In Instances of Power Cuts Call 105
NHS Covid status 'phone: 0808- 1968585 (10.00am to 6.00pm)	Scottish Water 0800-0778778 www.scottishwater.co.uk
Gas 0800 111999	St Ronans Health Centre 01896 830203
NHS 24 Tel 111 or 0845-242424 www.nhs24.com	Samaritans phone or text 116123 www.samaritans.org.uk
Scottish Borders Council 0300-1001800 www.sbalert.co.uk	Floodline 0845-9881188 www.sepa.org.uk/flooding
Police Non-Emergency 101 Emergency 999	MAK Locksmith (24hour Service) 07926 559296

Community Action Policing Team <https://scotborders.citizenspace.com/customer-communities>.
email: saferrcommunities@scotborders.gov.uk *Please let your Community Council know about specific problems so that the Action Team can be informed*



**HOME
BASICS**

furnishing people's futures

Home Basics - your local furniture reuse charity.

We collect good quality furniture and working electrical white goods
free of charge, or you can deliver to our depot.

Open to all Monday-Friday 10-4, Saturday 11-2.

Unit 7, Tweeddale Mills East, Walkerburn

01896 870455 www.homebasics.org.uk

Company Ltd by Guarantee 234746 : Registered Scottish Charity SC 033827



Borders Boilers

Gas & Oil Heating Engineers

Installation, Service & Repair

David: 01896 870735 or 07904119264



TM Joinery

A family run joinery business in the local walkerburn area with 10+ years experience, fully insured and reasonably priced.

Want a quote today?

Call 07878452129

WALKERBURN & DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL

DRAFT Minutes of Meeting held in Walkerburn Public Hall on Wednesday 21st February 2024

Present: Mr P Waller (Chairman), Mrs L Thornton (Secretary), Ms M Daykin, Mrs S Horsburgh, Mr C Kerr, Ms G Jones, Ms S Sedgwick, Mr G Thornton. Councillor Douglas, Councillor Pirone.

Apologies and Notices.

Apologies: Mr M Wilcox, Ms G Jones, Mrs P Purves (Co-opted), Councillor Pirone.

Notices: i. Peebles Road Resurfacing: SPEN electricity supply upgrading works for the local Tweed Valley area are expected to be completed in the Peebles Road section by August. As this will necessitate digging up part of Peebles Road to lay the underground cables, the planned SBC work for the resurfacing of Peebles Road has been put back until then. The planned 'dragon's teeth' will be installed after the resurfacing is complete.

Members agreed that this was a satisfactory outcome to the necessary resurfacing and the electricity supply problems.

Open Questions.

i. In answer to a question from a resident, it was clearly stated that Burning Issues only publishes Community Council draft Minutes and various other articles of local interest exactly in the wording supplied by contributors and that they are not changed or edited to alter the meaning.

ii. A resident asked if there was any restriction on the hours when heavily laden log lorries were allowed to use local roads. Recently, it has been noticeable that they travel through Genbenna and Walkerburn more frequently and at more extended hours of the day. They have disturbed residents overnight and as early in the morning as 5.00 am. Also, they pass by the school during school hours, including times when pupils and parents are going to and from the school.

They are increasingly causing problems to the drains and road surface in Caberston Road and the bridge over the Tweed.

Councillors noted that this has been a problem for some while. Currently, there is no restriction on the hours they can work. However, it was hoped that a voluntary solution could be found and a joint committee was set up a couple of years ago by Scottish Borders and Dumfries and Galloway to find a solution to this matter. Unfortunately, there seems to have been very little progress and it was suggested that WDCC Secretary should write to the Chief Executive of SBC to ask why the committee was not meeting.

iii. A resident also commented on the problems of pavement parking and speeding along the length of Peebles Road. Also, difficulties in crossing the A72 at the foot of the 'ladder'.

Regarding pavement parking, it was mentioned that consultation is still taking place in the Borders Region to establish what exemptions might be allowed. Members were of the opinion that Peebles Road was one of the streets in Walkerburn that should be considered as it has a traffic calming effect.

iv. It was suggested that traffic could be slowed by building out sections of pavement on the south side of Peebles Road (similar to what's been done along a stretch of the A72 on the western side of Galashiels). The bus stop by 40 Peebles Road could be moved eastwards to allow this to happen.

4. Police Business.

The monthly Tweeddale East Area Police Report had been distributed to members. There was one incident reported in respect of Walkerburn. A male has been reported to the Procurator Fiscal after committing various Road Traffic offences in Walkerburn.

The Community Action Team (CAT) is active in the Tweeddale area. Parking issues in Peebles are being addressed. If needed, the CAT can also be directed to other areas locally.

Residents are asked to call '101' whenever possible to report incidents, especially concerning anti-social behaviour.

January Minutes. *Proposed:* Mrs S Horsburgh. *Seconded:* Ms M Daykin

Matters Arising.

i. Leaf Problem in Park Avenue: SBC were contacted and made aware of complaints about a problem with leaves in Park Avenue. Since being asked for the leaves to be swept up and removed, SBC acted promptly to resolve this issue.

ii. Smoke from Chimney in Old Mill complex: Members again discussed complaints about the occasional discharge of acrid smoke from a chimney somewhere in the buildings between Galashiels Road and Caberston Road. As it is not certain just where this chimney is located, enquiries to identify the site have continued and, if possible, to provide some photographic evidence. Councillors will then be asked to contact the relevant authorities at SBC so that it can be investigated and dealt with appropriately.

On the subject of smoke issues, it was suggested by members that an item be put in Burning Issues giving guidance about what can and cannot be burned in garden and household fires.

iii. Fire Damaged Property in Tweedholm Avenue: SBHA have been made aware of concerns about the fire-damaged upper flat in Tweedholm Avenue that has been lying empty for almost two years. They were asked to remedy the situation as soon as possible. And have now started to repair the damage to this and to neighbouring properties.

iv. Water Switch-off problems in village: Scottish Water have been contacted about recent instances of the water supply to some local properties being switched off without residents getting any prior notice. They have apologized and will try to give more prior warning in future, especially to vulnerable people.

v. Christmas Trees: Following discussions about whether Walkerburn qualifies for the supply of a Christmas tree from SBC, it emerged that the population of Walkerburn & District's is deemed too small to qualify.

vi. Drinking Water tap for public use: After enquiries were made regarding getting a drinking-water tap installed in the village, there seems to be little possibility of this happening. There are over 1100 similar enquiries currently being dealt with throughout Scotland. However, Scottish Water will keep a record of the Walkerburn request.

vii. Caberston Road Drains problems: The drains in Caberston Road are badly damaged, and are deteriorating further as a result of a big increase of use by heavy log lorries. SBC have been made aware of the problems and acknowledged that extensive work will be necessary to solve the problem. Because of the expense entailed, no time limit has been set for repairs. Councillors will continue to pursue this matter.

viii. Proposed Telephone Kiosk removal: Efforts to keep the kiosk will continue, but it is becoming increasingly likely that the equipment will be removed. The empty kiosk could then be adopted by residents, if they so wish. However, there remains a need to ascertain who owns the land on which it stands.

Members also voiced concerns about a potential risk to the village if all emergency communications are removed. The mobile 'phone reception in the village is very poor or non-existent in some parts. With the coming implementation of Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) technology to replace the current analog landlines with a broadband Internet connection in 2025 a number of residents will not have an internet connection and may struggle to use the replacement technology that will be part of the VOIP switch-over.

ix. Jubilee Road pavement pothole: The pothole on Jubilee Road pavement has been filled in since this problem was mentioned at the January meeting. Members thanked SBC. for their prompt response.

Correspondence.

The correspondence list for 17th January to 21st February 2024 had been circulated to members.

Secretary mentioned three items in particular:

i. She confirmed that Mr Thornton will attend the Stakeholders' meeting on 29th February at SBC headquarters from 5.00 pm until 6.00pm.

ii. Details the notice of an 'Improving Cancer Journey Service' consultation have been posted on village notice boards.

iii. A letter was received from Rose Hogg, SBC Dog Education Officer, giving advice about how a previously raised problem with a barking dog should be reported. However, the incident to which it referred has been resolved, but this information will be kept on file in the event that it may be necessary to deal with a similar offence at some time in the future.

Planning.

There was one new Planning Applications in the past month.:

Members were asked to submit any comments that might be raised in respect of an application by the Walkerburn Community Development Trust to install three lighting columns to illuminate the proposed pump track on land south of Tweedholm Avenue East.

It was pointed out that these would be state-of-the- art lights. They would be downward pointing and will incorporate automatic switches to turn-off power when the facility is not being used. Also, the lights will not operate after 8pm. Similar lights are being used successfully at the Peebles skate park.

Members did not raise any objections.

Scawd Law Wind Farm Application Update.

i. Chairman referred to a very comprehensive consultation report by S.B.C. Landscape Architect Siobhan McDermott relating to the Scawd Law proposed development. The report concludes with a strong objection to this development.

Members agreed that this was a thorough and balanced assessment of the many factors concerning this planning application.

ii. Chairman also informed members that he had written to Innerleithen Community Council regarding their decision not to support objections to Scawd Law. He also pointed out that Walkerburn Community Council did not have any valid objections to proposed windfarm developments at Cloich, Bowbeat and Leithen Water which are of most concern to Innerleithen as they will not affect Walkerburn.

Reports by Members.

- i. Budget Survey Query: Concern was raised about the complex and confusing nature of the recent SBC Budget Survey that residents were encouraged to complete and submit. There seemed to be too many choices on which to comment and the forms themselves were of a poor quality.
- ii. Digger in Alexandra Park: It was pointed out that the mechanical digger in Alexandra Park was there to assist Scottish Water with the on-going sewer clean-up and repairs programme between Innerleithen and Walkerburn. Over 8 tons of sediment have already been removed from pipes.
- iii. Parking Across Drop Kerbs: There is a problem with some residents parking their vehicle across drop kerbs in Walkerburn. This is causing particular problems for disabled people, especially those who cannot walk unassisted and have to use a mobility scooter. The drop kerb near the telephone exchange in Tweedholm Avenue is becoming increasingly prone to this illegal parking and residents are asked to report any similar infringements to Police by dialling '101'.
- iv. Unattended Water Works: Holes have been dug in the roadway on Park Avenue and Jubilee Road. These were dug to enable Scottish Water to carry out repairs. However, they have been left unattended for some while and are a traffic hazard and an inconvenience to traffic, especially for emergency vehicles. Scottish Water have received this complaint, together with photographs of the works. Councillors acknowledged that this is a common problem and advised that the person to contact for help is John Henderson at SBC. He deals with these problems and has the authority to order repairs to be carried out without delay.
- v. Primary School Garden: The Primary School garden shed and the small greenhouse are being updated and built up. There has been excellent local support, and funding applications have been made to the Rotary Club, Glenmorangie, the HBMI Club and the Walkerburn Community Development Trust.
- vi. Flood Problems: Members received an update on what is being done to deal with flooding problems along the River Tweed. At a recent meeting of the Flood Advisory sub-group, the Fire Scotland 'Swift-Water' team gave a talk. Also, local training is being planned for the future. The need for flood gates on all 'at-risk' bridges is being pursued. In an extreme weather event, water flowing over the spillway at reservoirs on the Upper Tweed needs to be digitally recorded so that the SBC bunker can alert affected communities quickly. The Flood Advisory sub group will liaise with Scottish Water with a view to getting these installed. A further meeting with SEPA has been planned and will include a discussion on ways to ensure better communication with them.
- vii. Borderland Paths Update: Discussions are planned in respect of an extension of the multi-use pathway to link up Walkerburn with Clovenfords. At present, the plans are long-term and will also be influenced by the 'Destination Tweed' project. Councillor Tatler pointed out that a survey about five different routes in the Borders Region has been sent out. This also includes liaising with 'the national Sustrans' body to get agreement on projects.
- viii. Spring 'Litter Pick' in Village: There has not been a litter-pick in the village for a couple of years and it was agreed that one should be held this Spring. We will discuss this again during our next meeting.
- x. Pensioners' Association Memorial Bench in Alexandra Park: The Pensioners' Association would like to place a bench in Alexandra Park in memory of Mollie McIntosh. They will pay for the bench, but would like the Council to instal it. They wanted to know if the Council would pay for the installation. If not, the Pensioners would pay. Councillor Tatler suggested the names of two SBC officers who should be contacted about installing a bench in the park.
- xi. Residents are still hoping to get some sort of bus shelter erected on the north side of Galashiels Road to the east of Hall Street. When this was previously mentioned at a WDCC meeting, there were doubts that it would be permitted because of the narrowness of the footpath. However, efforts will be made to see if this can now be achieved.
- xii. Bridge across Bold Burn: A new footbridge has been planned as a replacement for the damaged structure where the old railway line crosses the Bold Burn and member wanted an update on when that would be. This will be part of the Destination Tweed initiative and members were told that a survey has been made. However, it seems that this crossing will need a more robust and longer structure than originally envisaged. This will, inevitably result in some delay. Enquiries will be made to see if this bridge project could be brought forward.

Reports by SBC Councillors.

a.) Councillor Tatler mentioned three issues:

- i. He mentioned that work on the village Pump Track project was scheduled to start in April.
- ii. He also said that the Walkerburn Community Development Trust was looking at the feasibility of purchasing the George Hotel.
- iii. He was pleased to say that plans for improving the Chambers Institute were progressing and emphasized that this is a project for the benefit of all of Tweeddale, not just for Peebles. The first phase project in respect of a better entrance has been discussed. Also, a further phase to improve the museum is progressing. He will forward a 'Vision Statement' in the near future.

b.) Councillor Douglas mentioned two issues: He spoke about the current SBC Budget meeting and noted that there will be a freeze on Council Tax rates.

- i) There will be a further meeting to determine spending plans going forward in future years. Also, Water Tax is set to rise by 8%, in line with Scottish Water apportionment. This levy is collected by SBC.
- ii) He pointed out that there was still some money available from the 'Neighbourhood Support Fund', and local groups should apply for grants as soon as possible.

Any Other Business.

Scottish Power Energy Networks have arranged a meeting to update representatives of local community councils about progress with the planned underground cabling of the main power supply to Walkerburn and Innerleithen. A report will be available at the March community council meeting.

Date of Next Meeting.

Wednesday 20th March 2024 at 7.00pm.

Members of the Public are welcome to attend and to raise any issues they want to discuss with Councillors or the Community Council.

MARCH WILDSIDE

It's the beginning of March and as I sit watching TV with Edinburgh Rugby taking on Ospreys, I wonder when 'our' real ospreys will return.



Their nesting season is May to September. They mate for life and return to the same nest site each year, adding new material to the old nest. They typically lay three eggs and the female incubates the eggs from the laying of the first one. The youngsters take about 65 days to fledge and the

male typically catches fish and brings back to the nest for the female to feed the young. We're lucky enough in Walkerburn to occasionally see ospreys fishing on the Tweed particularly down near the East end of the village. It all depends on the weather, but generally ospreys arrive in the UK in late March to early April, so keep a look out towards the end of this month. They tend to head south again to Africa around September. The journey can take 4-6 weeks; quite a journey for the young birds when you think of it.

As I mentioned last month, this is coming up to the breeding season for all our resident birds too, so please make sure your nest boxes are clean to begin the season. We need to remove an old wasp nest from one of our boxes, but we'll get it done. It's been far too cold to do much in the garden and I've quite a few plants to tidy up. I've some primroses to plant out but the ground is very cold and there is still a forecast for snow. I just

need a few mild days for them to settle and they'll cope. We have quite a few daffs and tulips coming, plus crocuses and hellebores so there will be nectar for the first insects, when they come. It will be lovely to have some colour in the garden anyway and I can't wait for green trees. Some of our shrubs have wee green shoots and leaf buds so it's just a matter of time.

It's been lovely to hear and see the oystercatchers back here. They often fly over our garden and have such a distinctive call. Just last week, a pair flew over calling loudly and in the opposite direction flew the Little Egret. It was great to have such a view of this lovely white bird. It is a smaller member of the heron family, white with a black bill, black legs and yellow feet and is quite uncommon in Scotland so we're very lucky to have one in the village. They spend their summer months in Africa or southern Europe. Like our other winter visitors, it will soon be leaving our shores and we'll be welcoming summer visitors like swallows and cuckoos.

March is named after Mars, the Roman God of war and is the first month of Spring. It sees the Spring Equinox on the 21st then on the 31st, it is not only Easter Sunday but the return of British Summer Time as we put our clocks forward. Sunday 10th is Mothering Sunday, so March is going to be a very busy month.

And Edinburgh Rugby won!

Walkerburn Post Office & Store

Local Shop and Post Office Shop for all your daily essentials including wines & spirits, tobacco, milk & bread, crisps & snacks, confectionery, groceries, and non-food essentials. We get fresh rolls and pies delivered daily from the bakery in Innerleithen, readymade sandwiches and cakes delivered 3 times a week.

Amazon parcels - Banking/Cheque Deposits - Travel Money Orders all can be delivered to PO.

Tel:01896870205

Shop Opening Hours: Mon-Saturday 7am - 8pm & Sun 10am - 8pm

Post Office Hours: Monday to Friday 8am - 5.30pm, Saturday 9am - 5pm & Sunday 10am - 5pm

MD MOWERS

"Garden Tools and Machinery Service and Repair"

A reliable and experienced Walkerburn based business

Mob: 07517 154 868

Email: mjdee1982@gmail.com



Mike Little Plumber



Phone: 01896 870 655 or 07927 344 184