



# BURNing Issues



[www.walkerburn.com](http://www.walkerburn.com)

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## WALKERBURN AND DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL ELECTIONS 2025

**Nominations are sought from anyone over the age of 16 who is a registered voter in Walkerburn and District for the 2025 Community Council Elections.**

Nomination forms are available on [www.walkerburn.com](http://www.walkerburn.com) from the secretary at [walkerburncouncilsecretary@gmail.com](mailto:walkerburncouncilsecretary@gmail.com) or from any member of the Community Council. Forms must be lodged with the Returning Officer by midday Monday 26th May 2025. If there are more nominations than vacancies an election will be held on Friday June 2025. The Community Council acts as a link between the community and public bodies such as the Council and the Scottish Government. It is used as a sounding board on a wide range of issues.

Meetings, open to the public, are held on the third Wednesday of each month at 7.00pm in Walkerburn

Public Hall.

Members must be willing to take decisions in the long-term community interest. They must listen to the views of residents but must think about issues, carry out some basic research if necessary, and make their own individual judgement. Decisions by the Community Council must be taken in the long-term community interest, without prejudice, and members agree to abide by a code of conduct.

\* \* \* \* \*

The Community Council is not 'Political'. Members may declare a political preference, but it is practical help for our community that is the focus of our work.

## POLICE ADVICE TO DOG OWNERS

***P.S. Crawford Laing has included some advice to Dog Owners and Handlers in his monthly Police Report to Community Councils. In it he says:***

"At this time of year, I feel it is worth putting out a reminder of some of these responsibilities. Many of us in the Borders are dog owners and we all need to be mindful that dog behaviour is our responsibility as owners. Dogs who may normally be well behaved can sometimes give in to their natural instinct to chase. Worrying, chasing or attacking Livestock can bring hefty fines, and/or imprisonment in some cases. It is best to avoid the risk by ensuring that your dog is kept on a lead when near to livestock.

Please remember to pick up and dispose of dog waste responsibly.

When walking through farmland please be respectful and avoid crop fields, close gates behind you and leave no trace that you were there.

**Please also keep yourself safe, cows, especially those with calves, are unpredictable and are best avoided."**

## WALKERBURN COFFEE CLUB

**24th April, 8th and 22nd May – Thursday, every fortnight, 10am to 12pm**

Please come along and support this very worthwhile asset to our community and bring a friend or family if you wish. Sponsored by Citizens Advice Bureau and run by volunteers, the Coffee Club is a community café offering FREE hot drinks and cakes and you can enjoy meeting others in a warm and friendly environment. The Coffee Club is for everyone in the community, whether you'd like advice or just a cuppa! **Contacts: Citizens**

**Advice Bureau: Tel 01721 721722.**

***We're also on facebook - 'The Coffee Clubs' - follow our page for the latest information!***

## 'WALK IT' WALKERBURN

**Gentle Walks Every Monday 10am, Alexandra Park (by the playpark)**

Our small group have continued our walks and been lucky with the weather most days. It's been great to be out and looking at the lovely landscape in different lights and seasons. Cheers us up every week! We'd be delighted if you want to join us. Please give it a shot!

'Walk It' is the 'Paths for All' project in the Scottish Borders, supported by Scottish Borders Council and NHS Borders. The aim is to help people become more physically active through providing low level and friendly led walks. We identify local routes suitable for most abilities. 'Walk It' walks are safe, social, low level, led and free. Walks are led by a first aid trained 'Walk It' Leader and are dementia friendly. You can find out more online by searching Scottish Borders Council 'Walk It'.

***Alice Pringle - Mobile or text 07974 782016***



**WALKERBURN AND DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL**  
**DRAFT MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 19<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2025**

**Present:** Mr Kerr (Chairman), Ms Daykin, Mr Leslie, Ms Sedgwick, Mrs Thornton, Mr Thornton, Mr Waller, Mr Wilcox, Mrs Purves (Secretary), Cllr Douglas, Cllr Tatler.

**Apologies and Notices.** Apologies had been received from Cllr Pirone, Mrs Horsburgh, and Ms Jones. No notices. The secretary noted that Roads were now sending notifications of road events all over the Borders, but Mr Wilcox pointed out that some local closures were not being notified – more work to be done.

**Police Business:** PC Beaumont was in attendance and there was a lively exchange of views on current issues such as speeding traffic, particularly forestry HGV. Members were sympathetic to the problems being faced by local Police Officers but the problems being faced by residents also had to be considered: every attempt to engage with forestry HGV leaves us with a minority of firms and drivers still ignoring common sense. The Chairman stated that we would continue to press for action rather than words from all agencies involved. PMK as a company were co-operating in attempts to slow down their own and sub-contractors' drivers but there was little action evident as yet of FLS being pro-active in controlling their contractors. Residents should be encouraged to report the registration numbers and any other details gathered, e.g. a company name or type of vehicle, to the Police when they spot excessive speed or dangerous driving. All complaints are treated confidentially. Anything involving forestry lorries should also be reported to the WDCC secretary who will pass it on to the Timber Transport Officer at SBC. PC Beaumont went on to give a short report on the ongoing discussions around the future direction of community policing after the demise of the CAT Teams, and he also reported that 'Pop up Bob' would be available to visit regularly in the coming months. Thanks were expressed to PC Beaumont for coming in person to the meeting and being so helpful and frank during the discussion.

**February Minutes and Matters Arising:**

*Minutes:* Mr Waller proposed approval of the February minutes, seconded by Ms Sedgwick. The Minutes were passed unanimously.

*Matters Arising:*

a.) 50 mph Trial. Cllr Douglas reported no further action. Doubts were expressed that there would be any action before the start date. No further action possible at this stage.

b.) Potholes and Mess along Caberston Road. The situation has not changed. SBC did not include road cleaning in its contract with SPEN who did not include it in their contract with PMK. A lesson, we hope, has been learnt by SBC. In recent dry weather the dust issue for anyone living near the road has been horrendous. Councillors are asked to pursue the issues at SBC and WDCC will continue to badger the contractors. We need the road cleaned and we urgently need some method to stop HGV cutting into the green because drivers are in a hurry and squeeze past each other. WDCC has regularly asked that some form of posts/kerbing along the edge of the green be provided and when the road/drains are repaired this must be done.

c.) Rugby Club Rubbish etc at the Playing Field. No further action seems to have been taken by the Rugby Club. WDCC may have to offer to clear up the area, but we hope that there will be some action by the Rugby Club soon. The Secretary noted that she had received a note from an individual who seemed unsure about the location of the Playing Field, so, for clarification in case anyone else is confused, the Playing Field is opposite the Station Cottage on the south side of the bridge. As was pointed out last month, the field was part of a series of 'playing fields' which included a cricket pitch on the present field, with hockey and football fields beyond. Rugby Goal posts were erected in the field by SBC to make it a useful practice pitch at a time when the Rugby Club regularly played games on the Rugby Pitch and wanted extra practice space. Today, there appears to be more interest in football, and moveable football goal posts have been provided by a local club.

d.) Bad Behaviour at Pump Track. Concerns about bad behaviour at the pump track had been raised and parents/carers had been approached with some success.

e.) Community Council Visits to New Peebles High School. Cllr Douglas will bring this up when the next round of visits is planned.

**Correspondence.** List circulated to members. The following points were noted:

Cross Border Connection Emails. (To be discussed at Item 7c but Secretary is inundated with correspondence and sends out actual 'action' emails only.)

**Hall Coffee Morning Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> March:** It was agreed that we may advertise WDCC elections and other issues. Secretary will put together a display, but we need to man the stand from 10am to Noon and she asked members to contact her if they could manage to take a stint. Mrs Thornton, Mr Wilcox, Ms Sedgwick all indicated that they could probably help.

## **Planning:**

a). General. Mr Thornton reported that Apex Forestry (David Meldrum) had made an Agricultural Notification for a new shed on land they were renting at the former Glendinning's Yard (Mr Leng, the owner, is using Bell Rural Solutions as his agent). After a short discussion, the Chairman asked the secretary to check the rules for this with the Planners and report back to Members.

b). Wind Farms. Mr Wilcox gave a full report on the latest developments for Scawd Law, and this is attached to the Minutes. It was agreed that WDCC should seek an extension to the ECU deadline for comments in line with any extension sought by Restoring Upland Nature (RUN) which is the new charity that incorporates the South of Scotland Eagle Project. *Afternote.* After consultation with RUN, Mr Wilcox is asking for an extension until 4<sup>th</sup> May 2025.

c). **SPEN Cross Border Connection.** The Secretary gave a short report on recent developments on the route selection for the Cross Border Connection and this is attached to the Minutes. In discussion all agreed that the SPEN methodology for route selection was clearly based on existing and predicted wind farm development rather than giving any consideration to environmental effects or to local opinion on visual impacts. Mr Leslie reminded members that SPEN, in its role as a transmission company, would make lots of money from being able to connect wind farms to the new sub stations, hence their interest in planning a route to include as many opportunities for new connections as possible – including the proposed Scawd Law development and more development in the Moorfoots. So, the route is a double benefit for SPEN: a contract for the infrastructure paid for by NESO with the money being raised from consumers through their electricity bills and a huge bonus for making their own transmission connectors to the line they have installed. All agreed that there was an urgent need to involve as many politicians as possible in looking at the overall impact of what is happening throughout Scottish Borders. It was agreed that WDCC should express support for the motion being put to Council by 3 Councillors, including Cllr Pirone, to set up a proper mapping system to help planners throughout SBC at all levels and residents to understand the impact of the disparate applications for electricity infrastructure, wind farms, solar farms, battery storage sites etc which the Borders faces at present and in the near future. *Afternote:* a rough map of the current proposed route on an OS framework is now available from the Secretary or any WDCC members along with a screenshot of the SPEN website map. A note of the Motion being put to Council is attached to the Minutes.

**Wash-up on Public Consultation Event 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2025:** A draft note had been circulated and is attached to the Minutes. In discussion it was agreed that Mr Leslie would put together a template to make it easier to demonstrate actions taken as a result of the consultation and send this to the Secretary for publication in Burning Issues. In the meantime, it was agreed that some notes on actions taken would be displayed at the Hall Coffee Morning on 22<sup>nd</sup> March. The Chairman asked members to give a vote of thanks to the Secretary for her work in arranging and running the consultation and this was given unanimously. The Secretary thanked members.

**June 2025 Election for WDCC:** The Secretary reported that there would be a total of 6 vacancies in WDCC to be filled at the June election. Current members Ms Daykin, Ms Sedgwick and Mrs Thornton wished to stand again so a minimum of 3 new candidates were required. The position of Secretary also needed to be filled either by an elected member or by someone who may not wish to stand for election but is willing to be co-opted as Secretary. The Secretary then reminded members that the returning Officer was Dr Jan Henderson and the critical dates were:

- a). Nominations lodged with the Returning Officer by midday 26<sup>th</sup> May (can withdraw up to midday 2<sup>nd</sup> June).
- b.) Returning Officer checks all nominations against vacancies on 3<sup>rd</sup> June and either calls an election for 13<sup>th</sup> June or if there are only 6 candidates and all have valid nominations, declares the 6 candidates to be elected.
- c.) If there is an election on 13<sup>th</sup> June, the results will be published on 14<sup>th</sup> June.
- d.) Elected candidates take up their posts on 18<sup>th</sup> June 2025 at the end of the AGM and take part in their first meeting after the AGM.

There was a short discussion on who might be interested in seeking election to WDCC and the Chairman concluded by reminding members that candidates who would be active WDCC members were required, and said that he had every confidence that good people would put themselves forward.

## **Reports by Members.**

a.) As has already been discussed, residents in Caberston Road are sick and tired of speeding vehicles, mud and dust on the road and pavements and the shambles being created on the verges of the green by so much poor

driving from forestry HGV, PMK and other contractors' vehicles, locals and visitors in a rush, the school bus etc. The more mess created, the more careless the driving. It is an incredibly difficult situation and all WDC can do is continue to harass various companies, the Police and SBC roads. Residents must continue to complain themselves, especially to SBC roads who are responsible for cleaning the road.

b.) Work continues to encourage SBHA to repair paths and railings in their ownership. The 'D' in Caberston Road is about to undergo some repairs.

c.) Too many adult/older cyclists are now using the Park to access the pump track causing annoyance and danger to pedestrians on the narrow pathways. Good cyclists dismount when passing pedestrians, but too many seem to believe that they have a priority. Another difficult issue, and all we can do is try to encourage cyclists to be more aware of other park users and dismount rather than forcing people off pathways.

d.) It has been reported to SBC that 2 sections of railings on the steps from the A72 to High Cottages have been broken.

d.) Concerns raised over the deterioration of SBC owned assets such as St Ronan's Wells Museum at a time when there was some shortage of available space for community groups. Cllrs Tatler and Douglas explained that there was a current review of the whole SBC estate and once there was a report the community would be consulted over future use of some assets. They pointed out that there would probably be two new community spaces available as part of the Mountain Bike Innovation Centre project in Innerleithen.

e.) A question had been raised about the possibility of WDC trying to encourage the formation of a 'banking hub' in Peebles but it was agreed that there was no role for WDC in such a discussion.

f.) The new dropped kerb to allow access to the Galashiels Road bus stop on the north side of the A72 had been welcomed by a disabled resident who passed her thanks both to WDC and SBC.

g.) Dog poo problems and generally filthy pavements were issues raised by many residents. The problem with dog poo is finding a way to deal with irresponsible dog owners (a small minority who blight the place!) Any ideas welcomed. The dirty pavements problem is with us until the end of the road works, but WDC will continue to press for a clean-up. Residents are urged to add their voice by complaining to SBC on the contact form or by telephone – the more complaints, the more likely we are to see action.

h.) Various road signs in the village have been damaged by road works/weather and SBC will be asked to check and repair.

i.) The Tweed Bridge is suffering badly from excess HGV movement. Cllr Tatler and Cllr Douglas agreed that the best way ahead was for the Chairman to write once more to Mr Stuart Moir at SBC asking for a survey of the bridge.

j.) The Chairman reported that the 2-way radios for flood/resilience groups should arrive shortly, and training will begin as quickly as possible for users in good time for spring flood watches.

k.) There has been no sign of any report after the flood survey work carried out last year and the Chairman will chase the report, with help from Councillors.

l.) The Chairman has been involved in flood prevention discussions at various other communities in the Tweeddale area.

### **Reports by Councillors**

a.) Cllr Tatler reported that he was expecting a report and costing for repairs to the pavement along the A72 between Walkerburn and Innerleithen. There was a feeling amongst most of those present that the costs may prove too great, but a small clearing of the pavement might still be possible. On a more positive note, Cllr Tatler also explained that further steps to institute a one-way system down the D83 when the A72 has to be closed were in progress with costings for new signage being awaited. The new drop-down signs would be activated by Police en-route to an incident, which should ensure that, in the event of a road closure, one way diversion signs would be in place speedily. Finally, Cllr Tatler noted that attempts to get some cash for B709 repairs from the Timber Transport Road Fund were on-going.

b.) Cllr Douglas noted that the Tweeddale Area Committee meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> March might be the last in the present format since a report was about to be taken by the Council on the future of Area Committees and there would be a proposal to abolish the current format. All agreed that in the case of Tweeddale this would be a retrograde step in terms of general community consultation.

**Any Other Business:** Mr Thornton reported that Mr Ross McGinn had been awarded recognition for his long service to Innerleithen community as Tweeddale Citizen of the Year. All agreed that Mr McGinn was an excellent choice

**Date of Next Meeting:** Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> April 2025 at 7pm in the Public Hall.

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

### WHAT'S ON IN THE HALL: April/May

Anyone interested in booking the hall, please note new contact: [enquiries@walkerburnvillagehall.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@walkerburnvillagehall.co.uk)

Date	Event	Time
Mondays	Mindful Yoga For more info, please tel. Sue Cotterill on 07983 167075 or email <a href="mailto:reverendsusancotterill@gmail.com">reverendsusancotterill@gmail.com</a>	6.00-9.00pm
Tuesdays	Youth Club – Check Facebook for when it is in the Hall	6.30-8.00pm
Wednesdays	Walkerburn and District Community Council Monthly Meeting 16 <sup>th</sup> April	7.00pm
Thursdays	Free Peeblesshire Foodbank Coffee Club and Citizens Advice Bureau – Thursday, every fortnight - 24 <sup>th</sup> April, 8 <sup>th</sup> and 22 <sup>nd</sup> May Pilates Classes with Melanie Riley	9.00am–12.00noon 6.00 – 9.00pm
Fridays	9 <sup>th</sup> May – Adam Holmes – an evening of music. Link to tickets will be on the Hall Facebook page.	7.30-10.00pm
Saturday	3 <sup>rd</sup> May – Walkerburn Summer Festival Coffee Morning 10 <sup>th</sup> May – Walkerburn Veg Show Coffee Morning and Plant Sale.	10.00am-12 noon 10.00am-12 noon
Sundays	ITW Church Service – 20 <sup>th</sup> April and 18 <sup>th</sup> May Table Tennis	2.00pm 6.00-9.00pm

### WALKERBURN BOWLING & PETANQUE CLUB

**Many thanks to everyone who helped to make the Club AGM 30th March a successful occasion.**

There was good discussion on each of the agenda items and Draft Minutes will be available soon. The Committee were re-elected unanimously for the coming year.

Our thoughts are turning to the warmer summer days. There will be Bowls and Petanque tournaments, League games and events throughout the Summer and Autumn and we look forward to welcoming as many new members as possible – especially younger members!

The Bowls section will start the new season with the traditional President's 'Bowl Off' at 2.00pm on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> April. This will be followed by tea and biscuits as well as a short presentation of Bowls trophies to last year's winners. Members and non-members are very welcome to attend.

The club will again be entering a team in the Peeblesshire Bowls League, starting with an 'away' match at Peebles on Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> April.

'Petanque' continues each Friday afternoon - with tea, coffee and biscuits afterwards. Members also have access to the club every day to practice or to play with friends.

*Just a short reminder:* Bill Nicholson still has few vacant places in the twice-monthly 'Bonus Ball' competition. Please contact any member, or see our Facebook page if you would like to enter. Congratulations to the more fortunate among our members who have been lucky enough to win! Please continue to support us.

**For more details, please see the Walkerburn Bowls 'Facebook' pages, or contact George Thornton on either 01896-870251 or e-mail [geoles2@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:geoles2@tiscali.co.uk)**



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## BURNING ISSUES CONTRIBUTORS

**Please send articles before the end of  
June.**

**Thank You!**

## APRIL WILDSIDE

**There was an eclipse just a few days ago which we were supposed to get an excellent view of in Scotland but alas it was rather cloudy.**

Nothing as exciting as an eclipse, but we have a couple of meteor showers to look for in the next couple of months. Firstly, the Lyrid meteor shower will be visible from 16-25 April, peaking on 22 April.

Although it's far from one of the most active yearly meteor showers, the Lyrids can still dazzle - some meteors have bright dust trails that glow in the sky for several seconds. What's more, when it peaks on the night of 22 and morning of 23 April the Moon will be below the horizon until around 4 am BST, so won't cause light pollution, making conditions ideal to observe the peak. The Lyrids are caused by debris from Comet C/1861 G1 Thatcher, which does a lap of the Sun once every 415 years. It's the oldest recorded meteor shower still visible today, and was first recorded in 687 BCE. Next, the Eta Aquariid meteor shower is active between 19 April and 28 May, peaking between midnight and dawn on 5 May with a predicted rate of up to 40 meteors per hour. This shower is more visible for the Southern Hemisphere and will appear low in the sky in the Northern Hemisphere in the early hours pre-dawn. Nevertheless, it should still be possible to see the shower in the eastern sky even when the radiant is below the horizon.

In 2025 the Eta Aquariids begin when the Moon is in its waxing gibbous phase, with maximum on May 5 happening one day after a first quarter moon, resulting in slightly unfavourable seeing conditions. Look eastwards to spot the star Eta Aquariid in the constellation of Aquarius, after which the meteor shower is named. The source of the meteor shower is the famous Halley's Comet, which is visible from Earth about every 75-76 years.

We've just watched a very large double skein of geese fly over, heading North, no doubt off to their summer residence to breed. There will, of course be other birds coming here for their breeding season and our resident birds are certainly gearing up for it with smart new feathers and partnering up.

We have house sparrows finally taking an interest in the terrace of nestboxes we put up for them 3 years ago so, hopefully, we'll see a successful batch of babies from them later in the Spring. We've been visited by peacock butterflies already as they feed on the nectar on the tall stemmed primulas. These are of great interest to the bumble bees we've had visiting too.

I love this time of year, when things are all new and it's a joy to be outdoors. The lawn's had its first mow of the year and a lot of moss came up too, so the birds will find that on the open compost and perhaps use it in their nests. It is lovely to see things starting to look a vibrant green again. We have seen some early blackthorn blossom and hawthorns are starting to open their leaves. Sand martins have been seen looking for nest sites in the banks of the Tweed It won't be too long before we get swallows, house martins and hopefully swifts visiting in numbers for their breeding season and they can enjoy all the mayflies that will emerge from the river, then the midges when we get to Festival Week in June. Midges love to come to the bonfire on the Friday evening, I know from itchy experience!

**Lots to look forward to then as spring really kicks in and, hopefully, the weather stays like this and when the swallows and others come and bats emerge, they'll feast heartily on those midges!**