

Blackness Area Community Council

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday 16th May 2018 - Blackness Boat Club

<p>Attendees: Community Council members: Martin Watt (MW), (Chair) Dorothy Garrow (DG), Nick Paul (NP), Helena Paul (HP) (Minutes), Cllr David Aitchison (DA), PC Greg Cruickshanks, Police Scotland (GC) Members of the public: 4</p>	
<p>Apologies: Helen Brown (HB), Dave Lawson (DL), Merv Archibald (MA)</p>	
	Action
<p>Chair's opening remarks: The Chair opened the meeting with reference to an unfortunate incident of inappropriate behaviour by members of the public present that had occurred towards the end of the previous meeting. He reiterated that the Community council operates in an inclusive and respectful manner and that any further such incidents would not be tolerated. He confirmed that the current 6 community councillors are MW, DL, NP, HP, DG and HB who are bound by a code of conduct that all have signed. It is important that everyone recognises that as volunteers, the BACC wish to treat everyone properly and fairly and with respect and that such behaviour, while unusual, is unacceptable. The Chair would be the final arbiter of what is and is not acceptable.</p>	
<p>1. Approval of Previous Minutes: Proposed: NP Seconded: MW</p>	
<p>2. Community Police Report</p> <p>One incident last month – an attempted break-in during the early hours of 17th/18th April to a house in the village. The 3 perpetrators were disturbed by the householder who was in the house. Likely that the intention was to steal car keys and cars. Residents were reminded to keep their car keys secure, and not to leave any keys within sight or reach of the front door, and to inform the Police of any suspicious activity.</p> <p>Recent fatal car accident at Champany:</p> <p>Concerns expressed at the number of road accidents, some sadly fatal, that have occurred at this junction, and other accidents on the A903 and A904 over the last few years. Could the speed limit be reduced from 60mph to 50mph between Bo'ness and Linlithgow and on all the roads around Blackness (B9109 and B903) to be consistent with West Lothian? Can the signage around the major junctions be improved to avoid possible driver error? Is there anything that can be done to the design of the junctions to improve road safety? in particular residents have concerns about the Mannerston's junction, with overtaking cars on the A904, and issues with the motorways slips, where it is not uncommon for drivers to go the wrong way down the off-slip by mistake. Advice was to contact local politicians to lobby for a speed limit reduction.</p> <p>Action: Cllr Aitchison will write to the head of roads at Falkirk Council to request that the situation around Blackness is investigated and appropriate action taken in the interests of road safety. Residents offered to assist with any information and to meet with the Roads management as appropriate.</p> <p>Issues raised with parking in the village. Particularly at weekends, the "Outlander Effect" seems to have led to a sharp increase in visitors to the castle. While Blackness welcomes visitors to the area, residents reported being "imprisoned" in the village at times due to</p>	
	DA

Blackness Area Community Council

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday 16th May 2018 - Blackness Boat Club

<p>poor parking. Particular concerns that a First Responder cannot go on the weekend rota due to concerns that his car will be blocked in. Cars parking across driveways and along Castle Road may make it difficult for the emergency services to gain access.</p> <p>Discussion about possible alternatives – encouraging visitors to come by public transport, or the community bus, the possibility of other parking locations, possibly in the field at the end of St Ninian’s Way or the previous plan to create a car park at the church, which was not universally welcomed by residents.</p> <p>It is clear that there is an issue with insufficient parking to deal with the influx of visitors. The JMW may also be contributing to additional traffic around the area.</p> <p>Agreed to:</p> <p>Action: Write to Historic Environment Scotland to advise of the issues, and ask them to enter into a dialogue with BACC about possible solutions. Suggest HES put something on their website / social media to ask that visitors park with consideration for residents and emergency services. Ask a rep to attend our June meeting to discuss further? (In her absence this task was allocated to HB, as she already has a contact at HES)</p> <p>Write to Falkirk Council roads dept and ask for the road signage and markings to be renewed.</p> <p>The Police would attend at weekends when resources allow and remind drivers to park considerately and would issue tickets to any drivers of vehicles causing an obstruction.</p> <p>Revisit the plan for the car park at the church when resources allow.</p>	<p>HB</p> <p>DA</p> <p>GC</p> <p>BACC</p>
<p>3. Actions and matters arising from previous minutes</p>	
<p>Licence variation at Blackness Inn. HP had discussed matters with Licensing at FC. The variation to the Premises licences has come about due to the alterations made at the pub to create a shop which has reduced the area covered by the licence. The shop will no longer be covered by the premises licence. There were no grounds on which to object, but a comment had been sent to licensing to reflect the disappointment of BACC that the pub, while licences, had not operated at all for many years. BACC would welcome a well managed and appropriate café/ pub type business trading properly again as an asset for the area.</p>	
<p>4. Future Events / Fundraising</p>	
<p>No update.</p>	
<p>5. Community Projects</p>	
<p>In her absence, HB had kindly provided a written update of progress on the play park improvements. HP updated the meeting accordingly – good progress being made with funding applications, and letters of support from residents and members of the public. Request that as many people as possible contact blacknessc@gmail.com with any comments or notices of support. This is very helpful for funding applications as it demonstrates a need and community support for the project.</p> <p>Suggestions made for further consideration: parents of school pupils could also be asked for support, place flyers in notice boards (and possibly on some of the parked cars in the village!) to notify people and suggest how they can support it, these could be pro forma, tick box type short letter with space for folks to leave their name and address etc. Maybe put a “post box” for responses in the Castle, or in the shop or on the Community bus?</p>	<p>HB</p>

Blackness Area Community Council
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday 16th May 2018 - Blackness Boat Club

Maybe add info in a summer newsletter.	ALL
6. Budget	
In DL's absence, no update. Only transaction would be the payment to the Boat Club which is already in hand.	
7. Councillors' Update	
<p>Cllr Aitchison was warmly welcomed and thanked for attending his first BACC meeting. DA agreed to contact FC Roads Dept regarding various matters:</p> <p>Road Safety: Speed limit reductions on A903, A904, B9109 and B903. Possibility of improving signage or design of some junctions to reduce accidents and improve safety for all road users.</p> <p>Road repairs: Issues relating to the current round of pothole repairs on B903 and B9109. Comments made that the patch repairs are leading to a lot of loose chippings on the road which may not last very long and could be just as dangerous particularly for cyclists as the potholes. While we welcome the attention being paid to the repairs, concerns expressed that the patching may be a false economy requiring further work in a short space of time. The east side of the B9109 is in a very poor state where it was recently dug up by a utility company. The reinstatement work is disintegrating. Question asked about what FC can do to gain some recompense for the poor work from the utility company concerned which was probably OpenReach.</p> <p>Parking in the village and refreshing road markings and signage.</p> <p>BACC would be happy to host the Road's management staff at a future meeting to discuss all the issues, and/or meet them on site as appropriate.</p>	DA
8. Planning Update	
<p>8.1 Weekly planning list: Still looking for a volunteer to review the weekly planning list and flag up any relevant applications. This is now an urgent task, can anyone help please? Contact HB for details of what is involved.</p> <p>8.2 P/18/0128/FUL Blackness Inn Single Storey Retail Unit in pub garden. PP granted by FC on 4th May 2018.</p> <p>PRE/2017/0015/PAN INEOS have signalled an intention to apply for permission for a new energy plant.</p> <p>Update on proposal to close the road through plant and redirect traffic – the public enquiry was held in March, awaiting the Reporter's findings possibly during the summer.</p>	ALL
9. Broadband update	
<p>Suggestions made that people should haggle with their existing provider to get a better deal.</p> <p>Residents should be asked to test their broad band speed to establish what is happening in different places.</p> <p>Some fibre already here, but patchy, with some areas getting over 11mb, and others</p>	

Blackness Area Community Council
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday 16th May 2018 - Blackness Boat Club

<p>less than 2mb.</p> <p>Agreed – use a summer newsletter to alert residents on how to check their Broadband speed, and to let BACC know so that the responses can be collated by address to help establish the extent of the issue. TR to draft.</p> <p>Continue to investigate with Open Reach what infrastructure upgrades have already taken place in the area, and what is proposed, inviting Open Reach to a future BACC meeting.</p>	<p>TR</p> <p>MW</p>
<p>10. Flight path matters</p>	
<p>HP updated the meeting: Edinburgh Airport Noise Advisory Board (EANAB) continues to meet monthly where Blackness is represented.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EAL has approved the funding for the EANAB proposal for independent analysis of the historical flight data to try and establish the reasons behind the increased noise over the area. • Need locations for noise monitors – an open site with an electricity supply will be required. ACTION – residents to identify appropriate locations for noise monitors. • The revised ACP is expected to be sent to the CAA soon, but no update on whether that has happened or not • In other news, the Government has published a new aviation strategy “Beyond the Horizon”. A green paper will be placed before Parliament in the autumn. DfT will be consulting over the summer months an opportunity for residents affected by aircraft noise to shape the proposals. <p>Proposals are online: https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/a-new-aviation-strategy-for-the-uk-call-for-evidence</p> <p>Comments made that the recent run of a number of weeks with Easterly winds have been particularly noisy at Blackness – with some planes being markedly noisier than others. Further comments about how irritating an interruption to daily life the noise is. Residents were again encouraged to complain to the airport, and to all of their elected representatives. Airport email is: noise@edinburghairport.com Elected reps details can be found using the www.Writetothem.com website.</p>	<p>ALL</p>
<p>11. AOCB</p>	
<p>11.1: New defibrillator installed on outside wall of Blackness Boat Club. Two first responders, Annie, and Norrie attended the meeting to advise about the new “self service” defibrillator and to offer a demo session on how to use it. They briefly explained the process – if you call 999 and the person is not breathing, then the operator will advise the caller of the location of the nearest defibrillator and give them an access code to open it. The machine than gives clear written and spoken instructions on how to use it. The operator will stay on the phone throughout until paramedics arrive.</p>	

Blackness Area Community Council
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday 16th May 2018 - Blackness Boat Club

A defibrillator does not “start” the heart. It actually stops the heart with an electric shock so that it can restart in proper rhythm.

It was agreed to contact the First responders again to find a convenient date – probably over a weekend and probably in the Boat Club to offer a demo and information and training on the use of the equipment. Members were grateful to note that the Boat Club has offered their premises for this event.

The date would be published in the next newsletter to encourage residents to attend. All were congratulated on the fund raising efforts that had led to the defibrillator being installed in Blackness.

11.2 A resident noted that as the area is right on the boundary of two different health boards, there can be a problem when requesting an out of hours GP home visit. The area is actually within the Forth Valley Health Board catchment, but many residents are registered at Linlithgow Health Centre which is in Lothian Health Board area. The GP will not have access to medical records out of hours, so is unable to attend. If a resident is sufficiently ill an ambulance should be asked to attend.

Another possible topic to include in the summer newsletter.

11.3 Litter along back shore adjacent to Hopetoun Woods. HP has contacted FC Community Justice team who have been out to clear some of the accumulated rubbish. They cannot deal with the dead sea birds, but will pick up plastic and other flotsam which has come in on the tide following the storms earlier in the year. FC will also come on 16th June, and we could look at the possibility of arranging a community litter pick that day. HP and NP are away, unfortunately. If anyone is able to arrange something, let HP know.

11.4: Community Bus: Busey McBusface! There are now two buses, and there are plans to continue to increase passenger numbers. A competition to name the buses runs until 25th May. Prize of £300. Entry forms available on the Bus or in the Bo’ness Library, Blackness Shop, Bo’ness LIDL and Tesco at Bo’ness and Linlithgow.

Date of Next Meeting; Wednesday 20th June at 7 pm in the Boat Club.

This will be the last meeting of the BACC before our summer recess with no meetings scheduled for July and August.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 21.15

Blackness Area Community Council
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday 16th May 2018 - Blackness Boat Club

Space here for updated budget document when received.

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