

This document records the detailed minutes of the recent Community Council meeting focused on local issues, updates, and planning within the villages of Charlestown, Limekilns, and Pattiesmuir and the surrounding areas. The meeting incorporated the novel use of AI technology for transcription and minute-taking. Discussions covered, and a wide range of community concerns including signage, infrastructure, safety, and community engagement efforts.

Charlestown, Limekilns and Pattiesmuir Community Council

Minutes of Meeting

Date: 24 June 2025 at 7pm, in the Queens Hall

Attendees: Mandy Littlewood, Sue Hamilton, Alex Lodge, Lesley Scott, Tom Leatherland, Malcolm Hamilton, Craig Lindsay, Steve Williams, Carol Williams.

Apologies:: Geoff Cartwright, Peter Hutchings, Leslie Laird, Peter Wilson, Jo McFarlane, Tess Gibson, Cllr Goodall, Cllr Verrechia, Cllr Jackson (late arrival)

1. Introduction and Attendance

Mandy introduced the use of AI for recording and transcribing the meeting.

2. Matters Arising from Previous Meeting

- Toilet Signage: We now have a correctly spelt sign on the building, and a directional sign on a lamp post at the Sutlery!
- War Memorial restoration. Verbal confirmation was received that the Council has committed funding (between £20,000 and £40,000) for repairs, with work scheduled for completion before Remembrance Day
- Play Park: Funding applications have been submitted, and community support is ongoing including a planned football event and possible help from Babcock welders for fence repairs. School pupils have contributed equipment recommendations.
- Street Lighting: Charles Way installation is progressing well despite some accidental BT cable cuts. Completion expected by early July. Consultation on street lighting design for the Main Street is ongoing.
- Uneven slabs at Charles Way footpath. Robbie Blyth has been in touch with Muir Homes to request clarification as to adoption status, but no positive vibes thus far!
- Defibrillator in Phone Box: The Community Council discussed the offer from BT for us to purchase the phone box for £1 with liability concerns and lack of local champions to manage a defibrillator project. It would be good to identify a community champion in Charlestown.

- Third Village Notice Board: Sue still to discuss design and cost with Rosyth Men's Shed. Potential location near the tennis club.
- Village Information Panel: Minimal progress with a general information panel, Cllr Goodall had sent a photo of a similar panel at Kinghorn and will enquire about who had commissioned it and at what cost.
- War Memorial Panel. Craig has developed a draft design for a panel for the war memorial, and further cost assessments and contacts are being pursued
- Twinning Project: At the public meeting chaired by Geoff Cartwright, we got some very good support, but not quite the number of attendees we had hoped for. We're planning to have a stall at the Gala, and a French-themed tasting event at the Coorie. We're drafting a constitution, and have had discussions about that, and about funding with both Alastair Mutch, Fife Council Area Manager, and with Fife Voluntary Action
- Potholes: Some repaired speedily; others marked but not repaired. Residents are encouraged to report potholes through the Fife Council web site.
- Broomhall Estate: Safety issues at the piggery site highlighted, yet again. Community Council urged the Estate to take responsibility.
- Double Yellow Lines: Advocacy for double yellow lines near Old Orchard junction continues. Secretary has had no response from Lesley Craig, or acknowledgement of the consultation we had carried out. Ask Brian Goodall to chase. Lesley Craig also seems to be in charge of Pavement Parking! (See below)

5. Consultations

- Pavement Parking. Fife Council is, belatedly, implementing the Scottish Government pavement parking ban, and have asked Councillors to identify exemptions and require them to submit measurements to support their recommendations. Concerns were expressed about Fife Council's handling of the ban and the need for exemptions in narrow village streets The Community Council received no notification, and public information has been minimal. Warning stickers will be placed on offending vehicles from 1st July, and £100 fines from 1st September. A meeting between Ward Councillors and Lesley Craig will not happen until 9th September, when local exemptions will be discussed. Cycling on Pavements. In these villages, it is cycling on the footway on the Promenade which causes greatest concern, especially for visually- and hearing-impaired pedestrians.
- Short-Term Lets Consultation: This is to designate areas in Fife that are under a short-term control order Brief discussion on local impact; few Air BnBs in our area, compared with the East Neuk and St Andrews.
- Community Council Scheme Revision: Low response (just 53) to previous consultation. Challenges in participation and youth involvement continue, as does liaison between Community Councils and Fife Council.

6. Local Developments

Charlestown Harbour: Lesley had submitted a written report as follows:

I want to update you on recent activities regarding Charlestown Harbour. This issue that has been raised on an increasing basis with the Community Council and local politicians.

Some Background:

- The Harbour is owned by the Elgin Estate and managed by their Factor DR Rural.
- No fees are charged in the Harbour. There is no management of the Harbour.
- Over time this has resulted in various craft being moored, abandoned and sunk.
- There is no central register of boats nor is this a legal requirement.
- There is no formal record of craft or their owners.
- Many craft are in poor condition, require regular bailing out to prevent them sinking, or indeed have simply been left to deteriorate and sink and pollute the harbour and its wider environment.
- The pollution from these craft and the condition of the harbour is an increasing cause for concern – from a health, safety, pollution and environmental perspective.
- Boats are now being dumped on the land area contributing to the wider deterioration of amenity for our community and visitors.
- The Harbour is required to have a spillage plan, which requires to be approved by SEPA and Fife Council. This is now underway.
- Forth Ports have a process to assist Harbour owners on how to deal with abandoned craft. They have already assisted with spillage events in the Harbour.
- Ultimately as a private Harbour, responsibility for it, and its contents, resides with the owner.

Activities undertaken so far

- A mapping of the harbour and boats has been undertaken.
- Photographs of craft in the harbour have also been taken.
- Meetings have been held with the Estate to outline concerns and suggestions made on a way forward in terms of Harbour clearance and improvement.
- A Key Stakeholder working meeting was convened by the Community Council on 3 May 2025 which had a high turnout of key agencies, and political leaders. (See list of attendees below).
- From this working session 5 workstreams have been identified and workgroups allocated to work on the range of actions and activities to improve the Harbour and the surrounding land area. Its actions are structured based on activities that can be taken in the short / medium and long term. (See separate notes).
- The Estate, as owners, are the lead for each work group but supported by key stakeholders. They are responsible for convening the first meetings of each group.
- With the assistance of Forth Cruising Club the first working group will undertake a water survey of craft in the Harbour and on the land to begin the process of identifying owners and arrange for their boat removal from the Harbour and its land area.
- A planning application will be submitted to install a Boom across the Harbour entrance to prevent craft entering.
- Community Council and working groups are now awaiting confirmation from the Estate as to how they will resource and support the Stakeholder Working Group Plan.

Stakeholders in attendance

Community Council: Geoff Cartwright, Sue Hamilton, Lesley Laird,

Political Representatives: (MSPs) Shirley Anne Somerville, Claire Baker. Graeme Downie MP, document submission . Local Councillors, Brian Goodall and Andrew Verracchia.

Agencies: Fife Council (Nigel Kerr), SEPA (Peter Finnie & Helen Swinney), Forth Ports (Gregor McIntyre), Fife Coast & Countryside Trust (Robbie Blyth).

Elgin Estate: Lord Charles Bruce, Tess Gibson, Niall Milner

Forth Cruising Club: Commodore, Roger Hart, and Secretary Alan Gibson

Residents: David Blyth, David MacKay

CLP Nature Group: Joanna McFarlane and Phil Taylor

- Stirling Developments: Kingswood Development. Planning permission for phase one infrastructure was granted in early May. On site development unlikely before the new year. There will be new planning applications as the different builders develop plans for the segments they have acquired.
- Planning application for house next to No 9 Saltpans has not being rejected as was reported. It is on about the 8th extension of time request by Planning, and the current extension of time is until July 7th. Every time they've nearly run out of time, they get themselves another month.
- Water Quality. CLP Nature Action has been monitoring at various sites on the Lynn Burn. More volunteers were recently trained. Disappointing to have found clear evidence of a pollution incident.

6. Treasurer Report.

- No sign of Paul. I hope he's done the annual financial report. Peter Wilson was in touch with him because he needed the annual accounts in order to make a funding application.

6. Police and Councillor Reports

- Police Report not yet received.
- Councillor Reports: Discussion on political content of reports submitted by Councillor Goodall. He is very conscientious in circulating his detailed reports, which are always very informative – if a little long! The Meeting agreed that there is no issue with Cllr Goodall reporting within the context of his political affiliation.

7. Community Engagement and Upcoming Events

Sue reported on the plans for a Flower Festival at the church to be held next weekend to foster community interaction through floral displays with personal significance. Organisations are invited to contribute a flower arrangement and promote what they do. Mandy and Sue will work on a Community Council contribution to promote awareness and membership.

8. Members discussed scheduling for upcoming meetings, noting variations from previous years and looking forward to continued engagement.

Date of Next Meeting. August 26th Queens Hall 7pm.