

## **Denholm Community Council 2026 Report by Gwen Crew**

As we approach the end of another term, I once again need to thank the past and present community councillors for their continuing loyalty in working for our community. We find again our numbers are not at the current requirement and despite advertising at election time and also appealing prior to the AGM no further interest has been shown which is very disappointing. Community Councils will not be sustainable in the future unless new members come along. It is in everyone's interest to keep a finger on the pulse of what's going on in the area, to keep the funding from wind farms ongoing, and to have a voice at local levels when problems occur.

On a more positive note, we continue to work in conjunction with other local CC's to promote our area, to highlight the need to retain Hawick fire station, and to work together so we have a more positive approach to our changing community roles.

Over the course of 25/26 our local placemaking plan was finally completed. Views about what it will actually achieve vary immensely, however it is now placed with SBC and should help develop our local area plan in the future.

The development of Center Parcs is surging ahead and the hope continues that this will re-energise the whole area and not just bring tourists to a holiday 'resort' without the benefit of seeing what the wider area has to offer. The promise of sustainable jobs is obviously a welcome boost for local people and with the reputation the company has, should give a multitude of positions for skilled or unskilled workers for years to come.

We continue to be consultees on various windfarm projects in the area and although they may not appear to impact directly with us, we jointly continue to support those local CC's who are. We are concerned about the continual planning applications for new & bigger windfarms in the area, and the subsequent proposed infrastructure with large solar arrays and further battery storage units. We urge the local authority and consequently the Scottish Government to listen to the views of those living and working in those affected areas and not allow the whole Border area to become an industrialised landscape, with little regard to traditional farming and tourism.

This view is also reiterated on plans for the massive new Grid infrastructure proposed to take energy over the Border. Ideas and new proposals to lessen this impact on communities should be a priority.

I believe we have a duty for future generations to try and preserve our countryside in the best way we can, and it is important that the local communities are informed about all these developments and have a proper voice regarding their impacts.

My thanks go to Shirley Passmore who offers advice, receives grant applications, and liaises with Foundation Scotland for those wishing to benefit from the Langhope Rig and Pinesburn Community Funds. We hope to continue to encourage new projects in our area, and all applications will be considered from within our CC district.

Funding has also been allocated to various projects in Denholm Dean. This is a fantastic community asset and will continue to require funding & volunteers to continue ongoing work for some

time. However the team already in place have done a fantastic job, and our thanks must go out to them all.

The CC's continue to maintain defibrillators in our area, with ongoing costs met through the Community Fund. A huge 'thank you' must go to Mr George Lothian, who checks and reports on all the defibs we are responsible for.

It has been unfortunate that due to unforeseen circumstances, our village newsletter has been suspended. This will be discussed at a future meeting and a decision to continue or not will be made.

Santa did manage to visit local children again last Christmas, and I would like to say a huge thank you for the generous donations that made this happen! And of course, to Santa for finding the time to come!

As a community it is important that all our local committees and organisations work together and we all have the same aims to make this a great place for all our residents, young and old. We urgently need new (and younger!) volunteers to step up, as age catches up with us all.

We need our CC to be active as Grants or Community Benefit will not continue. We need a voice with ongoing developments or planning as it may be something that isn't welcome. A development trust to manage future income would be useful, but needs commitment to set up. Youth organisations constantly need volunteers as does the Village Hall and the Feuars Council. I hope residents will look around and ask themselves what they can do to make things better for everyone. More people mean less work for those already committed to doing things.

I would like to show my appreciation to our 3 SBC Councillors, Clair, Stuart and Neil who are always able to deal with any problems that arise; or know someone else who can help. Lastly my personal thanks go to Will and Shirley who endeavour to keep me right, and to all the other CC members who commit their time and efforts for the benefit of our communities.

Gwen Crew

17/06/2026