

East Lammermuir Community Council

Draft note of Meeting held 12 January 2026 at 19.00 Innerwick Outdoor Centre

1. Present

Community Councillors Kelvin Darcy-Burt, Lennox Webb, Caroline Anderson, Suzie Fletcher (notes), Chris Bruce (Chair)
Helen Taylor Brown (East Lammermuir Community Benefits Fund Trustee)
Beth Landon, Energy Projects Partnership Manager

2. Apologies for Absence

Anne Lyall, Spott; Colin Bloomfield, Stenton, Cllr Lyn Jardine, Sharon Young (VCEL)

3. Minutes of meeting held Monday 8 December 2025

Beth suggested one correction to point seven – Communication not Administration. This was accepted and the minute of meeting was approved.

4. Matters arising not elsewhere on agenda

- Scottish Borders Area Community Council Convention on the impact on communities of major energy infrastructure (17 January)

Chris had suggested ELCC might propose an alternative to the proposed Highland Statement. This was discussed in detail, and after robust debate we agreed to

- re-order Bullet Points putting community voice point first
- to describe climate action as urgent
- add something more about curtailment costs and the link with improved transmission

Chris will attend and use the 2-minute speaking slot we have been offered to cover these points.

- National Shared Ownership Strategy for the Climate Action Hub Programme
Agreed to invite Bobby Pembleton (ELCAN) to March meeting to discuss our involvement

5. Treasurer's Report

Payments have been issued following the November funding meeting.

Colin Bloomfield had proposed an opportunity to support administration of Community Benefits funds. Lennox Webb and Helen Taylor Brown offered to do this within their own limited availability. A proposal for running the May 2026 funding decision making meeting will follow.

Early discussion about alternative models for administering funds, should this be too much for us as volunteers. There are other options, we will continue to mull over the pros and cons of this.

6. Community Council Newsletter

Last door to door newsletter was 2019. Members felt that this was not now needed, as most residents can access information electronically. Energy Projects email bulletin is sent out weekly to those who have signed up and a quarterly Energy Projects Partnership newsletter is produced, once a year this is to be posted to all households, with a small print run available for the other 3, all available digitally

Agreed to check who might be missed if we rely solely on social media and emails and website – each village to draw up its own (anonymised) list of individuals and we will discuss again at March meeting how best to include those households.

7. Local Energy Infrastructure Developments (see eastlammermuirdevelopments.co.uk)

- Crystal Rig repower – now been withdrawn from agenda of ELC Planning Committee 13 January whilst Fred Olsen and Council negotiate about the necessary repairs or upgrading of the access road.
- Energy Projects Partnership Manager Beth Landon provided a brief update
 - Beth now has just under 50% of the proposed communal budget committed from developers.
 - The next Partnership newsletter (bigger than the weekly bulletin) will be distributed electronically, and will give updates from projects now on the ground, plus advertise the public meeting with developers and transmission owners scheduled for May. As ever, any ideas or feedback should be given to Beth for inclusion.
 - Energy Partnership Advisory Group hopefully will meet for first time before the end of March.
 - Traffic and Travel Group/Lorries in our Lanes meetings
Beth reported that she is continuing Roads discussions with SPEN, has established a Community Traffic and Travel Forum – subgroup to look at the proposed portal for reporting construction traffic-related incidents or concerns or gratitude, there had been a site Visit to EGL 1 Converter Station Site and Branxton, Bilsdean Compound, where helpful discussion had included concerns about works crossing Braidwood Burn, Bilsdean Junction – narrow space, EGL1 compound at Innerwick Junction / Glare – to be addressed.
- Future developments – Thorntonloch Substation/Morven offshore wind farm et al are being actively discussed with East Lothian Council – Chris and Beth had a meeting with Laurence Rockey and other senior council officials where a collaborative approach was welcomed, seeking to work together and get on the front foot should any further developments in East Lammermuir become a reality. Morven Offshore Windfarm representative will come to all developers meeting in March to advise of plans
- Data Centres
We now know of two proposed data centres in East Lammermuir, and two more elsewhere in East Lothian. These will have massive electricity requirements and may drive further rounds of generation and grid development in due course. Agreed to consider what position the CC should take in respect of any and all planning applications, and noted the Association for the Protection of Rural Scotland request for a moratorium on hyperscale data centres to allow impacts to be properly assessed and for Environmental Impact Assessment (EIAs) to be mandatory.

Valencia are hosting a public meeting on 3 February to outline their plans for a data centre in the old Sorting Shed at the landfill site at Oxwellmains. Their planning application has not yet been validated by East Lothian Council.

The applicants proposing a larger datacentre on land to the South of Dunbar are now required by ELC to produce a full EIA.

8. Progressing our Local Place Plan – discussion (Update from Beth Landon)

Next steps for 4 local priorities; Community Transport workshop 22 January Stenton.

Presentations arranged from Borders Wheels – Denise, CEO

Community Transport Association

Liftango – Kevin Orr.

Reports from the other three ambitions workshops (already run) are trickling in.

A fifth report will be produced drawing together the overlapping themes, and starting us thinking about how to apportion the funds available across the four ambitions.

Beth sees the need for a Development Officer to take a lot of this work forward, as it doesn't entirely fall within her job description and is taking a lot of her time. We rehearsed our need for a Role of Minute Secretary and wondered if a composite job might meet all of our needs in one go.

EGL1 SPEN/NnG community benefits; Proposed FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) document; Beth had been in further discussions with Claire Roxburgh on behalf of SPEN. A firm proposal for management of the EGL1 community benefits funding is emerging, not altogether in line with our ask for a single aligned arrangement. Discussions continue with Beth and Chris both involved.

9. Community Benefits

- The group had a detailed discussion about the ideal arrangements for disbursing funds outwith East Lammermuir, and the possibility of working with **East Lothian Community Benefits/Foundation Scotland**. A discussion paper had previously been circulated, and the following points were debated;

1. Current funds

Broadening Location – What do we anticipate happening?

Our Treasurer's analysis shows that as the Fred Olsen community benefits funds that we have administered have grown, from 2005-2020 – 88% of funds were given to organisations based within East Lammermuir. For the years 2020-25, 41% were given to organisations based outwith East Lammermuir, which benefit individuals resident here and elsewhere. Our principle has been that people who live in the area should decide on the use of the funds. But our practice has been to make decisions about spend in a growing geographical area, without engaging people who live there in making those decisions.

We discussed the pro's and con's of asking Dunbar Community Council to decide about a %

of the funds in future, and let them administer, alongside the £50k per annum they currently get from CWP. There was no clear view on whether this would be a good idea. It was agreed as a first step we should discuss what funds we have and how we use them with DCC.

2) Future funds

We anticipate that before too long the UK Government will mandate Community Benefits from various renewables technologies. The values are not yet known. What seems important is to start to think now about how much we want to retain in East Lammermuir, and how much should be spent across a wider geography (for example through East Lothian Community Benefits).

We are clear that for the first five years of any new fund related to construction in East Lammermuir, the majority of that fund should be spent within East Lammermuir, and we have agreed four community ambitions to guide that spend.

After five years, that will be reviewed with the possibility of moving the decision-making for those funds to the East Lothian area (and possible part of Berwickshire which neighbours us to the East). 6 of 20 East Lothian CCs currently have access to Community Benefits. Is that fair?

It was suggested we might hold on to a portion beyond the five years, perhaps to allow for funding for Community Ownership opportunities.

We discussed the pros and cons of starting to pass over some funds slowly, to confirm our intent and to let the broader East Lothian entity establish itself as able to administer funds. This would be about us setting in place a mechanism for funds to have real benefit rather than peanuts occasionally available.

The following action points were agreed

- Chris Bruce should engage ELCB Trustees in a discussion about what they would do if we made £20k of the forthcoming FOR community benefits from Crystal Rig 4 available to the whole of East Lothian from the beginning of the fund (probably June 2026).
- Chris Bruce should engage ELCB Trustees in a discussion about a joint meeting with East Lammermuir funds Trustees and members
- Chris Bruce should engage Dunbar Community Council in a discussion about a joint meeting with East Lammermuir funds Trustees and members to ensure the most effective use of our separate funding streams.

10. Liaison Meetings and Roles – updates

- Biodiversity Community Liaison Group (not met since last ELCC meeting)
- Torness Liaison visit 20 January (Anne, Suzie, Chris & Beth to attend)
- Viridor Liaison (not met since last ELCC meeting)
- Valencia Liaison (including Data Centre proposal) 3 or 4 February (Chris to go)
- Tarmac Liaison 10 December (Christy)

- Area Partnership (Anne)
- Association of East Lothian Community Councils AGM 14th January (Chris to go)
- Community And Police Partnership (Kelvin)

11. Correspondence (all circulated previously under separate cover)

Scottish Government [Consultation](#) on raising bar for ECU consideration of development proposals – agreed to discuss an ELCC response at March meeting. Individuals welcome to respond too.

Invitation to visit Dunbar Day Centre (circulated separately – Anne to go)

Community Councillor training (For potential attendance – ELCB have a slot at the 18 March event.)

12. Local Updates

Innerwick: No new Community Council members. Hall refurbishment commencement is imminent!

Oldhamstocks: good early progress with new village hall – AGM 8 February 2026

13. Dates of Meetings 2026 – to be agreed and publicised

MONDAYS at 19.00 in the village hall

02 March	Spott
9 March	<i>NnG (& EGL1?) Funding decision making meeting Online</i>
27 April	Stenton
4 th May	<i>Funding decision making meeting Online</i>
08 June	Innerwick
27 July	Spott
24 August	Stenton
26 August	<i>NnG & EGL1 Funding decision making meeting Online</i>
5 Oct	East Lammermuir Community Benefits Trust and Fund Ltd. AGM's Stenton
26 October	Innerwick
9 Nov 2026	<i>Funding decision making meeting Online</i>
30 November 2026	Spott