



**Minutes of the Garve & District Community Council ordinary meeting held on
September 2025 on webcam recording kept for 12 months**

<https://bit.ly/GDCC-Meeting16Sept2025>

Community Council elected members present: Bob Moir (Chair) Caroline Gamble (Treasurer) and Sadie-Michaela Harris (Secretary)

Community Council co-opted members present: Simon Friend.

Also present: Richard MacLennan Access Ranger Mid Ross and the Black Isle

Apologies: Cllr. Liz Kraft, Fiona Middleton and Katrina Walker Boralex

Welcome and Introductions

Bob opened the meeting at 7.10pm and welcomed everyone. He also confirmed that this meeting would be recorded as per the agenda and will be archived and available for viewing for twelve months thereafter. Recordings will then be deleted. He reminded members of the public that although our meetings are not public meetings, they were still very welcome to attend Community Council meetings even on webcam and take part in the discussions under his guidance (see section 12 of the Constitution) and that phones should be on silent.

Those who cannot attend our meetings can write to us by post C/O The Secretary, The Cottage, Garve, IV23 2PU or by email contact@gdcc.scot or via our website gdcc.scot
Latest draft minutes and published minutes going back to 1994 can be viewed on our website. We also share updates on our Facebook page facebook.com/GarveCC

Declarations of Interest - the Chairman is a Garve Public Hall Trustee, a Friend of Garve War Memorial, a LCT elected Director and a member of the GD CORE land panel. The Treasurer noted she is a land owner with regards to the SSN underground cable from the Western Isles to Beaulieu and Community Council elected The Secretary and Co-Opted Member Simon Friend are members of the Wyvis Natural Playpark group.

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Community Council elected members confirmed that they had read all documents due to be discussed tonight before the start of this meeting.

Approval of draft minutes of the ordinary meeting held on Tuesday 19th August 2025 via webcam were proposed without amendment by Sadie and seconded by Simon, unanimously agreed. Minutes are available at Garve Post Office and on our website. Hard/electronic copies are also available on request. Minutes will be signed by our Chairman and Treasurer in due course via post.

Access Ranger Talk - Richard MacLennan

Introduction

- Bob welcomed **Richard MacLennan**, seasonal Access Ranger with Highland Council, to give an overview of his role and issues in the Garve area.

Background

- Richard lives near Fortrose and has a background in small-scale farming.
- Has worked as a seasonal ranger in Mid-Ross and Black Isle (2022-23). No service in 2024 due to lack of funding. Returned in 2025.
- Took a short break mid-2025 after a heart attack; some data gaps during this period.

Ranger Role

- One of 16 rangers across the Highlands.
- No enforcement powers; role is to:
 - Monitor access and visitor behaviour.
 - Promote the Scottish Outdoor Access Code.
 - Report issues to relevant authorities.
- Works Friday to Sunday:
 - Fridays cover furthest areas (e.g. Achnasheen, Braemore Junction).
 - Saturdays/Sundays include split patrols (morning and evening).

Visitor Behaviour

- Most visitors behave responsibly.
- Small minority require advice or can be difficult; rangers trained in conflict avoidance.
- Repeated common excuses for inappropriate camping/parking behaviour.

Garve Area Observations

- **Little Garve:** No major current problems, though graffiti, fire pits and litter noted in past.
- **Ben Wyvis:** Generally fine.
- **Silverbridge-Black Bridge:**
 - Regular fly tipping (builders' waste, tyres) in large layby near Inchbae.
 - Toileting issues also reported.
- **Loch Glascarnoch:**

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- Popular motorhome stop. Most visitors behave well.
- Problem area at track to loch side: frequent fires despite fire risk. Signs often vandalised or ignored.
- **Silverbridge (reserved for later discussion):** Specific issue noted to raise separately.

Achnasheen Road {832} Observations

- **Lochluichart** Some litter and toileting issues despite bins being available.
- **Opposite power station - Grudie**
 - Large fire pits regularly built near water's edge.
 - Previous efforts to block vehicle access (moving a large stone) have been undone, with vehicles returning to off-road camping and roof tent use.
 - Achnasheen lots of issues with dirty toileting especially between Midge Bite and the village.
- **Traffic incidents:**
 - Lay-bys become heavily used during road accidents further west, with vehicles parking overnight while waiting for roads to clear.

Loch a'Chuillin Area

- Large drive-in lay-by screened by trees/bushes attracts **fly tipping** builders' waste, paint, tyres.
- Abuse from fishermen:
 - Multiple large fire pits often 7-8 visible at any one time.
 - Litter and mess consistently left behind.
 - Rarely catch offenders, but when encountered they have been fishermen who present language barriers when challenged.
- Ongoing misuse includes stockpiles of firewood being brought in for repeat visits.
- Serious road safety concern:
 - Gateway access to boathouse located on a fast stretch of road.
 - Vehicles parked dangerously on verges; described as "an accident waiting to happen."
- Bob noted the estate had previously petitioned to have the lay-by closed.
- **Sadie** suggested gathering photographic evidence and publicising the issue online to raise awareness.

Parking and Lay-bys

Richard explained that although some have suggested closing the lay-by, it would not prevent parking problems. He had photographs showing four or five cars parked at the gate, sticking out onto the road. Closing the lay-by would likely just push drivers to park further along the road, forcing them to walk on a fast stretch, which poses safety risks.

Caroline added that when the community ran a litter-picking group, this lay-by was always the worst area for rubbish, with frequent fires and fly-tipping. Richard confirmed that fly-tipping remains an ongoing problem, though frustratingly difficult to tackle.

Achnasheen Toileting Issues

Moving on, Richard noted that the Achnasheen public toilets are currently closed. He monitors local reports on social media (though cannot comment officially as a council employee) and was aware of significant toileting problems in the area – particularly around the pond, the train station, and even private gardens.

To mitigate this, he installed signage discouraging toileting and directing people to the nearest facilities, which are 10, 15, or 20 miles away. **Sadie** highlighted concerns raised by a local resident, Sam, who is renovating a property in Achnasheen. Sam had reported people using his garden, the platform, and bushes nearby, forcing him to erect Harris fencing as a deterrent. Richard confirmed he had acted in response.

Bob added that Sam even reported coach parties stopping there, including French tourist groups. Richard expressed surprise and dismay at this.

Abandoned Caravan in Achnasheen

Richard reported another issue in Achnasheen: an abandoned caravan. This has been reported by several people and now carries official notices, meaning it should eventually be removed. **Sadie** asked whether the removal process takes 28 days once notice is served. Richard said he was unsure of the timescale for caravans, though his team must give seven days' notice before removing abandoned tents. He hoped the caravan would be cleared soon, noting it had been shifted slightly from the charging points to a nearby parking space opposite the railway platform.

Silver Bridge Encampment

Attention then turned to Silver Bridge, a popular overnight stop for motorhomes. **Richard** explained that one man has effectively taken up residence there since January. Although presenting himself as part of the travelling community, Richard stressed that he has not actually been travelling, which undermines that claim.

Initially, the man was repairing his broken-down van while living in a wigwam in the woods. His van remains neither MOT'd nor taxed. Although Richard reported this, the only outcome was that the van was declared SORN. The man has since acquired another van, giving the impression he has financial means, yet continues to occupy the site.

Visitors find his presence off-putting, particularly as he parks at the top of the steps leading to the viewing point. Richard noted that there is often a "herbal" smell when his doors are open, and the man appears to be insulating his new van with sheep fleeces. While not leaving waste outside (he uses the toilet facilities on-site and has a log burner indoors), he does contribute to overflowing bins and stores firewood beneath the vehicle.

Sadie asked whether he had been served with an official notice to leave and whether the land was council-owned. Richard believed the site belongs to Highland Council Roads Department, but despite repeated contact from his manager, no response had yet been received. He noted that in other areas, similar problems had been resolved swiftly, and could not explain why nothing had been done here.

General Ranger Work

Richard outlined his broader duties: his team patrols Friday to Sunday, with Mondays and Tuesdays reserved for report-writing, community engagement, and tidying up problem sites. From late October, ranger numbers will reduce to a quarter, with winter work focusing on path surveys, maintenance, and larger project management rather than patrols. He encouraged members of the community to report issues to the Ranger service online or to Police 101 / 999.

Fire Concerns and Enforcement

Sadie then raised the issue of fires. Richard said there is strong support among Rangers for

seasonal fire bans, similar to those already enforced in the Loch Lomond & Trossachs and Cairngorms National Parks. However, such policies are set above his level.

Simon noted a recent proposal for fines in some areas, which he felt could be a good deterrent. Richard added that Rangers share intelligence on problem visitors via WhatsApp groups to help catch repeat offenders and educate them.

Sadie also asked about increased signage, noting Aberdeenshire had found it effective in some trial areas. Richard, however, felt signage often failed because people become “sign-blind” and focus on scenery rather than instructions. He gave the example of Chanonry Point, where multiple “No Motorhomes” signs are routinely ignored.

Winter Ranger Service and Local Coverage

Richard confirmed that the current ranger contract runs until the end of October. After that, staffing is reduced to a skeleton service over the winter. He explained that last winter he was retained on a casual basis, carrying out a variety of odd jobs across different parts of the Highlands, including work in Ballachulish and other areas. Although scaled back, the service does continue through the off-season.

Sadie asked whether there were any outstanding jobs in the Garve and District area that might be picked up during the winter period, such as path maintenance or repairs. Richard said no core path surveys had been carried out locally so far this year, but these are scheduled for the off-season. He added that no issues had been flagged up to him to date.

Richard mentioned that the lead Access Ranger for the area is **Phil Waite**, who lives in Contin. Phil is both a runner and a cyclist and uses the tracks and paths across the GDCC area regularly, meaning he knows them well and would be quick to spot and report any problems. Richard was confident that if there were any issues requiring attention, Phil would have already raised them.

Sadie remarked that she had not realised how close Phil was based, and welcomed that local coverage.

Overview in brief given in respect of Garve Hotel.

- GDCC in contact with hotel representatives.
- Tidying the exterior - progress made with removing weeds and some rubbish
- Two commercial skips are on site and workers remain on site in caravan
- Power is on; lights visible in various windows.
- Hotel break in Friday night, 15 July. Not on August Police Report
- Email sent to Police Scotland - registering dissatisfaction - being referred. No update - will raise at quarterly Inspector meeting if no update beforehand.

Closing Thanks

With no further questions, Bob thanked Richard for attending. Simon also expressed appreciation for the detailed report. Richard agreed to forward his phone number to GDCC, so members could contact him easily if any issues arise.

Matters arising -

Boralex windfarm

<https://www.boralex.com>

No Update

Proposed Boralex Lochluichart East BESS - Update via email

<https://www.boralex.com/en/projects-and-sites/storage-lochluichart-east-bess> -

- Application submitted to Highland Council
- Validated 12th August same day as submitted
- Katrina has provided each CC member with a memory stick containing the full application and detailed traffic survey data. Survey took place in May 2025
- Engagement event to be held at Garve Public Hall - date TBC
- There is no obligation for the developer to provide hard copies of the documents for viewing in a local venue. This is due to the size of the project. All documents are viewable on The Highland Council Planning portal Ref 25/03004/FUL and the developer's website {link above}

Kirkan Windfarm -

<http://www.kirkanwindfarm.co.uk>

No update

Proposed Tarvie windfarm -

www.tarviewindfarm.com -

No update - locally there has been mention the proposed site may have been sold or in the process of being sold- no confirmation - just hearsay!

A further closed meeting is planned for October, ahead of the first public meeting.

Status:

- EIA survey: ongoing (due September)
- Design phase: due December
- Public meetings: November & February (TBC)
- Application: May 2026
- Construction: 2030/31

Proposed SSE Fairburn windfarm extension - No update

<https://www.sserenewables.com/onshore-wind/in-development/fairburn-extension>

SSEN Spittal - Beaully 400kV project -

<https://www.ssen-transmission.co.uk/projects/project-map/spittal--loch-buidhe--beaully-400kv->

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[connection](#) -

Section 37 Lodged with ECU Ref [ECU00006008](#)

SSEN underground cable from the Western Isles to Beaulieu - <https://www.ssen-transmission.co.uk/projects/project-map/western-isles>

We had an email from Kevin Morrison, Community Liaison Manager at SSEN. Proposed temporary closure of a 5km stretch of the A832 near Dundonnell. Kevin's email has already been shared in full on our website and Facebook page. Send feedback to SSEN copy in Cllr. Liz Kraft and Maree Todd MSP

Field Corriemoillie BESS -

www.fieldcorriemoillie.co.uk

Via email Ecology surveys still ongoing

Proposed Glasawind farm -

<https://glasawindfarm.com/>

No update

Proposed Carn Fearna windfarm -

<https://projects.statkraft.co.uk/Carn-Fearna>

In related news - www.ssen-transmission.co.uk/carn-fearna-wind-farm-connection

Ongoing evaluation of consultation responses. THC has requested an extension until the end of December 2025.

Carn Fearna ancillary applications

No further update

The EDF Corriemoillie Education & Training Fund details can be found at

<https://www.foundationscotland.org.uk/corriemoillie-education-training>

The Highland Council updates - www.highland.gov.uk -

Achnasheen Hall - Closing date for offers 29th September 2025

<https://bit.ly/AchnasheenVillageHallForSale>

The Highland Council notes that **residents should report issues directly to them** by calling The Highland Council's Call Centre on 01349 886606 or via www.highland.gov.uk/report In all cases, you will be given a reference number. The Highland Council also appreciates photos showing the actual problem and precise location - a [What3Words](#) location is very helpful.

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A835 Trunk Road issues -

Check Rail Corner

- No update on permanent repair - lasted info rec'd
- Simon experienced dangerous incident - difficulty reporting it.

Faults on the Trunk Road (A835) should be reported via www.bearscot.com/report-a-defect/ or 0800 028 1414.

White Lining

- Gorstan Junction white lining took place 9th September 2025
- Liz to chase THC as *below
- *Garve village also requires white lining {outstanding since pre-COVID}.

Overgrown Foliage NWR side of the barrier A835

- Sadie reported sight line foliage needs cutting near Check Rail Corner to Network Rail
Incident: 250822-000345

Dangerous Driving

- Difficulty reporting incidents to Police Scotland to be raised at Quarterly Inspector meeting - 30th Sept 2025

Achanalt Traffic

- Resident reported excessive traffic speed to Bob, citing danger to children and pedestrians.
- Bob spoke with Lisa at THC about installing “gateways” at both ends of Achanalt, similar to Mossford and Achnasheen. - Unfortunately, no budget currently for this.

Cllr. Kraft - actions still outstanding

- Weeds around Garve village
- Bolts tightening Blackwater Bridge {near Primary School}
- Update on Community Service / Payback schemes
- Broken cemetery gate.
- White lining Garve village - as mentioned above.

No updates from Liz on any of the above.

Communications

- Website +2000 visits since launched on 11th July gdcc.scot
- Primary email: contact@gdcc.scot
- Chair email: chair@gdcc.scot
- Facebook: [GarveCC](https://www.facebook.com/GarveCC)
- Bulk minute emails are no longer sent available on our website.
- Hard copies of minutes will continue to be available in Garve Post Office and on the Achnasheen notice board within two weeks of each meeting.
- Copies also available on request.

Scottish Water Issues

- Bob persisted with water issues affecting Garve village with his contact Natalie Mason who replaced Gavin Steel.
- Scottish Water attempted unauthorised access on to private road / field - Bob & Uisdean intervened
- Scottish Water spoke with the land owners and work has been agreed.
- Local resident wants Cllr. Kraft / MPS case worker to intervene with Scottish Water - Bob to speak to Liz for this and her outstanding list of GDCC actions.

Community Groups Joint meeting - GDCC, LCT, TGDD

- 3rd of September, we had a joint meeting with the development company.
- Emergency resilience and, what to do was brought up after the last power cut.
- Early stages of consultation between the different groups and stakeholders in the village.
- Awaiting outcomes of these consultations and meetings with the groups.
- Just so we don't prejudice anything.

Beaully CC

- Were in abeyance have now formed a new CC.

Garve & District Community Council currently has vacancies on the Community Council. The Community Council elected members consider it to be very important to have as broad a representation of our community as possible, as we cover a wide variety of community issues and to do this well, we would like members from all corners of our large area. If you are aged 16 or over, live in the Community Council area and are on the electoral roll and would like to be considered for co-option onto the Community Council, please email contact@gdcc.scot with your name and contact details. This update has already appeared on our online channels.

Police update - as reported at previous Community Council meetings, anyone who wishes to raise an issue with the police are asked to **call them directly on 101** at the time of the incident and make a

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witness statement. Video, dashcam or photo evidence is also welcomed, indeed encouraged by the police. The police can also be contacted on www.scotland.police.uk/secureforms/contact/

Police matters mentioned throughout the meeting and noted.

Bob: Any questions so far? None

Treasurer's report -

- **Bank balance: £2,143.62** - Nothing in or out this month
- **Recent expenditures to settle: £42.90** Wreath {Now owed to Caroline - CC bank account has no card payment facility}

Breakdown:

- **Wreath Fund: £420.20** {- £42.90 to be reclaimed by Caroline}
- **Community Fund: £1,723.42**

Banking Issues:

- Ongoing problems with Virgin Bank following office bearer changes.
- Bob need bank to add the GDCC account - As Vice Chair previously had viewing only but has never used it

AOB from Community Council members -

Sadie attended Dingwall Medical Group {DMG} CCs Forum meeting 15th Sept. 2025

- Discussed, vaccines, and although the MSPs have been saying they're coming back into surgery, they've been championing that, they've been telling people to get their vaccines. They're not back in surgery yet, and no date for them to be so either. That's given a knock-on problem where people are still not getting their vaccines, and it's a little bit disingenuous - It's generally felt, that the same message is going out by MSPs and MPs, "Go and get your vaccines", but in fact, people have still got the same difficulties. Their appointments are a long way away; they can't easily get there. The doctors are noticing a decline in the uptake of vaccines, and since that message has gone out that they are going to be taken back into practice. People have been tipping up and saying, oh, while I'm here, can you just give me my flu jab or whatever. And they can't do that because they don't have a stock of them in the fridge. So, they're still waiting on that. They still want us to push with, our own MSP on that to find out if that can be moved on a little.
- No Diabetes update, other than the letter that you got via MSP, already shared through when we shared on our website.
- Resilience from the DMG point of view - the practice, if there's any power cut for any length of time, and they go offline, they've got a process in place to take notes on paper because medical records are held on computers now. If there is an electricity outage for an elongated period, they actually have another building, for business continuity, where they will go in to a different building and be able to connect to their computer systems. They also have mobile phone numbers for when their landlines are down during power outages and the like, but we did point out, of course, that not everybody's mobile phone is working in times of outages.

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- Resilience plans within communities were mentioned, idea of having a sub group of the DMG CC Forum to work together so that efforts are not duplicated

DMG

- Have couple of new admin staff.
- Have had people off on sick leave and also maternity leave.
- Have got a new doctor.
- Are continuing with that outreach program with Traveller Community, which is going really well.
- Have started a new project, for people that have got chronic kidney function -new work group going with one of their doctors and a doctor up at Raigmore and are really pleased with the way that's going.
- Apologised for the fact that they said that they haven't been getting their phones answered very quickly, but that's because they've been down on admin stuff, and they hope that that's going, improve anyway.

Bob: Back to the vaccines, I was expecting to be told for my Flu one to, go into Strathpeffer. I got an email and given a date in October to go into Dingwall to the Legion. Date didn't suit and was able to rebook an earlier slot online for Friday. Worth those who are able to trying to book online - although others have not had such luck historically, hence the discussion.

Caroline: It's a pity Strathpeffer doesn't have such a group, you know, because most of our residents probably go to the Strathpeffer surgery. We used to have a Public Participation Group years ago, but it dropped by the way.

Sadie: I've actually spoken with Dawn about it - Dr. Westwood, it was something that she was planning to get off the ground like the DMGCCF, once she got a Practice manager in. Will follow up with Dr. Westwood.

Caroline: Dr Westwood retiring had seen an advert.

Diary dates

The **Macmillan Coffee Morning**, which Kathy is running, is on the **26th Sept. from 10am until 12** in Garve Public Hall. She's still, happy to take donations, and if anybody wants to make a bake donation, you can get in touch with her directly. Her phone number is 07808 152394

Mid-Ross Community Planning Partnership meeting on the **24th Sept**, where, again, resilience is on the agenda for that.

Tore Hall have a fundraiser for their hall, on **Saturday September 27th** A coffee and cake morning. It's from 11 in the morning until 1pm

CPR training at Garve Public Hall on the **29th September at 7 o'clock**. For anybody that's booked onto that.

The extension of the motion we spoke about already and agreed to support - Sadie will contact Kathrin / Halkirk and District CC.

Caroline: I was traveling down to Dingwall last night 15th Sept. {A835}, and it was quite wet.

Pretty wet, in fact, last night. And, there's a lot of surface water just before the Craig Darroch corner. Already reported to BEAR Scotland {16th Sept}

Sadie: Network Rail. The list of proposals that we got asked for jobs that we'd like done, Sam came along to last meeting, and he made some suggestions. I sent them off twice, and I didn't hear anything, and I sent a chaser again today, and it's two people Scott and Natalie dealing with this. Scott has been away, and that's why we haven't heard anything back, but he's back next week, so hopefully we should get a bit of news on that. *If you remember, they were* tidying up the car park over there and making it a bit more usable, and giving the shelter a bit of a clear up.

Bob: has been established the parking does belong to NWR

Caroline: Put a report in to THC as well, for the bushes at Matheson Road, near the school that need cutting. FS-Case 749770652

Simon: Expressed surprise at how difficult it is to report things like dangerous driving after experiencing first hand trying to do so and as Richard {Ranger} was saying, who do you report, you know, a guy living in the car park up the road and stuff like that? **Sadie** will follow up. Simon's difficulty reporting dangerous driving will be flagged at Quarterly Inspector's Meeting. - takes place over Teams 30th Sept at 7pm.

Unlawful sale of plots at Inchbae and other areas of the Highlands being dealt with by THC.

THC message, because it's been quite widespread this issue, is if you are considering buying a building plot, take specialist advice. If you see something is looking like a bargain, then there's probably a reason for it, and it's probably not a good one. Basically, selling under false pretences.

AOB from members of the public - No public in attendance.

Those who cannot attend our meetings can, as always, write to us by post or email with any issues they wish raise.

Screening reports, scoping reports and consultations -

All Highland Council consultations are available at <http://consult.highland.gov.uk/portal> All Scottish Government consultations are available at https://consult.gov.scot/consultation_finder

Building warrants, planning issues and licensing issues -

For benefit of the community, as we are notified of new planning applications, we list them on our own website here <https://www.gdcc.scot/planning> with links to the listings on The Highland Council / ECU Energy Consents Unit portals.

New planning applications; none to consider.

A possible planning breach can be reported at https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/180/planning_-_applications_warrants_and_certificates/170/planning_enforcement/2

All planning applications can be viewed at www.hIGHLAND.gov.uk/info/180/planning_-_applications_warrants_and_certificates/143/planning_permission/4

There were no new licensing issues for us to consider this evening.

Date of NEXT CC meeting - 25th November via Zoom 7pm.

Next Joint Community Group Meeting will be in January.

Other dates to note -

LTC - AGM 7pm tomorrow 17th Sept. at GPH there is no option to join via Zoom.
Must attend in person or give vote by proxy - can be posted in the GPH post box too.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 9.10 pm.

Signed

Signed

Date

This set of minutes were first published in draft form at 11am on 22nd September 2025

As a post meeting note - GDCC would like to thank the resident of Garve village for all the weeding and tidying of unsightly overgrown areas around the village. He has been spotted by ourselves and others regularly recently around the village with his wheelbarrow and tools. Thank you!!

We have removed weeding from Cllr. Kraft's list of outstanding actions.