

# Selkirk Hill Management Group: AGM and conversation June 2023

Draft - for circulation and ratification at the next Selkirk Hill AGM

## Minute Sheet

**Important:** *The information recorded in these minutes is not a verbatim account of the views of any person present at the meeting rather than a memorandum of the business discussed.*

Date:	<b>28 June 2023</b>
Time/ Venue:	1800 hrs. @ Victoria Halls, Selkirk Hill
Present:	Cllr Leigh Douglas, Ian King, Grant Kinghorn, Gordon Edgar, Alistair Patullo, Judith Thompson, Sandy Smith, John Hawkins, David Playfair, Barbara Harvie, John Rathie, Alistair Stuart, Andy Murray
Apologies:	Campbell Dempster (Hill Warden)

		<b>Action</b>

### 1 Chair's Report

The AGM opened with the Chair welcoming everyone and then delivering her report:  
Chair's Report - AGM – 28th June 2023

“Selkirk Hill Management Group

I must start by confessing that, prior to being advised post-election that I was to chair this committee, I had absolutely no idea that a Selkirk Hill Management group existed! This many might find surprising as I have lived in and around Selkirk my whole life. Any concerns I had upon appointment of chair (and believe you me there were many!) were quickly resolved when our vice-chair Ian King, very kindly suggested we meet informally at the Peony Rose so that he might better acquaint me with the functioning, scope and objectives of this group. What I learnt on that day enthused me immensely. Ian's passion and commitment for the group to continue to deliver on its key objectives were clear and I think its worth us reminding ourselves of the groups commitment to the hill here now:

- Maintaining the boundaries, character and integrity of The Selkirk Hill on behalf of the people of Selkirk.
- Preserving the freedoms of access and enjoyment historically and currently enjoyed by the
- people of Selkirk, and all others having a desire to appreciate the qualities of natural countryside.
- Carrying out such works to maintain The Selkirk Hill in its current natural state.
- Planning and carry out projects intended to add to the amenity on Selkirk Hill.
- Protecting The Selkirk Hill and its boundaries from encroachment, misuse or misappropriation.
- Conserving the natural flora and wildlife habitat of The Selkirk Hill as a form of tended heathland by seeking only to balance what is present against the requirements of those using The Selkirk Hill.

Last summer, Campbell very kindly led a number of us (new and returning committee members) round the hill to familiarize ourselves with all areas and indeed pick up on some of the areas we might as a group like to focus our attention on. What I found almost overwhelming was Campbell's depth of passion and knowledge of the flora and wildlife and indeed just the general terrain, leaving us all in absolutely no doubt our hill was in very safe hands under his watch!

I feel we have collectively delivered on a number of objectives over this last year and would like to reflect on some of the highlights here now, whilst consciously not repeating the great work done and covered by our warden in his report.

- Installation of four new ‘slow signs’ to enhance the safety of our walkers and golfers as they cross the busy A699.
- New collaborative working arrangement with the High School to enable a beginners’ mountain biking group to use the hill for confidence building. This is very much a new situation for the Hill Group and it would be remiss of me not to mention generated some reservation and concern amongst some group members. I am pleased to report that, to date, reports back from our warden are that the collaboration seems to be working well. I remain optimistic that this will continue to be the case and that a further benefit of this arrangement might be that the exposure of young people to the hill enables them to start acknowledging the further reaching benefits the hill provides, beyond the gentle undulating terrain to enable their confidence to build up on a bike. We know our footfall is not great, and predominantly of an older generation so I feel anything to encourage young locals to come up onto enjoy the hill, in a respectful manner, should be encouraged.
- Successful application and receipt of a £10,000 grant from the Selkirk Common Good fund for 2023.
- Successful SBC grant application to enable the purchase of a new lawn mower.

Noting financial uplifts our group has received, leads me nicely on to thank our treasurer, Judith. I think it is easy to underestimate the amount of work Judith does behind the scenes to keep us on the straight and narrow financially, I shudder to think where we would be without her sterling guidance – pardon the pun! Thank you, Judith!

It feels only right and proper that I conclude my report by thanking Gordon Edgar. Gordon is undoubtedly a stalwart member of the group, on so many occasions having provided us with much needed clarity of direction and demonstrating an unparalleled knowledge of the hill now and in the past. Thank you very much Gordon and I do hope you are planning to stay on this committee in this coming year – we need your expertise and knowledge!

Finally, I just want to thank you all for making me feel so welcome and I look forward to continue to working with you all going forward.

CLlr Leigh Douglas”

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**Treasurer’s Report:**

Hill Group Treasurer’s Report – AGM– 28.06.23

Wages and petrol – higher than 2021-22 but that was lower than previous years – possibly depends on which financial year payments fall.

In future I will record separately Campbell’s expenses and his hours

Materials and maintenance – Oakwood Tree services £216, tree removal; John Rathie £103.20, work at Skating Pond

Insurance – allowed policy to lapse, covered by CC

Other - £500 borrowed from Blooming Selkirk and repaid

Selkirk Hill Management Group  
Accounts for Year 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023

2021 - 22	Income	2022-23
£		£
10,000.00	SBC Common Good	10,000.00
0.00	Other income	500.00
0.93	Interest	8.86
<b>10,000.93</b>		<b>10,508.86</b>
	Expenditure	
9,085.95	Wages & petrol	12,299.56
0.00	Materials/maintenance	319.20
254.90	Insurance	0.00
0.00	Independent examiner	80.00
	Other	500.00
<b>9,340.85</b>		<b>13,198.76</b>
660.08	Surplus/defecit	-2,689.90
9588.29	Opening Balance	10,248.27
10,248.27	Closing balance	7,558.37
<b>10,248.27</b>	Bank Balance	<b>7,558.37</b>

Independent examiner's report

I have examined the books and records of Selkirk Community Council Hill Management Group for the year ended 30th April 2023 from which these accounts have been prepared.

In my opinion they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the group for the year.

*Vivien Ross*

Vivien Ross  
Independent examiner  
Selkirk

21/4/2023

Treasurer

**Question:** IK asked if dates could be provided as to when the SBC monies were recorded as being received into the Hill bank account. This would help inform the Group as to the time delay between SBC Committee approval and actual receipt - which could be important when we are ordering equipment or paying for work done.

Judith and Viv (Auditor) were both thanked for their help and assistance.

**3 Warden's Report 2023**

for the Selkirk Hill Management Group

**"Paths**

The main network of paths continue to be mowed and or strimmed and foliage cut back from path edges to maintain unobstructed access. A number of smaller connecting paths are also cut. Path cutting is presently behind schedule but the recent acquisition of the new mower has already been a great benefit and will enable the work to be brought up to date over the next few weeks.

Strimming is carried out around the numerous seats, benches, walkboards, gates and picnic tables around the hill.

In the spring, all sets of steps were sprayed with Roundup (glyphosate) along with some larger areas of willow herb.

**Maintenance**

- Last year some large scale gorse cutting was carried out along several paths where access was becoming restricted.
- A new field gate has been situated at the corner entrance to the hill near the 5th green.

- More gravel has been laid on the path at the wet area behind the Caulks Well. A large kerb stone was also situated above the burn for public safety and to help contain the gravel.
- Where required, wood treatment has been carried out on several walk-boards and the benches at the Knowe (pronounced The Now) viewpoint.
- Some painting has been required at the shelter to cover up some offensive messages and symbols.
- In the winter a number of drainage ditches were cleared out to prevent path flooding.
- A new field gate is now required at the entrance to the Hill, near the Dean burn bridge.

### **Litter**

Litter picking remains a constant requirement especially in and around parking areas, along some fairway edges and the Pot Loch path. The teenage party activity at the shelter has reduced significantly over the last couple of years, with only the occasional clean up required. Hopefully this trend will continue as, apart from the obvious visual impact of the rubbish, the broken glass is a hazard which poses a threat to dogs and the public and is very time consuming to remove thoroughly, especially from the surrounding grass.

### **General**

- Susan Gray of the Countryside Ranger Service has kindly paid for an order of new timber for the hill. This was as a result of a site visit we had in early May, when we identified several seats, benches and bridges that required some renewal or repair. It also included the new field gate (previously mentioned). The work to replace a number of broken, lost or rotten beams and slats is currently being carried out.
- Susan also initiated the procurement and installation of the two new information boards now found on the Hill. They include a brief history of Selkirk Hill and colourfully illustrate some of the flora and fauna that can be found. They were installed by the Ranger Service/ Path Wardens.
- The Hill was used over a few days in May by some large groups of 1st year mountain bikers. These sessions were well organised and supervised and certainly appeared to be successful and an enjoyable experience for all those involved. The sunny dry conditions were ideal as it was part of the High School Exodus activities week.
- Regarding the sheep grazing, I spoke to the farmer (Bill Rutter) and requested that he let me know prior to the sheep going on the Hill later in the year to allow me time to put up signs to inform the public.

### **Acknowledgements**

Susan Gray - For providing the new timber for the Hill and for the new information boards.

John Rathe and Sandy Smith - For all the repair, restoration and maintenance work carried out at the Skating pond and at Curries fountain.

Gordon MacGregor - For the hill paths that he cuts.

Rory Dempster - For installing the new field gate.

Gordon Edgar - For providing the kerb stone and slabs, the loan of equipment and for general advice concerning the Hill.

Leagh Douglas - For work done to help complete the process required to attain the new mower and her work in getting the new safety signs for the St. Boswells road.

- Campbell Dempster"

Campbell's report was accepted and approved

Cllr Douglas announced that she did not intend to stand for or would not accept a nomination for office in the Group.

After discussion, when it was agreed the post was open to anyone from the Selkirk community, nominations were called for, as follows:

**Post of Chairperson:**  
both John Hawkins and Gordon Edgar were proposed. John then withdrew and Gordon was appointed unanimously.

**Post of Vice Chairman:**  
both John Hawkins and Ian King were proposed. John then withdrew and Ian was appointed unanimously.

**Post of Treasurer:**  
Gordon explained the background to the post (in context with its separation from the Community Council) and Judith then agreed to continue in her role. This was unanimously approved.

**Post of Secretary:**  
IK agreed to continue taking notes of the monthly conversations as before, with Gordon dealing with other secretarial matters. This was unanimously approved.

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**Gordon Edgar as newly elected Chair, took over the remainder of the meeting.**

**AOCB:**

John Hawkins asked about a previous suggestion that wider support for the Hill be encouraged through the formation of a 'Friends of Selkirk Hill' group.  
Gordon responded by confirming that he was keen to widen interest and agreed to look at ways to widen the composition / membership of the Hill Group.

GE

**Constitution:**

It was noted that a 'signed' Constitution had not been located. It was agreed that the existing document/ text be reviewed and that any potential alterations would then be discussed and formalised as appropriate. Thereafter, a 'signed' copy would be put safely on record.  
(a copy of the existing Constitution is attached below).

ALL

**Caulks Well:**

Ian mentioned the ongoing drainage situation in the area of the Caulks Well/ approach to 2<sup>nd</sup> Tee. There being no Golf Club representation present, the matter was carried over to a future meeting.

**Hill Grazing:**

David queried the grazing arrangements with the local farmer. Gordon agreed to follow this up and to confirm whether the contract was being fully carried out. It was also generally agreed that better signage is required to advise/ warn the public during times of grazing.

GE

John also expressed his view that current grazing methods are not adequate/ efficient. He suggested additional fencing and the possible introduction of cattle grazing. Gordon commented that the present arrangements were all as previously recommended by DEFRA. He agreed to seek an update from them to confirm whether any change might be appropriate.

GE

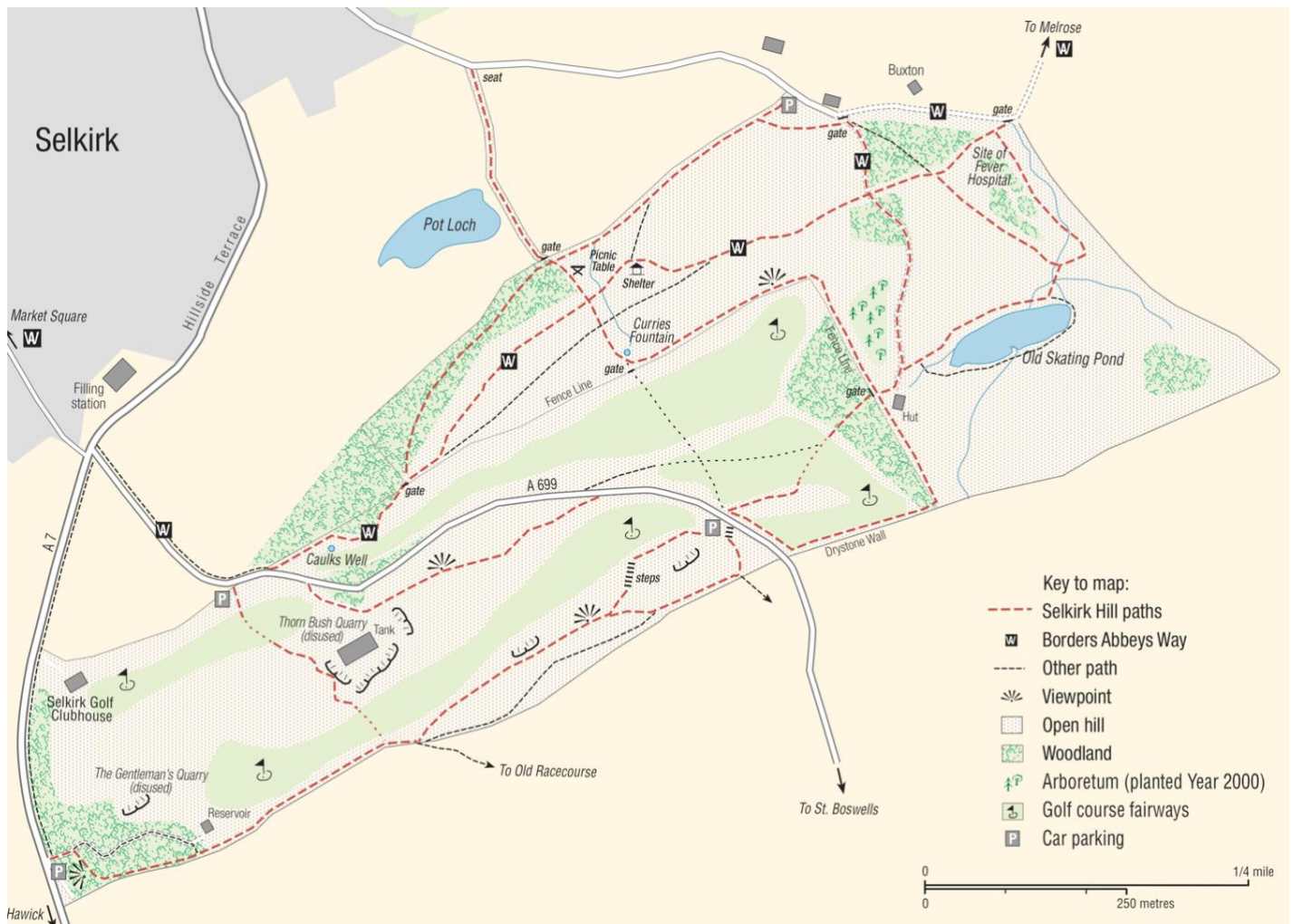
Gordon thanked everyone for attending and looked forward to a constructive community future for the Hill!

6 Closure:-  
the meeting closed at 0645

**Next Conversation:** Agreed that there would be no meeting in July and meetings will continue thereafter as from 1st Wednesday of each month @ 6pm – with everyone from the Selkirk community welcome to attend.  
viz. **1800 on Wednesday 02 August 2023 – at Victoria Halls.**

All

IK  
09 July 2023



20/08/04  
CONSTITUTION  
of  
The Selkirk Hill Management Group

**NAME**

The Selkirk Hill Management Group.

**OBJECTS**

The objects of the Selkirk Hill Management Group are to:

- (i) Maintain the boundaries, character and integrity of The Selkirk Hill on behalf of the people of Selkirk.
- (ii) Preserve the freedoms of access and enjoyment historically and currently enjoyed by the people of Selkirk, and all others having a desire to appreciate the qualities of natural countryside.
- (iii) Carry out such works to maintain The Selkirk Hill in its current natural state.
- (iv) To plan and carry out projects intended to add to the amenity on Selkirk Hill.
- (v) To protect The Selkirk Hill and its boundaries from encroachment, misuse or misappropriation.
- (vi) To conserve the natural flora and wildlife habitat of The Selkirk Hill as a form of tended heath-land by seeking only to balance what is present against the requirements of those using The Selkirk Hill.

**POWERS**

In pursuance of the objects, The Selkirk Hill Management Group shall have the following powers:-

- a) To purchase, borrow, take on lease, hire or otherwise acquire any equipment which is suitable for The Selkirk Hill Management Group activities.
- b) To take such steps as may be deemed appropriate for the purpose of raising funds for The Selkirk Hill Management Group activities.
- c) To invest any funds which are not immediately required for The Selkirk Hill Management Group activities in such investments as may be considered appropriate (and to dispose of, and vary, such investments).
- d) To seek funding for The Selkirk Hill Management Group activities.
- e) To accept grants, donations and legacies of all kinds (and to accept any reasonable conditions attaching to them).
- f) To take, on lease, or construct any accommodation necessary for the furtherance of the aims of The Selkirk Hill Management Group.
- g) To liaise with other voluntary sector bodies, local authorities, UK or Scottish government departments, agencies or other bodies, all with a view to furthering The Selkirk Hill Management Group aims.
- h) To employ such staff or consultants as may be required by The Selkirk Hill Management Group from time to time.
- i) To do anything which may be incidental or conducive to the furtherance of any of The Selkirk Hill Management Group aims.

**MEMBERSHIP**

Membership shall be open to

- (a) Any person above the age of 16 years, being a resident of or born within the Royal Burgh of Selkirk.
- (b) Any person following a profession associated with the objects, aims and activities of the Selkirk Hill Management Group.
- (c) Any person at the invitation of the Selkirk Hill Management Group who by virtue of qualification or other skill can bring enlightenment or assistance to the objects of the Selkirk Hill Management Group.

- (d) Any person serving as a representative of any body, club or association having an interest of any kind relevant to The Selkirk Hill or any function thereof.
- (e) Any person owning or occupying property adjacent to The Selkirk Hill.
- (f) Serving members of the Scottish Borders Council and Selkirk Community Council.

#### **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

- a) The Selkirk Hill Management Group shall be managed by a Committee to be elected at the Annual General Meeting.
- b) The Committee shall consist of a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer (The Officers) and not more than eight other members. Four of which will be ex-officio members – one representative each from Selkirk Golf Club, Selkirk Rifle Club, Scottish Natural Heritage and Scottish Borders Ranger Service.
- c) If vacancies occur among the Officers, the Committee shall have the power to fill them from among its members.
- d) The Committee may co-opt up to three full members of The Selkirk Hill Management Group to serve on the Committee until the next Annual General Meeting.
- e) All members of the Committee shall retire from office at the Annual General Meeting following the date on which they came into office but they may be re-elected.

#### **COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

- a) The Committee shall hold at least six ordinary meetings each year, with four of those meetings regarded as quarterly or formal meetings.
- b) There shall be a quorum when at least three members of the Committee, are present at a formal meeting. An informal meeting may proceed with an attendance of two or more members.
- c) Every matter shall be determined by a majority of the members of the Committee present and voting. In the case of equality of votes the Chairman shall have a second or casting vote.
- d) Minutes shall be kept as a record of the proceedings of the meetings of the Committee and any of its sub-committees.

#### **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

- a) There shall be an Annual General Meeting to be held within three months of the end of the Association's financial year. Members shall be given at least 14 days notice.
- b) The Committee shall present the report and accounts of The Selkirk Hill Management Group for the preceding year.
- c) Nominations for election to the Committee must be made by members of The Selkirk Hill Management Group in writing before commencement of the meeting. This condition may be waived at the discretion of the Chairman.
- d) A Chairman's Report and Balance Sheet will be submitted and thereafter presented to Scottish Borders Council.

#### **GENERAL AND SPECIAL MEETINGS**

The Committee may at any time call a general or a special general meeting of The Selkirk Hill Management Group stating the business to be discussed. The Secretary of the Committee may also call a Special General Meeting if a written request is received from at least 10 members. At least 14 days notice shall be given for a Special General Meeting.



**FINANCE**

- a) All monies raised by or on behalf of The Selkirk Hill Management Group shall be applied to further the aims of the Selkirk Hill Management Group and for no other purpose.
- b) The funds of The Selkirk Hill Management Group including all donations, contributions and bequests shall be paid into an account operated by the Committee in the name of The Selkirk Hill Management Group at such bank as the Committee shall from time to time decide.
- c) The Officers will be designated as signatories to all financial transactions and any transaction over £30.00 (Thirty Pounds) must be signed by two Officers.
- d) The Committee shall comply with the current legislation for trustees with regard to the keeping of accounts , the preparation of an annual statement of account and the independent examination of the statements of account.

**J. AMENDMENTS**

Any amendments to the constitution shall require the approval of a two-thirds majority of those present and voting at the General Meeting at which it is discussed. Any resolution for the amendment of the constitution must be in the possession of the Secretary at least 14 days before the meeting at which the resolution is to be brought forward.

**L. DISSOLUTION**

- a) The Selkirk Hill Management Group may be dissolved at a Special General Meeting called for that purpose and must be advertised 14 days before the meeting.
- b) Such proposals to dissolve The Selkirk Hill Management Group shall take effect only if agreed by a two-thirds majority of members present and voting at the meeting.
- c) Surplus funds of The Selkirk Hill Management Group, if it is dissolved, shall be given or transferred to such other charitable institution or voluntary organisation having similar aims as the members of The Selkirk Hill Management Group may determine or failing that to Scottish Borders Council.

This is certified as a true copy of the constitution of Selkirk Hill Management Group adopted on .....

Signed by:

.....

Chairman

of .....

.....

Secretary

of .....