

Peebles & District Community Council

Chairman's Report - August 2024

1.0 Peebles Town Action Plan (Place Planning)

The draft place plan and town action plan is still under review.

2.0 NHS – Community Hospitals Review

Recent scheduled meetings have been cancelled due to a variety of reasons. However, the public has continued to raise concerns over the refusal to provide minor injury services at Haylodge and more recently the difficulty parking when visiting the hospital or more importantly when attending a GP appointment.

Minor Injury Cover

We have had reports of parents with injured children and of more than one elderly person who had fallen in the grounds of the community hospital being turned away and then told to go untreated to BGH. When this writer raised this subject some weeks ago, Dr Tim Young (NHS Borders Director) indicated that he had read the PCC article in Peebles Life and that the subject should be subject to further discussion. This of course indicates a willingness to review and not necessarily for a potential change of policy. However, since then, the writer has noted no visible action and wonders if there is any progress at all. The feedback from the public indicates an increasing level of anger with each new incident.

The writer's view - Most members of the public, when confronted with an injured person will try to help, until professional help is available if it is needed. It is a basic tenet of humanity or should be, that we will all of us provide help to those in need. For the very people who are trained, to turn away an injured person is iniquitous – morally wrong. Surely, it cannot be that the nurses and doctors, who presumably joined the profession through a desire to make a difference think that this is the right policy. How difficult is it to cover a wound and then send the injured person to BGH, if required? This policy is morally bankrupt and needs to be changed now. However, one doesn't hold out much hope. The website still states that minor injury cover is provided and this after management was informed months ago of the error.

Parking at Haylodge

A complaint from a member of the public was received about parking at Haylodge that detailed how all the spaces were taken including the disabled spaces, although to be fair the disabled spaces were seen to turnover. The letter also identified at least one staff member who was parked long term in the adjacent car park. After taking up this issue with the NHS, we received the following response.

Peebles & District Community Council

Chairman's Report - August 2024

Dear Ms Snoddy

Please accept our apologies for the delay in responding to your email of 10 July 2024.

We have been in touch with Mr Robin Cleat, Assistant Service Manager, Primary & Community Services, Scottish Borders Health & Social Care Partnership and he would like me to thank you for raising this with us on behalf of a patient and asked that we share his response with you as noted below:

We understand that patients want easy access to health centres and community hospitals, particularly if they are not as mobile. Hay Lodge is a busy site, shared by the community hospital, GP practices and health board services. Many teams also use this site as their community base within Peebles (offices and equipment storage). There is competition for the 40 – 50 spaces on site, the majority of which are at the front of the building. Given the number of services using the building, there is a high turnover of patients through the car park, but we acknowledge that staff also use these spaces. The car park is there to serve staff and patients. While there are designated spaces for GPs, consultants and community nurses, many other staff groups also work on this site and require somewhere to park – without these staff we would not be able to provide services or treat patients. Many staff do not live locally, travel a distance to work and require somewhere to park. Many staff using Hay Lodge as a base are often in and out throughout the day and asking them to park elsewhere and walk a distance each time would not be practical. Unfortunately, we are not in a position to extend the current car park or employ a parking attendant. Administration staff sometimes challenge inappropriate parking by staff or patients but often receive indifference or abuse. We will send an e-mail to staff, encouraging them to park elsewhere (the public car park along the road), take public transport or walk.

Kind regards

Susan Hogg

Patient Experience Coordinator

Clinical Governance & Quality

NHS Borders

BGH

Melrose

The writer would comment as follows. The member of the public raised the important point that there are many patients who have mobility issues for all sorts of reasons and observed that this is unlikely to be the case with staff. When faced with a lack of parking at the Health Centre myself, this writer parks in the public car park less than two hundred yards away. In both the public and private sectors there are many organisations that provide separate staff parking, or indeed no staff parking at all and many of the latter don't have the benefit of a free public car park close by. In more than one past employment, the writer did not live locally, travelled a distance to work and required somewhere to park and had to pay for his parking in the nearest public car park. That's life! Taking up the last item in the response. [Administration staff sometimes challenge inappropriate parking by staff or patients but often receive indifference or abuse.](#) If staff have been abusive or indifferent to admin staff, then they should be disciplined.

3.0 Tweeddale Area Partnership

Next Meeting 20 August – Otherwise nothing new and presently no agenda posted.

Peebles & District Community Council

Chairman's Report - August 2024

4.0 Baptist Church Hall – Cleland Site

The presentation by Jennifer Misak at the July meeting was generally seen as a positive step forward and we await further progress reports with interest.

5.0 Meetings Attended This Month

11.07.24	PCC Meeting
19.07.24	Meeting with Councillor Pirone
31.07.24	Pre-meeting meeting

6.0 Working party on non-financial support to community councils

No change – SBC are apparently still working on it.

7.0 Peebles Youth

As it stands at this time, the progress made by our previous chair, Les Turnbull, our own member Malcolm Bruce, member of the public Iain Gibson and others is likely to be ended. This would be a tragedy. We need to see a new leader or leaders to be visible, to generate ideas and to provide the leadership needed. We also need a replacement for Lennox.

8.0 Live Borders

Recent concern was expressed regarding the opening times of the library and of the Peebles swimming pool. The swimming pool times, and some comparisons are below. Everywhere reviewed has a better timetable. It is also understood that some facilities at the pool are broken and not thought to be scheduled for repair. Live Borders are in danger of creating a self-fulfilling prophecy. They reduce the quality and make it more difficult to access at times suitable to the public and the public stop going. Finally, someone says there is no demand, and it is not commercially viable. This must not be allowed to happen, and a review is needed.

Sunday	Closes 12:30
Monday	Closes 21:00
Tuesday	Closes 20:30
Wednesday	Closes 18:30
Thursday	Closes 17:30
Friday	Closes 19:00
Saturday	Closes 12:30

Berwick upon Tweed	Closes 22:00
Wooler	Closes 22:00

Peebles & District Community Council

Chairman's Report - August 2024

Inverurie	Mon to Thurs 06:15 to 21:30, Fri to 20:30, Sun 09:00 to 15:00, Sat 09:00 to 15:00
Fort William	Closes 21:00, Friday 20:30, Sat/Sun 15:00
Lanark	Closes 21:30, Friday 20:00, Sat/sun 16:00

It is a similar picture with Peebles library. However, in this case the trustees of the Chambers Institution Trust, i.e. the elected councillors have a strong responsibility for ensuring that William Chambers' legacy is protected.

Opening times in Peebles are mostly 10:00 to 15:00 except Thursday until 17:00 and closed Sunday. Closing at 15:00 precludes visits from primary school children after school. Literacy is linked to reading and the other libraries reviewed make access easier.

Fort William		Berwick Upon Tweed	Inverurie
Monday	10:00 to 20:00	09:00 to 17:00 (5 days)	Closed
Tuesday	10:00 to 18:00		09:00 to 17:30
Wednesday	10:00 to 13:00		09:00 to 17:30
Thursday	10:00 to 20:00		10:00 to 19:00
Friday	10:00 to 18:00		Closed
Saturday	10:00 to 13:00	10:00 to 17:00	10:00 to 14:00

9.0 Electoral Roll

From a recent email from our secretary.

I spoke with Alison of Peebles Library just now. SBC have at last supplied the library with the up-to-date Electoral Roll but only as an electronic version. SBC for some reason won't send the library a paper version. The electronic version is on the library staff's work computers, so it is inappropriate for me to access it. Alison was perfectly nice about the situation and offered to check up a couple of names for me. But of course, we're looking for 40+ names. So, it looks like a car journey to St Boswell's to look at a paper version. How frustrating. This exercise is to ensure that we know the owners of each garden to inscribe the certificates correctly. People die, people move away - it would be awful if we made an error.

Apparently, libraries do not receive a copy as a matter of course and must ask SBC for a copy. The electoral roll is a public document and should therefore be freely available to the public. What is the use of it being supplied in a form that is unavailable? Do SBC really expect someone to drive a 40 mile return journey to access the electoral roll?

Peter Maudsley
Chair

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Chairman's Report - August 2024

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