Floors, Makerstoun, Nenthorn & Smailholm Community Council
Minutes of meeting on 6th October 2026

Apologies

There were apologies from one Community Councillor

Minutes of Meeting on 2nd June 2026

None were presented. Since our secretary has been indisposed we have not properly recorded minutes. This has impacted our meetings in April and June 2026. Since the June meeting our secretary has resigned as he has moved away from the area. It was agreed that members of the CC would take minutes by rotation. We also agreed to the use of recording devices to aid in minute taking.

Matters Arising

As discussed above our previous secretary has moved away from the area and so can no longer be a Community Councillor. George Boath has been acting as secretary over recent month and kindly agreed to be nominated as Secretary. This was unanimously supported by all present.

Finance

Andy Carter presented a summary financial update prepared by Philip Green. Our current balance is £1696.11, plus £24,247.79 held on behalf of the Smailholm Paths Project.

Reports

Police – These have been circulated previously. It is noted that some incidents (road accident in Coldstream, river incidents in Makerstoun do not appear in the reports even though police were present and these were serious incidents. George to invite police to attend a meeting in early 2027, and ask them to focus on rural crime.

Scottish Borders Council – Euan presented a number of items;

- It is hoped that significant repairs can be made to the Smailholm/Brotherstone road early in the next financial year
- Work will shortly commence to improve the situation where the footpath ends at the south end of the Smailholm main road. This will include removal of vegetation and soil beside the church wall so there is a safe refuge here, and tidying up the end of the footpath opposite so that wheelchair users can get off the path in relative safety.
- Review of Community Councils. The part 1 report has been circulated and includes assistance that SBC can provide. Part 2 will be reviewed in November and is expected to include a significant increase in the CC grant.
- SBC is currently setting the budget for next year, which again looks like being challenging.
- The Scottish Government have set our ambitious plans for public sector reform, all of which would see the Borders area losing control over the way decisions that affect our area are made. This appears to be part of the longer term Scottish Government trend to centralisation. They have set a very short (three month) consultation period. These changes will have an impact on next May's council elections, but the Scottish Government has siad that the elections will proceed regardless.

Andy asked what the councils views were on new Pylon routes and Data Centres. Euan stated that there are 32 proposals for new data centres in Scotland, most of which have serious shortcomings. The main issue is that Scotland can produce 25GW of electricity, but only uses 5-6 at peak. This imbalance attracts energy hungry data centres, as well as requiring new export infrastructure. The main concern of the Community Council is that there needs to be integrated planning for these major projects, which avoids

unnecessary development of Agricultural and Wild Land. Ian Topping asked if anything could be done to address current heating oil prices, as this have been excluded from the energy price cap. Euan suggested that we write to our MP about this issue. Ian also asked if more SBC staff were returning to work in the office. Recent experience suggests that phone calls are not being answered if a message is left it is ignored. Euan accepted that this was his experience as well, and that some central departments of the council have very few staff but current performance is not as good as expected.

Smaiholm Paths

Susan reported that the first part of the Smailholm path network has been completed and is looking really smart. She then highlighted three areas, maintenance, planning applications and wider connections. The path project are in the process of buying a ride on bush cutter which will be used to maintain the paths. This will also be used to create new grass paths along routes agreed with Mellerstain. If sufficiently used these routes could later be surfaced as with the phase 1 paths. However these paths would require planning permission before they could be surfaces, and the project team is looking in to how this can be done. When complete the team will create a map showing which paths are in operation.

Roads

Eden Road – need to identify a person to fund raise to get Eden road work completed

Nenthorn Bridge – Andy to write to SBC Roads team to look at what can be done to calm north-bound traffic as the approach the bridge, There have been a number of incidents recently where north bound traffic has not given way as per signage. There was a discussion about improved signage and road markings. Finally sighlines are currently diminished owing to vegetation (trees) – this too will be passed to the roads team.

Courthill Road – This road really is not suitable for the heavy HGV usage. Andy to write to roads team and ask if this route could closed to HGV's.

Makerstoun – Euan agreed ask about progress on the requested passing places signage around Makerstoun.

Planning - No updates

AOCB

Floors estate. Andy asked about the pedestrian access to the estate for those that lived there. Historically they have been able to walk out of the estate by a number of routes, but recent comments seem to suggest that they should only use the north gate. Andy will write to the factor to ask what the policy is.

Resilient Communities Coordinator. Ian Topping has been doing this for a number of years and is concerned about holiday cover and being able to cover the whole FMNS area. We agreed that Ian Malcolm and Andy Carter will support Ian Topping, and that Ian will arrange a new FMNS email address for the Resilient Communities Coordinator which will forward emails to all three people

Squirrels. It was noted that Grey squirrels appear to becoming more numerous, and that is some instances they are also becoming more aggressive.

Future Meetings

January 5th 2027
April 6th 2027
June 1st 2027
October 5th 2027

All to be held at 19:00 in Smailholm Village Hall