

Sandness & Walls Community Council

Chair:
Jane Haswell
07585 152408
haswelljane@aol.com



Clerk:
Gill Nadin
01595 810249
sandnesswallsccl@gmail.com

Draft minutes of the hybrid meeting of the Sandness and Walls Community Council (SWCC) held at Walls Hall on Tuesday 4th August 2026 at 7:00pm

Present: Members - Jane Haswell, David Sinclair, Haydn Robertson, Sorley Johnston, Andy Holt (online), Jane Puckey (online)
Cllr Liz Peterson (online)
Clerk - Gill Nadin (online)

Apologies: Jonathan Laing, Angie Nichols, Michael Duncan

1. Chair's welcome

Jane Haswell chaired the meeting and welcomed everyone present.

2. Declaration of interest – to be declared in relation to each item.

3. Police report - April/May report received. No comments or queries.

4. Previous minutes and actions

Adoption of minutes from 2nd June 2026 was proposed by S Johnston and seconded by J Haswell.

The Clerk and Chair confirmed that all actions had been completed, except:
Re. 6.2 of 6/26 – still to reply to Sandwick CC

Action: Clerk will reply to Sandwick CC after funding proposals finalised.

Re. 13 of 6/26 – Papa Stour defibrillator to be registered (West Burrafirth defib completed)

Action: Clerk to get information on Papa Stour defibs to enable registration

5. Matters arising not on agenda

5.1 *Re. 14 of 6/26 - Active Travel update*

No further update received to date, although the holiday period may have impacted this. The members requested that this be followed up for another progress report before the next meeting.

Action: Clerk will contact Robina Barton for an update.

5.2 *Re. 8.1 of 03/26 Papa Stour cattle grid*

This has now been repaired

6. Correspondence not on agenda

- 6.1 A thank you letter was received for the donation of £250 from First Responder, Samantha Belokon-Dennis. A Nicols attended on behalf of SWCC for a photo which appeared in a recent press release.
- 6.2 Island Communities Place Programme - aims to ensure island communities have the knowledge, confidence and support to engage with planning processes. Members agreed that information posters could be displayed to inform the community. J Haswell emphasised that some of the upcoming local training for CC members will be of value regarding planning.

Action: Clerk to obtain posters and arrange for their display. Clerk to re-send information on Community Council training programme.

- 6.3 Community Development Officers - update
 - a. Laurie Clubb has taken on the role of Community Involvement & Development Officer for Scalloway, Burra, Trondra, Foula and Lerwick.
 - b. Leah Colyer has left the post of Community Involvement & Development Officer for West Mainland, Central Mainland, Whalsay and Papa Stour. This post will be vacant until a replacement is recruited. Meantime, Community Development providing support where possible. They are looking to assign someone to support the Walls Swimming Pool group shortly. Ana Horne is currently supporting the Gruting Hall and the Islands with Small Population work in Papa Stour. Any other groups looking for support, should email the SWCC Clerk in the first instance.

7 Finance report

The finance report was circulated before the meeting. No queries were raised, and members approved the report.

- 7.1 Bank account closure issues.

The Bank of Scotland (BoS) account was finally closed in mid July and all monies transferred to Virgin Bank. As BoS had stated there were no signature mandates for the account, new signatures were submitted before closure could be actioned. Funds in the new Virgin account were too low to pay suppliers for a short time. A complaint was raised and it became clear from phone calls with BoS that it was a system issue within the bank. The issue arose due to IT system incompatibility when BoS merged with Lloyds Bank years ago. £100 has been received from BoS in compensation for the issues encountered.

Anecdotal reports locally suggest several groups are having similar issues with BoS Charity accounts. It was agreed that the Clerk will write to our MSP to highlight the issues raised in the hope that this will assist other groups.

Action: Clerk to write to MSP regarding issues with BoS account closure

7.2 Accounts

Independent examination of the SWCC accounts for 1st April 2025 - 31st March 2026 was completed by VAS and forwarded to the members ahead of the meeting. There were no queries and they were approved by A Holt and seconded by D Sinclair. The accounts will now be sent to M Duncan for checking.

Action: Accounts to be sent to M Duncan

8 Roads – weekly reports were forwarded.

All previous roads issues now logged on SIC online system as previously agreed, and Clerk is monitoring these issues.

Members felt that some areas were still in need of passing place signs, although some have been installed recently. Any examples should be reported to the Clerk (with a grid reference or What3Words) and she will then request from the Roads Department via online reporting.

Action: Members to report to Clerk for online reporting

D Sinclair reported that a cattle grid sign on Dale o Waas road is lying on the floor.

Action: Clerk to report online

Neil Hutcheson is planning to attend September SWCC meeting. Although any outstanding issues can be discussed with him, winter planning will be a significant topic for discussion.

9 Planning and licencing

Notification of an Application for Variation of Premises Licence for Walls Hall to include an outside drinking area and televised sport was received on June 30th. The closing date for objections or representations was 20th July. J Haswell informed the meeting that unlike planning no extensions for CC response are possible beyond the 21 days from publication. It was felt the changes would support the hall which the CC support.

10 Councillor's reports

Cllr Peterson advised that due to the summer recess, there was little to update on at present. There will be a campaign soon trying to encourage people to stand for the next SIC elections in May 2027. Cllr Peterson is happy to speak with anyone interested in this.

Discussions followed on the need for more community involvement and communication from the SIC, especially about budgetary priorities, as potentially difficult decisions are required to reduce the funding gap.

11 Funding applications

11.1 Proposals from informal meeting on 7th July 2026

Notes from 7th July were sent to the members ahead of this meeting and are attached as Appendix 1 to these minutes. The proposals were agreed.

The SWCC grant application forms are based on a standard template from M Duncan, and any amendments will need to be approved by him.

Action: Clerk to implement proposals as per meeting notes from 7th July, liaising with M Duncan regarding the forms.

11.2 War memorials

J Haswell had contacted the SIC to check who is responsible for the upkeep and weeding of war memorials. The SIC cut the grass if appropriate, but do not undertake any required weeding. A volunteer is currently doing the weeding in Walls and happy to continue. J Haswell had also contacted the Criminal Justice team who organise unpaid work, to request painting and general upkeep of the Walls War Memorial but had not heard back. It was suggested that The Bridges Project may also be appropriate for such work.

Members agreed to continue funding Remembrance Day wreaths for the war memorials in the area if requested – Walls, Sandness, Gruting, West Burrafirth, Papa Stour and Foula. The Clerk will contact appropriate individuals in each locality and arrange to purchase and distribute wreaths as required before November.

Action: Clerk will arrange wreaths as appropriate and follow up with Bridges Project and Criminal Justice.

- ## 11.3 SCBF application Tier 2 - CGS0081 - Walls Marina Users Association (WMUA)
- Application was for Phase 1 (feasibility study) of a project to improve the navigation channel and add new berths. £6000 was requested as part of the Phase 1 costs. Members wished to see the project succeed but there was concern that unless the WMUA had a reasonable idea of where potential funding may be available for the significant Phase 2 and 3 costs, any money at this stage would be of no real value. Following detailed discussions, the members agreed that it was not possible to offer the full amount requested as this is almost the whole SWCC SCBF allocation for the year. Members also needed reassurance that potential funding streams had been identified for the remainder of the project, whilst acknowledging this could not be guaranteed. They agreed to support the application with an offer of £3000, conditional on an acceptable response from WMUA as to potential future funding options having been identified.

Action: Clerk to respond to SCBF with conditional offer

The discussions highlighted the issue that the information contained in the application was inadequate to enable a final decision to be made. It was agreed that all future SCBF applications will be forwarded to members for review on receipt, with an understanding that where possible, any questions arising can potentially be asked ahead of the meeting in which the application will be considered. For some applications where queries arise it might be appropriate to invite the applicant to clarify points and this could be considered in advance.

11.4 Community Council grant application – Sandness Film Club

S Johnston and H Robertson declared an interest in this item and left the room for this discussion.

The application was for £300 to support the Film Club winter programme, including a children's' film. The members agreed this was a very worthwhile community project and were keen to support it.

Action: Clerk to liaise with applicant, including documentation completion and payment

12 Update - Association of Shetland Community Council (ASCC) – 2nd July

12.1 J Haswell attended the meeting and reported that the ASCC did not feel the medium-term financial plan presented by Maggie Sandison and Paul Fraser addressed the issues raised. They were seeking clarification on what strategy is in place to bring spending under control and ensure the long-term sustainability of Shetland's finances. The original paper has gone back to the political leader to respond to the paper, or to attend the next ASCC.

12.2 Plans for Community Councils Energy Convention

It was agreed by the ASCC members present to hold the event on 22nd August, inviting local politicians to attend to discuss the situation further – see below.

13 Community Councils Energy Convention - 22nd August 10:30 @ Islesburgh

Details on this event had been forwarded to members, and anyone can attend. The June SWCC meeting supported the call for the Convention, focussing on the need for major energy developments to be shaped with input from the communities most affected, and delivering a fairer return to those communities. Representatives from Community Councils may speak for 3 minutes to set out its concerns and priorities. Other interested groups may also be invited to address the politicians present, but the exact details on how the event will be managed are not clear. D Sinclair and J Puckey advised they plan to attend.

There were detailed discussions about the pros and cons of presenting as a Community Councillor at the meeting. The members agreed that it was difficult for anyone to claim to represent the whole local community in this complex topic, as the SWCC had not been able to consult widely to gain those views. It appeared from the event information that any member of the public would potentially be able to speak (within time constraints) and most individuals could only represent their personal view. There was agreement that the processes for community involvement from the beginning had been lacking.

The discussions highlighted the issues around community engagement and representation. Cllr Peterson cautioned that a community survey by SWCC on housing several years ago was not recognised or accepted by the SIC, so any future consultation would need to be carefully planned. It was suggested and agreed that a meeting on community engagement be arranged as an extra meeting in the New Year (similar to the funding meeting on 7th July).

Action - to arrange meeting in New Year for SWCC to explore planning of community engagement

14 Community Council Training Programme

This was forwarded to members on 16/5/26. There are subject specific sessions in September and October, eg. Community Engagement, Participatory Budgeting, Local Place Planning and Community Resilience Planning. Members were encouraged to sign up for the sessions directly with the SIC and the email will be re-sent.

Action: Members to sign up for appropriate sessions and Clerk to re-send email

15. Foula issues

The following issues were all reported by R Smith in June 2026, were not covered in detail at the meeting (due to time constraints) and have been followed up by the Clerk – reported here.

15.1 Harbour silting

Ross MacLennan, Small Ports Supervisor, advised that some survey work is due this summer in Foula to analyse the current situation. R Smith will also ask the ferrymen to report the issue, as this will add more weight to any requests for action.

15.2 Full skips at Walls pier and no empty ones in Foula

Paula Nicolson at Infrastructure Services resolved this issue within 24 hours of it being reported in June. A process now in place should mean that skips are now appropriately emptied.

15.3 Ham Bridge project

Liam Drosso, Outdoor Access Officer, advised that he is in contact with potential contractors, there is a bridge design plan, and he is looking into funding options.

15.4 Nurses Cottage transfer to community

David Wagstaff, NHS Shetland Head of Estates, advised that NHS Shetland would still be receptive to a formal approach from a recognised community transfer body as laid out in the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. Laurie Clubb (Community Development Worker for Foula) has been asked to contact NHS Shetland to enable support for the local community in advancing this.

15.5 New pier waiting room and toilets

Claire Christey, Marine and Airport Infrastructure Services, advised that following an unsuccessful tender exercise earlier this year, the decision was taken to alter the tender into 2 packages (fabrication only and installation only) and re-tender separately. The fabrication works have been tendered and submitted tenders are being assessed.

16 Defibrillators update

See section 4 - Previous Minutes and Actions

Cooke Aquaculture currently have a survey on the impact of their community gifting of defibrillators. Our feedback was that the gift was well received, but the ongoing maintenance is the main issue.

17 AOCB

17.1 New bin at Melby Pier

A new larger bin has been sited but is on wheels and not fixed to anything.

Action: Clerk to request bin is fixed

17.2 Internet at Papa Stour school

A Holt reported that there was still no internet at the school in Papa Stour and that despite trying to chase it up, he could make no progress. Cllr Peterson advised

Draft Minutes of the Aug 2026 Meeting of the Sandness & Walls Community Council subject to approval at the next meeting

that she had a contact who may be able to assist. She would pass details to A Holt.

17.3 Display of minutes and agenda - Sandness.

With no shop or other appropriate place for display of multiple pages in Sandness, it was agreed that the Sandness Community Development website is the most appropriate way to communicate the minutes. The single sheet agenda can go in the Hall noticeboard.

17.4 Gruting Hall

The minutes and agenda are not currently displayed at Gruting Hall and consideration will be given to some of the meetings in 2027 being held there.

Action: Clerk to contact Hall for potential document display and Hall bookings

17.5 Meetings dates for the next few months

It was agreed that the next meeting will be held on Tues 1st September as planned. Meetings will then move to the first Wednesday of each month from October 2026 to April 2027, before reverting to Tuesdays.

Meeting dates for the remainder of 2026 are therefore:

Tues 1st September

Wed 7th October

Wed 4th November

Wed 2nd December

Action: Clerk to re-book Halls for the affected meetings and notify SIC CC admin

18 Date/Venue of Next Meeting

The date of next meeting was set for Tues 1st September at 7pm.

Venue – Sandness Hall and TEAMS.

The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and participation

Meeting closed at 9pm

We welcome your contact

- Do you have any community issues or concerns you would like us to discuss?
- A safety issue or an idea for improving the area?
- Do you wish to discuss or apply for funding?

Please get in touch by email - sandnesswallsc@gmail.com



or speak directly to any member via <https://tinyurl.com/yhwa3wus>