

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, 10TH APRIL 2025, AT HOLIDAY INN & BY ZOOM.

Community Council		
Name	Position	Present
Mayasa Al-Jubori	Member	✓ (via zoom)
Mervyn Barr	Member	✓
Malcolm Collie	Member	✓
Heather Cook	Member	✓
Alistair Mckelvie (Rotary)	Associate Member	*
Becky Ferguson	Member	✓ (via zoom)
Audrey Findlay	Member	✓
Charlie Flint	Member	✓
Darren Green	Member	*
Kate Lumsden	Member	✓
Arthur McArthur	Chair	✓
Elaine Manley	Member	✓
Rachid Meghezzi	Vice-Chair	✓
William Munro	Vice-Chair	✓ (via zoom)
Gordon Prentice	Treasurer	✓
Diane Priestley	Member	✓
David Ritchie	Secretary	✓
Tim Yeomans	Member	✓ (via zoom)
Cllr Iris Walker	Ward 13 Councillor	✓ (via zoom)
Cllr Ron McKail	Ward 13 Councillor	*
Cllr Craig Miller	Ward 13 Councillor	*
Cllr Fatima Joji	Ward 13 Councillor	*

Members of Public- Hazel Mustard, Cynthia Attah

1	<p><u>Welcome and opening remarks</u></p> <p>Chair Arthur McArthur welcomed all. Permission was granted to record the meeting</p>
2	<p><u>Apologies and Declarations of Interest</u></p> <p>Apologies received from Darren, Cllr Miller, Cllr Miller, Cllr Joji, Alistair Mckelvie</p>
3	<p><u>Sharon Whitehead- Vice Chair of Westhill Gardening Club</u></p> <p>Sharon presented her Vision for Westhill. Below is extracts of the text from the slides.</p> <p><u>Areas of Interest</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Denman Park / Arnhall Moss • Sensory Garden • Town Centre • Westhill In Bloom • Xmas Lights • Funding • Build / Maintenance

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DENMAN PARK / ARNHALL MOSS

- **Box Hedge Maze**
 - Cuttings of box hedge or willow
 - Small 60cm high
- **Owl Adventure Walk**
 - Different coloured owls up in the trees
 - QR Code for trail to find the owls
 - Made from old pallets / painted
- **FLOWER BEDS**
 - Easy to maintain / flower beds
 - Low maintenance perennial plants
 - Summer Bedding for colour
 - Rock Garden
- **FEATURES IN THE PARK**
 - Visual areas of Interest e.g. Bird box post

SENSORY GARDEN (Area across from Tesco)

- Sleepers with Resin feature in Central Circle
- Gabion baskets / sleepers around circle
- Wood Pallet Animals
- Wind Chimes
- Perfumed / tactile plants
- Pebble flower pathways
- Painted pebbles
- Archway into area

CENTRAL AREA IN SHOPPING CENTRE

- Seating / Planters
- Half barrel tubs painted and sponsored by individual shops

RHS Britain in Bloom Competition

- Promote more colour / flowers in Westhill
- Regeneration of areas
- Businesses inspired to add planting / containers

XMAS LIGHTS / TREE / FIREWORKS

- Adding to present Xmas light display
- Christmas Tree
- Fireworks on Bonfire Night

FUNDING

- Just Giving Page
- Volunteers / Gardening Club growing plants

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Foxlane - Facebook Page Appeal - Materials sourced locally e.g. Pallets - Letters to local business asking for support e.g. Wynford Farm <p><u>WORK FORCE OPTIONS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Volunteers - Mens' Shed for building items - Primary School Eco Clubs - Scouts / D of E groups looking for their voluntary badges - Gardening Club can offer wealth of advice - Local Companies – team building <p>Comments from members-</p> <p>Willie- not sure if proposed location for a sensory garden is suitable as it is off a busy road. There would need to be good co-ordination amongst the groups involved in various activities, suggest one person would be the contact for Landscape Services.</p> <p>Quite a few ideas now for Denman Park in the CAP, got to be careful not to overload it.</p> <p>Gordon- Council permission would be required to put wooden owls in trees in Denman Park. Sharon's ideas for Denman Park are complimentary to the infrastructure changes that we initiated (paths & bridges) and other ambitions we have, like a playpark</p> <p>The sensory garden location would increase the argument for a pedestrian crossing there</p> <p>A vote of thanks was proposed to Sharon for her presentation.</p> <p>Sharon will be added to the Green Spaces Whats App group</p>
4	<p><u>Approval of Minutes of Meeting 13th Mach 2025</u></p> <p>Minutes were approved. Proposed by Rachid, seconded by Gordon</p>
5	<p><u>Matters Arising (not covered elsewhere)</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Larg/Broadstraik Park (Malcolm) – Want to put up signs in the planted areas to say this is a wildlife area, please respect it 2. Business Association (Elaine). 26th March meeting was poorly attended. Going to put survey in Bulletin. Could also try to promote a BA at our stall at Lazy Sunday on 8th June. Keen to get a social media expert as a speaker at a meeting 3. Sports Hub Gordon has had productive meeting with Greg Welsh re the Re-discover Denman Park event (see Green Spaces report, item11) 4. Survey re Bus Service to top part of Westhill Drive

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	<p>A final report has been prepared with an abstract & executive summary. Agreed that this can now be sent to the Council initially. Willie suggested that any meeting with the Council should include discussion on the other bus transport issues covered in the CAP, e.g Old Skene Road residents not being near a bus stop.</p> <p>5. Proposed 20mph Speed Limits</p> <p>Becky & Gordon had commented on the proposed change. The main change we don't agree with is for Hays Way to change to 20mph. Some roads we would like to see reduced from 60mph, like Hill of Keir Rd are not marked for any change. Iris advised they will be reviewed as a separate project and asked that the Councillors be copied on the response we submit.</p> <p>Willie suggested we could buy a few interactive speed signs as they are not expensive and they could be moved around</p>
6	<p>Police Report (see appendix)</p> <p>March was a quiet month. No significant crimes. David will query why shoplifting isn't included in the report.</p>
7	<p>Correspondence (David)</p> <p>Review of secretary correspondence log for last month. (Circulated).</p> <p>Scottish Community Councils wish to do a video case study on us, mainly on the Bulletin and big projects like the Orbital Trail. David will have an initial planning call with Brian Davey on 28th April.</p> <p>Kate has received a facebook request to put a memorial bench in Denman Park. Permission will be required from Landscape Services, probably Ian Mitchell. The benches that WECC have put in the park were supplied by Glasdon. They are constructed from recycled plastic so need little maintenance</p>
8	<p>Asylum Seeker Hotel (David)</p> <p>The monthly Community meeting was yesterday. The notes from it will be circulated when issued. Hotel numbers still around 260. Decisions are coming through but Mears are not advised if they are positive or negative.</p> <p>The Green Spaces activities that Gordon has proposed the SUs could assist with have been posted on the notice board. The most popular one is rebuilding the stone wall near golf course. This should be getting done after Gordon returns from holiday.</p> <p>Not sure yet if the offer of table tennis at Westdyke Leisure Centre will be taken up by the SUs</p> <p>The Home Office response to our FOI request appeal was expected by 3rd April but hasn't been received yet. David will query this.</p> <p>A Home Office Select Committee (HASC) meeting has been organised for Thursday 24 April in Westhill, with reps from WECC, Kingshill Church, Rotary and voluntary ESOL learning attending, to give an overview of the support they are giving and any impacts this has had. David will be attending this. Mervyn offered to also attend</p>
9	<p><u>Rotary Update/Exchange-</u> no Rotary rep able to attend.</p>
10	<p><u>Ward 13 Councillors updates</u></p>

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	<p>Cllr Iris Walker</p> <p>Not much to report. Council is on Easter recess just now</p> <p>A review of Sheltered Housing is underway. Some complexes are hard to let. Blackhills Court not likely to be closed.</p> <p>No other Councillors present.</p>
11	<p>Westhill Green Spaces Update</p> <p>Circulated report from Gordon Prentice in italics with new points highlighted in green. Updates in normal type:-</p> <p>Volunteer Activity Since Last Month</p> <p><i>Maintenance of Denman planted areas – our 11 consecutive weeks of pruning and trimming of the many overgrown planted areas came to an enforced end in the last week of March [owing to commencement of bird nesting season]. A total of 204 person hours were recorded; that’s an average attendance of just over 9 per week, and testament to our dry winter.</i></p> <p>Orbital Trail Development/Maintenance [clockwise from Gateway Sculpture]</p> <p>Monthly changes highlighted in green</p> <p>Gateway Sculpture – no activity</p> <p>Hidden Garden – no activity – the paving block may need to be scraped over the coming weeks.</p> <p>Silvertrees Drive to Peregrine Road – no activity</p> <p>Mason Lodge to Pitcairn Lodge – path at junction of A944 and Pitcairn Lodge driveway – no activity</p> <p>Broadshade/Berryhill Circle – 20 hazel trees offered on 22nd March. No response as yet.</p> <p>Westhill Golf Club – some path repairs will be required, using quarry dust – no activity</p> <p>Westhill Drive – overhanging bushes opposite bus turning point – no activity</p> <p>Link north to Craigmar – request to extend existing path by a further 100m to Craigmar junction – no activity</p> <p>Meadowlands Farm track & lane – no activity</p> <p>Links to Brimmond – letter received from AC’s Outdoor Access team leader confirming that the owner of Northside Farm was granted planning permission for the installation of electronic gates that effectively closed the link between Westhill & Brimmond Hill. No mention was made of the barbed wire wrapped around adjacent field gate, so I have queried that.</p> <p>Mains of Kinmundy Hill – no activity</p> <p>Links east from Hillside Road – ownership of abandoned farm track and pavement vegetation from Hillside Road junction to Lawsondale turn-off – no activity</p> <p>Lawsondale – spring patching work commenced Wednesday, 2nd April.</p> <p>Other Green Spaces</p> <p>Blackhills Court – to be followed up. Have been offered a picnic table.</p> <p>Carnie Woods boardwalk removal – no activity - pitched this to Mears 26th March – 7 asylum seekers have signed up.</p>

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Carnie Crescent All Weather Pitches [AWP] – no activity - awaiting reply and consent to effect improvements to path and planted areas – to be followed up

Denman Park – PBIP Project – There is a small retention [circa £4k] in place to ensure that all snags are addressed. Seeding of edges and compound to be repeated in spring – no activity.

I was contacted by Susan Adams on 28th March inviting us to bid for a small amount of Developer Obligations funding which we could use to purchase a 6-bike bike rack for Denman. The quoted cost is £900 ex VAT. Could I have the go-ahead to offer £300 [from unused PBIP project funds], or more, up to £600, if needs be? This was approved.

“Rediscover Denman” family fun / club open day/event proposal for Saturday, 31st May accepted by the Bowling Club and Tennis Clubs. Both are keen to be involved. See **Appendix 1** for proposal.

Denman/Arnhall Moss core path – no activity - improve surface of the “desire line”, saving 70m between Parkside and Tesco crossing. Green spaces Team working on widening the path tomorrow, 9th.

Westdyke Leisure Centre accessible path – no activity – planning to contact contractor w/c 21st April with a view to completion not long after.

ALOAF [Aberdeenshire Local Outdoor Access Forum]

No activity – next meeting 28th April.

Funding Update

Budget allocated for 2024/25 - £2,000, with £51 carried forward from 2023/4, plus £200 donated by Total Energies, totalling £2,251. Spend was £2,285 owing to an unexpected repair bill for one set of hedge trimmers, needed for the team’s work in Denman Park.

Planting Update

Daffodils from ACC - three bags of bulbs remain

Summer Bedding Plants – to be funded from WECC budget

Cherry Tree Avenues - Tajana Sasic has applied to the Nature Restoration Fund on our behalf to fund native trees and wild flowers on Jubilee Drive and Westhill Drive [Denman Park] to brighten up the entrance to Westhill from the east. The farmer who owns the field to the north of Jubilee Drive has informed us that he does not want trees to be planted on his verge.

Funding Update – The budget of £1,000 was overspent by £173 owing to approval being given to purchase a batch of 25 mature azalea plants for Denman Park. Unfortunately, the new young plants have proven to be a tasty snack for our wild deer population!

Shopping Centre Planters- Mervyn is in discussion with David Waterworth of LCP about arrangements for watering the half-barrel planters at front of shops. We can supply the summer bedding plants for them and will paint the barrels

Litter Picks

A record equalling 21 attended our rescheduled pick on 29th March, following the postponement on the 22nd. Next pick is this Saturday 12th April

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Additional Bins in Westhill – we received an email from Head of Waste Collections suggesting a meeting once her team had completed its audit of bin locations. Budget restrictions will mean that we shouldn't expect new bins, but some may be repositioned to meet demand.

Restoration of bin in Aldi car park – no action - to be followed up.

Gordon & David had a call yesterday with Paula Houston of ESCC who is keen to address the issue of roadside take-away litter between Garlogie & Echt. We will jointly approach the Council Waste Team and Keep Scotland Beautiful about how best to proactively tackle fast-food waste

Gordon & Mervyn

"Rediscover Denman"

Aims – to provide an informative and enjoyable community event to promote awareness of Denman Park facilities and conduct the Official Opening of the new circular paths and bridges.

Promoters/Organisers – WECC

Context – Over the last 2 years, and after a considerable investment of time and effort by the WECC Greenspaces Team with support from Aberdeenshire Council, major investment was secured to design, and lay 900m of new internal paths around Denman Park; replace one of the two existing bridges, and to provide two additional bridging points to make the features of the park more accessible for all abilities. Simultaneously, Rotary Westhill also secured funding to install a new pétanque court near the pavilion. Time and effort has also been spent cutting back and restoring most of the shrubbery and verges that suffered from neglect due to Covid shutdown and recent budget cuts.

All this work has been designed to make the park a more accessible and pleasant place to spend time in, and very importantly, to help facilitate healthy lifestyles. The emphasis on healthy living, accessibility and much improved connectivity was of central importance in securing funds from the Scottish Government's Place Based Investment Programme.

Results so far – All the major work has been completed to a high standard and the new and existing paths have, where possible been designed or upgraded to allow use by wheelers; with wheelchair and pushchair users particularly in mind. There is now clear evidence that footfall in the park has increased significantly without any formal promotion of improvements made other than updates on social media.

Vision - WECC believes that the value of Denman Park to the wider community can be significantly increased by spreading the word about park facilities via "Rediscover Denman", particularly to those who live on the west side of the town and those who work in Arnhall Business and Retail Parks. Publicity via Bulletin approximately 1 week before hand. Also via social media and press release. **Action: draft press release and distribution list**

Outline Programme for "Rediscover Denman"

Date 31st May 2025 [tbc]

- 2.5 - 3hour drop-in session 10-12.30/1300 facilitated by volunteers from clubs, Sports Hub, WECC & Rotary. Explanation/Demonstration of activities/facilities (by rep from club/group): Pétanque – Bowls – Tennis - Trishaw Rides - Outdoor gym demo – Rebel PT. [Other sports clubs could be invited to promote themselves from within the pavilion?] **Action: contact clubs for support**

- Opening Ribbon cutting ceremony - time tbc – SensationAll/tri-shaw client

Action: compile guest list

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- *Picnics welcome – Compass primarily or free choice but must be near a litter bin! (Litter pick after?)*
- *Park Walks and/or Teddy Bear Treasure Hunt (only if 3rd party organiser can be found) – Park and Arnhall (basic route maps/with distances and links to other amenities to be provided).*
Action: draft & print maps, recruit volunteer 3rd party
- *Healthy food & drink options – promoting healthier choices to complement outdoor activities – available from within pavilion – along with teas/coffees.*
Action: check with tennis/bowls
- *Toilets - pavilion toilets (volunteers to clean afterwards)*
Action: contact tennis/bowls for consent
- *Promotion: via Westhill Bulletin – Summer Issue, WECC Facebook page, press release, posters?, participating clubs social media and member newsletters, etc.*
Action: to be drafted
- *Funding: funding [posters, food & drink, kids bowls/tennis kits, etc] could be available from WDCSH*

Gordon will arrange a meeting of the WECC project team and Tennis & Bowling club reps for soon after his holiday

12 **COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN** (Diane Priestly)

Circulated report in italics:-

Green spaces audit- *the planning group spent the morning pulling together the data gathered from the volunteers who have logged the various green spaces in Westhill and Elrick and the various play parks, overgrown hedges, potholes, the state of the paths, trees and health and safety issues. The next stage of this exercise is to visit Denman Park (29th April) to see if it is possible to establish a children's playpark there.*

Local Place Plans- *we are looking for more information about what will be required by WECC if we go ahead with this. The LDP newsletter shows several examples of local place plans that have already been completed and when you look at these plans you will see that they are extremely detailed and aligned to the National Planning Framework 4. What are your thoughts on WECC undertaking this task?*

Audrey will be attending the Community Planning meeting next week re Place Plans and will find out if we can feed a lot of our CAP data into a Place Plan..

13 **Planning Matters** (Diane Priestly)

Circulated report in italics:-

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

APP/2024/1762 Costco is planning to add a petrol station to the Westhill site, plus installation of ev charging points, landscaping and associated works-awaiting a decision-holding response from the infrastructure services and roads-awaiting decision,

APP /2024/2150 McDonalds Restaurant Venture Way Arnhall Business Park Westhill Ab326BQ Full Planning Permission for the installation of 2 ev charging stations with ancillary substation and infrastructure refused.

APP/2025/0157 Alatas enterprise house Enterprise Drive AB326TQ full planning permission for the erection of a boundary fence-awaiting decision

APP/2025/0428 Chap Construction Enterprise Drive AB326TQ full planning permission for siting of Cabin and Alterations to Workshop

ENQ/2025/0215 Land at Mosscroft Avenue, AB326TQ-Proposal of Application Notice for the Erection of Residential Units, 50-60units with Associated Open Space Roads and Infrastructure

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Several of us went along to view the proposed development for 50 -60 affordable house /flats on the former Stewart Milne building and we were informed that a further 49 affordable homes are planned for Peregrine House. There will be a second engagement event on the 20th August at the Westhill Community Church between 3.30pm & 7.30pm. These properties will be in addition to the affordable houses /flats still not completed opposite the Hampton Hotel. We will advertise the 20th August event in Summer Bulletin.

There are plans by Westhill Park Homes to develop 24 quality homes in what was the mobile site opposite Trittech International Limited which is off the Straik Road. These homes will be suitable for the over fifties' singletons, families and retired people. Prices range from £185,000 to £255,000. The original planning application for 30 residential caravans was made in 1975 which implies 50 years ago.

Diane will go back to planners to query how a 50 year-old planning application can still be valid and point out to them that Park Homes are not caravans. Surely this should be treated as a Change of Use.

HILL OF FARE

This application is now moving forward and the next process is that it will now be subject to a Public Local Enquiry. If you want to be part of this enquiry you need to contact Hazel.Bailey@gov.scot from the DPEA.

PYLONS

Continuing concerns over the installation of high pylons and the need for better consultations by SSEN as they not listening to the locals.

KINTORE HYDROGEN PRODUCTION PLANT

The proposed application to build a hydrogen production plant near Kintore which would be one of the largest sites in Europe was recommended for refusal by councillors however the final decision will be made this month at the next full council meeting.

ENERGY CONSENTS UNIT

In the last 28 days 10 applications have been approved this includes 2 windfarms ,2 Battery Energy Storage Systems,1 energy solar park,4 overhead power lines and a hydro renewable project.

Diane Priestley

14 Financials (Gordon Prentice) Circulated report in italics:-

Matters Arising 13 March:

Outstanding Commitments: Expenses paid to David Ritchie.

Bank Accounts: Chair added as signatory. New digital Bulletin A/c now visible to Bulletin Editor.

Financial Transactions – March

Income: £4,991 – comprising £4,928 from 31 Bulletin advertisers plus bank interest of £62.82

Expenditure: £3,548 – comprising £1,254 paid to DR plus £97 paid to insurers for 2025/26, plus 6 payments totalling £2,197 on approved projects.

Outstanding Commitments: £4,233, comprising 4 payments made on projects since month end, plus £3,960 committed to Westdyke contractor, but refundable from Nestrans Grant.

Transfers: £25,673 was transferred from the old Bulletin Account with the intention of closing it; £24,000 to Main A/c, and £1,673 to the Bulletin Digital A/c. However, since then, a number of advertisers have continued to pay into the old Bulletin A/c, which will be transferred in due course. £19,000 was then transferred to the new interest bearing 35-day notice A/c.

Bank Balances at Month End: £40,781

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Main Account: £16,422 [see Appendix 1]
Savings Account: £19,000
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Old Bulletin Account: £127
Bulletin Dig Acc: £5,232

Westhill Bulletin

71 advertisers opted to prepay £25,432 for 2025 to take advantage of discounted annual rates. Contribution from the Spring issue is expected to be circa 6,100 [57%] from 112 advertisers. At time of writing 4 invoices totalling £473 remain outstanding.

Draft Income & Expenditure Account 2024/25

(Deficit)/Surplus represented by:	Year to March 2025	Year to March 2024	Year to March 2023
Surplus from Westhill Bulletin	18,134	5,765	12,130
Net Spend on Projects	(7,185)	496	(9,467)
Donations to Local Voluntary Groups	(3,300)	(2,927)	(3,965)
(Deficit)/Surplus from Normal Operations	(1,349)	(1,527)	(1,754)
	6,299	1,807	(3,056)
Funds in Bank Accounts at 31st March	40,782	34,483	32,676

Gordon pointed out that in last financial year the new Bulletin printer was only used for 2 of the 4 issues, but the change has made a significant increase in the surplus generated from the Bulletin.
The draft accounts were approved and Gordon will now send them to the independent reviewer.

15 AOB & Close of Meeting

David advised that he had nominated Gordon in the Inspiring Aberdeenshire Beautiful Aberdeenshire Environmental Award category and he has been short-listed for the award. He will be invited to attend the Awards Ceremony in September.

Meeting closed at 9.55pm.

Date of Next Meeting-8th May, 7pm at Holiday Inn, with Zoom option.

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APPENDIX



GARIOCH COMMUNITY POLICING TEAM

VISIBLE, ACCESSIBLE AND EFFECTIVE

Community Council: Westhill and Elrick

Reporting Period: 1 to 31 March 2025

Current Policing Priorities:

Our priorities are:-

1. ASB – Proactive patrols to provide community reassurance and to deter/detect instances of ASB and Vandalism.
2. PROACTIVITY – Increased use of Stop and Search and plain-clothed patrols to deter/detect drug and acquisitive crime.
3. ROAD SAFETY – Enhanced speed checks and other speed reduction measures.

Crime Overview and Explanation:

CRIME TYPE	CURRENT PERIOD	PREVIOUS PERIOD
Assault	0	1
Housebreaking	0	0
Public Nuisance	1	3
Road Traffic	2 collision, 5 other	2 collision, 6 other
Drugs	0	0

Assault – Includes all recorded instances of violence.

Housebreaking – includes all break in's to domestic and commercial premises, including attempted break in's.

Public Nuisance – All youth annoyance and calls in relation to anti-social behaviour.

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Road Traffic – all calls in relation to Road Traffic Accidents and Offences (speeding, illegal parking, obstruction etc).

Drugs – all reports incidents in relation to drugs dealing and use.

Assault:

There have been no reports.

Housebreaking:

There have been no reports.

Public Nuisance:

There has been 1 report regarding youths kicking a house door. No crimes have been recorded.

Road Traffic:

This period has seen 2 reported collisions each involving 2 cars. Police attendance was necessary at one only with no injury reported in either. No crimes were recorded.

Reports received relate to vehicle breakdown, suspected document offences, manner of driving, concern for a driver and a vehicle being driven with a frozen windscreen.

Enquiry is ongoing into three instances of a parked car being damaged by another vehicle which failed to stop or report the collision.

Drivers were issued Conditional Offers of Fixed Penalty for no MOT, vehicle in dangerous condition and drive or keep vehicle with registration plate that does not conform to the requirements.

On 12/03/2025, speed checks were carried out in Westhill with no offences identified.

Drugs:

There have been no reports.

Significant Crime/Issues within Your Community:

There have been no significant events this reporting period.

Planned Community Policing Activity/Advice:

The Community Policing Team will continue to carry out speed checks in the area and will be supported by Roads Policing colleagues.

Conclusion:

This is another stable report and if there are any issues that you wish brought to Police attention, please let me know.

Emma Forbes, Sergeant, A0645