

Heriot Community Council

Minutes of meeting, 7pm on 15th April 2026

Present: Neil Mackinnon (SBC councillor), Sue Sharp, Helen White, Helen Brinkworth (minutes), Claire Rogers, Suzy Dun, 19 members of the public

Apologies: Faye Sinclair, Mu Reid, Felix Oxton, Helen Taylor, Struan Mills

1. Minutes of meeting 04/02/26 accepted.

Minutes of meeting 18/03/26 accepted.

Neil Mackinnon: request for a review of road speeds within the village, no response from SBC. NM to chase

The issue of replacing the old defibrillator at Heriot Station is ongoing. It requires a location with an electricity source to power a heated case over winter to preserve the battery. Frank Connelly will remove the defibrillator from the national register.

2. Community Land Purchase

- a. **Opportunity to purchase land around the current playpark and Shoestanes Terrace at Heriot Station from Foresight**

Shoestanes farm was sold to Foresight approximately 2 years ago and HCC enquired as to the possibility to purchase any of the land for community use. Foresight replied to HCC last year with an offer to sell approx. 8 acres of their land for £13,000 plus their legal fees capped at £2,000. Estimate of legal fees for buyers at £840. A group of community members formed with the intention to register as Heriot Community Trust (HCT), apply for funding, purchase the land and create a community park.

- b. **Results of presentation and questionnaire**

Gavin Whittaker reported on behalf of the community group forming HCT. They commissioned a survey and produced an initial “concept” plan of the area showing possible elements for a community park. This was printed for viewing. They did in person home visits to neighbouring properties followed by 2 public drop-in sessions at Macfie Hall with a paper and online questionnaire.

Aim of the survey was to provide evidence: Does the community think that this project concept is a good idea to be progressed?

There were 86 respondents to the survey within the time limit, with 85% in favour of the project. Allowing a 6% margin of error, this can be said to represent the views of the whole community. HCT will use the results of the survey to progress a request for funding from both windfarm panels.

Full report with breakdown of results is attached in Appendix A.

c. Community Conversation feedback report

An open residents' meeting was convened to gather community perspectives on the proposed Community land project. Facilitators Gary Reid and Muriel Reid emphasised the importance of creating opportunities for residents to contribute their views.

Summary of results: For the positive it showed the people think a park land is a good for bringing the community together. For the concerns, people are worried about the impacts such as littering, traffic, noise.

Results for Community Conversation attached as Appendix B.

Gary Reid recommends holding an open survey of the community wishes for future developments as was done in 2011.

d. Request for HCC to submit funding application on behalf of a future community trust

It is not required for HCC to be involved as the Trust registration process has progressed quickly and HCT are in the process of applying for a bank account.

- e. SS: For HCC, the potential value to the community of land ownership plus the concern locally for environment issues such as improving drainage are reasons for supporting the purchase. The process of consultation and communication about the project has not been ideal this far e.g. a little rushed.
- f. GW: They needed to gain opinions in a short time frame. They expect that the HCT group will inform future planning through more thorough community consultation.
- g. Gary Reid: a report of issues experienced by some in the community, in summary; no clear support evident, residents not clear on what plan status was, residents do not feel that they have been heard, querying appropriate use of money, feeling that the plan does not reflect local want or needs. A full version of Gary Reid's comments is available on request.
- h. The views of community members at the meeting were heard. Issues raised included lack of pre-consultation input, no clarity around use of funds, querying community support, poor awareness of previous efforts to purchase land or improve the play park. Positive opinions support that ownership of land would be a benefit to Heriot. People would like to see improvements to Heriot. There is Government support for local ownership.
- i. In summary: Ownership for the project is with HCT. Overall agreement that volunteers, engagement and more communication will be required in future. Currently no consensus about what will be done with the land as the primary focus is on the option to purchase. Funding from windfarm panels to purchase the land has not yet been applied for and will only be awarded on merit.

3. The A7 North of Galashiels 50mph speed limit trial

a. **Feedback submitted to SBC**

HW: HCC completed a feedback response requested by SBC using received feedback results of 11 responses against and 3 for a permanent 50mph speed limit. Comments described experiences of other drivers seemingly frustrated by the slower speed and, also, poor driving standards. Increased incidences of dangerous overtaking and tailgating. Suggestions for the use of average speed cameras and that driver behaviour is the main issue to correct if the 50mph is to be effective.

b. The latest police report from the A7 action group shows an increase in the number of accidents on the A7.

c. Comments: The 50mph signage is believed to be inadequate. Visible enforcement today as police motorbike officer seen pulling over vehicles at Fountainhall.

Sadly, another accident this evening on the A7 bends at the telephone exchange involving a small car and a motorbike.

4. Planning Applications

a. **Toddleburn**

HCC are expecting to see an application soon for a met/wind mast at Toddleburn as part of the process for the future repowering of this site.

b. **Wull Muir wind farm**

A successful Judicial Review of the Reporter's decision to grant the planning application means that the application goes back for another Reporter decision. The Judicial Review centred on the need for the grid connection infrastructure to be part of the applicant's EIA. Unusually, two reporters have been assigned, and this application is setting a new precedent. Comments from HCC submitted to the previous reporter were about the residential and amenity impact on properties due to visibility and it was felt that this was ignored by the reporter. HCC may be asked to comment again.

5. Community Funds

a. **Laptop for Heriot Country Kids**

A grant for funding for a laptop was granted previously. The cost increased and Tasha has asked whether we will pay the extra. Decided that HCC will ask for a second application to be submitted for the extra amount.

b. **Education Grant**

Seven successful applications have been paid. We had £3000 to allocate from SSE Toddleburn funds this time, but in future it is an annual pot of £1500. HCC may allow future rolling applications instead of a fixed period and investigate accessing more funds if demand is there.

Frank Connolly: All education grant cheques have been cashed with £182 remaining to spend.

c. **Microgrant funds**

FC: HCC has received £1750 to be awarded as microgrants this year.

6. AOB

a. FC: Change of signatories for the bank account is in progress, yet to be ratified.

b. Wind farm panel representatives

One representative from HCC for DLX fund

Two representatives for SSE/Foundation Scotland panel agreed as being Claire Rogers and Helen White.

SS to contact panels for full descriptions of roles.

c. Heriot Community Action Plan / Heriot Local Place Plan

i. Consultation is required with the community on several issues.

The Heriot Place Plan is produced for SBC to use and would inform about issues such as new housing locations, infrastructure, services etc. It directly influences the SBC Local Development Plan and requires consultation with the Heriot population and representatives of local groups.

ii. A Community Action Plan would inform about issues and opportunities that we see within Heriot and would want to address or provide for ourselves.

iii. It is possible that all of this can be combined into one survey and coordinate with wind farm panels and a HCT consultation about community land. The previous community survey involved visiting each house to ensure that every person had the opportunity to respond. There is an option for professionally funded advice to be used. HCC to take this forward, invite input and ask for volunteers when conducting the survey.

d. John Williams: The Lauderdale Preservation Group is a recommended source of information for anyone wanting to know about status of the energy infrastructure plans.

- e. South Scotland Community Council Convention is holding a second meeting in Lauder, Saturday 18th April. HB to attend. The Unified Statement has previously been voted through by HCC.

- f. Condition of the local roads.
Issues such as potholes can be reported to SBC via their website and they do get filled.
The stretch of the B709 going past Dewar is of particular concern as a long section of roadside is damaged with sharp edges to the road causing damage. On the A7, the dip in the road north of Falahill would benefit from double white lines and repainting of the double white lines between Heriot underpass and the telephone exchange is needed.
NM is able to raise the roads issues with SBC and HCC will provide a summary of road safety requests to aid this.

Finish at 20:45. Next meeting of HCC is on 10th June.

Appendix A: Results of Survey on Community land project.

Appendix B: Heriot Community Conversation, 1.4.26: Residents' Feedback.

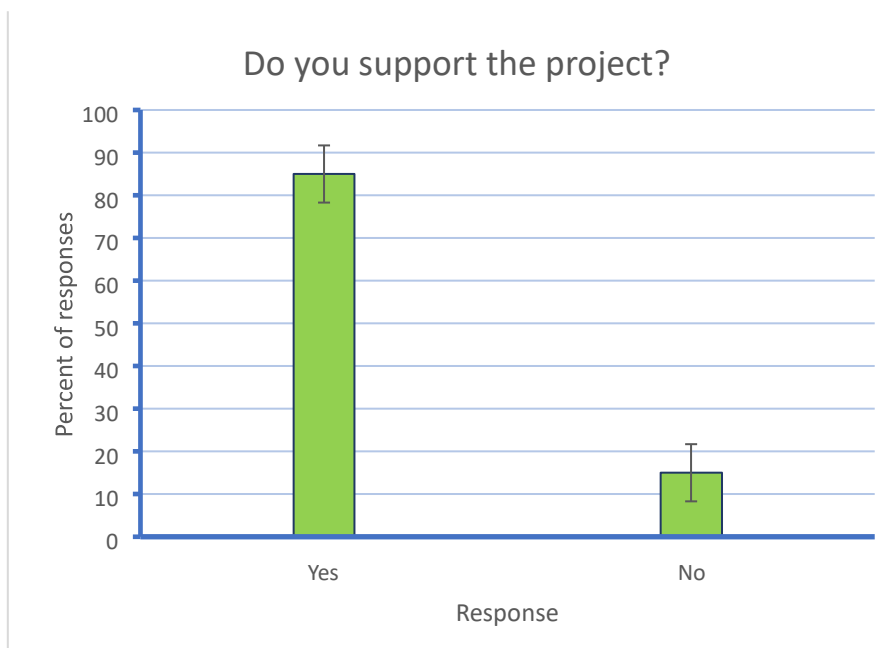
Community survey on land project

Simplified summary of responses.

The Heriot land project team held two public sessions at which members of the community were given the opportunity to ask about the outline plans for Shoestanes field adjacent to Heriot Station. At these events members of the community were asked to complete a paper questionnaire that covered a number of aspects of the project. An online survey, asking the same questions, was also made available to anyone who either couldn't attend the sessions, or who preferred to answer the questions at their leisure.

A total of 86 people answered the fundamental question in the survey, which was whether they supported the project or not. A significant proportion of those surveyed supported the project, with 85% of respondents in favour and just 15% against.

A frequent criticism of surveys of this kind is that they do not obtain responses from everyone in the community. The question, however, is not whether enough people have been asked, but whether the sample is large enough to provide a representative sample of the whole population. A straightforward statistical analysis shows that, for a community of around 350 people, a sample of 86 people would have a margin of error of approximately 6.5%. In other words, if responses had been obtained from the whole community, the result for 'support' would be highly likely to lie in the range 78.92%, which still represents a very comfortable level of support for the project.



95% Confidence interval for this sample is $\pm 6.5\%$

Appendix A: Results of Survey on Community land project.

In subsequent questions, respondents were asked to rate various aspects of the concept plan as either 'high priority', 'low priority' or 'not needed'.

The percentage for the three priority values, for each aspect of the concept, are provided for in the table below. It should be pointed out that seven people who voted against the project as a whole voted 'not needed' for almost all aspects of the project.

No. of responses = 86*	Percentage		
	Yes	No	
Do you use the existing playpark?	14	86	
Do you go somewhere locally?	85	15	
Do you support the project?	85	15	
	High priority	Low priority	Not needed
Covered Shelter	54	26	20
Interpretive signage	17	54	29
Seating at viewpoint Picnic tables	66	20	14
	67	18	14
Polytunnel Tree nursery	41	41	19
	55	32	13
Sports pitch	56	22	23
Stepped seating	19	44	37
Play equipment - older play	63	22	15
Play equipment - Younger play	73	12	15
Play equipment - mixed play	66	20	14
Surfaced path	76	13	11
Boardwalks Seating alongside routes	76	9	15
	58	27	15
Native tree planting	80	6	14
Meadow spaces	75	13	12
Enhance existing woodland	66	20	14
Wet woodland planting Pond creation	65	22	13
	47	37	16
Retention of space in front of houses	81	13	6

* Several respondents failed to answer all questions

The results can be arranged in order of support, and plotted out as a stacked bar chart (shown on following page), which gives an indication of which parts of the project are most likely to be prioritised as it is refined and implemented. Almost all aspects of the plan have majority support as high priority, but some are clearly more popular than others, and this hierarchy will be used to inform the Trust's decisions as the project moves forward.

Prioritisation of project components



Heriot Community Conversation Residents' Feedback Report

Facilitators:

Gary Reid

Muriel Reid

Date of Meeting: 01

April 2026

Report Created: 03

April 2026

Report Created By: Muriel

Reid

Report Prepared For:

Presentation to Heriot Community Council

(in advance of HCC meeting on 15 April 2026)

Location:

Heriot, Scottish Borders

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Heriot Community Conversation: Residents' Feedback

Facilitators: Gary Reid and Muriel Reid

Date: 01 April 2026

Report prepared for: Heriot Community Council in advance of next meeting on 15 April 2026

1. Introduction

An open residents' meeting was convened to gather community perspectives on the proposed Heriot Community Project. Facilitators Gary Reid and Muriel Reid welcomed attendees, expressed appreciation for their engagement, and emphasised the importance of creating opportunities for residents to contribute their views. They also noted that the meeting had been arranged at short notice due to the time constraints set by the Project Team for gathering this feedback. The facilitators' own perspectives were not included in the collated written data.

This report summarises the process used, along with the feedback collected from residents' claims (positive statements) and concerns (worries or risks) recorded on Post-it™ notes, in addition to information drawn from sign-in sheets. It presents a balanced, synthesised account of community sentiment regarding the proposed development.

2. Purpose and Intent of the Meeting

2.1 Purpose

The meeting had two main purposes:

- To provide an open forum for residents to express thoughts, feelings, and perspectives on the proposed community space.
- To gather community views — not to make decisions — as decision-making lies outside the remit of this meeting.

2.2 Intent

The facilitators aimed: • To collect "Community Voices" transparently and visibly.

- To prepare and present this feedback to the Heriot Community Council (HCC) prior to 15 April 2026
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3. Meeting Process

- The meeting was facilitated by Gary and Muriel Reid, residents of Heriot Station.
 - Participants were invited to sign in under their area of residency and could optionally provide their age.
 - The facilitators outlined the **Claims, Concerns and Issues (CCI) Framework** (Guba & Lincoln, 1989), designed to surface views from all stakeholders potentially affected by a proposal.
 - Residents were invited to write:
 - **Claims** — positive statements
 - **Concerns** — doubts, worries, or perceived risks
 - Responses were placed on flipchart sheets using Post-it™ notes.
 - Residents were invited to cluster responses into themes.
 - The “Issues” stage of the CCI framework was not undertaken.
 - All feedback was collated for this report and will be submitted to HCC prior to the next planned meeting.
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4. Overview of Community Feedback

Residents expressed strong interest in the proposed community space. Feedback reflects: • Considerable support for the idea and potential benefits.

- Significant concerns relating to cost, management, neighbour impact, and consultation.

The proposal is seen as an important opportunity for the village, but residents expect clarity, transparency, and careful planning.

5. Claims: Positive Feedback and Perceived Benefits

5.1 Community Value

Many residents described the proposal as a good idea, offering clear community benefits. They felt it could:

- Strengthen community connections
- Increase local ownership and agency
- Improve the attractiveness and livability of the area
- Respond to long-standing community needs

5.2 Benefits Across Age Groups

Residents saw the space as valuable for children, families, older people, and people with reduced mobility. They highlighted safe places to play, car-free walkways, outdoor meeting spaces, and opportunities for social mixing.

5.3 Recreation, Wellbeing, and Activity

Supportive comments emphasised:

- Walking and dog walking
- Cycling
- Children's play
- Picnic and seating areas
- Accessible paths for wheelchairs and prams
- Outdoor recreation

5.4 Environmental and Nature Benefits

Many residents supported:

- Tree planting and native planting
- Biodiversity
- Wildlife habitats
- Ponds and meadow areas
- Orchards

5.5 Supported Facilities and Features

Residents positively referenced:

- Play areas
- Safe walking routes
- Dog-walking zones
- Seating and picnic spaces
- Wheelchair/pram-friendly paths
- Food-growing areas
- Open green spaces

5.6 Claims Chart Summary

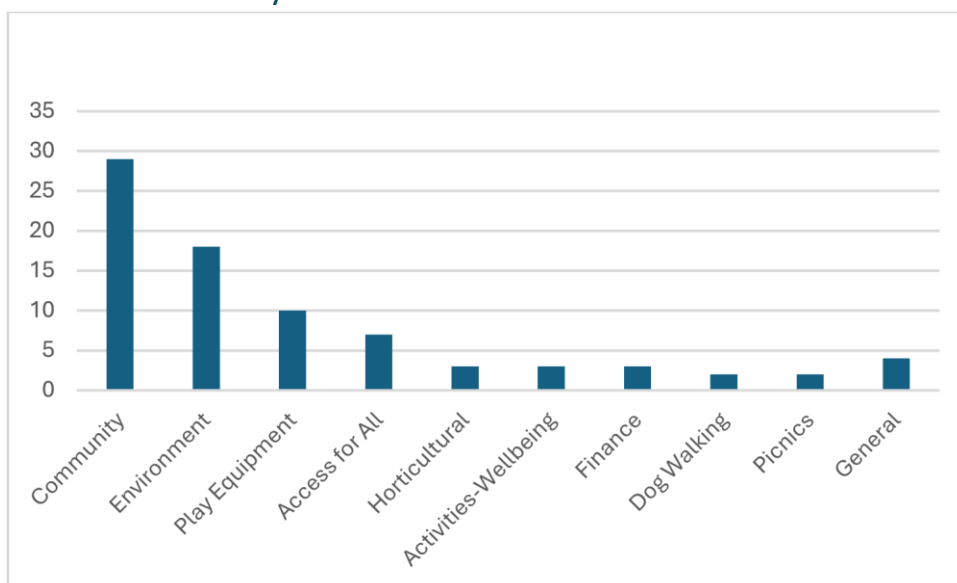


Figure 1. Claims Theme Chart

This chart presents the number of positive “Claims” made by residents across key themes they identified. It highlights which aspects of the proposed community space received the most enthusiastic support and aligns with the synthesised feedback.

Key insights include:

- **Community Value (≈29 claims):** The strongest theme, showing residents see the project as a major opportunity to strengthen community life.
- **Environment (≈18 claims):** Many residents value the potential for biodiversity, planting, wildlife habitats, and overall environmental improvement.
- **Play Equipment (≈10 claims):** Strong support for creating a safe, engaging space for children.
- **Access for All (≈7 claims):** Emphasis on pram-friendly, wheelchair-friendly, and accessible spaces.
- **Horticultural / Growing (≈3 claims):** Support for gardening, food-growing, and horticulture areas.
- **Activities & Wellbeing (≈3 claims):** Interest in outdoor activities that promote wellbeing.
- **Finance (≈3 claims):** A small number of comments expressing positive views about the project’s potential value.
- **Dog Walking (≈2 claims), Picnics (≈2 claims), General (≈4 claims):** Smaller but meaningful clusters of support.

Overall, the chart shows that residents most value community connection, environmental improvement, and child-friendly play spaces.

5.7 Individual Claims Summary

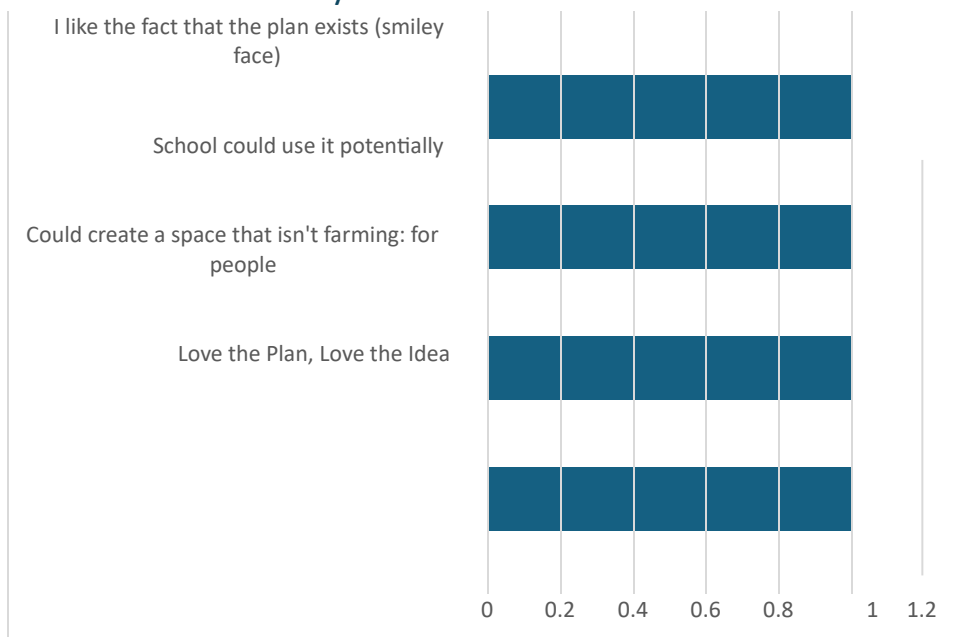


Figure 2. Individual Claims Chart

This chart presents *individual one-off positive comments* that did not cluster into larger themes but still express meaningful support.

These comments demonstrate additional enthusiasm and highlight unique perspectives that complement the main themes.

Overall, the claims charts reinforces that residents are particularly enthusiastic about **community connection**, **environmental improvements**, and **child-friendly play spaces**, with broad but varied support across additional themes.

6. Concerns: Risks and Issues Identified

6.1 Process and Communication

This was the most frequent concern. Residents expressed worries about unclear processes, confusion between community bodies, inclusiveness, and trust in how the project is being managed.

6.2 Privacy Concerns

included:

- Proximity of development to homes
- Overlooking and loss of privacy
- Adequacy of buffer zones

6.3 Parking and Traffic

Residents raised:

- Limited parking capacity
- Potential overflow into surrounding roads
- Traffic increases and road safety
- Lack of toilet facilities

6.4 Alternative Use of Land

Some residents questioned whether:

- The land should be used for affordable housing
- The park is the best option
- Other village priorities should be considered

6.5 Upkeep and Cost Concerns

included:

- Long-term maintenance
- Litter collection
- Funding sources
- Sustainability of the project

6.6 Environmental Concerns from Some Residents A

minority expressed concerns about:

- Increased pollution
- Potential increase in car use

6.7 Single-Mention Concerns

These are individually expressed concerns that appeared only once but add important nuance to the overall feedback.

6.8 Concerns Chart Summary

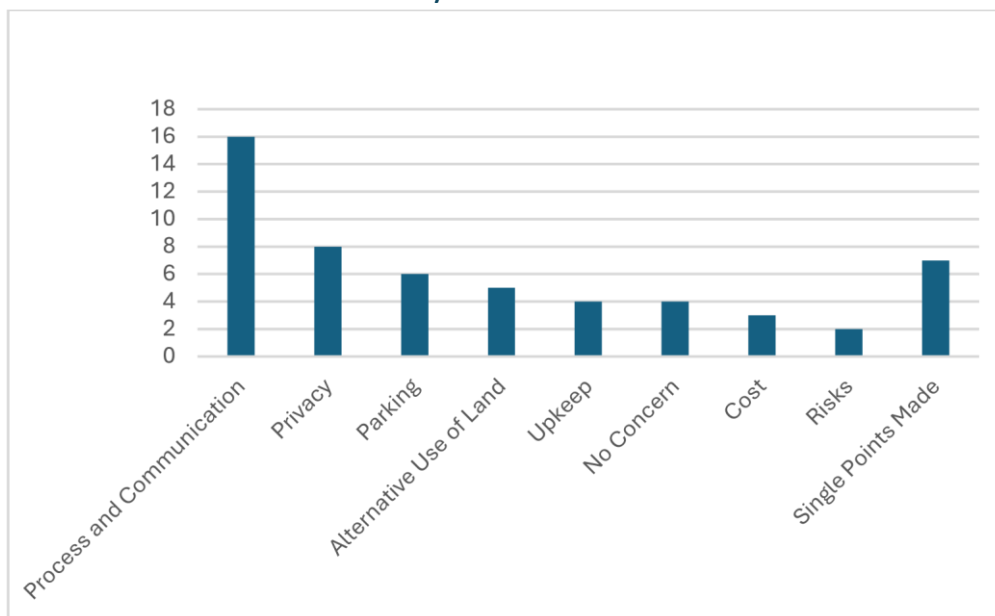


Figure 3. Concerns Theme Chart

This chart summarises the number of “Concerns” raised by residents across key themes they identified, highlighting the areas where anxieties, risks, or uncertainties were most frequently expressed and aligns with the synthesised data.

Key insights include:

- **Process and Communication (≈16 concerns):** The most significant theme, showing widespread uncertainty about consultation methods, transparency, and community trust.
- **Privacy (≈8 concerns):** Strong concerns about proximity to homes, overlooking, and the adequacy of buffer zones.
- **Parking (≈6 concerns):** Ongoing worries about parking pressure, overflow, and traffic safety.
- **Alternative Use of Land (≈5 concerns):** A notable group questioned whether the land might better serve housing or other community priorities.
- **Upkeep (≈4 concerns) and Cost (≈3 concerns):** Concerns about maintenance responsibility, long-term sustainability, and financial clarity.
- **Risks (≈2 concerns):** Minor but present worries about broader implications.

Appendix B: Heriot Community Conversation, 1.4.26: Residents' Feedback.

- **Single Points Made (≈7 concerns):** Individual concerns that did not fall into major themes but provide valuable nuance.

Overall, this chart reinforces that the most significant concerns relate to **process clarity, impact on neighbours, and practical infrastructure considerations.**

6.9 Single-Mention Concerns Chart Summary

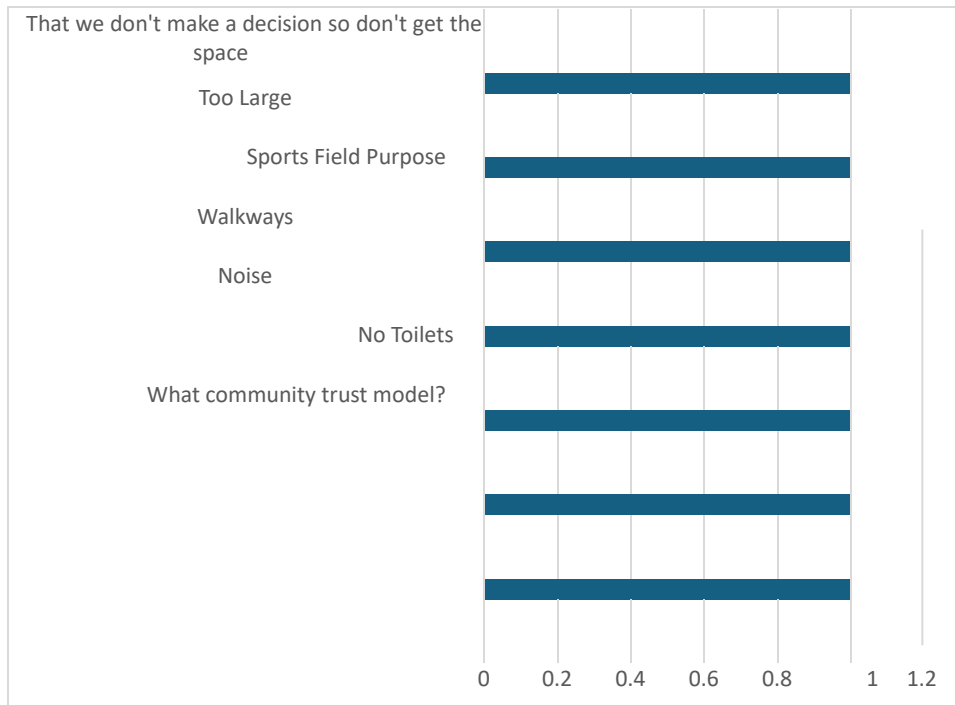


Figure 4. Single-Mention Concerns Chart

This chart presents the *one-off concerns* raised by residents; issues that did not cluster into larger themes but reflect meaningful individual perspectives.

Collectively, these individual points highlight additional sensitivities—ranging from design details to governance clarity—that may warrant attention in future planning and communication.

Individually expressed concerns included:

- Fear that indecision may lead to losing the opportunity entirely
- Worry the project is too large
- Queries about sports field use
- Concerns about walkway placement
- Noise disturbance
- Lack of toilet provision
- Questions about the community trust model

7. Participation Profile

7.1 Residency



Figure 5. Residency Chart

The residency chart shows the distribution of meeting participants and contributors across three groups:

- **Heriot Station residents** — 20 attendees and 3 apologies with comments.
- **Heriot Wider community** — 13 attendees and 1 apology without comment.
- **Non-Heriot residents** — Only 1 attendee.

This distribution indicates that the consultation was driven primarily by residents of Heriot Station and the broader Heriot community.

7.2 Population of Heriot Contributing to CCI Evaluation

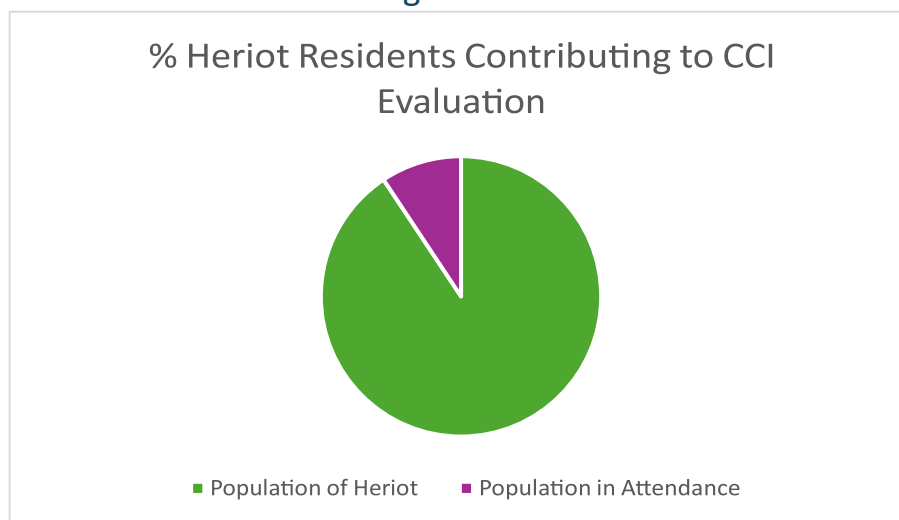


Figure 6: % of Heriot Population Contributing to CCI Evaluation

The chart demonstrates that only a very small proportion of Heriot residents participated in the CCI evaluation, with attendance representing a minor fraction of the overall population. As a result, the evaluation findings reflect the views of a limited subset of the community rather than the population as a whole. **This low participation rate raises concerns about the representativeness and generalisability**

of the evaluation outcomes and highlights the need for strategies to broaden community engagement in future consultation or assessment activities.

7.3 Age Profile of Participants

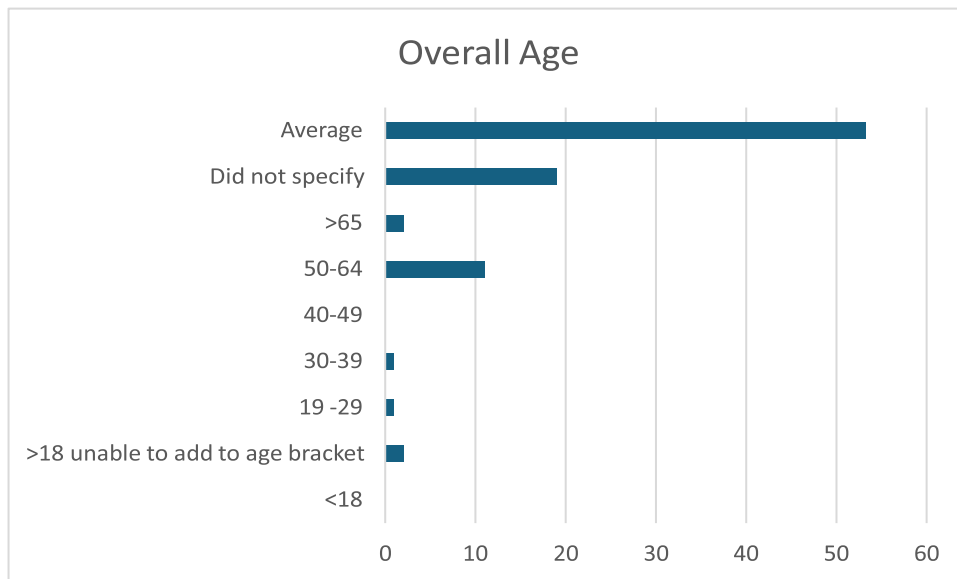


Figure 7. Overall Age

The “Overall Age” chart shows:

- **Average Age Group:** Calculated average across all provided ages.
- **Did Not Specify:** Around 18 individuals did not report age.
- **50–64 Age Group:** Around 10 participants—the largest defined bracket.
- Smaller numbers were recorded in:
 - 40–49 ○ 30–39 ○ 19–29
 - Over-18 but no bracket classification
- No under-18 participants were recorded or reported.

Overall, representation skewed towards older adults, with **limited participation from younger residents.**

7.4 Age and Residency (Combined View)

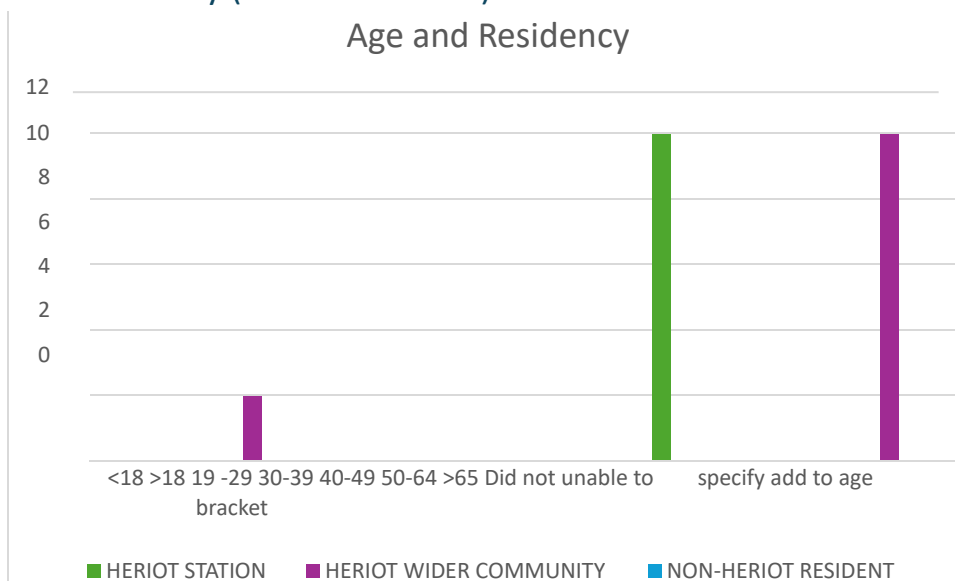


Figure 8. Age and Residency Chart

This chart combines age brackets with residency categories (Heriot Station, Heriot Wider Community, Non-Heriot Resident), showing how participation varied across different age groups and locations.

Key insights include:

- **Heriot Station residents** had the highest representation across most age brackets, especially **50–64** and **Did Not Specify**.
- **Wider Heriot Community** participants appeared mainly in the **Did Not Specify** and **>18 unable to add to age bracket** groups.
- **Non-Heriot residents** were represented only in very small numbers (e.g., one participant in the **50–64** age bracket).

This combined view reinforces that most contributions came from older adults living within Heriot Station, with limited input from younger residents and minimal participation from outside the area.

8. Overall Summary of Community Position

The community is engaged and invested in the future of the site. Residents generally welcome the idea of community enhancement but emphasise the need for:

- Clear communication
- Strong and transparent governance
- Financial sustainability
- Sensitivity to neighbour impact
- Consideration of alternative land uses

Broad support exists, but residents expect the project to be carefully planned and collaboratively managed.

9. Next Steps

- This report will be presented to the Heriot Community Council prior to next HCC meeting on **15 April 2026**.
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10. References

- Guba, E.G., and Lincoln, Y.S. (1989). Fourth generation evaluation. Sage Publications: Inc
-