

# East Neuk Tourism Association - Meeting 12 March 2026, Cambo House

## Minutes

### 1. Welcome, Apologies and Minutes – Gillian

Apologies: Emma Hamilton & Kylie Clark, Bowhouse; Nikki Storrar, Ardross  
Michele Blackwood, Puffin Cottage, Brad Eggleston, Umlungu Art; Kate Butler,  
Scottish Seaside Saunas; Rob and Ellie Deas, Isle of May Boat Trips

Attendees:

- |                                  |                            |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| • Gillian Maclaren, Chair        | Pittenweem Properties      |
| • Bill Bruce, Vice Chair         | Different Voice            |
| • Tim Findlay-Coulson, Treasurer | The West End Bar           |
| • Manuela Calchini, Secretary    |                            |
| • Joanne Quinney                 | Cambo House                |
| • Elise Methven                  | Cambo House                |
| • Gregor Bisset                  | Welcome to Fife            |
| • Thomas Innes                   | Anstruther Fishbar         |
| • Judith Dunlop                  | Elie Seaside Sauna         |
| • Alex Nairn                     | Elie Leisure               |
| • Sandy McNaughton               | Sandcastle Cottage, Crail  |
| • Daryl Wilson                   | Guide Us Breaks            |
| • Peigi Muir                     | Crail Museum               |
| • Helen Armitage                 | Crail Museum               |
| • Julie Ireland                  | Kilrenny Mill              |
| • Diane Ireland                  | Kilrenny Mill              |
| • Linda Sneddon                  | Honeypot Guesthouse, Crail |
| • Andrea Morris                  | Kingsbarns Distillery      |
| • Martin Dibley                  | Pets Pantry, Anstruther    |
| • Nick Frost                     | The Shoregate, Crail       |
| • Val Eglinton                   | Blue Badge Guide           |
| • Faye Cochrane                  | The Dory, Pittenweem       |
| • Ruth Robinson                  | The Dory Pittenweem        |
| • Lisa Kennedy                   | East Neuk Orchards         |
| • Jamie Robertson                | Elie Select                |

Minutes Proposed: Tim

Minutes Seconded: Thomas

Matters arising from Minutes:

- In terms of East Neuk Signage and Brown Signs, Gregor will continue to liaise with the roads' department at Fife Council

## 2. Welcome to Cambo House and Gardens – Joanne and Elise

- Currently two separate businesses that will combine as “Cambo Estate”
- Many different aspects to the business: Historic house and tours, event venue, gig venue, walled garden, café plus the nearby distillery
- Weddings are still a focus for Cambo. Using bed rooms in the house, the 3 cottages and the two off grid pods, Cambo can sleep 59 pax.
- However, as more accommodation is often required, Cambo are looking for local accommodation providers
- Cambo’s excellent wedding service was recognised with two awards by the Scottish Wedding Awards 2026 – “Most Romantic Wedding Venue of the Year” and a Top Ten placing for “Wedding Co-ordinator of the Year”
- Cambo also offers corporate away days, private dinners and even accommodation when there are no weddings
- Cambo is committed to providing inclusive access to visitors by providing accessible parking, mobility aids. Cambo also offers Dementia friendly walks



## 3. Finances - Tim

- We have paid out on invoices for the Social Media Training and the Crail Map design.
- Our account balance currently sits at £ 1,771.01
- As we have submitted the project report for the Social Media Training, we should shortly receive the outstanding 25% of our grant (£997.50), which would bring our balance up to £2,768.51. Gregor confirmed that the process is underway

## 4. Business Rate Revaluation – ENTA subgroup

- While this is mostly a challenge for self catering it also affects other business types

- The threshold for Business Rate Relief has been decreased from £ 15K to £12K, putting many more businesses in a position where they have to pay business rates.
- At the same time the revaluation figures have seen increases up to 300% for business values.
- This will result in much higher bills, which might put some self-caterers and others out of business.
- The wider tourism community could be adversely affected by a potential decline in visitor numbers
- The meeting with the Fife Assessor, Barbara Hector was challenging, but there is an opportunity to pick up the conversation again
- The underlying process for the revaluation looks archaic, with no comparative businesses used to support the statistical analysis
- Some transitional relief appears to have been brought in with a limited reduction in relation to the charge per bedspace
- Notification of the new rateable value will be issues in mid-March
- Water rates are also an issue as they are linked directly to business rates
- Businesses will be able to appeal to the Assessor directly and/or propose a different charge based on their own analysis.
- It should be noted that business owners can only appeal **ONCE** and should not rush into this. However, all appeals need to be submitted no later than 31 July 2026
- Support for businesses has been shown by numerous organisations such as the Assc (Association of the Scottish Self Caterers), the Federation of Small Businesses and the Fife Chamber of Commerce.

#### **What can you do as a business owner?**

- Alex Nairn made a tentative enquiry with someone he had worked with before who was willing to offer his consultancy services on a no win no fee basis with 20% discount to ENTA members. It was thought it best for the subgroup to assess interest from member businesses after they receive new revaluations, and possibly arrange a meeting with the consultant then.
- If you have moved your business off domestic rates, there is the possibility to move it back, but this needs to be done by 31 April
- Appeals have to be done on an individual basis by 31 July, but bear in mind that you can only appeal **once**
- Please speak to your colleagues in the industry to make sure that they are aware of this issue.
- Stay in touch with the ASSC and follow the discussion either as a member or by looking at their newsletters – here is an excerpt, complete with links, from 11 March 2026

11/03/2026

#### ***Non-Domestic Rates Revaluation***

*Following sustained lobbying by the ASSC and cross-party support from MSPs, the Scottish Government has introduced targeted measures to protect self-catering businesses from the most severe impacts of the 2026 Non-Domestic Rates revaluation.*

***This includes:***

- *A bespoke transitional relief scheme for self-catering accommodation, limiting increases in gross non-domestic rates liabilities to 15% in the first year of the revaluation cycle*
- *A new evidence window allowing legitimate operators to demonstrate occupancy compliance for the 2024–25 financial year*
- *Adjustments to the valuation matrix, with most revaluations expected to reduce by around 20–25%*

*These changes represent important progress and provide short-term breathing space for many businesses.*

*However, the underlying valuation methodology remains fundamentally flawed. The ASSC will continue pressing for structural reform ahead of the 2029 revaluation, while supporting members through the appeals process.*

You can see the newsletter here: [Advocacy in action: what the ASSC is doing for members right now \(March 2026 Update\) - ASSC](#)

#### **What can the ENTA do?**

- The subgroup have invited concerned businesses to get in touch via a post on the Facebook members page but we have yet to decide how we manage more direct communications on this issue.

#### **5. Update from Welcome to Fife – Gregor**

- Busy time attending shows and hosting conferences
- Linn attended Inbound Manchester
- Welcome to Fife team will attend in mid-April, with 25 Fife business partners
- A new campaign brief is going out to tender
- Love Fife boards to be put into new localities including Bus stations at Ferrytoll, Halbeath and St Andrews
- A request was made for a contact address for the organisation dealing with Accommodation at the 2027 Open though it is unclear if the organisation is already looking at self catering properties at this time:  
[Register A Property - The Open Accommodation](#)

#### **6. Wash Up from Social Media Training - Manuela**

- Manuela offered her apologies for the venue selection, as the Classroom at Bowhouse was very cold
- 31 workshop attendees
- 11 attendees for surgery
- This represents 26 different businesses – 24 from East Neuk and 2 from wider Fife.
- These 26 businesses covered 9 different sectors including retail, visitor attraction self catering, self catering agencies, venues, hospitality, festival and others.

Unfortunately 4 members had to call off attendance at short notice due to illness and other commitments and 2 members were no shows.

- As part of the feedback form, we were able to collect:  
24 FB handles
- 24 Instagram handles
- 8 TikTok handles
- 3 X handles
- and 3 other handles

The workshop was highly valued by those who attended and completed the online feedback form (30 out of 34):

- Quality – 29 out of 30 suggested it was “good”/”very good”.
- Engaging – 29 out of 30 found the course content and delivery “engaging”/”very engaging”.
- The most encouraging feedback was around the question “Do you feel more confident in using Social Media”, the respondents suggested that everyone felt more confident. (on a sliding scale from 1 – 4, with 1 being “No, I feel the same” to 4 being “I feel much more confident”, 2 respondents scored “2”, 11 respondents scored “3” and 17 respondents scored “4”.
- Scunnered Digital have given us access to a slimmed down slide deck that they used during the workshops and we can share that with the wider group: <https://bit.ly/east-neuk-training>
- They have also created a blank scheduling planner for anyone who wants to plan their content in a Google Sheets we displayed in the session. All they have to do is be logged into a google account and click ‘file’ then ‘make a copy’ and they can freely use this template if it’s helpful: <https://bit.ly/east-neuk-planner>
- **Gregor has confirmed that project funding will be available from Welcome to Fife and new grant applications will have to be submitted by 31 July 2026**

**ACTION – All – please bring your ideas for projects we could carry out to our next meeting in May**

## **7. Update from Tay Country Tourism Conference**

- Gregor, Thomas, Brad, Kate and Manuela attended the Tay Country Tourism Conference (as did some members of the ENTA) and Gregor raised two main take aways from the event:
- Giving the visitor a chance to stay longer and do more has the potential to make a difference to the bottom line
- Insight into inclusive tourism – understanding that there are many different disabilities and the best way to address to provide in-depth information on your business  
For more information on this, have a look at Access Able: [Home | AccessAble:](#)
- The presentation consisted of a Visitor Economy overview by Vikki Miller, CEO of VisitScotland and presentations by numerous tourism businesses and organisation such as Lunan Bay Farm, Anstruther Harbour Festival, Ballintaggart and others, and Alan Cumming popped up to tell us all about the Pitlochry Festival Theatre.
- One of the highlights for me was a presentation by Johannes Skulason, Managing Director of the Icelandic Travel Association
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- There were also presentation on Inclusive Tourism, The Eden Project and AI, particularly in tourism marketing.

You can get some insights into the presentations at the conference here: [Tay Country Tourism Conference 2026 | follow-up - News | VisitScotland.org](#)

The Conference was very well organised and thanks must go to the team from Welcome to Fife, the team from VisitScotland and the other folks involved in delivering this successful event.

## 8. AoB

- **Flightpath changes for Edinburgh Airport** – the consultation period is now closed. While Fife Council has neither a vote nor a veto in this matter, it has engaged on numerous occasions with the process to raise concerns shared by local communities, such as noise and air pollution. It should be noted that the consultation period was quite short and some suggested that that it was not really an open /fair consultation.

There is a process diagram and the proposal process is currently at stage 3: [Airspace Change | Edinburgh Airport](#)

The airport has also set up a Virtual Room that allows you to check potential noise level changes in your area: [Airspace Change | Edinburgh Airport](#) Go to the right and then straight to the “Locations Room”, once in there turn left and look for the sound box.

**ACTION:** In future please report any concerns about proposals that could affect tourism in the East Neuk directly to the ENTA so we can take a look at it and speak to relevant partners.

- **Coastal Path**

According to Audrey Peebles of the FCCT, the Coastal Path will have its 25 year anniversary in either 2027 or 2028 and it is likely that some celebrations will take place. While the members welcomed the idea of celebrations of this wonderful asset, the sentiment in the room was one of concern that the continued erosion has now compromised the integrity of this long distance route.

**ACTION: Robbie Blyth of FCCT to be invited to next meeting**

- **Update on Tourism Levy:**

Concern was raised that the committee charged with agreeing to the tourism levy did not feature a single councilor from either St Andrews or East Neuk & Landward wards. It is not sure how the monies will eventually be distributed, but there was some concern in the room that the money raised in our area would be spent elsewhere.

## **9.Next meeting**

Likely to be Thursday 21 May – TBC