

Minutes of the Tarland Development Group Trustees Meeting

Wednesday 23rd October 2019 at 7.30pm
The MacRobert Trust Office, Tarland

1. Attendees and apologies

Present (7): K Redpath (KR) (Chair), D Hirst (DH), K Dale (KD), S Power (SP), E Shepherd, (ES), Y Davidson (YD), Megan Albon (MA) (Minutes).

Apologies (3): C Redmond (CR), Ana Pena del Vale (APV), Annie McKee (AMK).

2. Matters Arising:

There were no matters arising.

3. Decisions Between Meetings

There were two decisions between meetings. One was to approve the application to the Community and Renewables Energy Scheme (CARES) for a feasibility study in to a holistic energy system for the Village Farm affordable housing project. The second decision between meetings was to print more walking leaflets.

4. Membership

There were no new applications for membership. There are currently 44 Members including Trustees.

5. Cromar Community Council

There were no points raised in relation to the Cromar Community Council.

6. Tarland Community Housing

SP reported on the Tarland Community Housing Project. The September application to the Scottish Land Fund was unsuccessful, however feedback suggests that the project was felt to be suitable for the fund but requiring too much of the overall budget. Reapplication for a smaller sum is a possibility, and applications to other grants are planned.

The planned discussion by the MacRobert Trust Estate Committee on the 15th October did not take place as following from the SLF result there were too many unknowns for a decision to be reached.



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It was agreed that the process was very difficult for communities, and that the Scottish Government should be made aware of this. KR and SP discussed the problem of housing developments being removed from Local Development Plans because of marketability issues (no developer being interested) rather than consideration of local need. SP reported that TCH might try to meet with MP Kevin Stuart, who is also Minister for Local Government, Housing and Planning, to discuss the difficulties of communities getting involved in housing. Annie McKee was felt to be well placed to raise the issue with officials.

MA reported on the CARES application, prepared by Joe Gribbens of Community Housing Scotland. The main issue affecting TDG was the proposed in-kind match funding of £5000 in project management hours given by TDG staff and Trustees. MA explained how the contribution would break-down, emphasizing that the arrangement was provisional, and no major objections were raised by Trustees.

SP explained the need for stronger communication with MacRobert Trust (MRT) Trustees of the pressing social need behind the housing project. He said that at the next MRT Trustee meeting where the Village Farm project is to be considered, he will seek approval for representatives from the new community group to be present at the meeting.

7. Electric Car Scheme

MA reported on the application to the Plugged-in Households grant scheme, managed by the Energy Saving Trust. The application was felt by the panel to be strong, and they requested further evidence that there would be sufficient usage to make the scheme sustainable in the long term. It was indicated that multiple cars might be funded, so that the scheme could be expanded to include Aboyne. A meeting was held with the Mid-Deeside Community Trust. Patient transport groups in Tarland and Aboyne were asked to indicate how much support they could provide. An online survey was also open for a week. The sum of these activities suggested that demand was not strong enough to support the model of a car share scheme funded by the Plugged-in Households grant.

Despite this lack of demand, it was felt that the project should stay on the agenda. LS suggested that MA should attend the Cromar Patient Transport meeting in November. It was also suggested that car share schemes in small communities should be researched, such as that at Loch Eilean. Development Trusts Association Scotland (DTAS) could also be approached for advice. KR also suggested attending the next Marr Area Partnership (MAP) Ward Forum at which rural transport would be raised. Through more thorough research a more detailed action plan could be created.

8. Bee Group

YD gave an update of the latest TBG activity. 48% of funding is now in place for the second phase of the apiary project, with applications in to the Robertson Trust and the Crerar Trust. If either of



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these applications is successful then an application will be made to Baxters to complete the fundraising.

A hedge was planted on 19 October at the apiary using funding from the Woodland Trust. Twelve volunteers turned out. Later the bees were moved down to fill the hives.

The lease hives have produced well, with almost £400 of hive honey sold at Tarland Market, and about another £400 to sell. This represents a good return on investment for the purchase of the lease hives.

Twenty-eight people are now signed up to the Beginners Beekeeping Course, with only 20 places available. The deadline for payment is 8 November.

An enthusiastic amateur beekeeper from Boston, USA was shown around the apiary. He is originally from Tarland and follows our activities on our FB page with great interest and enthusiasm.

TDG will show off the new facility at Old Town of Kincaigie during a guided tour as part of the MAP AGM. All projects involved will be represented, TBG, Tarland Seed Swap Group and Tarland Apple Pressing Group.

TBG were successful in their application to the Jo Walters Trust, and were awarded £1900 for equipment such as bee suits and observational hives. MA will send an email to the Jo Walters Trust asking that the hives purchase be postponed until the Boxing Day sales.

9. **Wetlands**

KD reported back on progress on the Wetlands Project. KD met with Kirsty Blackstock of the James Hutton Institute (JHI), an expert in community consultation, on 26 September, who identified a number of options in education and awareness raising around wetlands. MA and Ian Francis are tasked with organising a community consultation. Kirsty advised that a series of warm up events, such as stalls at the Christmas Fayre, would prepare the ground for more in-depth engagement in the future. William Latimer has agreed to be part of the group and both he and Susan Cooksley of the Dee Catchment Partnership (DCP) have been invited to the next meeting on 27 November.

10. **Food and Music Festival**

KD gave a summary of the recent Food and Music Festival (FMF). It was one of the best ever, with fantastic weather and a lot of people around. Overall the event made £1800 profit, taking in to account £3000 from MRT and DTAS funding for the Festival Co-ordinator's role. Next year MRT funding will decrease to £2000, and the DTAS funding is currently uncertain. However FMF have £10,000 of savings banked after previous festivals and so the financial outlook for next year's festival is positive.

The Chair sent very positive feedback about the event, and really enjoyed the opportunity to play in Tarland.

The Bikes and BBQ event was successful, with 400 people and over £1000 in donations (all of which goes to the Tarland Trails project). The £800 grant received by Tarland Trails to put on the event - paying for guiding, e-bikes and the 'Bike Doctor' - was largely donated back by the payees.

There were a large number of volunteers and the Trustees would like to thank them for all the time they contributed to the event. However, more volunteers are needed for next year, as well as a couple of new people on the steering group to spread the load.

The Trustees thanked Sarah Smith for her continued hard work organising the festival. It is very much appreciated.

The date of next year's festival will be the 25 - 27 September.

11. **Apple Pressing**

This year the apple pressing made 125 bottles, compared to 640 last year. This year a new press and crusher were purchased, although it is felt that the technique for using the press has not yet been mastered. DH felt that the project was all set up to be faster but there weren't enough apples this year.

12. **Composting**

KR reported that although Denise Hansford has stepped down as a Trustee, she plans to continue her work co-ordinating the composting scheme.

13. **Film Club**

Similarly Denise is happy to continue her work co-ordinating the Film Club. It is not clear who will be the lead Trustee on the project, but the Tapestry project sends reports to KD which she presents at Trustees' meetings, and the Film Club could potentially operate in the same way. It was felt that Film Club members should be encouraged to become TDG Members, and perhaps some new Trustees could be found amongst them.

14. **Paths and Access**

KR reported an oil spill on the track at Corrachree. This is within the TDG paths network (yellow route) but is not on MRT land. It was felt that TDG was not responsible for the track itself. DH reported on a damaged straining post near the bridge over the Small Burn at Coull. SP thought that this might have been caused by a tractor, and that MRT would sort out the problem.



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DH reported that the Outdoor Access Trust for Scotland (OATS) (formerly the Cairngorms Outdoor Access Trust (COAT)) have said that they would replace the vandalised signs. They currently have the contract for cutting the grass on the new section of the Tarland Way beyond Coull Bridge. The contract is due to run out and it is uncertain who will do the work thereafter.

15. Tapestry

Jan Healey emailed an update on the Tapestry project to KD, who presented it at the meeting. Jan said: "The tapestry had a lot of attention at North East Open Studies (NEOS) and lots of visitors from last year came to see the progress made. There are now cards featuring details from the tapestry for sale locally. Dorie Wilkie visited and was most impressed with our work. She was able to give us advice as to the stretching/ framing/ hanging of the tapestry. She also enjoyed some of the events of Tarland FMF. In the last two weeks we have declared the Tapestry finished! We are now exploring the options of framing it rather than hanging it. There will be an official opening when the framing is completed and there will be tea, cake and jubilation!"

16. Accounts, grants, awards and funding

DH reported that the TDG accounts were all looking healthy. There was some discussion as to whether the grants spreadsheet was up to date. MA is to email LS to get access to the online copy.

17. Governance

Trustees were reminded to complete the Declaration of Interests (DoI) forms and return them to KD as soon as possible.

18. AOB

KD brought up the issue of the need for a TDG First Aider, specifically for the FMF. It was suggested that TDG could pay for the training, and that should the DTAS funding continue, MA could be trained as a First Aider.

LS brought up the MAP AGM on Tuesday 29 October, stating that she and DH, with the help of Sarah Leahy and Lindsay Stewart, would be taking partnership members on a tour of the apiary and community orchard before the main business in The Commercial.

19. Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be on Thursday 5 December at 7.30pm at the MRT offices.