



Minutes of the Tarland Development Group Trustees Meeting

**Wednesday 3rd March 2021 at 7.30pm
Online**

1. Attendees and apologies

Present (12): K Redpath (KR) (Chair), D Hirst (DH), K Dale (KD), E Shepherd, (ES), Y Davidson (YD), Annie McKee (AM), Liz Cooper (LzC), Linda Cunningham (LC), Julian Davies (JD), C Redmond (CR), Simon Power (SP), Megan Albon (MA)

Apologies (1): Ana Pena del Vale

2. Matters Arising:

There were no matters arising.

3. Decisions Between Meetings

There were no decisions between meetings.

4. Membership

There were no new applications for membership.

5. Cromar Community Council and Cromar Community Helpline

The helpline is experiencing considerable demand and currently making deliveries four days a week, largely delivering food shopping and prescriptions from the pharmacy. A discussion is taking place as to what happens to the helpline after Covid. While it seems a shame to lose the capacity which has been built up, the community is also anxious that it does not find itself permanently responsible for statutory roles.

6. Food Waste Project

The Food Waste Project has continued to run pop-up food collection points at the Bowling Pavilion. At the next event they will be able to offer nappies and flour donated by Number 1 in Banchory.

The project is coming to the end of its funding from Aberdeenshire Community Food Fund. The MacRobert Hall have also received funding; enough to put in a new cooker on which to run community food workshops, although not enough to buy halogen hobs as was hoped.

The project has had lots of good feedback.



7. Tarland Community Housing

The application to register TCH as a separate SCIO has been submitted to OSCR. It is expected that the application will take three months to process, although some local organisations have found the wait to be less than this.

Four separate funding applications have been made to raise money to keep Sam Foster, the Housing Development Worker, in post.

A meeting was held with Scottish Water at which it was determined that the current water and sewage infrastructure at the Village Farm site could support 8-10 houses. TCH is now preparing a proposal on how the group could work with the MacRobert Trust (MRT) to deliver a number of affordable homes within this initial limit. They are holding off submitting an application to the current round of Scottish Land Funding until the business plan is complete.

8. Tarland Wetlands Group

There is much activity at the Tarland Wetland at the wastewater treatment works. KD and DH painted the exterior walls and cleaned the windows on the bird hide. Thanks are due to KR and Donald Redpath for erecting the willow screen. William Latimer has kindly volunteered to do some more strimming of the wetland before the 21st March. Drainage works, being paid for by the MRT, on the field next to the wetland began today. The MRT is hoping to agree with its farm tenant that part of this field will be added to the area managed for breeding waders, although the management plan has yet to be agreed.

At the Viewfield Wetland, the MRT is planning for desilting to take place following concerns over its performance during recent snow melt. The drains from this wetland will also be checked at the same time. KR and LS visited the field during the high water levels of the last few weeks and commented on how water is funneled in to the wetland from the field behind, and suggested that a landscape scale solution such as a thick belt of trees would help to slow water flow. Mark Wilkinson of the James Hutton Institute (JHI) will attend the next group meeting. Mark helped to design the bund which feeds that wetland and will give advice on whether further bunds could be added.

A webinar on managing grasslands for breeding waders was attended by some of the group, which was very informative.

Cromar History Group have shared an extensive GIS dataset with the group, charting ancient wetlands in the Howe of Cromar.

9. Tarland Trails

The bell mouth for the TT2 carpark has been completed and paid for. CR, DH and Chris Roper will have a meeting with Sports Scotland to discuss their application at either their April or September round of funding. The maximum sum that can be applied for through an expression of interest form is £540,000.





10. **Paths and Access**

LzC has been devising a set of procedures to manage the new Facebook page. Gillian Needham has been tasked with liaising with the Baillies of Bennachie on their plans to mark the COP26 meeting with climate related signposts showing the environmental benefits of various features on the path network around Tarland; discussions will be held with the MRT and other landowners about where these will go. The forum of paths groups initiated by the Lumphanan group continues, with the addition of the Ballater group. Next Wednesday they are organising a webinar with lawyer Malcolm Combe to understand Scots law relating to public access across land.

11. **Seed Swap**

The potatoes will be arriving tomorrow and distributed this coming weekend. As well as some local deliveries made by the steering group the pre-ordered potatoes will be available to collect from local hubs including No. 1 in Banchory and Platform 22 in Torphins.

There have been 75 orders. LzC will be taking some of the potatoes for the Cromar Horticultural and Industrial Society's 'Tattie Challenge', a potato growing competition for local school children.

Thanks to ES for all her hard work on this project under difficult circumstances.

12. **Bee Group**

The Education Facility continues to progress as the final design is confirmed between the structural engineer and cabin supplier.

The carpark at the Community Apiary has been used for the last two weekends to feed bees.

A plan is coming together for a reference library for the Educational Facility including books on beekeeping and wildlife. Tapestries for the facility are coming on, and three local stained glass artists have offered their talents for the front windows.

Local art teacher and TBG member Dave Woods has been working with YD to design a commission for pupils at Aboyne Academy to create a 'calligram' in the outline of a bee made up of text describing its different body parts.

13. **Spring Market**

It was decided that the Spring Market should be cancelled this year due to ongoing uncertainty with Covid 19, however it is hoped a market could still be organized for September as part of the Food and Music Festival.

14. **Tarland Food and Music Festival**

Festival Co-ordinator Shona Donaldson continues to work on planning for the 2021 festival. Pending a repeat of the survey of local opinion carried out before the last festival, it is intended that the festival should be largely online, but with the potential for some bonus in-person events should the pandemic restrictions allow.



15. **Tarland Community Garden**

It was with great sadness that KR reported the death of one of the community garden's most dedicated members, Geordie Rattray, who passed away recently. The community garden committee is in discussion as to the best way to mark Geordie's memory.

16. **Composting Scheme**

The composting scheme is likely to recommence around the middle to the end of April, depending on current restrictions. JD kindly offered to do the first round of collections with his wife Jackie so as to keep the operation to one household.

17. **Accounts, grants, awards and funding**

The Scottish Hydro Electric Community Trust award cheque has been received.

A discussion was held on what the reserves policy of TDG should be. At present TDG has minimal overheads and undertakes only projects of low financial risk, therefore a reserves policy has not been set.

It was suggested that DH should determine the exact annual running costs of the organisation to form the basis of a reserves target. It was also commented that sub-groups should pay in to the central TDG fund to meet this target given the support they receive from the umbrella organisation.

18. **Governance**

KD and MA have reviewed all TDG's policies and made minor updates. KD and MA have also drawn up a social media policy as guidance for TDG trustees, staff and volunteers. It has been circulated to trustees for comment.

JD described the advantages and disadvantages of different platforms to increase TDG's online data and document storage. Dropbox may be the best solution because it allows for many different members to be administrators on an account, rather than requiring one central administrator. KD is to investigate the payment options for larger Dropbox capacity.

17. **AOB**

KD has ordered rope for the new squirrel bridge. SP informed the committee that as estate forestry workers would be working in the area in March they could do the work. Thanks to JD who had also offered to assist.

18. **Date of next meeting**

The next meeting will be Wednesday 14th April 2021.