



Tarland Development Group Trustees Meeting

**Wednesday 26th May 2021 at 7.30pm
Video-conference**

MINUTES

1. Welcome and apologies

Present: Lizzy Shepherd (LS) (Chair), Chris Redmond (CR), Annie McKee (AMcK), Liz Cooper (LzC), Yvonne Davidson (YD), Dave Hirst (DH), Simon Power (SP), Kathy Dale (KD) (Minutes).

Apologies: Kate Redpath (KR), Linda Cunningham (LnC), Julian Davies (JD), Ana Pena del Vale (APV).

2. Matters arising

DH had previously circulated a paper on Reserves and TDG Core Funding. In summary, there is a very small annual cost that is not met by any regular income. TDG currently has unallocated reserves of about £10,000. DH suggests that TDG should aim for three years of unallocated reserves, say £2,000. Since we have considerably more than this at present we could think of spending some of this in a way that would further our charitable aims. In the long term however we should be looking for some source of revenue since the current surplus is a result of circumstances that are unlikely to reoccur.

3. Decisions made between meetings

Strengthening Communities Programme. An opportunity to apply for Scottish Government funding for staff members via DTAS had arisen. LS and DH attended an online seminar and following that a meeting was held by LS, DH and KD to discuss if it was worth applying and for what role.

Continuation funding for the Development Officer role was not an option for this fund and therefore all the Trustees agreed that an application could be submitted for a Community Engagement Officer.

The application was submitted on 5th May to support a Community Engagement Officer for a two year period, three days a week. The Community Engagement Officer would focus on community engagement in relation to existing projects, new projects, the Tarland Community Action Plan (CAP) and TDG organisation more generally. Cromar Community Council (CCC) were consulted in relation to the CAP proposal and were happy with this approach. The outcome of the application should be known in early June.

Tarland Community Housing (TCH) asked whether TDG would be willing to apply for funding to the MacRobert Trust (MRT) Alastrean Fund to enable their Development Officer to continue. TCH is not yet a charity in its own right and can therefore not apply. Trustees did not approve this proposal,

deciding that it would be better to wait until TCH could do so, which is expected to be in the next few months.

4. Membership

Two new applications for membership were approved.

5. Governance – GoogleDrive, emergency project management and updated Project Plans

Microsoft will give OneDrive (not GoogleDrive) with 1Tb of storage free to charities so DH has signed us up and is in the process of installing and learning how to use it. It should solve TDG's storage needs for the foreseeable future and should be ready by the next meeting. We will then need to try to arrange some training.

Due to KR's absence LS will chair meetings until further notice and has stepped in to manage KR's projects.

Updated Project Plans are still to be completed for some projects. If these are going to take some time then Trustees were asked to forward the main contact details to KD asap. KD will check out sharing e-mail passwords and GDPR/security/the dark web/two factor identification with Emma at MAP (Marr Area Partnership).

6. Tarland Trails

SP visited one of the nearby residents to discuss disturbance issues with Tarland Trails 1 and how best to resolve them. The resident had suggested a number of possible solutions and these were discussed. It was agreed that wider engagement is needed to ask what people would like to see. CR stated that TDG has acted on concerns promptly before, such as tarmacking the track. A sub-group of CR, SP, DH (and AMK as support) will look at practical solutions and SP will reply to the resident in the meantime.

The funding application to sportscotland for Tarland Trails 2 requires further information so has not yet been determined.

7. Community Garden

Paul Middlemiss is the new communications person. LS has briefed five new members and is temporarily acting as TDG responsible Trustee. A committee meeting will be arranged soon if possible.

8. Composting

DH is helping Denise Hansford with the rota. Denise manages the volunteers. This is how it will continue. DH will meet her when she's back from holiday and discuss sharing the volunteer contact details so that volunteer team members can contact each other on the day if necessary (for example if there is a no-show).

9. Cromar Food Waste Project

LnC previously circulated an update. The last pop up in April was less well attended than usual. The next manned pop-ups are on Friday 28th May in Tarland and Tuesday 1st June in Logie Coldstone. The group now have a key from Aberdeenshire Council for the pavilion in Tarland so that food can be stored there. Unfortunately the petty vandalism at the pavilion has continued, and has also affected the tennis club and the bird hide. The police have been informed of what's been going on (through the tennis club).

The Ward Forum on 16th June will be a Focus on Food which the group will attend. The group intends to apply to the Co-op Local Community Fund, deadline 31st May, in the hope of securing some funding for on-going expenses. The group has also been encouraged to apply for the Marr Area Committee Initiative Grant Scheme, deadline 14th June, which may help with the double sink funding.

10. Tarland Community Housing

Sam Foster provided an update. TCH's SCIO application was submitted to OSCR on 26th February. OSCR have confirmed that the application is yet to be assigned a Case Officer, so processing has not yet started. Remaining funding applications for the housing development worker post have been unsuccessful.

Since the last TDG Trustee meeting it has become clear that it is unlikely to be possible to develop affordable homes on the Village Farm site. The reasons for this stem from the fact that ground conditions at Village Farm are too soft and wet to be able to develop homes at an economical level. The Rural Housing Fund has confirmed that it would not support any main fund application requiring the current estimate of £50,000 per house purely for groundworks. As such the TCH Board has advised MRT that it will no longer consider the site any further for affordable housing, although it should be noted that MRT remain keen to see some affordable housing constructed there in the future. To progress affordable housing in the village TCH has re-considered a list of potential alternative sites. Of these the site with greatest potential is the MRT's Estate Yard, which is allocated for up to ten 'live/work' units and employment land in the forthcoming Local Development Plan (LDP) 2021. The MRT has advised that it is currently exploring the feasibility of business units on the Estate Yard, which reflects the current zoning of the site purely for business use, and will not consider any proposal for affordable housing there until this work is complete.

As a response to the above situation TCH will be holding a series of community engagement events over the next four weeks. This includes a Virtual Village Hall (Tuesday 1st June) and one-to-one Digital Drop-In (Wednesday 9th June) so folk can find out more about the progress of the project and ask questions, as well as a Tarland Walkabout to identify potential alternatives (Wednesday 16th June).

The end of May marks the conclusion of Rural Housing Scotland's 12-month contract. A full report will be submitted to TDG. Sam would like to thank TDG – on his own behalf and on TCH's – for funding his post and helping progress the project. He would also like to thank KD for providing clear and effective line management.

11. Tarland Wetlands

Three members of the group visited the Beltie Burn re-meandering project in Torphins with Dr Susan Cooksley, Project Manager, on 29 April. SP and KD both commented on how surprisingly cheap it was to design and construct. When Covid restrictions allow there will be another consultation in the village concerning the possibility of re-meandering a section of the Tarland Burn.

The drainage works in the field adjacent to the Waste Water Treatment Works (WWTW) wetland are now complete. SP and Ian Francis will liaise with the farm tenant about the operation of the sluice. A funding application has been submitted to NatureScot's Green Recovery Fund for the erection of a sign at the WWTW wetland and another one at Viewfield wetland.

SP will meet Dr Mark Wilkinson on site on 11 June to discuss the possible locations of additional flood storage bunds.

12. Paths and Access

There was a successful work party at the Jubilee Wood on 22nd May to re-stake trees, collect broken tree guards, and cut back brush around the trees. The next work party is planned for 19th June in the woods above Douneside, between the beech belties, to collect plastic waste from trees, carry out pruning etc.

After attending a Zoom presentation with Paths for All, LzC has submitted an Expression of Interest (EOI) for grant funding to cover the purchase of equipment for work parties. Volunteer hours will be used as match funding. She is waiting on feedback; the full application deadline is 14th June.

LzC has discussed fundraising opportunities with Marjory Craig – items which the Tapestry Group found to be successful - with a view to raising a pot of money for the Paths Group.

LzC will attend a Paths Zoom meeting with other Deeside/Donside paths groups on 9th June.

13. Tarland Bee Group

Membership is complete for 2021/22. Mentors have been allocated and lists circulated to all members. Members have been given advice about feeding in this particularly cold and wet spring. The TBG calligram commission with Aboyne Academy was very successful and articles from two beekeeping magazines have been circulated to Trustees and members and shared on Facebook. Regular teaching with the lease hive beekeepers is taking place every weekend at the Smallburn Apiary. The community hives are prepared for queen rearing which will start when the weather warms up.

The bark the group received as a donation from Julian Barclay was laid at Oldtown Apiary last weekend at a work party attended by eight people. The bee shelter and heather mound now have a thick coat of mulch. They will apply to the People's Postcode Trust for funding for a resource/reference library. The groundwork for the new build is due to start imminently.

14. Food and Music Festival

As per the last meeting, Shona Donaldson is doing well re-booking from last year and arranging the music. The group is keeping its options open with regard to whether the festival will be in person, online and/or streamed. A survey will be circulated around the community in June.

15. Cromar Community Council

The April meeting was cancelled. The May meeting is this evening and Sam Foster is attending.

16. Accounts, grants, awards and funding

DH will look into options for investing some of the cash in the TDG bank account. Interest rates are low but it might be possible to get some income.

17. AOB - Tarland Climate Crisis Group and Marr Area Partnership letter, Queen's Green Canopy initiative

TDG would be happy to assist with climate action signposting at events and in projects where possible and if there is capacity, however, further clarification would be useful. It was agreed that a representative of Tarland Climate Crisis Group (TCCG) should be invited to the beginning of the next TDG Trustees meeting to discuss possibilities (KD/DH to respond to Gillian Needham). AMcK noted

that she had already discussed the option to include climate change as an issue for the Food and Music Festival Farming Debate. SP asked if regenerative agriculture could also be included. SP indicated that the intention was for the MRT to talk with CCC and TDG about what the community may wish to do to respond to the Queen's Green Canopy initiative. The MRT has wondered about planting a small copse with one tree for each child at Tarland School, potentially planting a tree at each of the Trust farms, perhaps adding a tree in the Jubilee Wood – but there could be all sorts of other ideas. YD suggested planting a tree for/at each TDG project. Trees are available from the Woodland Trust but there will be other costs associated with planting, such as tubes and stakes and possibly fencing. Planting can start this October but needs to be completed by the end of 2022. All to email suggestions to SP/KD.

Litter picking was requested by one of the new TDG Members. YD to get information from Aberdeenshire Council. Tarland Paths have undertaken some litter picking and YD to put new member in touch with LzC.

18. Date of next meeting

Wednesday 14 July, possibly inside.

