



## Minutes of the Tarland Development Group Annual General Meeting Oldtown Walled Garden Saturday 4th September 2021

### 1. Attendees and apologies

Present (13): L Shepherd, K Dale, D Hirst, Y Davidson, A McKee, C Redmond, J Healey, N Healey, G Needham, D Currie, M Craig, W Latimer, L Bacon.

Apologies (7): K Redpath, L Cooper, L Cunningham, J Davies, A Pena del Vale, S van Heusden, D Hansford.

### 2. Welcome

Lizzy Shepherd (TDG Vice Chair) welcomed everyone to the 23rd AGM. Lizzy explained that she would give the Chair's report this year, as she is Acting Chair in Kate Redpath's absence. Kate has been unwell and is unable to attend meetings at present. Lizzy wished her all the very best, thanked her for her contribution to TDG and noted that the Trustees were looking forward to Kate being able to resume her involvement.

### 3. Chair's Report

Lizzy spoke about three strategic issues for TDG this last year, the impact of Coronavirus on TDG projects, with some being cancelled and others delivered virtually; the recruitment of three new Trustees; and the loss of funding from the Scottish Government Investing in Communities Fund (ICF), which had allowed TDG to employ or contract three part-time Development Officers for a period of three years. Lizzy then highlighted three successful projects, the Apiary Project, the Paths Project and the Wetlands Project. Thanks were expressed to the three employees, Megan Woods (Development Officer), Sam Foster (Housing Officer) and Shona Donaldson (Food and Music Festival Co-ordinator). The full Chair's report had been previously circulated to Members and is included in Appendix 1.

### 4. TDG Annual Accounts

Dave Hirst (TDG Treasurer) gave a summary of the financial situation of the Group. The full OSCR accounts had been previously circulated to Members.

At the end of the financial year on 1st July 2021 TDG had a **bank balance of £81,701**, up from £65,556 in the previous year. This is the result of expenditure and income very similar to last year, with **income of £64,519** and **expenditure of £48,374**. As usual the income is almost all thanks to various grants, the largest of which has been from the Strengthening Communities Programme (£32,280) which pays for the development and housing officers and the festival coordinator. The most important other grants are from various sources for the new educational facility at the





apiary (£19,700). The SCP grant is now finished, and the apiary is largely paid for so we can expect a large decrease in income next year, along with a large increase in expenditure as the apiary is finished. This should not cause any problems because we have enough reserves to pay core costs (insurance being the largest) for several years. It should be noted however that the only non project specific income we have is around £600 from Johnson Oils and about £100 from the donations in the cafe.

Thanks were expressed to Dave for doing an excellent job as Treasurer.

## 5. Election of Trustees

Kathy Dale (TDG Secretary) explained the election process. Each year all the Trustees resign and put their names forward for re-election (unless they want to step down), along with any new Members who want to become Trustees.

All of the existing Trustees decided to remain as Trustees apart from Annie McKee, who has decided to step down. Thanks were expressed to Annie for her commitment, enthusiasm and hard work over the last eight or nine years. There were no new nominations.

Eleven Trustees were **proposed for election by Annie McKee and seconded by Jan Healy**. They were approved and duly elected. The full list of current Trustees now stands as follows:

|                        |                   |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>K Dale</b>          | <b>Y Davidson</b> |
| <b>D Hirst</b>         | <b>L Cooper</b>   |
| <b>S Power</b>         | <b>C Redmond</b>  |
| <b>A Pena del Vale</b> | <b>L Shepherd</b> |
| <b>K Redpath</b>       | <b>J Davies</b>   |
| <b>L Cunningham</b>    |                   |

Kathy explained that one Trustee vacancy remains and that the Trustees could co-opt an additional Trustee over the year to fill this vacancy.

## 6. Resolution

The following amendments to the TDG Constitution were **approved unanimously**. The word 'extreme' was questioned by Annie McKee but subsequently agreed. The priority will be to meet in person.

*Present wording:*

### **Procedure at members' meetings**

39 The quorum for a members' meeting is six members, present in person.

### **Procedure at board meetings**

83 No valid decisions can be taken at a board meeting unless a quorum is present; the quorum for board meetings is three charity trustees, present in person.



*Amended wording:*

Insert after the word “person” Clause 39. Subsequent to any extreme circumstances whereby a physical meeting is not allowed or advisable, this will be undertaken by a virtual format.

Insert after the word “person” Clause 83. Subsequent to any extreme circumstances whereby a physical meeting is not allowed or advisable, this will be undertaken by a virtual format.

## 7. **Questions**

Marjory Craig asked about the Film Club. This needs a new Lead Trustee as Denise Hansford is no longer a Trustee. It was suggested that Tarland Welfare Trust could purchase a new, larger projector and screen for the main hall for its additional space and heating, as the upper hall is too small and cold. TDG owns the equipment in the upper hall, which has been repaired and would remain. TWT could then take over the Film Club project. Nigel Healey agreed to progress these ideas with TWT as it would have benefits for all the hall activities. It was noted that Rona Mitchell currently holds the list of Film Club members.

## 8. **Any Other Business**

There was no other business.

## 9. **Date of next Trustees meeting**

The date of the next Trustees meeting will be the 14<sup>th</sup> September.



## Appendix 1

### Chair's Report

#### Introduction

The Coronavirus pandemic has continued to affect Tarland Development Group (TDG) during 2020-21. We have tried to keep our projects running whilst following all of the guidance and rules, which ensure that everyone is kept safe. However, some events, meetings and activities have had to be cancelled entirely or have been delivered virtually. As the pandemic is brought further under control, we are hopeful that normal service will be resumed.

TDG Trustees have continued to meet throughout this period on Zoom but our first face to face Trustees meeting was held in July outside at the community garden. At the last AGM, one new Trustee was co-opted (Liz Cooper) and since then two new Trustees have been co-opted, Linda Cunningham and Julian Barclay. We were delighted to welcome them all and they have got off to a flying start with Liz leading the Paths Group, Linda leading the Food Waste Project and Julian has been extremely helpful with practical tasks.

In spring 2021, we stopped getting funding from the Scottish Government Investing in Communities Fund (ICF), however we are extremely grateful for the funding which allowed us to employ and contract three part-time Development Officers. Their input has significantly increased the capacity of the organisation and a number of our projects are far further forward than would have otherwise been the case. Megan Woods worked on a number of projects most notably the Educational Facility at Oldtown of Kincaigie (for which she helped to secure significant grant funding) and the Wetland Project. Sam Foster worked on the Housing Project and Shona Donaldson worked very hard to ensure that the virtual Food and Music Festival in 2020 was so successful. Sam and Megan have now left TDG but Shona continues to work on the Food and Music Festival. We are grateful for all of their hard work. In April 2021, we applied for Scottish Government Strengthening Communities Funding, which would enable us to employ a part-time Community Engagement Officer, the outcome of this application is yet to be received. Kate Redpath stepped down from being Chair during the year due to illness but continued to be a Trustee. We wish Kate a swift recovery and thank her for her input to the organisation and for being such a thoughtful and inclusive Chair.

*Lizzy Shepherd, Vice-Chair, 9<sup>th</sup> August 2021*

#### Project Updates

- **Tarland Bee Group (Lead Trustee: Yvonne Davidson)**

During the pandemic, TBG continued to teach hands on outdoor where necessary, allowed and appropriate. We have also provided support by email, text, phone, what's app, and video to our members. The old apiary is being used for lease hives, community hives and queen rearing. The





new apiary site at Oldtown (no hives present at the moment) has been maintained by members, keeping the buildings, garden and carpark tidy.

The 2019 beginners' classes were postponed a number of times due to the pandemic and have now been cancelled. We will run the class again, as and when the pandemic allows. We focused our time on our members and the building of the new Educational Facility at Oldtown Walled Garden, which is now almost complete. This was a large project, costing over £60k. We have made further funding applications for a resource library, butterfly banks and interior furnishings.

We collaborated with Aboyne Academy Students who were commissioned to produce a Honey Bee Calligramme. The commission was very popular and the winners all received prizes and the idea has been taken up by the Scottish Beekeeping Association and the International Meeting of Young Beekeepers.

- **Tarland Tapestry Group (Lead Trustee: Kathy Dale)**

The Tapestry group was unable to meet during the pandemic, but we managed to have our first meeting (outdoors) on 20<sup>th</sup> July 2021. A decision has been made to have the long postponed official unveiling of the Tarland Tapestry in the MacRobert Hall during the Food and Music Festival on the afternoon of Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> September.

Another project which started during the first lockdown is the creation of linen hexagons with embroidered flowers of species that are useful to bees and other pollinators. When completed, these will be displayed in the Educational Facility at Oldtown. This may be an ongoing project for some time depending on the display space available.

- **Tarland Paths Group (Lead Trustee: Liz Cooper)**

This year saw the creation of the Tarland Paths Facebook page. It has been very successful, allowing

folk to share their photos and walks, it has encouraged folk to walk paths new to them and report

maintenance concerns and we use it to set challenges (e.g. the July walking challenge). The Facebook page advertises the monthly maintenance sessions on a Saturday morning (we welcome more volunteers for this). We have also set up a Tuesday Tramping group, which checks paths and does minor maintenance. Thanks to all of those who have contributed to the maintenance work parties. Together with several local Paths Groups, we hold quarterly meetings to discuss issues and

share advice. We had an information zoom meeting with Paths for All which was extremely useful.

In discussion with the MacRobert Trust, we hope to take forward two projects in the next year or two! The first project is to repair the Black Path at the Petts, which will involve drainage to improve the path's resilience over the winter, fencing to separate the path from the fields and gates (stock and walkers). The MacRobert Trust also suggested planting trees along the field margin, which would be very effective. The second project is to create a new path (approx. 2.5k)





from the road near Tillychardoch (at the horse-mill), through the woodland and across the fields to the Coull Road. This would then link up with the Lochmanse / Wartle Right of Way and give off-road access to Craiglich from the village. This is a fairly major project, with two bridges, but we hope to be in a position to apply for funding in 2022. Some grant applications have been submitted already and cards will be printed as a fundraiser to cover ongoing maintenance costs.

- **Cromar Food Waste Project (Lead Trustee: Linda Cunningham)**

The Cromar Food Waste Project was set up in November 2020 with the aim of reducing food waste in our community, and we have a small, but committed, team of volunteers. This will be achieved by engaging our community in a range of projects that ensure access to food which would otherwise go into waste; educating and inspiring use of surplus and waste food by connecting with existing community groups e.g. Rainbows, Brownies, Tarland School; distributing available food from local depots and outlets e.g. Aboyne Fareshare Depot, Aboyne Coop etc.

We began with monthly free food pop-ups outside in both Tarland (by the pavilion) and Logie Coldstone (at the village hall). Typically, each month we reached around 50 families, with food supplies from Aboyne Fareshare and No. 1 in Banchory. We made up food bags, and gave out recipes to encourage folk to take some of the more difficult foods to shift. Tarland Nursery are very happy to take extra dry goods and vegetables for educational services, and our food bags were available via the Cromar Helpline during the pandemic. In September we will present the Community Kitchen at the Tarland Food and Music Festival making use of surplus/waste local produce for our soup.

We have received funding for food hygiene training, a fridge and freezer needed for picking up food waste from supermarkets and cooking and storing it or having more community events. Tarland Welfare Trust (TWT) has agreed that the MacRobert Hall can be our registered premises and will house our equipment. TWT also received funding towards a new cooker in the hall and along with them we are seeking funding for a double sink for the kitchen. The Food Waste Project still require more startup funding, however, once up and running, ongoing costs should be small, the main cost being buying supplementary food for recipes we are cooking.

- **Tarland Wetlands Group (Lead Trustee: Kathy Dale)**

The group's vision is to develop a set of natural wetlands fitting within the farming system, for the benefit of wildlife, the environment and local people. The group has carried out some field visits to look at suitable sites for leaky dams, bunds etc. to hold back water in the landscape. The James Hutton Institute (JHI) will be involved in the design of these natural flood management measures and they will be fully discussed with the farm tenants before anything is implemented. The group aims to provide the means (information and guidance) to enable land managers / the community to build more of these structures in the future.

A meeting was held with JHI in order to understand the functioning of the Viewfield Wetland in the village as a flood storage mechanism. A sign is being designed that explains this more clearly. The ponds will be de-silted in the autumn.





The group has undertaken upkeep and management of the Sewage Treatment Works (STW) hide and wetland, with a water level management plan due to be finalised with the farm tenant soon. A camera trap was deployed on the wetland during spring and early summer and videos of wading birds and their chicks have been shared on TDG's YouTube channel.

The group has produced a plan for wetlands in the Howe of Cromar, which was submitted to The MacRobert Trust in November 2020 and received a favourable response.

Finally, and probably most importantly, a visit was made to the Beltie Burn re-meandering project in order to inform a similar project on the Tarland Burn between the village and the Coull Bridge. Previous studies into the feasibility of re-meandering in this location are being re-visited and funding options are being investigated with the help of the Dee Catchment Partnership and the MacRobert Trust. Any plans will be fully discussed with the farm tenants and the community before the next steps are taken.

- **Tarland Trails 1 (Lead Trustee: Chris Redmond)**

Tarland Trails 1 continues to see lots of use by locals and visitors with a wide range of ages and abilities.

- **Tarland Trails 2 (Lead Trustee: Chris Redmond)**

A technical start has been made to the car park and entrance to maintain the planning permission.

Work continues to find the funding to make a start to Tarland Trails 2.

- **Apple Group (Lead Trustee: Dave Hirst)**

Last year there was a bumper crop of apples but unfortunately Covid rules meant we couldn't get together to press them. Instead, we hired the press out to various people who either had their own trees or collected apples from the orchard. A reasonable amount of juice was produced and we had some to sell through the cafe but nowhere near the previous years' amounts. This year we are planning to move the press to the new building at Oldtown and run the pressing from there. It will be very convenient for the orchard where there are some apples though not all that many this year. The move will also mean different people can take charge on different occasions reducing the dependence on one individual.

- **Tarland Community Garden (Lead Trustee: Ana Pena del Valle)**

The community garden remains a vibrant and productive project. Thankfully allotments were able to remain open during lockdown, and the garden was important in supporting mental health and wellbeing during a difficult time. The planned Scotland's Gardens Open Day had to be cancelled unfortunately again and the steering group have also decided this year not to open to the public during the Food and Music Festival. However, the Cromar Horticultural and Industrial Society held their second Big Potato Challenge weigh-in at the garden on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> August. The judges are ready and all they await are the spuds, and the bigger, the better! A





well-attended work party to help tidy the garden, do weeding and clear out the shed was held in July, and volunteers enjoyed tea and delicious cakes made by members. Geordie Rattray, a stalwart of the garden and mentor to many new gardeners, sadly passed away. A tree (Hazel Contorta, aka "Harry Lauder's walking stick") has been planted in the garden in his memory, along with a plaque and an event will be held for members in the autumn to celebrate him.

- **Community Composting (Lead Trustee: Dave Hirst)**

The garden waste collection service is running well in our 12th season with over 50 household members and a good band of committed volunteers. Donations were invited and received from most members at the end of the season last year, often of more than the usual fee, demonstrating the high perceived value of the service. The MacRobert Trust purchased a replacement tractor recently and drivers have been trained on this at short notice. Compost is available at the community garden for use.

- **Gone to Seed (Lead Trustee: Lizzy Shepherd)**

The Annual Seed Swap and Potato Day had to be done in a very different way this year. The event in the hall was cancelled but instead gardeners pre-ordered their potatoes, onions sets and shallots etc. Their orders were packaged up and either delivered or picked up. We are very grateful to certain outlets and individuals that agreed to be pick up points including No.1 Community Matters in Banchory and Platform 22 in Torphins. We had over 100 orders, which was quite a challenge and it could not have been done without volunteer support, so thanks to everyone who helped. Lots of saved seed was also distributed with the orders. Seed potatoes were also donated to various primary schools and for the Cromar Horticultural and Industrial Society Big Potato Challenge. Funding to support this was received from Aberdeenshire Council Covid-19 Recovery Community Food Fund. The seed saving workshops had to be cancelled this year but we hope to run these again next year.

- **Food and Music Festival (Lead Trustee: Annie McKee)**

Covid meant that last year the festival was entirely on-line. It was a hard introduction for our new administrator Shona Donaldson who nevertheless did a magnificent job both as organiser and presenter of the various events. These were mostly pre-recorded and included the usual mix of concerts, music and food workshops and a fabulous rendition of "When Tykes Were Bold" by multiple Tarland residents. The festival was free to watch, but we had quite a lot of donations and a successful raffle which meant we were able to pay the musicians something for their contributions in what has been a terrible year for all artists. This year it looks as if we will be able to hold the festival as normal, and we have booked the bands and other events accordingly, but we also hope to live stream the concerts for anyone who either doesn't want to attend a live event, or can't get a ticket. If this experiment works, we will consider doing it again in future years.





- **Tarland Community Housing (Lead Trustee: Annie McKee)**

In May 2020 TDG appointed Sam Foster, from Rural Housing Scotland, on a 12-month contract as Housing Development Worker to help progress the ongoing Tarland Community Housing project.

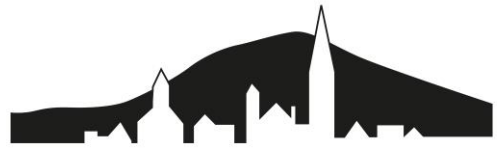
The post was extended until the end of June 2021 but, unfortunately, follow-on funding has not been secured. Over that period Sam has worked closely with the community to establish a newly constituted community organisation dedicated to the delivery of affordable housing in Tarland – an application has been submitted to OSCR (Scottish Charity regulator) to establish the new organisation and the outcome of this should be forthcoming soon. Sam has also Identified a number of appropriate sites for housing development and initiated negotiations with key partners, e.g. the MacRobert Trust. TCH would have liked more success in engaging local residents to a greater degree but it is clear that the project is much-needed. Tarland Community Housing will take this project forward from now on as a separate organisation and TDG wish them great success for the future.

- **Squirrel Bridge**

A rope was purchased with TDG funds and the MacRobert Trust kindly erected it when doing forestry work nearby.

- **Electric Car Share Scheme**

This project continues to be stalled by the pandemic and no further meetings have been held.



**TARLAND DEVELOPMENT GROUP**

Charity No. SCO41598 Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation

## Project Photographs



**Cromar Food Waste Project - Pop up Pantry at the Pavilion, Tarland**



**Wetlands Project - A straightened section of the Tarland Burn**



**Paths Group - Tuesday Tramps maintaining the waymarking signs**



**Paths Group - Saturday morning monthly maintenance group at Jubilee Woods**



**Tarland Bee Group - Young Imogen Taylor and her mum Marlice doing an inspection at the apiary under Yvonne's watchful eye**



**Tarland Bee Group - Finally it's up and the members start painting the Educational Facility at Oldtown Walled Garden**