



Tarland Development Group Trustees Meeting 11th February 2026 – Kens House MINUTES

Attendees: Simon Langan (SL), Chris Redmond (CR) (Arrived 7.45pm), Sandra van Heusden (SvH), Ken Webb (KW), Dave Hirst (DH), Dave Muirhead (DM). Frank Paterson (FP).

Apologies: Sheila Williams (SW), Jonquil Nicholl (JN)

Matters Arising Trustee Response to Governance document, taken under (2) below .

Decisions made between meetings – Responses to anonymous document.

1. Group Updates

Apiary Issues of PAT testing and water quality testing were discussed. AGM on 7/3/26

Bee Group: Annual members meeting 7th march. Agreed to hold a financial contingency in the unlikely event of disease outbreak to cover replacement of apiary hives/bees. Updating of roles and responsibilities amongst Steering Group to ensure load of tasks is spread and to allow for succession planning.

Apple Pressing

We are looking at buying a hydro press but need to test the water pressure at a time more representative of normal conditions

Cinema/Film Club- Core set of attendees, plus others, probably averaging around 30 people, much appreciated. Not quite breaking even financially.

Garden Update

Nothing much to report from the garden, far, far to wet and no one has been doing anything. Obviously the polytunnel cover guy has fallen behind with his horrible weather but if it clears up, he might be able to fit us in the last week of Feb if not it will be April. The recycled beds should start arriving end of this month.

Tarland Way Update

Three objections received on planning app. One on the gate width for horses, two on the grids. Background document sent to planner as requested. Fencing prep work has been completed. This will make path construction much cheaper and easier. Drafting lease with landowner. Contractors have already spent 8 hours installing new finger posts.

Tarland Trails

The trustees agreed to publish the composting toilet survey results at the same time as the upcoming in-person survey, to ensure a complete and accurate picture (Recently shared with Trustees). General





operational trail issues were discussed. CR to share 'North Pittenderich' trail feasibility document with trustees.

Food and Music Festival Update

We have booked the Laquettes for Saturday and are negotiating with Braebach for Friday. On Sunday we will have Ellie Beaton (local singer who has recently won trad musician of the year) who will do a concert then be interviewed by Frieda Morrison. Ellie will also do a singing workshop. We are applying for funding from the Traditional Arts and Culture Fund for Ellie and Frieda. The Aboyne and Deeside Festival have moved forward their deadline to April for their programme but we should be able to get the acts confirmed by then, possibly without a named support. Debbie is working on sponsorship packages which we hope might increase our income, and her time was included in the DTAS application (under financial resilience and making the most of assets).

Wetlands

The trustees agreed to formally close the Wetland Group. Responsibility will return/continue to be landowners although further consideration of ongoing management need to be confirmed. Note the bird-hide signage (Bird Flu Notice) still needs to be installed As with other projects that are not operative, move it on the web site, together with tapestry and spring market to the Closed Projects section.

Lego

Lego Club remains a highly successful, thriving and well-attended project. Attendance dipped slightly due to school timetable changes. Plans are underway to replace worn Lego and explore a future Lego trail. Attendance during the 3-year anniversary has been strong, with some months exceeding 70 participants.

Paths Update

There has been no activity to report for Paths. Ken filled in a form for Walking Scotland (formerly Paths for All) to enquire about grant funding but have not yet received a response. Need to phone them rather than fill in a form.

Seed Swap

Successful Seed Saving workshop. Lots of seeds to give away on Potato Day 28th Feb. All offers of help welcome. Books abroad will be at the sale. The Horticultural Soc will have a stall/pepper growing challenge and there will be Tarland Honey for sale. Frank agreed to help with parking.

Pavilion Restoration Report

The Pavilion project has reached a pivotal turning point in its transition from a state of limited local authority oversight to its restoration as a sustainable community asset. Recent developments have streamlined the acquisition process, moving the project away from the standard council Community Asset Transfer (CAT) to a quicker and more secure transfer route.

Key Developments

- Formal Business Case Request: On Friday, 6th February, Nick Mardall (Community Development Coordinator, Marr Area Partnership) requested a simplified business case



outlining the pavilion's long-term viability. This document will serve as the formal basis for a report to Aberdeenshire Council, recommending they relinquish control of the building.

- **MacRobert Trust Intervention:** During a meeting on Monday, 9th February, Angus Donaldson (Estate Manager, MacRobert Trust) confirmed the Trust's intent to invoke the existing pre-emption agreement with the Council. This legal mechanism will revert full control of the pavilion to the MacRobert Trust.
- **Management Transfer:** Following the reversion of title, the MacRobert Trust intends to transfer full management responsibility to the Tarland Development Group via a long-term community lease. This strategic move bypasses the lengthy and complex Community Asset Transfer (CAT) process, placing the asset directly into community hands more efficiently.

Risk Mitigation

The MacRobert Trust has further committed to a "safety net" provision: should the Development Group ever find itself unable to maintain the pavilion's viability, the Trust guarantees re-possession of the building. This concession ensures the asset remains protected from future dereliction and avoids risk to the Tarland Development Group.

Key points agreed:

Decisions

1. Proceed with the MacRobert Trust's pre-emption route as the preferred method of acquiring the Pavilion.
2. Prepare a simplified business plan, updated to include an exit strategy.
3. Commission the condition survey.
4. Seek written confirmation from the MacRobert Trust regarding lease terms, responsibilities, duration, and the handling of any future TDG withdrawal.
5. Send the business plan to: The MacRobert Trust; Nick Mardell (Council) for reference; Trustees
6. Frank will continue representing TDG in lease discussions, reporting back to trustees.
7. Ideas such as early membership launch and potential crowdfunding were also discussed as part of a wider resilience and income strategy

Cromar Food Waste Project Report (Jan–Feb 2026)

During the month of January the pick up of waste food from Aboyne Co-op was disrupted by the inclement weather and failure of the store's communication systems.

Shortage of pick up food items, and the transfer of all remaining stocks of frozen bread to the Tarland Store during the delivery disruption day resulted in low stocks for the January pop-up.

This has led to the group reviewing the current '**waste food only policy**'.

In recognition that our food distribution has become a welcome supplement for some pop-up attendees, the group has agreed to acquire '**in-date food**' on occasions when waste food stocks are low.

January Pop Up:

Food Items: 233, Value: £398, Attendees: 30

The group discussed the shift from a “waste food only” policy to a flexible approach allowing purchase of in-date food where needed. This was supported as a practical response to shortages. Safety, placement, and vandalism risks for any future pantry installation were also discussed.

2. Governance Document – Second Response

The group reviewed the three draft options (A, B, C). Discussion covered:

- Advice from DTAS communications consultant Marlene
- Acknowledgement that at least one author had now publicly identified themselves
- Whether inviting individuals to meet was appropriate
- Whether to answer specific questions or rely on actions

Decision:

Option B will be used as the final response, answering selected questions.

Who it will be sent to:

- Only to the Community Council
- Addressed to both Paul and the Community Council
- Sent from the TDG email
- Signed by Simon on behalf of the Trustees

Trustees hope this will help build trust and be seen as engaged communication that ultimately will allow us all to move on.

3. TDG Matters

a) Membership Applications & Proposed New Approach

- 3 new TT Steering Group members approved
- 1 further application rejected (With the option to re-apply in a year)
- Discussion held about capturing membership and steering group data more consistently
- Work underway to move to a digital method for annual renewals and governance compliance

b) Financial Update & DTAS Resilience Fund

- Short update on project/overall finances was provided. *
- Group acknowledged ongoing funding applications and obligations
- Debbie’s work on sponsorship (linked to festival) noted as part of financial resilience

c) Proposed Members Event

- Initial concept discussed
- Ideas included mixed sessions for members, active volunteers, and public outreach
- No final decision yet; further work required

Any Other Business

- Agreement to circulate Declaration of Interest to all steering groups; responses due by end of February.
- Discussion of changes in communication responsibilities:
 - Simon to handle external communications
 - Chris to focus on internal communications



- Thanks proposed for the outgoing minute-secretary – replaced by AI minute taking.

Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 25th March – 7.30pm – Sandra’s House