

DUNBLANE DEVELOPMENT TRUST

Approved Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at the Braeport Centre, Dunblane on 30th September 2023 at 2pm.

1. Welcome

The Trust's Chairperson, Sandy Fleming, welcomed 31 ordinary members to the meeting. It was noted that an additional 15 proxy votes had also been authorised by ordinary members of the DDT. As membership currently stands at 460 the Chair confirmed that the meeting was quorate in line with the Memorandum and Articles of Association.

2. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 1st October 2022.

The minutes of the previous AGM had been previously circulated to members and made available on the website.

The minutes were proposed by Malcolm Dougal and seconded by Scott Williamson

3. Matters arising

A question was raised about membership numbers. We currently have 460 members which is an increase of 29 from last year. The letter distributed earlier this year regarding the 20th anniversary of DDT prompted some of the late payers to come forward.

4. Chairperson's Report

Sandy opened the meeting thanking members for attending the Braeport Centre. As always this has been an incredibly busy year with volunteers and staff going above and beyond to serve the community and are a great asset to the DDT which is appreciated by the businesses, visitors and residents of Dunblane. He commented that this year sees 20 years of the DDT and mentioned some of the incredible work carried out by the volunteers and supported by the members. However, to carry out these projects, money is required. The DDT launched its 20th anniversary appeal to try to raise funds for future projects and to support the current ones. The DDT will continue to look at ways of raising money and to try to get some grant funding which is becoming increasingly difficult. One of the highlights of the year was a visit from the Development Trust Association of Scotland (DTAS) who visited Dunblane in June. DTAS were clearly incredibly impressed with the work carried out by the working groups and Sandy commented that everyone should be incredibly proud of their achievements. He then went on to announce that the DDT has been successful in securing the lease for the shop formerly known as Mary's Meals. All going to plan, the shop should be opening in a couple of weeks. This will give the DDT a new revenue stream and a 'shop window' to highlight the work of the DDT. Along with the shop, the DDT are working with 'The Bank' to help them bring a new venue to the town, Sandy commented that Paul Nelson is working a team for the Christmas Extravaganza. This again is a project run by the DDT. He mentioned the EcoFest which took place in May which was hugely successful and was run in collaboration with St Mary's Church. He thanked the team that worked on this.

Sandy went on to pay respects to Claire Watt, Graham Houston and Kenneth Murray who all sadly passed away in 2023.

Two DDT board members are standing down, Alan Booth and David Young. Both were thanked for their contributions to the DDT.

5. Questions and Answers

A question was raised about the new shop asking whether it would stay as a charity shop. Sandy replied that the shop would contribute to the running of the DDT and the surplus will be distributed to charities. The volunteers working in the shop will have their say in where the money will go.

6. The Accounts of Dunblane Development Trust for the year to 31st May 2023

Ian Gill, Treasurer, confirmed that the annual accounts for the DDT have been approved by the accountants, A9. The draft accounts are on the website and a summary has been circulated to members. Any member wishing the full set of accounts should contact the office.

Ian commented that the accounts looked better than anticipated showing a profit of £8k. Income was down by £34k on the previous year and expenditure was up by £21K. Income was mainly reduced due to a reduction in grants received. The previous year, DDT received £99k Legacy grant to fund the meeting centres for DFD. Donations are showing at £41k but £21k is assigned to DFD therefore cannot be used for running costs for the DDT. The Braeport Centre had to close for 2 weeks to allow the new heating system installation to take place. This was brought forward as the old boiler broke down in January. The cost of this project was £117k and the DDT secured funds of £113k from grants mainly from Local Energy Trust and CSET. DFD received a grant from £12k from Impact Funding, £13k from SVE health and wellbeing and £4.9k for new benches and signage. Ian explained that expenditure had increased mainly due to an increase in salaries. Depreciation has increased due to the new heating system. Ian then went on to discuss the balance sheet which although looks healthy 33% of the funds are restricted and half the unrestricted funds are assigned to DFD. Ian commented that it takes £30k to run the DDT and this is concerning as it is impossible to get grants to cover this. DDTPL donated £6k this year which has been helpful and DDTPL are hoping to donate a further £12k this financial year. Questions were asked regarding the poor membership numbers and Ian commented that the Board will be looking at the membership model as a matter of urgency. A further question was raised regarding why DDTPL had not contributed more to the DDT as it was agreed that the income from DDTPL was meant to be for DDT admin running costs. Ian explained that there has been a delay in this happening due to COVID, changes in tenancy and factor problems but it is hoped this is now resolved.

The accounts were proposed by Dougal Thornton and seconded by Rosie Hunter

7. Election of Directors

It was noted that Sandy Fleming was required to stand down under the terms of the Memorandum and Articles of Association and wished to be re-elected. Four new Board members are seeking election, namely Sue Hunter, Margaret Sharkey, Gillain Joynes, Mirella Marchini (Co-opted) and David Storrie (Co-Opted).

All Directors were elected unanimously by DDT members at the AGM.

8. Membership Fee Increase

The Board asked the members for approval to raise membership fees from £10 to £20 from 1st January 2024. A discussion took place about why this was necessary and why the Board was asking for £20. Ian and Sandy explained that the DDT cannot operate at the current membership level and read out some of the overheads incurred by DDT admin. Sandy explained that a newsletter will be going out to every household in Dunblane which will be delivered by the Boys Brigade and hopefully this will attract new members and donations. He explained that if the membership increases significantly then the membership fee may reduce again in time. He also commented that groups carry out works, but no donations are received. A comment was made that we really do need to stress that we need money to carry out these jobs and QR codes etc should be placed in as many places as possible. After a lively discussion a vote took place on whether the increase should be £15 or £20.

28 members approved the increase to £20 (15 proxy votes) with 11 objections.

9. Any other business.

There was no other business raised.

10 Working Group Presentations

Dementia Friendly Dunblane

Caroline Earnshaw updated the AGM that it has been another busy and successful year for DFD now that the second meeting centre has opened. A new group will be opening in Doune in November which DFD will be supporting. She thanked all the wonderful volunteers for their contributions.

Dunblane in Bloom

Scott Williamson gave an update on some of the work carried out by the volunteers of Dunblane in Bloom and mentioned that work will carry on during winter in the polytunnel at Ashfield. He mentioned that at the moment 8-20 volunteers turned up on Sunday mornings, but they are looking for more as there is a great deal of work they would like to do but do not have enough time to carry out this work. He thanked the volunteers for their continued support.

Environment Group

Monica Cessford thanked her volunteers for their hard work this year. She mentioned that Stirling Council visited the Environment group regarding dog control at the Haugh. Stirling Council are looking into this. She mentioned that there is a problem with the path beside the Faery Bridge, but nobody seems to know who owns this land. Monica is trying to find out who owns this piece of land. This pathway is a problem in wet weather and requires

fixing as soon as possible. She thanked her volunteers and again mentioned that new volunteers would be made welcome.

Mid Week Group

Dougal Thornton updated the AGM on the works of the MWG. He thanked Ken Mitchell for his work on the signs at the Four Ways Roundabout and Stewart Corbett for his work installing new heaters in the Braeport Centre toilets. Dougal mentioned that they are trying to find a place for storage and a workspace as currently park benches etc are being stored in volunteers' garages whilst painting takes place. Again, he expressed the need for younger volunteers to come forward and thanked the MWG volunteers for their contribution.

Path Group

Peter McGreggor mentioned that there were 24 members of the path group. They have carried out 18 jobs this year- mainly clearing vegetation, reopening underused paths, and repairing paths that have been damaged by flooding etc. They carried out a successful project over 3 weekends with the aim of attracting new volunteers. The volunteers cleared away some of the plastic tree tubes at the Laighills which were later taken to Polmaise. Stirling Council agreed to 2 shipments and 560kg of tubes were taken there. He concluded by thanking all his volunteers.

10. Chairperson's concluding remarks

Sandy concluded by mentioning the amount of work that is carried out in Dunblane is all thanks to the working groups and the amazing volunteers who carry out all this work. He mentioned that the DDT is 20 years old and there has been a great deal of development during this time. Sandy ended by thanking all the volunteers and members. Without them there would be no DDT. He thanked the Board for their hard work in the last year with particular thanks to Ian Gill and Anita Smiley.