DUNBLANE DEVELOPMENT TRUST LIMITED

Approved Minutes of the DDT Board meeting held on Monday 13th July at 7PM in the Braeport Centre

1. Welcome and apologies **Present:** Stewart Corbett, Paul Nelson, Rhona McInnes, Alf Scambler, Lorraine Murphy, Alan Reid **Apologies:** Scott Williamson, Bob Stainton, Anthony Delleur, David Storrie **In attendance:** Kirsty Robertson	
2. Approval of minutes from previous Board Meeting held on 1st June 2026: The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as an accurate record of the meeting. The approval was proposed by Stewart and seconded by Lorraine.	
3. Matters arising from previous minutes: **Thank You to Malcolm Dougall:** It was noted that one of the actions from the previous Board Meeting was to arrange a thank you for Malcolm Dougall following his retirement from both DDT and DDT Projects. It was agreed that Stewart would speak with Malcolm to decide on an appropriate thank you and circulate his suggestions to the Board. Lorraine also noted her thanks to Malcolm for the three months of support he had provided while she took over the role of Chair of DDT Projects. It was also noted that the Board was grateful for the 16 years of service he had given. **DDT Priorities** At the previous meeting, the Board discussed the need to clarify DDT's priorities. It was noted that these were still not clear and that having a better understanding of the Trust's priorities would help identify areas where DDT and DCC could work together. It was noted that, although DDT does not currently have a formal written plan, a number of areas and projects had previously been identified as priorities following a meeting held approximately 18 months ago. The Board agreed that these previous discussions should be revisited and developed into a working document setting out the Trust's priorities. It was suggested that this should be a standing item for discussion at Board meetings, allowing the priorities to be reviewed and updated regularly. It was noted that a clear priorities document would also be helpful for new Board members in understanding the Trust's areas of focus. Stewart will review the notes from the previous discussions and circulate them to the Board for review.	Stewart Stewart

4. Local Development Plan: It was noted that the Local Development Plan had not been included on the agenda, but that it would be helpful to discuss the matter to clarify the Trust's role and involvement in the process. Stewart advised that a meeting had taken place with Stirling Council to discuss the next steps. A further meeting was expected to take place in August, at which Stirling Council would provide its views on the spatial plan. It was explained that the current document largely represented a compilation of requests and proposals received, without an assessment of their feasibility. The next stage would involve organising and assessing these proposals, alongside public and statutory body comments, with the intention of producing a document for public comment in spring 2027. It was agreed that, although DDT did not have a formal role in the process, there was value in the Trust submitting an agreed response and seeking to be included in future discussions. The Board discussed whether DDT should endorse the response document previously circulated by Anthony, rather than producing a separate response. It was agreed that the Trust should endorse the document while also adding its own key priorities and comments. The Board discussed the importance of ensuring that future development was of an appropriate scale and linked to the town centre. Concern was expressed that satellite development could result in Dunblane becoming increasingly a commuter town without strengthening the town centre. The importance of tourism was also highlighted, with Dunblane recognised as a tourist destination. The Board discussed the need for development to be supported by appropriate infrastructure. It was noted that infrastructure provision had been a significant issue during previous expansion of the town, with some facilities only being considered at a later stage. The Board agreed that DDT should be specific about the infrastructure it would like to see included in future plans, with many of these priorities already identified within the Place Plan. The Board also discussed the role the DDT could play in supporting matters which fall outside Stirling Council's direct responsibilities. It was noted that issues such as improvements to the A9 entrance, NHS facilities and other infrastructure matters may require lobbying of external organisations. The Board agreed that there could be a role for DDT in identifying these issues and liaising with the relevant external organisations. The Board discussed the potential impact of new housing development on Stirling Council's revenue and the pressure on the Council to meet Scottish Government housing targets. It was noted that this could create an incentive for the Council to support further housing development. The lack of parking in Dunblane town centre was also discussed. The possibility of including improved parking provision, including a potential park-and-ride facility to support tourism, was raised as an issue which should be considered as part of the planning process. It was agreed that a meeting should be arranged with Anna and Anthony from DCC to discuss the key issues and priorities which DDT would like to see reflected in the Local Development Plan process. Stewart will liaise with Anna and Anthony to arrange a suitable date and circulate an invitation to the Board.	

5. Laighhills Update:

Laighhills Pavillion:
The Board discussed the £50,000 funding available from Stirling Council for the provision of public toilet facilities at Laighhills. It was clarified that the funding did not necessarily need to be used specifically for portaloos, as previously suggested by Alistair Tollemache, provided a public toilet facility was operational by the end of March 2027.

The Board concluded that we would not rule out using all or part of the funding to provide toilet facilities through the provision of self-cleaning style automated toilets, and the Board would evaluate this as a viable alternative for using some of the funding, with potentially any balance being used to support the broader Pavillion project. It was suggested that such toilets could remain alongside the new Pavilion to give 24-hour toilet availability.

Comment [KR1]: Addition from Alan Reid

The Board discussed whether the funding could be used towards the wider facilities proposed as part of the planned development. It was noted that, should the public toilet facilities not be delivered within the required timeframe, the Council may seek the return of the funding. It was also confirmed that the funding was separate from the proposed asset transfer and that the Trust could accept the £50,000 without proceeding with the asset transfer.

The Board discussed the timescales involved and whether the facilities could realistically be operational by March 2027. It was noted that plans would need to be submitted and that, although timescales were becoming tight, there was a possibility that the funding could still be used provided the project was sufficiently advanced and construction had commenced.

The Board discussed responsibility for progressing the necessary surveys and preparatory work, as it was unclear whether this was the responsibility of DDT or Stirling Council. It was confirmed that this would be the responsibility of the Trust. Concerns were raised regarding delays in progressing matters from Stirling Council's side, including the outstanding survey which had been expected in April, and the potential impact this could have on the Trust's ability to deliver the project within the required timescale. Concerns were also raised regarding who was holding Stirling Council accountable for these delays.

It was suggested that the priority should be to use the £50,000 to make the building operational, with the proposed asset transfer considered separately at a later date. The Board noted that a business plan had been prepared and submitted, and that Anthony was continuing to press the Council to progress matters. It was also noted that the Council could potentially use the funding themselves to implement toilet facilities, rather than the Trust being required to do so.

The Board discussed whether accepting the funding would create an ongoing obligation for the Trust to operate and maintain the facilities. It was confirmed that there was no such commitment attached to the funding. Should the pavilion ultimately form part of an asset transfer, it was anticipated that the Council would work with the Trust regarding ongoing operating costs. Stewart

The Board agreed that the immediate focus should be on progressing the water and drainage requirements over the next six weeks. Stewart will speak with Anthony regarding the current position and provide a further update to the Board at the next Board Meeting.

Holmehill Update:

Comment [KR2]: Amendment from Laighhills to Holmehill Update

Stewart advised that work on the paths had commenced and was progressing well. Approval was still awaited from Planning regarding the proposed removal of the wall. A further planting day with St Andrews Botanic Gardens is to be arranged, with the intention of opening the area to the public as soon as possible. Alf advised that the ivy along the wall had been pulled back and that significant damage had been identified to the wall, including extensive pointing and repair requirements. It was agreed that Stewart would speak with Anthony regarding the structural engineer. It was also noted that some of the pointing work may be suitable for the DIY Group to undertake. A list of the required works will be prepared and sent to Anthony.	Stewart
6. Finance Report – Paul Nelson: Paul advised that the annual accounts had been submitted to the auditors. The transfer of accounting responsibilities had also progressed, with more of the work now being undertaken by Kirsty rather than Deirdre. Paul also advised that Kirsty was working through understanding the Dementia Friendly Dunblane accounts, which were complex due to the number of grants involved. It was proposed that Kirsty is added as a signatory on the RBS account and that all accounts operate on a two-signatory basis. The Board agreed that this should apply to all accounts, including the Co-operative Bank account. Paul requested that this be introduced as a formal resolution. The resolution was proposed by Stewart and approved by Rhona. It was also noted that the quarterly payment from The Giving Tree had not yet been received. Rhona advised that she would provide an update on this during the DDT Trading update. The Board discussed funds which had been transferred to DDT by Stirling Council for DCC. It was noted that the money was a grant which DCC had applied for under the banner of DDT and that the project would be administered by DDT. It was agreed that a copy of the grant application should be provided to DDT to ensure that the grant was being spent correctly. It was agreed that the funds should be recorded under a separate restricted department on Sage and administered in the same manner as funds held by DDT on behalf of its other working groups. Kirsty will arrange this on Sage.	Kirsty
7. H&S – Bob Stainton: Apologies were noted from Bob, who had no new matters to report. It was noted that Monica and Tim had not yet met with Bob regarding training for the DIY and Environment Groups. Stewart will speak with Bob to arrange a date for this. Two new poisonous plants had also been identified at The Haugh, highlighting the need for a risk assessment. The possibility of introducing a dynamic risk assessment process for situations such as this was discussed and it was agreed that this would be beneficial. Giant Hogweed had also been identified at The Haugh, and Stewart agreed to investigate.	Stewart Stewart
8. DDT Trading Update – Rhona McInnes: Rhona presented an update on the performance of The Giving Tree. It was noted that performance had remained relatively static compared with the previous year.	

Although year-on-year growth of approximately 3% would have been expected, the comparison period had been weaker than expected. Rhona also advised that footfall had decreased slightly and that the average transaction value was showing 0% growth. It was noted that DDT Trading have identified that they need to identify ways to stimulate growth. It was noted that Angela was still relatively new in the Shop Manager role, and several areas were being considered by the DDT Trading Board to improve profitability, including extending trading hours, reviewing staff hours and introducing more volunteer-led shifts to offset salary costs. It was noted that volunteer-led shifts had previously been used extensively and that work was ongoing to increase volunteer involvement. The importance of communicating the community benefit of The Giving Tree was highlighted. It was noted that some members of the public may not be aware that funds generated by the shop are reinvested in the local community. The Board agreed that there was a need to promote this more clearly, potentially through improved signage. Rhona suggested that printed vinyl signage stating that The Giving Tree supports the Dunblane community could be added to the shop window. Paul noted that turnover was not the key measure of performance and that the level of profit available to be reinvested in the community was more important. He expressed concern regarding profitability compared with the previous year, particularly given increased overheads, and noted that the DDT Trading Board should focus on increasing profitability and the level of funds available to support the community. It was advised that the anticipated contribution to DDT for the last quarter would be £19,000, with the cost of new carpets already deducted and retained within The Giving Tree's accounts in line with the agreed resolution. The success of the fashion show was noted, and congratulations were given to those involved. The Board discussed the proportion of donated items which were ultimately sold or recycled. It was estimated that approximately 60 - 70% of donations were either sold or recycled. It was noted that unsold items could potentially be reused through No. 24 High Street, with plans also being considered to sell electrical items and fabric from the premises.	
9. DDT Trading – No. 24 High Street – Rhona McInnes: Rhona advised that, despite some setbacks and the process taking longer than expected, the necessary paperwork and amendments to the sublease were now progressing. Once DDT trading receives the draft sublease, this will be circulated to the DDT board for approval prior to the signing of the lease. The Board discussed the proposed name, The Branch, to allow planning permission to be applied for, and voted in favour of the name. It was agreed that the signage should follow the same logo and font used by DDT, with additional window signage to ensure consistency. The Makerspace may be able to assist with lettering, and printed banners could also be produced for each shop.	

Comment [KR3]: Amendment from Rhona McInnes

10. DDT Projects – Lorraine Murphy: Lorraine provided an update on DDT Projects and advised that all flats were currently occupied. However, there were ongoing issues with water ingress. Scaffolding remained on the High Street and was preventing investigation of the issue. Lorraine had been following this up, and Alf and Jim Paice had assessed the situation. It was noted that significant expenditure would likely be required to address the water ingress and undertake associated internal works, including painting. The work may need to be completed in stages. The Board discussed the need to raise the issue with the owner of the adjoining properties at Numbers 21 - 25, as the drainpipe requiring replacement was located at the kebab shop. Alan offered to assist with any insurance claim or related matters, given his experience in this area. The Board also discussed ongoing issues with the cleaning arrangements. Kirsty provided Lorraine with details of Aqua Clean, the company used at the Braeport Centre. It was noted that the owners of Flat A were decorating their own hallway and corridor at their own expense. The remaining communal areas of the building would also require attention. The timescale for the works remained uncertain, as the water ingress would need to be addressed first and quotes obtained. Agreement would also be required from Craft Central and Flat A regarding their respective contributions to the costs. It was noted that, despite the recent £5,000 quarterly transfer, approximately £35,000 remained in the account to cover these costs. Lorraine advised that the intention was to undertake the necessary works during the current financial year.	
11. 2026 AGM: The Board discussed arrangements for the forthcoming AGM. It was agreed that the AGM should be held on a Monday evening rather than a Saturday afternoon. A provisional date of Monday 19th October was proposed, subject to confirmation of the availability of the accounts from the auditors. It was agreed that the date would be confirmed at the next meeting. It was noted that the Board should meet in advance of the AGM to prepare. Papers should be circulated at least two weeks before the AGM, and an advert would be included for the next edition of The Wire.	
12. AOB: **The Bank:** Stewart advised that work on The Bank forecourt was progressing and that it was hoped the area would soon be available for events. It was noted that a request for assistance with fitting electrical sockets had recently been shared on Facebook, suggesting that work on the internal fit-out had begun. **Treasurer:**	

Paul advised that he was intending to step down from the Treasurer role in October. The Board discussed the need to identify a suitable successor. Paul confirmed that he would be willing to remain for a period of time to support a handover. It was noted that the role carried responsibility and that the successful candidate would need to understand the organisation's financial position and ongoing issues. Much of the day-to-day financial work was currently being undertaken by Kirsty. **Christmas Extravaganza:** The Board discussed preparations for the Christmas Extravaganza. A meeting had taken place during the week, and £200 had been received from a community fund. It was noted that the main outstanding licensing issue related to the proposed Christmas market. The remaining arrangements, including the location of vans and bars, were still to be finalised. **Board Roles and Recruitment:** Lorraine advised that a DDT Board member would need to join the DDT Trading Board following Paul's planned resignation in October. It was also noted that Projects meetings had commenced and that the intention was to hold these in the week before DDT Board meetings. The Board discussed the need to consider trustee roles and responsibilities across DDT, including the Secretary, Chair, Vice Chair and representation on DDT Trading, DDT Projects, The Bank and DCC boards. It was acknowledged that there were currently insufficient Board members to fill all these roles effectively. The need to recruit additional Board members was therefore recognised.	

Comment [KR4]: Amendment from DDT Trading Board to DDT Projects Board

Date of next Board Meeting: Monday 24th August, 7PM, Braeport Centre

PLEASE NOTE:

The proposed date for the AGM has been amended to either Monday 2nd November or Monday 9th November. This is to accommodate holidays and allow sufficient time for the accounts to be returned by the accountants and reviewed prior to the AGM.