

## DIRLETON VILLAGE ASSOCIATION

### Minute of the Annual General Meeting: 28<sup>th</sup> April 2022

**Present:** D. Tait (chairman); C. Hamer; F. McClintock; J. MacLeod; B. Thomson; D. Carter; T & C. Drysdale; V & B. Nimmo; F. Dingwall; A. Orr; R. Mitchell; M. Stout; M. Chynoweth; E. Sutherland; E. Burnet; N. Steel

**Introduction:** DT welcomed everyone to the delayed 2021 AGM and explained that the delay was due to a need to rationalise the accounts and obtain approval from the independent examiner (IE).

- 1. Fairwells:** Mark Stout and Sheila Low have now left the committee and DT thanked them for their roles as Treasurers.
- 2. Apologies:** S Paterson-Brown; Brian Ford; Mary McNie and Tony Quillieti
- 3. Matters Arising:** None
- 4. Approval of the Minute of the 2020 AGM:** approved on a proposal by F. Dingwall, seconded by D. Tait.
- 5. Annual Report and Accounts 2020/21:** the chairman summarised the Annual Report and draft accounts that were submitted to the membership by Mailchimp on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2022, as follows:

#### *Committee Members November 2020 - November 2021*

Chair: David Tait; Honorary Secretary: vacant; Honorary Treasurer: vacant; Minutes Secretary: Carl Hamer; Membership Secretary: Felicity Dingwall; Keith Cornwell; Fred McClintock; Derek Carter; Janice Macleod; Tony Quillieti.

Ex Officio: SPB (Community Councillor). DT (Community Councillor)

Barry Thomson Interim Treasurer but not on the committee.

#### *The State of the Association*

The number of DVA memberships was 175 up slightly from 169 the previous year. This is over 50% of village residents.

The following committee members have decided not to stand for re-election the year 2021-2022: Tom Drysdale; Derek Carter, and Keith Cornwell.

The following committee members are standing for re-election: David Tait (Chairman); Fred McClintock; Janice MacLeod; Tony Quillieti and Carl Hamer. Simon Paterson-Brown and David Tait remain on the committee as ex-officio Community Council representatives.

#### *Meetings and Communication*

Covid 19 restrictions prevented face to face meetings from March 2020 onwards but have been reinstated from October 2021. Online meetings were held on the Zoom application.

Information has been distributed via the Mailchimp membership emailing system, which is working well and allows feedback. The village website has been completely rebuilt and has been working efficiently since its launch. A request for a volunteer to edit the website is still required as it now requires consistent updating to make sure the data our readers read is up to date and current, to date there has been no response.

The Dirleton Facebook page has been useful, particularly for dealing with immediate issues and for instant feedback. The village notice boards continue to be used to make information available to off-line residents, non-members and visitors.

### *Planning Matters*

Work on the Castlemains Place site for 36 housing units has commenced. The committee continues to monitor issues affecting the village. An application for planning permission for two blocks of flats (4 affordable housing units in all) by East Lothian Housing Association was approved. The site is the closed workshops on Castlemains Place.

In 2019 the DVA objected to an application for planning permission for a number of developments at Archerfield Links by Caledonian Heritable Ltd, the owners of the Archerfield Links estate, in respect of the proposed felling of trees and building of 2 large houses behind the Archerfield East Lodge last year. A decision on this application is still awaited.

New Mains Farm: In 2020 the DVA objected to an application for planning permission for the development of four dwelling-houses on the site of the Newmains farm steading, involving the conversion of the stone-built steading to a house, alterations and extensions to the cottage forming the eastern part of the site and two new houses, one on the site of disused agricultural buildings on the north part of the site and the other in the woodland area on the western part of the site. The application was approved by ELC subject to complex conditions and the deletion of the house on the north part of the site. Forestry Scotland had taken enforcement action in respect of unlawful tree felling in the woodland area, on which the DVA had provided evidence to them, but this action had later been withdrawn; the planning permission however contains conditions regarding the protection and retention of remaining trees during building operations and in the future. The project has been under construction during the year 2020-2021.

Newmains Public Right of Way: following the closure of the public path between Ware Road and the John Muir Way, through the Newmains steading area in February 2019 and the DVA's submission to ELC of substantial evidence of its use by the public over a long period of years, ELC has recognised the route as a public right of way, and the Scottish Rights of Way Society has registered it as such. ELC is in negotiations with the landowner as to the route of a diversion round the immediate steading area and the replacement of signage and is consulting with the DVA over this. The owner has built a sub-standard path around the steading. It does however remain as a work in progress. East Lothian Council (ELC) have still to undertake the formal legal process of recognising the right of way route. The committee continues to pressurise ELC to do so.

In 2020 an application for planning permission relating to Auburn and the former gallery/laundry building on Manse Road was submitted: The DVA welcomed the proposals to restore Auburn, but objected to the architectural design and conservation area impact of the proposals to replace the former laundry building with a combination of garages/carports and holiday letting apartments. A decision on this application is still outstanding.

The application for the development of a stables complex and a manège, off Manse Road: Although the Council granted planning permission, they took on board a number of the DVA reasons for objection and applied conditions to disallow the proposed floodlighting surrounding the manège and to restrict the completed development to private use associated with the

residential use of Auburn and not for any business or commercial purpose. The project is now under construction.

Despite a reasonably high level of protection being afforded by the Local Development Plan the village continues to suffer from the threat of inappropriate house building and other development within and close to the conservation area. There appears to be no prospect of such development pressure receding in the foreseeable future.

#### *Other Activities and Achievements*

Representatives from the DVA committee have been attending the North Berwick Coastal Area Partnership (AP) meetings regularly on behalf of the community. The DVA obtained approval from the AP for £35,000 for the improvement of the war memorial setting and church green. A grant was awarded by the War Memorials Trust towards repairs to the war memorial. Another (£2,000) was received for this from the Local Priorities Fund administered by the Community Council. A public Appeal raised £6,000. This project is now complete, and a special re-dedication ceremony was organised by the DVA committee on 14th November 2021. The appeal raised more than was needed for the war memorial repairs. The balance is being held on the DVA account until it is determined whether there is agreement for the surplus to be used to restore the churchyard railings cut down in WW2. Final discussions concerning this still await the return of the church session to face-to face meetings after Covid. Once this meeting is held, and the situation is determined, then the direction of the war memorial appeal donors concerning how they wish their surplus funds to be used will be obtained.

The DVA committee has met with various members of ELC during the year to further the outcomes from the Dirleton Discussion Day held on 6th May 2017. The committee plans to hold a new Dirleton Discussion Day in 2022 to update the community's priorities for the DVA committee once the community is happy to hold large meetings once again.

Feedback on the 20mph speed limit has been positive, and the committee is campaigning for it to become permanent.

Community volunteers continue to plant wild flowers in the long grass areas of the Green.

The phone box was purchased by the DVA for the community. A joint project with Dirleton Good Neighbours and other volunteers from the village has successfully converted it into a book exchange. It also contains an interpretation board which illustrates the history of the old greens.

#### *Accounts*

BT gave a comprehensive overview of the IE process and summarised the accounts as follows:

Income - Membership income was noted as £1,113 and additional income was in the form of grants and donations towards the village war memorial totalling 10616. Other donations to the DVA were £200. Total income was £11,929.

Expenditure - Payments out of DVA accounts were as follows £1,787 to NBCAP, £2,400 to Dirleton bowling club, £7,636 for the war memorial, £187 DART expenses, £100 donation to DGN, £450 to NBCAP for Louping Stane repair, £300 donation to Xmas lights, £211 to notice board repairs, £150

to HES for membership access to Dirleton Castle, £244 in insurance, £144 for zoom subscription and £347 in general expenses. Total outgoings are £13,956.

There was a deficit of £2,027. Carrying the previous year's balance forward of £16,557 brings our accounts for this years closing balance of £14,550.

BT was thanked for his efforts.

Discussions were then held over the OSCR requirements for account auditing and the need for charitable status was questioned. TD suggested that there would be a loss in credibility if charitable status was lost, although DT disagreed. Discussions were also held on a possible split of the treasurer's role amongst committee members to ease the pressure.

## **6. Election of Office Bearers and Committee**

DT was elected to continue as Chairman, Although the honorary secretary post remains vacant the secretarial duties will continue to be allocated to Felicity Dingwall (Membership) and Carl Hamer (Minutes). Barry Thomson has agreed to stay on as Treasurer (but not committee member) until the end of this financial year 31<sup>st</sup> August 2022.

The remaining committee members (F. McClintock, Janice MacLeod and Tony Quillietti) were all elected as continuing committee members. As a GACC representative for Dirleton, S. Paterson-Brown remains an ex officio member of the committee. Brian Ford was proposed as a new committee member by F. McClintock and seconded by Bill Nimmo.

## **7. Queen's Jubilee**

3 No. trees to be planted in the western end of the Castle Green 29th April. The fourth tree will be planted and dedicated 3pm 3rd June as part of the Jubilee celebrations. The primary school want to be involved. DGN will be providing afternoon tee Sat 5th June 2-4pm.

## **8. DART**

No action since July and would be reactivated when required by ELC's emergency committee. Nancy Steel thanked DART for their work.

## **9. Festive Lights**

Financial aspects handed over to the Fete & Games. c. £10,000 was raised but the final cost was over budget due to a lack of installers, who were working on tree storm damage. TD confirmed that an application to the LPF for the balance of £800 is being put to GACC for approval 28th April 2022.

## **10. Website**

Mike Haworth is manging the website but needs to inform committee members how to fulfil this role.

## **11. GACC**

No actions relevant to Dirleton

## **12. Village Discussion Day**

Last held 5 years ago, proposed date 20<sup>th</sup>/27<sup>th</sup> August at which residents can comment on public realm projects carried out or proposed and put forward ideas for new projects. The DVA want to use this

opportunity to understand the resident's opinion on the role which the DVA plays in the village and following that assess whether the constitution needs to be amended to reflect that.

**AOCB:**

- It was confirmed that DT and DC have key access to the noticeboards.
- The X5 bus service has been reinstated, DVA to publicise.

**Date of Next Meeting:** 19<sup>th</sup> May 2022.

DRAFT