

# DUNBLANE DEVELOPMENT TRUST

## Draft Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2011 at 10.30am in the Victoria Hall

### 1. Welcome and apologies

DDT Chairman Keir Bloomer welcomed 73 members and confirmed that the meeting was quorate. Apologies were received from D Gemmell, G Gillon, G Houston, J Houston, T Hughes, L Hughes, S Strathdee, J Strathdee, A Mitchell, and J Lindohf.

### 2. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2010

The minutes were proposed by Lawrie Dewar, seconded by Ken Mitchell and approved as presented.

### 3. Matters arising

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

### 4. Chairman's Report

Keir Bloomer explained that the DDT was in existence to promote the interests of Dunblane and its people and to look at how we wanted the town to develop beyond our lifetimes. This took two forms. We needed to be involved in development on a large scale, and also practically on a smaller scale.

In terms of major developments, the completion of Riverview House had been the most significant development in Dunblane in the postwar period, and thanks were owed to the Scottish Government for providing £1.25m, and also to Kippendavie Group Trust for providing a very important loan. That loan had been repaid in full and the DDT's relationship with KGT was now on the same footing as its relationship with other landowners. All five flats in the building had been let, and there were a number of expressions of interest in the restaurant and one formal proposal. Letting the restaurant would assist in the regeneration of the High Street.

On the smaller scale there were several groups of volunteers - some new, some longer-standing - who were undertaking valuable work in and around Dunblane. The Community Facilities Forum was not exclusively a DDT group. It had produced a survey which provided the basis for effective planning, and this would be transformed into a website for users. It also helped to inform Stirling Council's Settlement Review, which was designed to give the public the community buildings it needed, equipped as required. The Braeport Centre was the DDT's own community facility - managed but not owned by DDT. The intention was to take it into community ownership and if the resolution later on the agenda was approved, a petition of 700 signatures from people on the electoral role would be needed in support of the bid.

Dunblane in Bloom had had another very successful year with high impact on the environmental look of the town. What was produced was very impressive given that it was the work of less than 20 people. The Rock Garden project was now coming along well.

The Environment Group's plans for a garden around the cenotaph in the Haugh were progressing well as was 'the longest hosta border in the country'. The collaborative work on Glen Road would save an important link with Bridge of Allan.

The Midweek Group, one of the DDT's unsung groups, had refurbished the children's memorial garden, and had been doing painter work at the Braeport and in the Mill Row playpark. They were also responsible for putting up the Christmas lights in the High Street.

The Development Group was looking at the High Street, in particular the shop fronts and they had a remit to improve tourism in the town, which remained underdeveloped.

There had also been some changes to the membership of the Board. Everyone had been saddened by the death of John Seddon, a founder member of the DDT. He had been a Senior Baillie on Dunblane Town Council and had served the town for many years.

Lawrie Dewar and Morag Watson were both retiring from the DDT Board, and Nora Gilfillan had withdrawn during the course of the year.

The Board was seeking funding from the Scottish Government Enterprise Growth Fund for seed corn funding for a number of initiatives and a part-time development worker. The DDT was at an important time in its history. As the public sector shrank, communities would become more dependent on voluntary organisations, and it was therefore essential that we increased our membership and participation.

In response to a question from the floor on the DDT's formal links with Dunblane Community Council, Keir explained DCC had a statutory role in planning matters which DDT did not have. The link with DCC was formalised by DCC having a nominated member on the DDT Board, now Kate Fawcett.

In response to criticism from the floor of the Development Group, Keir agreed that the matter of the spatial strategy had been initiated late, and that it had failed through lack of funding. The Group needed more participants. It was a fact of life of organisations sustained by volunteers that they did not succeed if insufficient people become active participants.

It was understood that a consortium was interested in the Stirling Arms, and it was suggested that DDT should ensure the community received some benefit from the developers.

In response to a question about the old Co-op building, Steve Mason confirmed that the owners wanted to sell part of the property but at present planned to maintain a presence for the sale of furniture and for providing a café.

## **5. Trust's Plans for 2011/12**

Approved as presented (see attached Priority Actions).

## **6. Accounts of DDT (Projects) Ltd for year to 31 May 2011**

Janice Stewart, Treasurer, confirmed that the construction costs of Riverview House were c£1.5m. The Scottish Government's Town Centre Regeneration Fund had been the main source of funding and a loan of £150k was taken out from Social Investment Scotland. The contractor had been paid all the costs except for a retention fund which was lodged with Scottish Widows. The property was currently valued at £690k and the total rental income from the five flats was £2,475 per month. Negotiations with a potential restaurateur were ongoing, and it was hoped that the rental from the restaurant would be c£20k per annum. The accounts were unanimously adopted.

## **7. Accounts of Dunblane Development Trust Ltd for year to 31 May 2011**

Janice explained that there were three main headings - (i) Braeport Account, (ii) Enterprise Account and (iii) Business Account. The profit from the Braeport was lodged with Scottish Widows, and would be used to upgrade the building if the transfer to community ownership went ahead. She explained that both the DYPP's £63k and Airtricity's £13,055 were temporarily lodged with the DDT, which undertook the administration of both these funds as an independent body.

She outlined the amounts secured from fundraising over the year for specific projects and this amounted to around £13k. On the downside, the administration account was running at a deficit. The costs of professional fees, insurance for the all the volunteers and office costs were £4,600 per annum whilst the income was £3,500. This was the main reason why the increase in the subscription was being proposed.

It was suggested by a member that the membership was steadily decreasing. Keir agreed that increasing the membership was a priority. He paid tribute to Lorna Inglis, the Membership Secretary, who had done a valuable job in updating the membership list to give an accurate picture. The accounts were unanimously adopted.

## **8. Election of Directors**

The two longest-serving Directors, Steve Mason, Vice-Chairman and Dougal Thornton, Company Secretary were required to stand down under the terms of the Memorandum and Articles of Association. Both were standing for re-election as were Alan Cessford and Ian Gill, who had been co-opted during the year. All four were proposed by Morag Watson, seconded by Bill MacLean and elected unanimously.

## **9. Ordinary Resolutions**

### **9.1 This AGM supports the DDT Board in its efforts to take the Braeport Centre into community ownership**

Steve Mason explained that the Board had formally agreed to try to bring the Braeport into community ownership, and were now putting the matter to the membership. The building was well used with 21 groups regularly meeting there. The playgroup, which used the Centre on five days per week, had used it for 30 years.

As a result of Stirling Council's leasing the building to the DDT for £1 per annum whilst paying the insurance and allowing DDT to keep the rental income from groups, there was a fund of c£60k in the Braeport account. Together with the income of £8k per annum, this meant that around £18k per annum would be available to spend on upgrading it over a period of six years.

There were rigorous procedures involved in taking the building into community ownership and it had to accord with Stirling Council's Settlement Plan. In response to a question about a previous petition undertaken for the same purpose some years ago, Steve explained that the wording on the first petition was not appropriate to the current circumstances, and another petition of 700 signatures was now needed. It was likely no decision would be made by Stirling Council earlier than mid 2012. The market value of the property was not known, but the site had development potential.

On the understanding that the matter would be brought back to the membership once the outcome of the Settlement Review was known, the resolution was proposed by Steve Mason, seconded by Alan Cessford and carried unanimously.

### **9.2 This AGM agrees to increase the annual membership fees**

The resolution proposed increasing the annual membership fee from £5 to £7. It was proposed by Janice Stewart, seconded by Dougal Thornton and carried unanimously.

**The meeting closed at 11.40am**

## Dunblane Development Trust

# Priority Actions for 2011/12

### Braeport Centre

1. Secure transfer of ownership of Braeport Centre from the Council to DDT
2. Collect 700 signatures in support of Braeport Centre take over
3. Develop plans to repair, improve and extend the Centre
4. Increase membership of the Braeport Centre Action Group

### DDT Board

1. Seek to influence developments in the town for the benefit of the community
2. Coordinate & support DDT Working Groups
3. Seek funding from Scottish Government's Enterprise Growth Fund to improve systems, develop initiatives & employ a development worker for 12 months
4. Increase DDT membership to 500

### Community Facilities Forum

1. Maintain good communications and cooperation between providers of community facilities
2. Improve the Dunblaneweb website
3. Establish website about community facilities
4. Review possibilities for joint purchasing

### DDT (Projects) Ltd

1. Manage the Riverview building
2. Secure a tenant for restaurant

### Dunblane in Bloom Group

1. Maintain polytunnel
2. Plant out and maintain annual floral displays
3. Complete rock garden near entrance to Laighhills Park
4. Continue to upgrade display barrels
5. Clear Barbush roundabout & eradicate the equisetum

### Development Group

1. Carry out survey of High Street shop fronts
2. Improve tourism potential of the town
3. Lead discussions on the Local Development Plan
4. Work with Community Council to secure potential community benefits related to supermarket and other developments

### Mid Week Group

1. Complete painting to Millrow playpark
2. Paint Laighhills play park
3. Put up Christmas lights
4. Install edgeboard to hosta border
5. Ongoing repairs & maintenance at the Braeport Centre

### Environment Group

1. Carry out repairs to Glen Road at Kippenrait
2. Continue work on path upgrades and hosta border in the Haugh
3. Develop new garden around War Memorial in the Haugh
4. Continue work on information boards at railway station and around the Haugh
5. Develop garden design to south side of Braeport Centre