

**HADDINGTON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TRUST
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - 15 August 2016
CHAIR'S REPORT - Frances Wright**

Introduction

The Trust's third year began with the AGM on 10 August 2015. The main aim of the Trust's work for the coming year was to continue work on implementing the "A Vision for Haddington" the 2012 report by Heggie and Wright.

Board - Composition and Business

At the 2nd AGM the following members were elected as Directors: Frances Wright, Claire Goodwin, Eric Bateman, Duncan Scott and Paul Darling. Two of the four organisations identified in the Articles of Association nominated directors and they are as follows: Haddington and District Amenity Association (HADAS) - Karen Stevenson; Haddington and District Business Association (HDBA) - Judith Warren.

At the first Board meeting office bearers were elected as follows: chair (Frances Wright), vice chair (Paul Darling), secretary (Claire Goodwin) treasurer (Duncan Scott).

During the year Knox Academy (Knox) nominated Adam Linton-Main and Haddington and District Community Council (HCC) nominated Fiona-Frances Adam, both were co-opted onto the Board on 12 October 2015.

HCDT member Ewan Ogilvie was co-opted onto the Board on 11 July 2016.

There were 12 Board meetings held on the following dates: 7 September 2015, 12 October 2015, 2 November 2015, 7 December 2015, 11 January 2016, 1 February 2016, 7 March 2016, 4 April 2016, 2 May 2016, 6 June 2016, 11 July 2016 and 8 August 2016.

The Annual General Meeting will be held on 15 August 2016.

As Chair of HCDT, I express thanks to all of the above for their contributions in supporting the work of the Trust.

2015 AGM - Developing priorities for the new Board

The Board used the 2nd AGM on 10 August 2015, as an opportunity to consult with the membership, and to involve others across the Haddington community in helping to determine priorities for the Trust to work on over the next year. At the AGM four workshop sessions focused on opportunities presented in the Vision Report, which included

Town Centre improvements

Making the most of Haddington's history and natural environment
Developing a community hub and
Marketing and branding the town.

Discussion around these sessions clearly identified the memberships priorities as making the most of Haddington's history and Town centre improvements. Many members also felt the marketing of the town and our digital footprint and communications should be improved. Following the AGM the Board agreed these priorities would be the focus of the work of the Trust for the coming year.

What has been achieved since the AGM

Communications

Communications are improved with regular update emails being sent to digital members. Non-digital members have been issued with two standard newsletters. Using the social media platforms Twitter and Facebook has greatly increased our profile. The launch of the HCDT website also gives us the ability to keep the membership and others informed with what the Board are working on. The Trusts website www.trusthaddington.org.uk went live in April 2016.

Communication with East Lothian Council is much improved and the support of Stuart Gibb, Manager of Haddington and Lammermuir Local Area Partnership has been particularly appreciated.

The Trust has joined Scotland's Towns Partnership (STP) and as Chair, I attended the East Coast Workshop and the Annual Conference. STP is an excellent platform to learn what others are doing and it provides great resources e.g. The Understanding Scotland's Places tool (USP), the Town Centre toolkit and the Place Standards Tool.

The Trust is also a member of the Development Trust Association Scotland (DTAS), an organisation committed to supporting community development trusts such as ours. DTAS led a Strategic Planning Day for the members of the Board in November 2015 and this has been useful in helping the Board to develop the emerging strategy.

Town Centre Improvements

TCCCF Funding Application

The Scottish Government released the Town Centre Community Capital Fund in September 2015 and the Trust made an application that would support improvements to the footway and roads around the George Hotel property which is shortly to be redeveloped into flats and 2 commercial units, following a number years lying empty. Unfortunately the TCCCF fund was hugely oversubscribed and we were not successful with our application.

Haddington Skate Park Opened 3 June 2016

The Trust was delighted to support the long awaited skate park in Haddington with a donation of £5,000. The skate park was officially opened on 3 June 2016 and it is reported that it is being well used by the young people of Haddington and the surrounding area.

Access Strategy - Working with ELC and Sustrans

A key recommendation in the Vision for Haddington report was to develop an Access Strategy for Haddington town centre, and recently East Lothian Council, the Haddington and Lammermuir Local Area Partnership and Sustrans have been working in partnership to deliver this. The Trust has been involved as key stakeholders and has been able to influence the process to ensure a good level of community consultation took place. Physical Improvements to the town centre cannot be realised until the issues surrounding traffic movement and parking have been resolved and the Trust are delighted this work has started. The project will set out options for managing access in the Town Centre and review specific aspects such as parking. Further funding is available to continue to develop improvements and more information will be available in the autumn.

The Year Ahead

The Trust will continue to focus on the 4 key priorities and maintaining an income stream to support the work of the Trust.

Brand Haddington and Haddington Town Website

Following a rigorous tender process, Shaw Marketing from Edinburgh won the contract to deliver a Haddington town website. This will be a platform from which to tell the world about all Haddington has to offer, for residents and visitors. This project includes branding the town and a marketing strategy. The Trust consulted with the membership and the general public during the branding exercise, by asking for feedback on the initial design ideas and the AGM will give a further opportunity for feedback prior to the launch of the website in September.

Launch of funding for community projects that deliver objectives from the Vision

The current Board does not have the capacity to deliver lots of projects that would contribute to the key actions in the Vision for Haddington and realise that many community members would like to make a positive contribution to improve our town. The work of the four partnership organisations and others such as Blooming Haddington and MADE in East Lothian demonstrate the range of work and improvements happening in the town. We have therefore allocated funding, to support community led projects, which will deliver benefits that, align with the key actions of the Vision. Applications for funding will be accepted from September and judged on meeting strict criteria that align with key recommendations in the Vision for Haddington.

Developing a Strategic Plan

The Trust will continue to work with DTAS and the Haddington and Lammermuir Local Area Partnership to develop a strategic plan for the future, based on the aims in the Vision for Haddington.

Consideration of the Trust becoming self-sustaining rather than rely on grant funding

To ensure the longevity of the Trust the Board understand the need to become self-sustaining rather than rely entirely on grant funding. A meeting dedicated to this task was held in February 2016 and a number of ideas were discussed. None of the ideas were considered suitable to pursue further, however, it was agreed that the Board would continue to explore opportunities as they arise. In the future we would aim in any given year that we will earn 10% of our total income through self-funding.

Moving toward the Board being completely independent

The last year has seen stability in the Board and as we go into the next year we have a full complement of member Directors. This is a positive position to be in and shows the Trust is becoming a more established community group within the town. As the Trust continues to mature and follows a more strategic direction, the Board would like to see the Trust become completely independent, without the need of the support it currently receives from the 4 organisations, HDBA, HADAS, HCC and Knox. The timing of the change to the structure of the Trust will be flexible and would require consultation and a vote from the membership however the Board anticipates we would be in a position to make this change within the next 18 months - 2 years.

Conclusion

During this third year the Trust has become more established. The new Board has ensured the work of the Trust can continue and has enabled us to deliver some small but positive projects. Our social media accounts indicate a real interest, from the membership and others, about the work of the Trust. We look forward to the next year, working with the Local Area Partnership, HCC, HDBA, HADAS, Knox and others to make Haddington the best it can be to live, work and visit.