

HADDINGTON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TRUST
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING –31st October 2017
CHAIR'S REPORT – Frances Wright

Introduction

The Trust's fourth year began with the AGM on 15 August 2016. The main aim of the Trusts work for the coming year was to continue work on implementing the Vision for Haddington 2012 report by Heggie and Wright.

Board – Composition and Business

At the 3rd AGM the following members were elected as Member Directors: Frances Wright, Claire Goodwin, Eric Bateman, Duncan Scott, Paul Darling, Nico De Frietas and Ewan Ogilvie. Also elected was Karen Stevenson, the co-opted members for Haddington and District Amenity Society (HADAS), one of the four organisations identified in the Articles of Association.

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

Haddington Community Council (HCC) nominated Fiona-Frances Adam who was co-opted on 7 November 2016. We were disappointed that Knox Academy and Haddington and District Business Association (HDBA) did not nominate a representative and we hope they can find suitable Directors for the coming year.

There were 13 Board meetings held on the following dates: 12 September 2016, 3 October 2016, 7 November 2016, 5 December 2016, 9 January 2017, 6 February 2017, 6 March 2017, 1 May 2017, 5 June 2017, 3 July 2017, 7 August 2017, 4 September 2017 and 2 October 2017.

The Annual General Meeting was convened on 31st October 2017. On behalf of all members of HCDT I express my thanks to all of the above for their many excellent contributions in supporting the work of the Trust.

Priorities from the AGM 2016

Four priorities were identified at the 2016 AGM. Brand Haddington & Haddington Town Website, Funding for Community Projects, a Strategic Plan for the Trust and Investigate Income Generation.

Brand Haddington & Haddington Town Website

We were delighted to launch the Haddington town website in November 2016. Following community consultation, the brand "The Hidden Town" was chosen and the website clearly encourages both residents and visitors to discover the delights of our town. This website is a fantastic resource for all who live, work or visit Haddington, with information about shopping, eating, activities and events. We continue to work with Shaw Marketing to update the

content and to develop an ongoing marketing strategy for the town. We are delighted with the website and have received really great feedback relating to it. The Trust are indebted to Adam Cochrane for allowing us to use his fantastic photography, it really adds value to the website.

Community Funding Grants

Applications for community grants were received from Blooming Haddington and MADE in East Lothian. £2000 was awarded to Blooming Haddington which enabled reprinting of their Garden Trail leaflet for the 2017 season and planting of new flower beds in the Memorial Park, Station Road. We were delighted to hear that Blooming Haddington again won a Gold Medal in the 2017 Keep Scotland Beautiful awards.

MADE in East Lothian were also awarded £2000 and this enabled them to run 4 Makers Markets throughout 2017. The markets give local crafts people a chance to showcase their work to a larger audience and encourage people to visit the town centre.

Strategic Plan and Income Generation

Further work is still needed on the development of a longer term strategic plan for the Trust. Income generation is also something we need to look at for the future and we will be revisiting this in the coming year.

Ongoing Work

We continue our membership of Towns Partnership (STP) and as Chair, I attended the Annual Conference in Kirkcaldy in November 2016. STP is an excellent platform to learn what others are doing and it provides great resources e.g. The town Centre Toolkit, The USP – Understanding Scotland's Places and the Place Standards Tool. STP and Keep Scotland Beautiful partnered in running a competition this year for "Scotland's most Beautiful High Street" and we were delighted to be one of ten towns to be shortlisted. The results will be announced at the STP Annual conference in Paisley on 21st November 2017.

The Trust have continued to experience a good working relationship with East Lothian Council, notably with Stuart Gibb, Manager for Haddington and Lammermuir Area Partnership(H&LAP) and Jamie Baker, Regeneration Officer, through the Steering Group of the Haddington Town Centre Design Project. East Lothian Council has committed to help deliver improvements for Haddington town centre. The HCDT are represented on the Steering Group along with other community groups, the HCC and HDBA. The Steering Group ensure that the "Vision for Haddington" and community needs are considered in any design proposals. Design Consultants, Ironside Farrar were appointed in March 2017 and have been developing proposals and options for the town centre. We are pleased the Design Consultants have taken time to ask the community about their priorities, work with Council teams and to undertake all the necessary surveys and assessments to ensure they understand Haddington's needs. It is expected that the design proposals for the town centre will be a mix of enhancements to paving and crossing facilities combined with parking and traffic flow improvements.

All our local elected councillors are supportive of the Trust, but Provost John McMillan is particularly supportive, as a member of the Local Area Partnership, in his role of Champion for the Town Centre. He, Stuart Gibb and the Trust are working together to encourage activity and increase footfall in the town centre. This will supplement the work of the Trust, who have already implemented a range of activities focusing on the town centre. We have already made excellent progress on the development of a website for Haddington (haddington.org) and are currently developing an ongoing Marketing Strategy for the town.

Currently we are seeking funding that would enable us to continue to develop the town website and explore further marketing opportunities. With the 700 year anniversary of the signing of the Town Charter in 2018, this is a significant year for the town and the Trust would love to be able to support events that are planned, and explore other opportunities to promote this important anniversary.

We would anticipate using any funding we are able to secure for projects that: make physical improvements to the town centre, community initiatives aimed at increasing footfall in the town centre and initiatives that support new and existing businesses.

Conclusion

This, fourth year of the Trust has seen the Trust to deliver some positive projects. We look forward to another year, working together with the East Lothian Council, H&LAP, HCC, HDBA, HADAS, Knox and others to make Haddington the best it can be to live, work and visit.