

**HADDINGTON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TRUST**  
**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – 28 January 2019**  
**CHAIR’S REPORT – Frances Wright**

## **Introduction**

The Trust’s fifth year began with the AGM on 31 October 2017. The Trust continues to work on implementing the Vision for Haddington 2012 report by Heggie and Wright.

## **Board – Composition and Business**

At the 4th AGM the following members were elected as Member Directors: Frances Wright, Claire Goodwin, Eric Bateman, Duncan Scott, Nico De Freitas and Ewan Ogilvie. Mike Roger was also elected but resigned on 8 April 2018. Three of the four organisations identified in the Articles of Association nominated directors; Karen Stevenson, the co-opted member for Haddington and District Amenity Society (HADAS), Fraser Wright the co-opted member for Knox Academy. Adam Fairgrieve replaced Fraser as the Knox co-opted member on 19 November 2018. Haddington Community Council nominated Calum Learmonth at the AGM but unfortunately, he has been unable to attend any meetings and therefore has not been co-opted onto the Board.

Haddington and District Business Association (HDBA) were unable to nominate a co-opted member at the AGM however they later nominated David Cockerton who was co-opted on 9<sup>th</sup> April 2018.

Following the AGM office bearers were elected at the October meeting: chair (Frances Wright), vice chair (Eric Bateman), secretary (Claire Goodwin) treasurer (Duncan Scott).

There were 13 Board meetings held on the following dates: 6 November 2017, 4 December 2017, 5 February 2018, 5 March 2018, 9 April 2018, 30 April 2018, 4 June 2018, 6 August 2018, 3 September 2018, 15 October 2018, 19 November 2018, 10 December 2018 and 21 January 2019.

The Annual General Meeting was convened on 28th January 2019. 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.

## **The Work of the Trust**

As Chair of the Trust, I attended the Scotland’s Towns Partnership Annual Conference in Paisley in November 2017. STP is an excellent platform to learn what others are doing and it provides great resources e.g. The town Centre Toolkit, the Place Standards Tool and The USP – Understanding Scotland’s Places. An updated version of the USP was launched recently and the new version gives even more insights into all of Scotland’s towns. I would highly recommend members take a look at the USP – the data is very interesting.

We continue to work with Shaw Marketing to update the content of the Haddington Town Website [Haddington.org.uk](http://Haddington.org.uk). The website showcases all that Haddington has to offer for residents and visitors alike and is invaluable resource for anyone who wants to find out more of what is happening in our town. The events page was used by many organisations to publicise the numerous “Haddington 700” events that took place throughout 2018.

The Trust are represented on the Haddington and Lammermuir Area Partnership and worked with them to host a “Play the Medieval Way” event on the morning of the “Haddington 700 - Big Medieval Day” on 25<sup>th</sup> August 2108. Over 5000 visitors visited the town throughout the day and both events have been hailed as a great success by many members of the community. The Board would like to extend thanks to all members of the “Haddington 700” committee and the many volunteers who put in a great deal of work and enthusiasm to ensure the success of the celebrations. It was heartening to see what can be achieved when groups work together with a common goal.

The Trust awarded a small grant to East Lothian Mini Owners Club to support their event that takes place on the Haddington Community Council Festival Saturday in May.

The Trust have been working with Shaw Marketing in developing a “Virtual Tour” of Haddington. The tour can be used in two ways: via the GeoTourist app, users will be able to participate in a self-guided tour around Haddington. It will also be possible to drive people to the tour on the GeoTourist website which will allow us to promote Haddington to tourists far and wide. The Trust thank Haddington History Society and Haddington Community Council for working with us and sharing their vast knowledge which will enhance the quality of the tour.

The main focus of the Trusts activities over the last year has been the ongoing Town Centre Design Project. The HCDT are represented on the Steering Group along with other community groups, the HCC, HADAS and HDBA and the newly formed Haddington Community Business Partnership. The Steering Group ensure that the “Vision for Haddington” and community needs are considered in any design proposals for the Town Centre. Design Consultants, Ironside Farrar were appointed in March 2017 and developed design concept and options for the town centre, which were presented to the community in 3 public consultations during the summer of 2017. Feedback from the community at these consultations has influenced the design and although a detailed design has still to be finalised it is expected that improvements to the town centre will include enhancements to paving and crossing facilities combined with parking and traffic flow improvements.

The Board thank our local elected councillors for their continued support of the Trust. In his role as Haddington & Lammermuir Area Partnership Champion for the Town Centre Provost John McMillan and I have regular discussions regarding the importance of finding ways to work together to encourage activity and increase footfall in the town centre.

## **The Future Direction of the Trust**

The Trust was formed in 2013 following a recommendation in the “Vision for Haddington” report 2012, and the Board feel after 5 years the Board it is now time to consider changing the structure of the Trust so it can be managed in a more effective way, as at times in the past, due to the current structure, it has been difficult to maintain our legal obligations.

The Trust is a membership organisation and membership is open to anyone aged 18 years and over who:

- a) Is ordinarily resident in the community
- b) Works or studies in the community
- c) Supports the objects and activities of the company

The Board as stated in the A of A's is made up of 7 member Directors and 4 co-opted Directors from Knox Academy, Haddington Community Council (HCC), Haddington and District Amenity Society and Haddington (HADAS) and District Business Association (HDBA). Over the life of the Trust only HADAS has filled its nominated director position consistently whilst the other 3 groups have found it difficult to fill their co-opted Director position and this makes it difficult for the Trust to continue its work in a way that follows the Company Laws it is bound by, especially if we do not have a full complement of member Directors.

It is the responsibility of the Board to ensure the Trust is run legally and the current Board believe by changing the structure to a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO), it would be easier for the Trust to fulfil its legal obligations. We also believe it would be easier for members and the community groups to become involved in the work of the Trust as they would not have to become Directors of the Company – something people are often averse to doing.

There are three aspects that require consideration before the Board makes a recommendation to the membership:

- a) What are the aims and objectives of the Trust
- b) the CDT's form of incorporation - company or Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO)
- c) who should be the individuals or organisations that comprise the Board and any other governance bodies of the CDT

### **Aims and objectives:**

The main aim of the Trust is to implement the "Vision for Haddington". For the coming year the Board will be focusing on Key Action 5 of the Vision for Haddington, Telling the World: marketing Haddington town centre.

There have been discussions at the Steering Group of the Town Centre Design meetings that highlight the need for 'someone' to lead on the events that will take place in any new community space that is created, and it seems natural that the Trust could take responsibility for coordinating this role, as the Trust would be in a position to apply for funding which could be used for make improvements to the town centre. Further discussion relating to this are required by the Board, other community groups and ELC

### **Form of Incorporation:**

The Board were advised by their accountant, who is a specialist in the Charity sector to consider changing the legal status to a “Scottish Charity Incorporated Organisation” (SCIO). The SCIO has been designed to provide the key benefits of being a company, including limited liability, whilst removing some of the associated burdens. Administration tends to be significantly reduced, and the law relating to SCIO’s is self-contained and very manageable – unlike company law. A SCIO is regulated by the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR).

### **Composition of the Board:**

If the structure of the Trust is to be changed a decision regarding community representation on the SCIO will be taken by the Board elected at the AGM.

### **Summary**

The AGM will provide an opportunity for discussion of the Trusts structure and that discussion will assist the Board in formulating a proposal for consideration by the membership.

If the membership is minded to change the Structure of the Trust the new Board will consider all the aspects and will bring a proposal to the membership at an EGM, as any change cannot be made without the support of the community, a formal legal process and a vote at an EGM.

### **Conclusion**

This, fifth year of the Trust has seen the Trust maintain the town website, and work with other community groups to bring footfall to the town. We look forward to another year, working together with the East Lothian Council, other community and interest groups to make Haddington the best it can be to live, work and visit.