

The Glenkens & District Trust

SC042489

Report from meeting of Trustees - August 2020

It has been a busy time over the last few months for The Glenkens & District Trust.

We welcomed Julie Garton and Andrew Mellor as Trustees appointed by Corsock & Kirkpatrick Durham and Dalry Community Councils respectively and thanked Caroline Pridham and Graeme West, who had recently resigned, for their hard work on behalf of GDT.

After the grant making meetings in May we took stock of where we were and the work that was necessary to ensure that we were able to take forward the work of the Trust effectively. We set up two subgroups, one to look at the Community Action Plan and what was needed to take it forward and another to take forward the work on the Constitution. As usual we were ably supported by Foundation Scotland. In August we reviewed the recommendations from these groups and agreed a way forward.

Community Action Plan

We were delighted with the attendance by and input from people right across the area at our meetings on the Community Action Plan in January/February and were very close to finalising it when we went into lockdown.

As the situation emerged, Trustees took time to discuss and develop a way forward for the Community Action Plan that would reflect both the input we had already received as well as enable us to consider how things are changing as a result of our experiences during COVID-19.

The final document has two parts: A Research Report, into community context and priorities; and an Action Plan for delivering on these priorities.

We concluded that we should finalise and publish these now. The Research Report includes lots of information on the area along with the inputs we have received during the consultation, which it was felt would be of use to lots of groups in relation to any funding applications they may have.

We are also publishing the Action Plan, which sets out clear goals, values and principles to underpin this work - but we have also recognised that to make this Plan effective we need to ensure that the identified priorities get delivered whilst also ensuring that the Plan evolves to meet the changing needs of the community.

Therefore the Community Action Plan will now move into a 'set up' phase. To support delivery of this phase, it was agreed that a CAP Steering Group of around eight people would be set up, made up of some GDT Trustees as well as other people drawn from across the wider community, to ensure we have a diversity of interests and experience on the Steering Group. We hope to have this group up and running before too long and will ensure that there are regular communications on what it is doing.

We will shortly be issuing an Invitation to Tender to bring in external expertise to support the work of this group over the next six months, paid for using windfarm monies. Amongst

other things, this work will include an analysis of the CAP community priorities, seeking to identify where bodies already exist to deliver on these and where the gaps might be; and undertake some Covid-19 resilience learning. Where local groups are identified who can deliver community priorities in the short term it is the intention of GDT to progress or commission this work as funding allows.

The intention is to have a Glenkens Summit early next year and to publish an updated implementation plan after this work is completed

A link to the full Research Report and Action Plan is here :-

<https://www.foundationscotland.org.uk/media/1129113/Glenkens-CAP-report-FINAL-280820.pdf>.

We will also be producing a separate document with the Action Plan itself for wider dissemination across the area and this will be available soon.

Funding Round

We gave considerable attention to when we should open for a further round of Funding applications and also whether it was necessary to review the terms of the Covid-19 Emergency Fund, which has not received any applications for some months.

After considerable thought we decided to pause both Funds and that the next round of open applications to the Main Fund should take place early next year. We want to take a cautious approach to allocating funding at this uncertain time as no one can foresee with any certainty how this current crisis will unfold over the winter months, and we wish to ensure we have monies available if they are needed to respond to urgent community needs.

The work we are taking forward under the Community Action plan will enable us to understand this better and to make the most effective use of the monies going forward, both in terms of Covid-19 but also ensuring that the Blackcraig Fund Strategy aligns with the community priorities in the CAP.

Please note that funds will continue to be available to organisations who need them as set out in our Fund Strategy, which says that ‘there may be cases where an emergency situation arises that affects the community – or parts of it - and which GDT wishes to respond to. This may result in GDT choosing to provide some assistance by way of a grant or donation to a group with urgent and critical needs and/or to intermediaries with the infrastructure to provide the support. Such instances will be dealt with on a case by case basis and where no other provision or immediate support is available.’ If you become aware of organisations in need in your area, please direct them to contact Foundation Scotland in the first instance.

Constitution

Supported by Turcan Connell, a firm of solicitors with expertise in this area, we have reviewed our legal structure to ensure it is fit for purpose and reflective of our needs going forward.

We wanted to open up the membership of GDT to the wider community in a practical way while maintaining a strong connection with the Community Councils. We also wanted to ensure that we had a strong and diverse group of Trustees with the appropriate balance between governance and representation. There are considerable legal requirements that fall on Trustees and we wanted to ensure that we addressed them effectively. In addition, it

is some time since our Constitution was put in place and it needed to be updated to clarify some points and to bring it in line with good practice.

After detailed work by the subgroup of Trustees, a new Constitution was agreed. We will continue with the two-tier SCIO approach and will, for the first time, allow individuals to become Associate Members of GDT. The new Constitution will also set out clearly how each Community Council member can appoint a Trustee as well as discharge its membership responsibilities. There will also be the ability for up to five Independent Trustees to be appointed.

Steps now need to be taken to get formal approval from the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) and the Community Councils who make up the current membership of GDT. A detailed briefing note will be prepared and circulated to ensure the rationale for the changes is clearly set out. It can take around two months to get OSCR approval which must be obtained before we can take the next steps. After that, and subject to getting the necessary approvals, we will invite individuals to apply for Associate Membership.

Potential further developments

Contact has been made and dialogue continues on Community Benefit Arrangements for the wind farm developments in scoping and in planning. Developers appear to be interested in the multi Community Council model we have developed here and are interested to understand more about it and also our Community Action Plan. We will continue to seek to build good and constructive arrangements.

Annual Report and Communication

A report on the first year of the Blackcraig Wind Farm Community Fund will shortly be issued. We are delighted to see a number of the projects we have funded coming to fruition and providing real and tangible benefit to people in the area.

On communications we will continue to use the Foundation Scotland Blackcraig webpage as the main repository of our information but will start to use social media a bit more to highlight the work being done.