

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Westray Development Trust (WDT) held Tuesday 3rd December 2024 at 7pm at Westray Parish Kirk

Present: Amanda Phillips (AP), Louis Pottinger (LP), Christopher Rendall (CR), Gina Rendall (GR), Margaret Rendall (MR), Nancy Scott(NS), Kirsty Sinclair(KS), Ralph Stevenson(RS), George Thomson (GT), Christine Turnbull (CT), Peter White (PW)Willie Bain (WB), Philip Bews (PB), Carole Brooks (CB), Peter Brown (PBr), Anne Burgher (AB), Alison Clark (AC), Jonathan Clark (JC), Edith Costie (EC), Coilla Drake (CD), George Drever (GD), Lydia Harris (LH), Caroline Kent (CK), Douglas Leslie (DL), Iain MacDonald (IM),Gill McEwen (GM), Sandy McEwen (SM), William McEwen (WM)

Attending: Sarah Cowe (SC) (Minutes), Ivan Houston (IH) (Scholes), Mhairi Noble (MN), Erika Pottinger (EP), Davy Campbell (DC)

Welcome and apologies: GT welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave apologies for Jan Stephenson, David Stephenson, Helen Bain, Alistair McVicar, Liz McVicar, William Turnbull, Peter Needham, CCLA

Adoption of minutes from AGM 14th December 2023: Proposed: EC, Seconded: CT **Motion Carried**

Accounts Presentation and Adoption:

Ivan Houston from A.J.B Scholes Limited gave a short overview of the consolidated accounts of WDT and WRE for the financial year 1st July 2023 to 30th June 2024.

Summary of the figures as a whole, WRE and WDT as a combined economic entity. Income for the year to June 24 as a group, £840,000, expenditure £647,000. Gain in CCLA investment portfolio £181,000. Financially a good year, taking us to a net surplus as a group of £384,000 compared to £127,000 in the prior year.

Income is a make-up of Grants, investments (CCLA investments), trading activities (WRE Turbine) and Charitable/other income. Overall income of £839,758, the significant contributor of income is from trading - WRE Turbine. Grant income is less than in previous years; in previous years, there would have been grant income for Bayview, etc.

Group expenditure – labour costs and staff costs, which have gone up a bit, we have employed a health and well-being co-ordinator, etc. Grants awarded were £165,177, not as much as previous years, but a significant contribution, depreciation using up significant assets, and overheads (feasibility studies, etc)

Grants awarded, £165 thousand. This is made up of two-thirds, of which was given to fuel grants, £109,456. Other big grants were given to Westray Community Association (13,006), Westray Men’s Shed (£8,271), Westray Junior High School (6,750), Westray Golf Club (£6,293), and other grants (£21,401). These are all important contributions to the community.

Financial position at the end of the period of the group as a whole is just a touch under £6 million of assets. Very small amount of debt.

Adoption of Accounts Proposed GD, Seconded CT **Motion Carried**

Appointment of Auditors:

GR thanked IH for his presentation. GR put forward that the WDT board would like to continue the appointment of Scholes Accounts for the financial year 1st July 2024 to 30th June 2025.

Proposed WB, Seconded CR **Motion Carried**

Election of Directors:

George Thomson, Douglas Leslie, and Anne Burgher were stepping down from the Board as per the Articles of Association, and all stood for re-election. WDT member Kirsty Sinclair stood for election to the Board.

GT invited the remaining members to submit their votes on their voting slips into the ballot box. Most members had done this as they came into the building. IM and IH were invited to count votes.

Presentation by Gina Rendall, WDT Operations Manager - A Year in Review:

Conference – Why did we have it? Lots of folk moved in, and bairns have been born, just to remind folk why we are here and what we could do. See if there was a place for WDT still. Showed us that folk still have a spark and want The Trust to be working

for the Island. Gave us the green light to go ahead with ideas we had been thinking about in the office and at board meetings. Extremely lucky to have had Eve White on as Event Co-ordinator. Thanks to everyone involved.

What has happened since? Eve made up a conference report for us. Provided the opportunity for folk to speak more at mini events. A Development Plan will be made available.

Bayview – Bayview was completed. An open day in December 2023 to celebrate. First tenants in by January 2024. There are two flats occupied, and since June 2024 NHS have one flat rented for locums. The biggest Flat, Flat 4, is still to be occupied. GR thanked MN for being a great help with all things Bayview.

Bargain Box – The estimated cost had more than doubled for building a new Bargain Box. Subsequently, alternative options have been identified, and a community consultation is underway to reassess what community spaces are required. In the meantime, it is relocated to a temporary space in the former snooker room at the school. This year £8304.65 in Sales and £4959.87 in raffles and baking.

What next? No hard and fast plan, support is high, and staying in the village is important. If the offices move to The Old Hall, that would free up Unit 1, with others becoming available in the future. Thanks to Anne Burgher for all her hard work.

Fuel Grants – 253 Westray households supported through the fifth year of the Westray Fuel Grant.

Hofn – Gathered parents to come up with some solutions to issues that had cropped up, and so far, things are going well. Tweaks to rules and cleaning up of Hofn. There has been an increase in hires this year from hairdressing, birthday parties and training. This means that income has increased. Very clear when hiring that it is a Youth Centre first and foremost. Trying to update some of the facilities, new hot water system, etc Thanks to our Hofn Youth Workers Nick Wood, Margo Makin, Edith Costie and Maggie Drever.

Community Garden – Took a different turn this year – more community footfall, more focus on strawberry season and a change in some of the vegetables. This took a bigger U-turn when Mark Dickinson resigned as Lead Gardener; we advertised for a replacement without success. Thankfully, John Fordyce came and helped, along with Benny and a group of volunteers. They have cleared up, planted seeds, done the weeding, etc., and we are very thankful for them all.

As of June 2023, they introduced bedding plants and more strawberries. We have had beetroot, kale, black kale, leeks, broad beans, lettuce, tomatoes, etc.

Higher footfall with events and the selling of veg.

Sold produce in the Community Honesty Fridge, selling through shops. If there was a glut of a certain veg, this was sold to The Lynfield in Kirkwall, who are happy to take Westray produce. This was after trying everything in Westray.

Thank you to local shops for taking produce to sell, John, Benny and all our volunteer gardeners for all their hard work.

Next year will be spent finding a better selling system, more community events and redesigning the inside of the tunnels.

Wellbeing Co-ordinator – I was asked about this the day I got my manager's job. At that point, we were waiting for Island Wellbeing Projects, which was to be that they would pay for 2 days and the Trust for one, but funding ran out. After monitoring the work in the office that would fall under Wellbeing Co-ordinator, it was decided there was a space for a Wellbeing Co-ordinator at the trust. Erika started in September 2023.

Main services we want to promote are one-to-one support, accessing services, starting groups and supporting them in the set-up. We secured funding before she started this, which was for bringing services to Westray - bringing them here rather than you having to go to Kirkwall to access them. Another pot of funding was the VAO communities' Health and Wellbeing Fund, which is to provide financial support for three different wellness sessions for 6 months and purchase Solar lamps that can be borrowed anytime. Wellness classes include Weight management Classes, Chair exercise and relaxation sessions at the pool. Wellbeing supports the start-up, and the group can hopefully continue after the 6 months are up.

Community Fridge – Since opening in December 2023 to June 2024, there have been 515 ticks/folk accessing the fridge. 645.6 kg of waste has been saved from landfill. The aim is to reduce food waste, but it discreetly deals with food poverty too. We signed up to Fare Share this year, which is a body that gathers and shares out food destined for landfill. We filled out an application, and we were interviewed to make sure we were a good fit and committed to a year to see if it would work.

Here To Help – 13 households are being supported. Something Westray should be proud of, I think it will grow over the years.

Transport Survey – Accessible Westray survey in March 2024, which looked at accessing the Island. What can folk not access because they live here?

In July 2024, Margo went to Community Transport Day in Kirkwall, flagged up obstacles for us as we have transport providers on the Island already. GR needs to catch up on this, as she was off in July.

In June 2023, we ordered an all-terrain wheelchair and two all-terrain rollators, and they should be home soon.

Wellbeing post has been made permanent, and Erika can continue with her work, more training, befriending, promoting one-to-one, and wellbeing classes.

Housing- In Feb 2024, successful in stage 1 funding application from Scottish Land Fund (SLF) – feasibility of our project. We got it on another property that had been on the market for a while, but it sold. The advisor at SLF said we had a week to find another property. Stewart approached us about Jerusalem, which comes with 5 acres of ground. A feasibility study was done, which included housing needs analysis, the condition of the property, and concept drawings. We conducted community consultations, and then we went ahead with stage 2, which is to help with the purchase.

Stage 2 application sent in May, we asked for 50% of the valuation. In August, a phone call to say it had gone through. In October, we made the announcement public. Over the summer months, DC worked on plans, pre-planning application, when approved, full planning permission was applied for and granted in a really good time. Tender documents have gone out, with a return date of 13th December.

Old Hall – Feb 2024 in Stage 1 applications from Scottish Land Fund to explore community spaces. Then it sold, Owner Nick Wood approached us after that when the sale fell through. A feasibility study was done before stage 2. In August, the Hall also sailed through funding.

Fuel Grants, reduced to £250 this year, will open in December and shortened application time for January payments.

Sponsorships – We sponsored the Westray Football Club winning Parish Cup team and Golf Club Championships.

Future –

Development Plan

Jerusalem and The Old Hall

Staff changes – Margo has been off ill and has now handed in her resignation.

Anderson and Strathern -looking at the structure of staffing and looking at Governance, so no decision on Margo's job yet.

Community Climate Action Plan

Quote

Coming together is the beginning, staying together is progress, working together is success.

Thank you to the directors for being supportive before, during and after my operation, the Office team for being my legs before and kicking me out of the office, telling me to get off emails and trying to make me behave, not an easy task. Incredibly supportive time and very thankful.

Q&A

No Questions

GT – Thanks to Sarah, Margo, Mhairi, and Erika for keeping the office running. It is very much appreciated. Thank you to the community as a whole. Very fortunate to have the turbines, but community spirit, working together with the Community Council and Community Association, we're now seeing a difference. OIC is seeing the benefits of us all working together. This will increase as we go on; a prime example is Here to Help; we, as a trust, can do something to help ease the pressure on other services.

WRE vital part.

Hope we can continue to help and support groups in Westray.

Election of Directors:

IH and IM counted the votes and reported that the nominees who had greater than the required 50% of the votes cast in their favour, and therefore elected to the Board were: George Thomson, Douglas Leslie, Anne Burgher, and Kirsty Sinclair

AOCB

No other business was raised.

GT thanked Everyone for coming, thanked IM and IH for counting votes.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was closed at 7.58 pm