



Westray Development Trust
Annual Report
2003/4



Chairman's Report

Whilst the Care Centre has quite rightly taken most of the headlines, this past year has seen success on a number of fronts as well as steady progress on many others. I hope you will take the time to read the detail within the Annual Report and bring yourself up to date.

We have also worked very closely with other communities throughout Orkney and further afield too. It's encouraging to see a number of Development Trusts in other Isles growing in confidence and launching ambitious plans with community backing. We have much to gain by sharing ideas and working together on bigger projects and remain committed to helping other groups, particularly with start-up advice whenever asked to. The establishment of the Isles Forum has already provided an effective setting for this and has given a collective voice that didn't exist before.

Closer to home, we continue to work closely with our colleagues in the Papay Development Trust and are greatly appreciative of the support we receive from our own Community Council in Westray.

The biggest single piece of work for the Board over the past year has been the preparation of the new Development Plan. This has been at times tedious but is essential to ensure that we keep our projects up to date (and to be seen to be doing so) and following the last public meeting we are now ready to go to the printers as soon as funds allow.

Losing Danny Marcus and Geordie Thomson as directors earlier in the year was a real blow but we were delighted that both Jenna Hume and Robbie Rendall accepted co-option invitations to join us during the past year. We remain hugely grateful to Danny and Geordie for their time of service as directors and for their hard work which it's impossible to overstate.

Eight of the current twelve Directors are standing down at the forthcoming AGM but all are entitled to stand again for a further term. It's my personal hope that they all will. The AGM will also see some proposals for constitutional change which should improve accountability and bring us more into line with what's already current practice.

The most frustrating issue of the past year has been our effort to secure two years further funding for the Local Development Officer (LDO) post. Despite commissioning an independent study which very strongly recommended this, we have encountered difficulty in persuading some public agencies that they should be committing themselves to more than one year. We have presented a funding strategy which should make us self-financing in two years but need public support to reach that stage, during the phase-out period of the Initiative at the Edge programme.

After an initially disappointing outcome from Orkney Islands Council, there has since been a far more positive response and we're encouraged that councillors have decided to revisit the whole issue. It is fair to say that the response from Orkney Enterprise has been less enthusiastic and that there is a significant difference in opinion over what level of support ought to be provided. It has always been our position that investment in a Local Development Officer, free from interference from public agencies, provides an excellent public investment and generates money rather than drains it. The study we commissioned bears that out with hard facts and figures.

It is a source of intense frustration that the work of the Trust and value for money in supporting the LDO, has been lauded and applauded far and wide yet is not always recognised on our own doorstep.

This situation will be updated at the AGM.

Finally, I want to record my personal thanks to my fellow directors and our advisers; to Sam and Yvonne; and most of all to the people of Westray for your constructive criticism and encouragement, both of which are appreciated and needed.

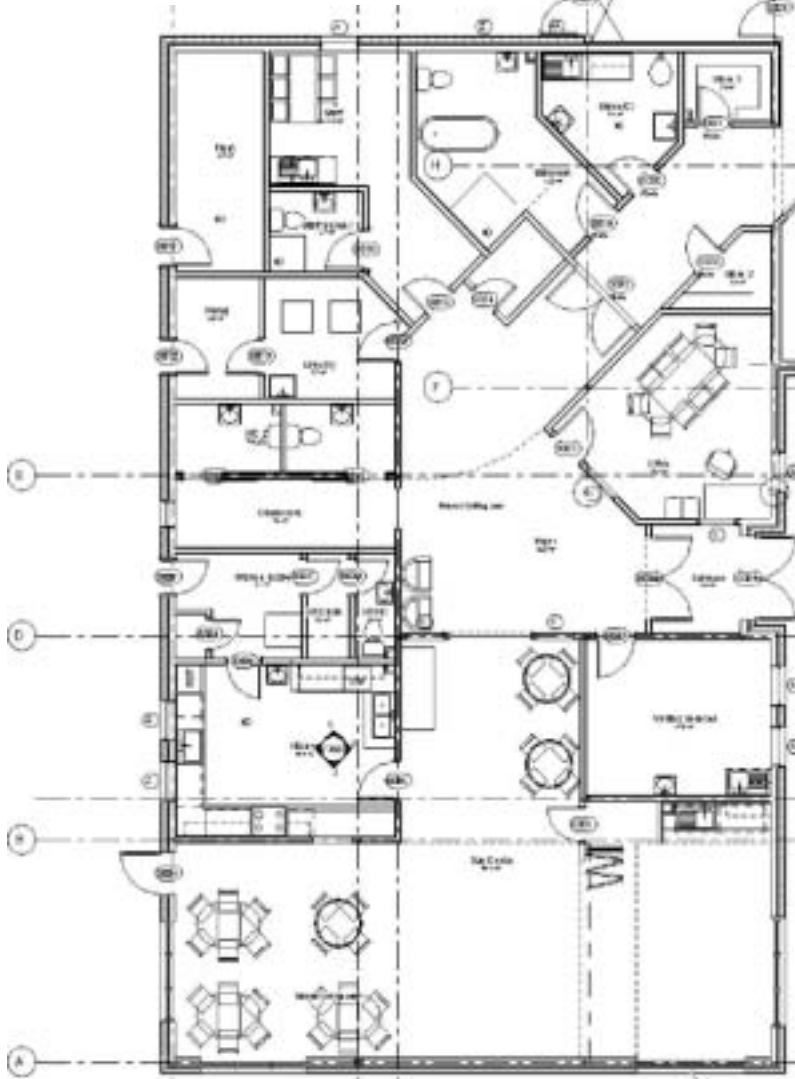
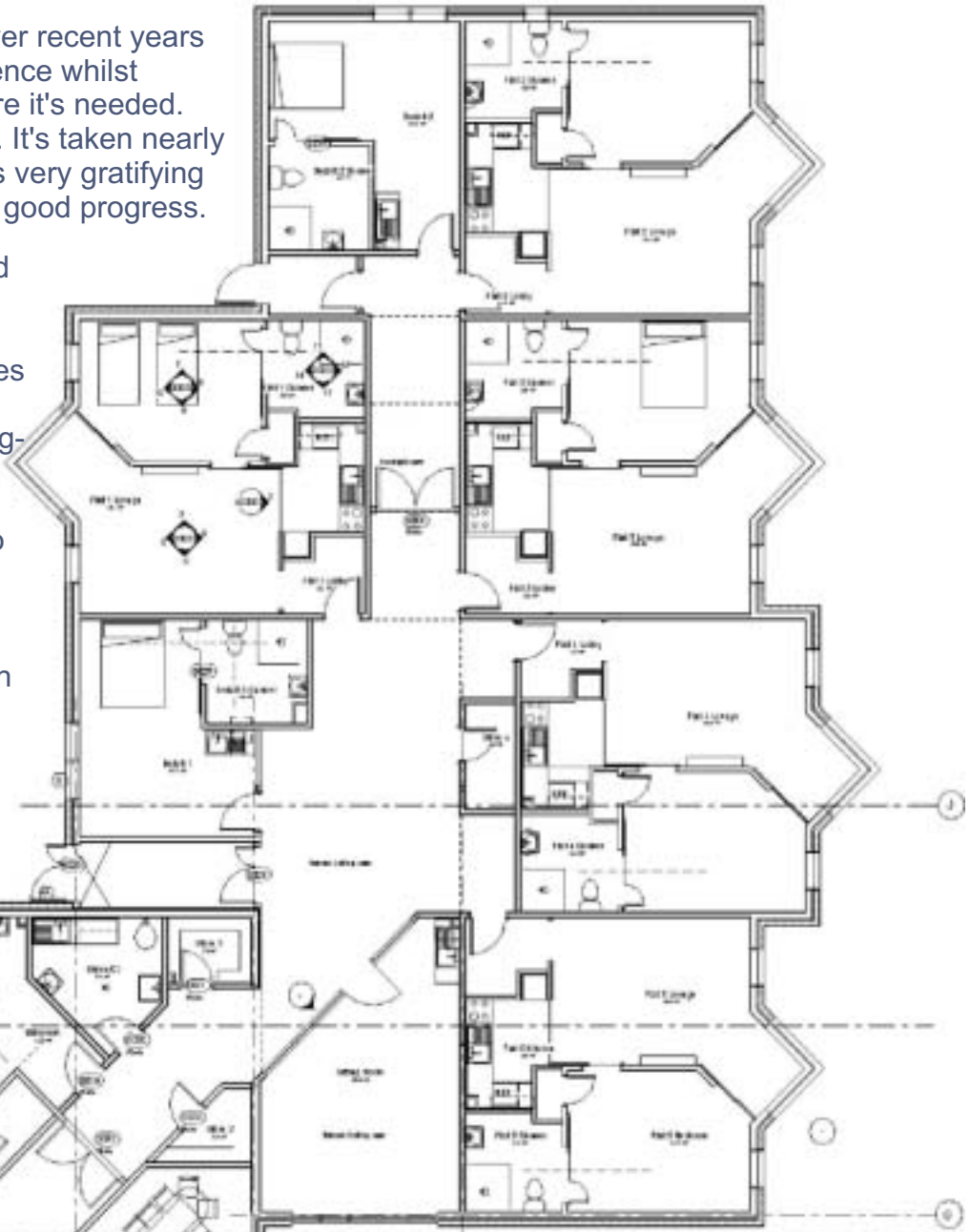
Hope to see you at the AGM on 14th April

Iain MacDonald.

Care Centre

One of the things we've learned over recent years is the need to show collective patience whilst keeping appropriate pressure where it's needed. The Care Centre is a case in point. It's taken nearly six years to reach this stage but it's very gratifying to see the construction work make good progress.

This project is about all things good in community development: partnership working; a community pulling in the one direction; agencies responding to local needs; job creation; training opportunities; long-term economic benefit and so on. But most of all it's about the restoration of dignity to people who were previously denied that opportunity because their needs could not be catered for in the Isle. It's scandalous that such a situation was ever tolerated, but it's tremendous that it's now being addressed in such a positive way.



Many people have been involved in bringing things to this point but particular thanks are due to Dawn Sherwood, (Project Manager) and to Cllr. Keith Johnson, (Chair of Social Services & Housing), both of whom have kept faith with the project when others put obstacles in the way. We also owe a big thanks to Shirley Haunschmidt who Chaired this sub-group for several years, and to Leslie Burgher for his innovative design and making such efforts to take local ideas on board.

The Sub-group has much less to do now but has not yet been stood down and we hope to be involved in helping to set up a local support group. Meantime we look forward to an official opening early next year. Iain MacDonald.

Sub-group members during the past year have been : Linda Hagan, Stephen Hagan, Karen Rendall, Alison Hutchison, Iain MacDonald, Willie McEwen, Alena Tulloch.

Access to the Countryside: Core Paths, Pilot Project 2004

By Christine Skene working with the walks subgroup of the Westray and Papa Westray Tourist Association

A Path Network for Westray, Papa Westray and Sanday.

This pilot project is the first phase in the development of a core path network for the whole of Orkney. It will develop path networks on Westray, Papa Westray and Sanday – with the aim of improving countryside access for both local communities and tourists. The creation of a path infrastructure will be accompanied by the development of information for the public about the path network, countryside access in general, and the natural and cultural heritage of the islands.

The pilot project will involve the creation of new paths; upgrading of existing routes and linking these with new routes; the upgrading of existing vehicular access/parking facilities which service paths and amenity sites; and the creation of new parking facilities where necessary. It will develop unobtrusive signposting/waymarking for routes; interpretation of the walks, and their associated natural and cultural heritage through the provision of interpretation boards; guidance for walkers; and production of a walks leaflet for each island.

Spread across the three islands, the total proposed developments are:

New paths created – approximately 20 km of coastal footpaths

Upgrading of existing routes – approximately 21 km of existing footpaths will be improved by provision of gates/stiles; upgrading the path surface; clearing of overgrown routes; removal of obstructions; dangers and rubbish.

The resulting promoted path network, comprised of new paths linking with existing routes and quiet roads, to provide a series of mostly circular routes of varying lengths, will be more than 80km in length.

Upgrading of existing vehicular access/parking areas where these serve footpaths or beaches. Access to beaches is very important for visitors and locals, and in particular for less able people.

Provision of two new car parks, which will be viewpoints with picnic areas and also allow access to the shore. These will be facilities for people of all abilities.

Signposting/waymarking – approximately 25–30 wooden directional signs and waymarkers will be erected on the path networks

Interpretation boards – 9 A2 size interpretation boards will be produced and placed in various car parks which provide access to the paths. The boards will have a map of the route; information about the walk; guidance on responsible behaviour; and information about natural, historical and cultural heritage.

Walks Leaflet for each island – a leaflet will be produced with a map of the island showing all the walks and other attractions on the island. It will provide information about all the walks and what visitors will see while walking, as well as other useful information about the island.

The provision of a path network will provide long term benefits to the islands. It will encourage walking amongst the local population, improving health and the quality of life. Promotion of the path network will encourage tourists to come to these remote islands, and the additional activities provided by the new walks will encourage tourists to stay longer on the islands and therefore contribute more to the economy. Increased awareness of the natural environment will help people to appreciate and protect it. Well signposted and interpreted routes will reduce conflicts between farmers and access users and avoid confusion and frustration amongst walkers.

To ensure we provide access opportunities for all sectors of the community the project will provide:

- ✍ A range of walks of different lengths and difficulties. The type of path will be shown on interpretation and promotional materials.
- ✍ Vehicular access points close to popular recreational sites, especially beaches. Walking along a smooth sandy beach is a pleasant and easy option for less able people. By providing parking facilities close to beaches and ensuring access from the car park to the beach is easy, we can allow less mobile people to enjoy some of the beautiful places on the islands.
- ✍ Vehicular access points close to good viewpoints. By providing parking facilities and seating close to attractive viewpoints we can allow people of all abilities access to attractive areas.

Youth and Children's work

Since being involved with this sub-group we have been successful in getting one more year of funding from Children in Need for the Höfn. This runs out in October 2004 and we are now actively looking for another funder.

The youngsters organised a tabletop sale, which went very well raising about £280 towards new equipment and replacements. Well done!

We have begun a new cleaning rota for the youngsters. This will be done by districts and each term there will be a winning team. All groups are doing really well, but could do better by tidying up outside the building as well. We are going to give the building a facelift by painting, replacing blinds etc.

A big thanks again to parents on the cleaning rota, Yvonne for organising both rotas and Alan for bus driving and caretaker duties.

Some of the other things that have happened.

- A study visit to Shetland with a group of young women from Westray and Sanday.
- First Gear driving course with a group of boys aged 14 - 16.
- Three girls checked out a walk for a publication of Westray Walks by the Tourist Association.
- Three 16 year olds having tractor driving lessons.
- Funding found for groups and individuals for equipment, courses etc.

In the pipeline

- Exchange visits with Unst, Shetland.
- Young Farmers to visit Ireland to look at Anaerobic Digestion of slurry to produce methane. (The Renewable Energy sub-group are working on a plan for a digester in Westray.)
- Höfn leaflet to be published.
- A young person to help making a video diary of the making of the stained glass window for the Care Centre.
- Easter workshops by Fiona Foley (glass artist) for P1 to S4 and upwards.
- Revised First Gear course for young women, with a driving lesson Sooth!

Thanks to the Development Trust and everyone else who has supported and given me advice during the first 18 months of my work.

If anyone wants more details, please get in touch.

Lorna Brown

Tourism

Another beautiful summer with plenty of visitors, tourism in Westray continues to flourish and expand. The Winter Warmers Weekends are generating useful trade, out of season.

We welcome Daybreak as a new self-catering cottage in the village and Graham and Kathy Maben who will be starting Westray bus tours as Westraak. Their unit at the nest units will become a Tourist Information Point.

There is a need for more B & B accommodation.

We hope to have a new tourist leaflet for the Tourist Association called "Islands for all seasons" produced in time for the summer.

The Association was involved in "Our Westray Your Westray" a leaflet to help visitors better understand the issues of access over farmland. There is more about it below. There is also a separate report about a series of new walks that are being organized by Christine Skene working with our walks sub group. Christine has accessed grants for a pilot scheme to upgrade, sign and provide a leaflet for walks on Westray, Papay and Sanday.

Our Westray Your Westray.



Following mounting concern, especially from farmers, over the new access rights and how this would work around livestock, a leaflet was produced by the Trust for visitors.

This aims to give a better understanding of the issues especially when walking with dogs.



The leaflet was produced entirely in Westray, with funding for Edwin Rendall's cartoons provided by the Community Council, words by Geordie Drever and the printing done at school.

It was placed on the ferries, in the shops, hotels etc. Over 400 were used and it seems to be a welcome start to addressing the concerns.



A companion leaflet is in development detailing suitable walks for dogs. This was researched by Leanne Marcus as part of her summer placement and is now at the consultation stage with land owners. This should be ready in time for this season.



Industry and housing

CAP Reform

On the basis that we needed to know the current state of core industries, the Industry sub group set itself the task of producing a Farming and Fishing Position Statement. This proved to be a considerable and very revealing task.

With the CAP reform looming the research rapidly developed into a “What is the likely effect on Westray?” exercise. Because of the deadline imposed by the CAP reform consultation period, the fishing side had to be temporarily put to one side but we will return to it soon.

That Westray is a clearly defined area, that is well farmed, very well documented and a size that allows a good degree of local knowledge, proved to be invaluable for calculating current, and possible future, stock numbers and the financial effects of the proposed changes.

The sub group worked closely with the Westray branch of the NFU to ensure accurate data.

The NFU took its concerns over the predictions and their implications for the whole Westray economy to both the Community Council and Development Trust, who decided to go public.

The document detailing the current and possible future position was used by Orkney NFU and Stephen Hagan in their meeting with Ross Finnie and Jim Wallace, and evidently proved an eye opener for both parties.

Nest Units.

The nest units are a great asset to Westray. They cost us nothing and they do offer ready made and serviced starter units for folk to get going without the capital cost of purchase or new build. The difficulty of finding tenants for these has shown how hard it is to start a new business in Westray, or any of the outer isles. We very much welcome Graham and Kathy Maben who are basing Westraak in one of the units. It will also become a Tourist Information Point.

There is a surge of interest in Westray and much building work going on, that is very welcome, but housing is often a delicate issue. While house prices were very low, our young couples were very fortunate in being able to buy themselves a place and be independent. Now we have house prices rising all across Orkney and it is threatening to become more difficult for them.

Westray offers much and there are often people coming here looking for sites to build on or property to buy. When they travel round the island and see empty/derelict property, it is not always easy for them to realise that the owners have no thought of selling because it may be family land or promised for their own

It is also not always easy for a farmer to contemplate selling a house or site to a non-farming incomer who would then be in the middle of their farmland but without the knowledge of how

Housing.



Reports by
Geordie Drever

Treasurers Report

This year saw our treasurer, Shirley Haunschmidt, leave and me, Janette Rendall, take over in May 2003.

In July the Trust became the employer of our Local Development Officer, Sam Harcus. Funding for this post came from Orkney Enterprise, Orkney Islands Council, Crofters Commission and Communities Scotland. This funding is available until June 20 04.

July also saw the end of funding from the Initiative-at-the Edge for forwarding the Trust's Development Plan. This fund also paid for some feasibility studies, running costs, clerk's wages, as well as for revising and rewriting the plan.

This means that the Trust needs to find alternative funding for its running costs. The Community Council Grant Scheme allocated £500 to the Trust to be used on administration and running costs for 1 year. We also received a donation of £1000 from the Community Association.

The Höfn still has money for running costs available until October from Children in Need. It also has remaining equipment funds. Funding is secured from the Rural Communities Transport Initiative and the Westray Community Council for the Höfn bus until 2005.

Our Youth Development Worker, Lorna Brown, is funded until August 2004. Work is ongoing to secure future funding for Lorna's post as well as the Local Development Officer's post.

We also received funding from Awards for All for an archaeological survey.

In the past year the Trust has received funding from Orkney Islands Council, Orkney Enterprise, Westray Community Council, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Social Inclusion Partnership Fund, Rural Communities Transport Initiative, Awards for All, BBC Children in Need, Westray Community Association, Scottish Natural Heritage, Crofters Commission, Communities Scotland and from the hire of the Höfn.

Janette Rendall

Social Inclusion Partnership (SIP)

Our time as a mainstream SIP area has now come to an end but we hope to still have some involvement. SIP monies have been exclusively for the benefit of 14 -25 year olds and have been a huge asset to Westray. The bulk of last year's resources went into the Isles Youth Development Project, which along with Council funding has provided three part-time posts in the North Isles, including Lorna Brown (covering Westray and Papay). We are very keen to see this project continued and are hopeful that it will be for some time yet.

Over the past year we have also been able to support a number of people with vocational training grants, give backing to the "Westray View", part fund two summer student placements, and provide a range of youth work grants bringing new equipment and new experiences to the Isle.

We remain very grateful to Community Education Team Leader, Malcolm Graves, for his continued support and guidance.

Iain MacDonald.

Report of the Heritage sub group

For the past year the Heritage sub-group has been treading water, not wishing to take any project forward until it has a clear view of what archaeology is around either hidden or easily accessible on the island.

To this end, the Trust commissioned EAST Archaeology to do a detailed study of the island, pulling together all the information they had gathered over several years of visits here. The cost of this study was outwith any budget the Trust has so we put in an application to the Lottery, which was turned down for various reasons. However, a second application last year was successful and we now have the first draft of the 134 page report.

This is an extract from the introduction to the report:

1.2 It brings together an up to date summary of all of the sites and monuments which have been recorded on the island, together with summaries of the findings of the modern archaeological excavations which have taken place there. A brief outline is provided for each known site, together with fuller summaries of key sites. It outlines a range of options for consideration as future heritage projects and provides ideas as to how these may be taken forward.

2.1 The need for a review of the archaeological resource of Westray was identified by the Westray Development Trust as part of its initiative to develop and promote the heritage profile of Westray. Long term changes within the local economy (see Tony Jarvis' report) have seen a decline of the more traditional industries of farming and fishing and at the same time revenue from tourism has formed an increasingly important source of income and employment on the island. While it is generally accepted that tourism alone cannot uphold the local economy, it is believed that it may be developed to provide increased opportunities in the future.

2.2 Within this context the promotion of local heritage is particularly important. With so many potential destinations available to the visitor, Westray needs to be able to offer a distinctive and unique experience if it is to successfully compete with its competitors.

Heritage is not alone among the attractions which the island has to offer: Westray possesses a wonderful natural environment, tranquil surroundings and a strong sense of community. Other destinations in Orkney can provide a similar experience and thus to be successful in attracting visitors, Westray must promote those elements which are specifically found only here.

If any Westray resident would like to receive a copy of this report when it is completed, or can't wait and would like to read it as a draft now, it can be supplied as a pdf file if you contact Sam Marcus or Peter Needham. The Heritage sub-group always welcomes input from any member of the community.

Peter Needham

Ancestral Tourism Project

One project, which was suggested during the year, was a result of Sam's attending a genealogical tourism course on Mainland. The project was proposed and adopted by the Scottish Executive Steering Group. Preliminary work on the Westray and Papay Ancestral Tourism Project is now underway. The project will take all the graveyard and house records which exist in Westray (owned by the WBPT), add to them similar records from Papay, which may have to be created, and then use an existing database of 29,000 Westray and Papay names of residents, (predominantly deceased), to create one huge archive.

This archive will be generated and then made accessible over the internet. Genealogical tourists and family historians will be able to trace their family history, see the gravestones and houses where their families lived, on payment of a fee for limited time access. It will also be accessible in the Heritage Centres in Westray and Papay. The project will create employment for a manager and two assistants for three years, and at the end of this period a homecoming is planned which will also help island businesses involved in tourism. Once funding has been secured the jobs will be advertised locally.



The project was launched at Hopetoun House in Edinburgh just before Christmas 2003 at a gathering of national tourism businesses, called "Trading on the Family Tree"

and the Westray project is featured in the Ancestral Scotland promotional literature.

Reports can be downloaded at www.scotexchange.net/ancestraltourism.

Once again, Westray is leading the field, not just in Orkney but in Scotland, with innovative ideas in order to promote our community and generate tourism. It is hoped that at the completion of the heritage project the team will act as ambassadors to the rest of the country and teach other communities how to document, and then promote, their own heritage.

The Heritage sub-group consists of representatives of various member groups on the island. Anyone who is particularly interested in joining the sub-group should contact Sam or Peter.

Peter Needham

See you at the
AGM 14th April

Transport

Preface by Geordie Drever

Basing the boat in Westray was identified in 1998 as potentially offering great benefits both socially and economically to Westray. The Development Trust carried out an island-wide survey (and other studies) and, whilst recognizing that some people have reservations about the boat lying safely at Rapness, reached clear conclusions about the benefits once that hurdle was overcome. It was also shown that the boat could offer, more daily runs on less crew hours, if it was based here. The boat, currently, is often almost empty on its first and last run of the day because of the direction in which it is going. The other runs are often over-booked days ahead. The ferry company was less than enthusiastic about it and also said they would only deal with the Community Council. The issue was therefore passed by the Development Trust to the Community Council who have been endeavoring, ever since, to make

Report by Danny Marcus

At the last AGM we reported that we were hoping for a trial period of the boat being based in Westray during the summer of 2004. This is not now going to happen for various reasons but the major one is the accommodation on the boat does not meet the DTI regulations for permanent overnight use.

The proposal at the moment is to design the replacement ferries with suitable accommodation so they can be based in the islands. Sanday and Stronsay are now looking more favourably on the possibility of having their boats based in the islands as well, which strengthens our case.

OIC transport committee are looking at a proposed 10 year plan and putting together the costings of what will be required to upgrade the ferry service including ferry replacements and pier improvements. Improving the piers at Papa Westray and North Ronaldsay are also part of this.

The haulage depot provision at Hatston has been retendered recently and won by Streamline. This is initially a two- year contract with the possibility of a one- year extension. A totally new depot for Hatston is in the early stages of discussion.

The Coast to Coast tickets introduced for tourists last year were very successful with 500 sold, representing 1500, trips.

The passenger and vehicle usage on the ferries continues to show a steady increase year on year.

Air transport

Air travel has shown an approximate 28% increase in numbers between 2001 and 2003. Reducing the fares has led to considerable increase in the number of passengers to Westray, Sanday and Stronsay.

The Airport Bus is working but needs more support. Anyone who has difficulties with the bus service should let us know as it would help in devising timetables.

The channels for transport issues are: through the Westray Development Trust or Community Council to the Westray Transport Representative who, at the moment, is Danny Marcus.

Development Officer's Report

Another year has passed in a flash. What have been the highlights? Work starting on the Care Centre - the fact we will have a place to care for our elderly and employ up to 14 people surely comes out on top.

There have been lots of other smaller developments over the last year, from the visitor parking area at Roadmire which will soon be landscaped (with the help of some school pupils), to the purchase of an area of land at Sand o' Gill (in conjunction with the Community Council), which will soon be an access and picnic area, but there have also been a few frustrations. Problems with the marina in Kirkwall have had a knock-on effect here but we still hope to have better facilities for small boats in by summer. South Hammer has been another frustratingly slow project, but again we hope that work will be done over this summer to consolidate the building.

The project that will probably have the most impact over the next few years is the new Renewable Energy Officer's post. This will maximise the benefits of renewable energy and energy efficiency throughout the whole community. Other projects include the formation of an active Building Preservation Trust as the original WBPT concentrate on the Heritage Centre. The intention is to save some of our buildings, creating employment and housing. The recreation of small holdings is a possibility we are looking at with the Crofters Commission, to "put lights back in the glen" and enable people to begin on the farming ladder.

Although I work primarily for Westray & Papay, it is in my job description to "network with other rural areas as appropriate" - so it has been a pleasure for me and good for Westray, that I have been involved a little with the emerging Development Trusts in the other isles, both individually and at the Isles Forum, where we can discuss and work towards solutions to our common problems. For example, top of the list is transport and housing. Slightly further away, we are still working closely with Unst and hope to forge stronger exciting links in the near future.

Our work has had remarkable press coverage this past year locally, on the web, and internationally, but we still have to address the fact on a very local level we could do better. There are a few ideas on how to address this but if people want to know what we are doing I, or any of the directors, would be only to glad to have a chat.

I have had the opportunity to travel to some other communities over the last year, from Tiree to Shetland, and tell them what we are doing and what our aims are. Everyone is envious of our achievements here and my response, when asked how we have achieved so much, is that it could not happen without the complete backing of the community, who have the ability to step back, let any petty problems or grievances take second place, and grasp the bigger picture.

We intend to publish our updated version of the plan very soon so I hope to be able to work on our projects for some time yet, and this is only possible if local agencies continue to fund the post.

There has been quite a battle on this front, fought by the WDT and its chair against a minority who see the work we do here only as a project with a limited time-scale and wish to move elsewhere and tick a few more boxes. Although our list of achievements gets progressively longer so does the list of aspirations - that is the sign of an active community. We have done a lot but there is still a way to go, which means effort by us all, working jointly and positively, together for a sustainable future.

Sam Harcus

Renewable Energy

The Renewable Energy sub-group has been working to the Renewable Energy Plan developed last year. The aspiration is the generation, by 2012, of as much energy from community-owned renewable sources as we in Westray use from all sources. This is undoubtedly an ambitious target but it is achievable, and we are tackling it from several angles.

Energy production from community owned projects is potentially a source of revenue. The aim, initially, is to reach a level that pays the running costs of the Westray Development Trust and then as it develops to be able to put money into other schemes for community benefit.

Renewable Energy worker

We have recently been awarded a grant from The Energy Savings Trust to employ a Renewable Energy worker for two years to take this work forward. The Renewable Energy scene is of major importance nationally and as a group we cannot, at present, take up all the opportunities that are regularly presenting themselves. This new post will enable us to do far more. This post is now advertised. The successful applicant is expected to bring into Westray the grants and investment needed to develop our plans and so start generating electricity and therefore the cash from it.

Renewables and Tourists

The Renewables projects here in Westray are one of the reasons for tourists to chose Westray as the North Isle they visit and, as we know from research, once they have been here, a significant number both tell their friends and keep coming back themselves. If we are successful with the electric car bid, we believe it will be particularly effective in attracting people.

Grid Connection

If the energy produced is in the form of electricity we have to either sell to the grid or use it on site for a business that needs a lot of energy.

We did an initial enquiry with Scottish and Southern Electricity ("the hydro") to see what the grid in Westray and Papa Westray could take, without needing to export electricity into the North Isles ring.

We have now applied for grid connections and will find out soon if and when this will be possible and the cost for a connection.

Electric Car

The Electric Car and Windmill project will shortly be going in as an application. Thank you to all those who have contributed both verbally and via the sheets in the shops. The feedback has mostly been very positive with lots of good suggestions that we will incorporate in the application. We are, of course, in competition with other community groups for this £50k grant.

I am very pleased to discuss the concept and how it could work for us here, especially with anyone with doubts or concerns.

Sub-group members: Iain MacDonald, Colin Risbridger, Steven Bain, Jonathan McEwen, Jimmy Stout, Kevin Rorie, Willie McEwen.

Anaerobic Digestion.

This project would digest slurry, fish waste, paper and cardboard etc and produce methane gas. Electricity generators would run on the methane. The project is about to go forward to apply for ERDF funding. It would be the first of its kind in Orkney. We would like to combine the project with Plastic Recycling, which is an energy demanding process, so we can sell energy from one part of the business to the other and get a better price than the grid pays. Plastic Recycling is environmentally very desirable, much better than dumping, burning or shipping it all the way to South West Scotland. However it is not an easy business to develop anywhere. A large quantity of UK plastic waste is shipped to China for recycling every year.

Geothermal

Within Orkney, Westray has led the way in demonstrating the effectiveness and value of heat pumps. As a direct result of seeing what has worked here, other places are now convinced by the technology and are specifying it. The Care Centre heating will be based on heat pumps, with solar panels to aid the hot water provision and a windmill to provide some of the electrical load.

Alternative fuels

The biodiesel project has demonstrated that we can produce diesel fuel that works from used cooking oil, and that we would be able to sell this environmentally very friendly product a little cheaper than regular diesel. We are now in the process of setting up a small company to do this commercially. Its size is limited meantime by the quantity of used oil available. We are also working with the Agronomy Institute at Orkney College towards growing both oil crops to press for raw oil and sugar beet crops for bioethanol production.

Wind

In world terms, we have very high average wind speeds and this is the deciding factor for successful generation. Wind energy is working reliably and making good financial returns in places with far less wind than here. Windmills are the simplest way to tackle our generation target and most important start earning cash.

AGM



14th April 2004

The AGM is open to all. As directors of the Trust, we work away in the sub-groups of the Trust and also meet regularly as a board of directors, but we need feedback from you. We hope you will come along to the AGM on April 14th and tell us what you think, good or bad. If you are not already a member of the Trust we invite you to join, on the evening, by signing your name as you come in. There is no membership fee, but as we are a Company Limited by Guarantee, should we ever go into liquidation, you would be asked for the princely sum of £1. Our constitution ensures a rolling membership of directors, so no-one gets stuck in a post and fresh people with fresh ideas come in.

Some directors step down each year. This year eight are doing so.

As well as the election of directors, there will be short updates from sub-groups, a financial report, and ample opportunity for you to raise concerns and make suggestions.

Tea, coffee and biscuits will be served during the evening.

We look forward to seeing you, on 14th April.

Directors

Iain MacDonald (Chairman)
Willie McEwen (Vice-Chairman)
Janette Rendall (Treasurer)
Allan Forrester (Secretary)
Geordie Drever
Jenna Hume
Elaine Langford
Peter Needham
Robbie Rendall
Ally Sangster
John Talbot
Alena Tulloch

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