



**Old Luce Development Trust
Minutes of the Annual General Meeting**

Wednesday 27 September 2023: 19:00
Glenluce Public Hall

1. Attendance and Apologies

- Directors: Mike Lane (ML), Jim McClung (JMCC), Lorna McDowall (LMcD), Diane Lowe, Jackie Plunkett, Richard Rankin, Steven Newton, Kippy Thomson
- Full Members: Clare Burl, Ewan Cameron, Neil Douglas, Margie Ferguson, Christopher Kingsland, Elizabeth McDowall, Fred Murray, June Murray, Stephen Ogston, Ken Chynoweth-Tidy, Janet Shooter, Guy McClure, Toby King
- Non-members: Tracey Murray (Development Officer), Leah Chynoweth-Tidy (Business Support Assistant)
- Apologies: Finlay Carson (MSP), Brian Whittle (MSP), Colin Smyth (MSP), Mick Bird (Member), Lynne Bird (Member), David Burl (Member), Lesley Goodchild (Member), Michelle Newton (Member), Cheryl Garrity (Director), Adele McCallum (Director)

ML opened the meeting and welcomed all in attendance.

2. Minutes of the Last AGM

The minutes of the last AGM were proposed by Diane Lowe and seconded by Kippy Thomson.

3. Chair's Report (ML)

2022-23 has been a year of growth, community engagement, and resilience, and the Trust is proud of what we have accomplished together. We remain financially stable with an operating reserve and income is budgeted forward for the next three years. The block grant that we receive from the OLCF, via Foundation Scotland, is fundamental in allowing us to effectively pursue our community development goals.

- **Village Square:** This was successfully completed and inaugurated as part of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations in June 2022. We didn't secure the Scottish Civic Trust My Place Award but it was an honour to be shortlisted by the judges. Our skilled landscape gardener continues to maintain and nurture the garden beds, supported by enthusiastic volunteers. Funds have been allocated for ongoing maintenance and further beautification of the square, including the installation of integrated oak benches beneath the gazebo.
- **Dunragit Community Hub:** Ambitious plans to establish a community hub in Dunragit have advanced significantly this past year. A suitable site near the park in Dunragit has been identified, comprehensively valued and purchased. £80,000 has been secured from the Coastal Benefit Fund, bolstered by a £50,000 contribution from the OLCF block grant to commence the project with the aim of installing a structure as a central, vibrant community hub to serve the needs of



350-400 Dunragit residents. We are optimistically planning for the hub to be operational in spring 2024 and fully equipped for a grand summer opening. We are exploring heritage funding to create captivating displays showcasing the significant archaeological findings in Dunragit and will also be looking at securing funding for alternative energy provisions, aligning with our commitment to sustainability and energy efficiency in this exciting community endeavour.

- **Glenluce Healthy Living Campus:** Our collaboration with the NHS to assess the need for a new medical facility in Glenluce is a crucial undertaking. This has been a long drawn out process, complicated by Covid and the priorities of the Health Board during the pandemic. Recently we have had some progress, with the proposal from our Trust having been positively received. Importantly, through our purchase of the surgery as is, the Trust has achieved the first stage of safeguarding medical services for the immediate future. We continue to work with the Surgery to identify ways to make the site more suitable, as we progress bigger plans.

The first stage of safeguarding medical services for the village for the immediate future was completed when we purchased the site. The second stage of building the new campus poses a more considerable challenge. While we have secured funding to progress both the surgery and housing elements to planning permission, the focus over the coming months will be on exploring funding options for the actual construction phase. Having to construct the building in line with Scottish government design guidance for GP practices imposes a significant cost on this project.

This project will continue to be a top priority in the upcoming year as we work diligently to secure the resources needed to progress the development of this essential facility, meeting the needs of our community, the surgery, and the Health Board.

- **Brambles:** The Brambles project underwent a significant shift in direction following the closure of the village café in spring 2022. We are currently exploring options to return to the project's initial concept of reopening Brambles as a café/restaurant. We successfully advanced to RIBA stage 1, but encountered apprehensions concerning rising project costs. In our commitment to ensuring the project's viability and success, we have engaged an independent expert to provide a thorough assessment. A new architect has also been appointed for the project with work scheduled to commence at the end of September 2023. This change reflects our dedication and determination to bring the Brambles café/restaurant project to fruition.
- **Glenluce Public Hall:** We recently extended our enduring management agreement with Dumfries & Galloway Council for the hall to 31 March 2025, ensuring the ongoing accessibility and maintenance of this vital community asset.

Activities and events in the Hall have almost returned to pre-Covid levels. Valuable services offered to our community include the weekly Post Office every Tuesday, Boccia-New Age Curling sessions every Monday and every Thursday and Chair Tai Chi every Wednesday. Yoga groups have found a welcoming space at the hall, along with a variety of enjoyable social activities, including drumming sessions and children's parties. Our newly established meeting room is also in regular use, providing essential support to community services like Citizens Advice. There are plans for more arts and crafts activities and events in the



coming year.

A warm welcome to our new Hall Keeper, Sue Murkowski, who joined us this year and will be available on weekdays and alternate weekends. We are still actively seeking an individual or a group of volunteers to assist in opening and closing the hall's toilets on alternate weekends or to cover the Hall Keeper's annual leave. This role can be undertaken on a voluntary or paid basis, and we encourage anyone interested to reach out to us.

The Friends of the Hall group operates a Community Shop during specified hours on Tuesday, Thursdays and Saturdays.

We are aware of halls in the local area that have been successful in obtaining funds for running costs for staff that has enables them to employ a full-time Hall Manager and this is something that we will be exploring in the coming year.

Your support and involvement in Glenluce Public Hall and its associated activities are highly valued, and we look forward to your continued engagement in our vibrant community hub.

- **Balkail Glen and Environmental Conservation:** We are dedicated to the preservation of Balkail Glen's natural beauty and thank our committed volunteers, particularly our Friends of the Glen (FotG) group, who are always keen to welcome more hands. The annual stipend allocated to FotG has been reconfigured to a top up to £500 each April to provide resources for acquiring essential equipment and facilitating valuable training initiatives. Collaborating closely with Glenluce Primary School, FotG have made significant strides clearing invasive species and planting new trees, ensuring that the Glen remains a pristine natural haven for our community.

The Glen continues to flourish under these combined conservation efforts, benefiting from ongoing maintenance, the strategic planting of native species, and various other ecological preservation initiatives. The Trust Directors have played an active role in bridge repairs, tree maintenance, and the installation of new benches throughout the parish. In coming months there are also plans to replace the boundary fencing on the north side of the Glen and improve drainage along the high path, further enhancing the safety and overall aesthetics of this cherished natural asset.

- **Community Asset Transfers:** The Trust has decided not to proceed with the North Street Lorry Park acquisition due to complications during the conveyancing process.
- **Industrial Estate:** The Trust took ownership of the industrial estate in March 2022, a significant step forward in our efforts to generate income that will directly benefit our community. The change in tenancies has opened up an opportunity for us to implement a comprehensive refurbishment program. Over the coming weeks, we will be undertaking essential upgrades to include rewiring, new external cladding, roof repairs, and the installation of new doors. These enhancements will prepare the space for re-letting, planned for the autumn/winter of 2023. In line with our commitment to fostering economic growth and employment opportunities, we will prioritize active businesses that have the potential to bring jobs to our village. This initiative aligns with our broader vision of creating a thriving and self-sustaining local economy. As we move forward, we anticipate



that the industrial estate will play a pivotal role in supporting our community's economic development, and we will continue to seek opportunities for its growth and prosperity.

- **Christmas Lights:** Our annual Christmas light displays in Dunragit and Glenluce continue to bring festive joy to our communities. We have identified several lights requiring repairs, and these are being seen to for this year's display.
- **Plans for Future Periods:** As we look ahead to the future, the Old Luce Development Trust is dedicated to a series of strategic steps and initiatives that will shape our endeavours in the coming year. These will include the successful establishment of the Dunragit Community Hub, ongoing maintenance and beautification of the Village Square, revitalisation and completion of the Brambles café, create a modern medical facility for Glenluce Healthy Living Campus, the comprehensive refurbishment and re-letting of the Industrial Estate to contribute to local job creation, preserving the natural beauty and enjoyment of Balkail Glen, continuing to manage and expand activity at the Glenluce Public Hall as a vital community hub and maintaining the tradition of organizing annual Christmas light displays in Dunragit and Glenluce.

Thank you to our dedicated board members, staff, volunteers, and the entire community for their unwavering support. Together, we have made significant strides in community development, and we are confident that our future endeavours will bring further success. Together, we will continue to work towards a brighter and more prosperous future for all.

4. **Treasurer's Report** Due to some challenges with our accounts, the Trust does not yet have a finalised set of 2022-23 accounts to hand. The Trust is a complex organisation. The accounts are in full draft format, but the accountant is now on leave for two weeks. Constitutionally, the Trust could not hold over tonight's AGM, so the finalised accounts will be posted publicly in the usual formats as soon as these are to hand.

The draft TAR presented this evening provides a solid idea of income and expenditure and outlines very clearly where all monies have been invested. The Trust retains a reserve of just under £50,000 allowing us the means to operate if there are any delays with Block Grant funding.

5. **Questions from the Floor**

Fred Murray expressed his disappointment at JMcC's resignation as a Trust Director and asked why this had occurred. ML responded that this was not appropriate for discussion in this forum and he could take it up privately with JMcC outside of the AGM.

6. **Resignations**

Drew Sloan and JMcC have resigned as Directors and both will be a great loss to the Trust. We thank them for their hard work, skills and dedication to our projects.

The next longest-standing Director Kippy Thomson is standing down and has been re-nominated.

Co-opted Director Cheryl Garrity has to stand down according to our articles..



7. Election of New Trust Directors

Director nominations received in advance of the meeting:

Kippy Thomson – seconded by ML

Ewan Cameron – seconded by ML

Neil Douglas – seconded by ML

Previously co-opted Director Cheryl Garrity was due to stand for full appointment and sent in her nomination ahead of the meeting, but was unable to attend. ML proposed to co-opt Cheryl for another 12 months at the next Trust meeting, which was unanimously accepted.

ML welcomed Ewan Cameron and Neil Douglas to the Trust Board and thanked Kippy Thomson and Cheryl Garrity for re-standing. He further thanked all Directors to date who have played their part in the Trust's activities and projects.

The Trust now has 11 Directors:

Mike Lane
Lorna McDowall
Diane Lowe
Steven Newton
Jackie Plunkett
Richard Rankin
Kippy Thomson
Adele McCallum
Cheryl Garrity
Ewan Cameron
Neil Douglas

8. Any Other Business

Over the next 6-12 months and in line with wide community consultation, the Trust is planning to undertake a new version of the 2015 Community Action Plan which can be used over the next 5-10 years. The Trust will then look at refreshing this CAP every 4-5 years to better steer what we are doing as an organisation.

ML closed the meeting at 19:35 with appreciation for the attendance.