

Annual Report 2018

Background:

Cupar Development Trust Ltd (The Trust, CDT) is a voluntary organisation registered as a company limited by guarantee (SC522831) to promote local initiatives which secure long-term social, economic and environmental benefits for the Cupar community. Formally incorporated in December 2015, the Trust has explored and taken forward projects in creative partnerships involving community groups, the public sector and the private sector.

Meetings of the Board

Since the last Annual General Meeting (AGM) held on 7th December 2017, the Trust's Board of Directors has met on 12 occasions.

Membership

The Trust has 40 Ordinary Members, 7 are Board Directors. There were 2 applications to become Ordinary Members of the Trust. The Board approved these applications.

Changes in Directors

David Kirk, Jim Hair and Jennie Hughes were re-elected by the Board to serve as Chairman, Treasurer and Minute and Membership Secretary respectively at the December meeting of the Board.

However, Jennie Hughes, the Trust's Secretary died in May after a short illness. Jennie's enthusiasm and the considerable practical contribution she made to the business of the Trust is much missed. She was a lovely, committed person.

Veronica Kirk was co-opted to the Board in May and agreed to take on the roles of minute and membership secretary and the management the Trust's Facebook page and the website until the December AGM.

Jim McLeish and Pat Mitchell have resigned from the Board. Both remain Ordinary Members of the Trust. Rick Bond was co-opted to the Board in October.

Governance

The Trust has a small Board of Directors. These individuals bring a spread of professional disciplines and experience to the Board. Their contributions at monthly meetings have been essential. However, the activities of the Trust have grown such that the current number of directors is less than is desirable.

The Board takes personal privacy seriously and in particular will not share personal data with any third parties. Bill Pagan developed the Data Protection and Privacy Policy (GDPR). This set of provisions was adopted by the Board at its May meeting at which Bill Pagan agreed to be the Trust's Data Protection Officer.

Bill Pagan and Kate Hughes prepared a suite of Employment Policies in readiness for the Trust employing staff.

The Trust does not have charitable status and cannot readily secure grants from foundations or from individual donors giving to charities. The Board decided not to revise the Trust's Articles. However, the Board recognized that it may be beneficial that a new 'umbrella' Cupar charity is constituted and registered as a SCIO. The Board has agreed that the Trust will host the funds secured for the emergent body should this progress.

Community Projects

The Development Trust aims to contribute to the community through the initiatives it promotes, develops and brings into practical effect producing resulting benefits. At the close of 2017 the Trust had brought forward two radical proposals: one, the renovation of vacant property within the George Inn Pend to provide work-units for small businesses in the creative industry sector; and the second, the Town Centre Interpretive Plan which proposed establishing 'Digital Cupar' – an archive of digital images and stories to be used as content when preparing digital media essential for making Cupar's places and history more widely known.

The Board fully appreciated that to take such proposals forward would require retaining professional expertise, attracting substantial funding, and, crucially, bringing together local groups and volunteers. The Board recognized that the management implications of these projects would be considerable. A strengthened Board was required and the employment of administrative and development staff would be essential.

The scale of the proposals and their demanding implications required the Board to make the choice between taking forward one or other proposal: the property-development project to create a centre for creative-businesses, or the implementation of the Interpretive Plan.

The Development of Cupar's 'Inner Court'

The Board concluded that the Trust would not be able to successfully fund the renovation project and called a close to further action on this venture. This decision was not fundamental to the viability of the greater scheme to redevelop the 'Inner Court' area to the rear of Crossgate. Des Montgomery and David Kirk have continued to meet with Fife Council and Kingdom Housing Association. The submission by Kingdom Housing of a planning application for the redevelopment of this extensive area is anticipated.

The Cupar Town Centre Interpretive Plan

The preparation of the Interpretive Plan during 2017 had been under-pinned by establishing a working group. The meetings of the working group, which involves trustees of the Trust, Cupar Heritage, ABCD (Cupar's business association), Fife Cultural Trust and Cupar and District Local Tourist Association, have continued. Dr Mike Spearman of CMC Associates, who had led the production of the Interpretive Plan, has participated in these bi-monthly meetings.

The measures identified in the Interpretive Plan included town history projects, the organising of community events, and using social media to make Cupar visible beyond Fife.

The Heritage Lottery Fund had recommended the working group to progress implementing the Interpretive Plan by undertaking small fundable projects. Mike Spearman designed two projects which will involve volunteers in building the 'Digital Cupar' heritage archive. The Trust, Cupar Heritage and CMC Associates committed to collaborate in the delivery of the two heritage projects.

A Partnership Agreement has been entered and the Trust will hold responsibility for project administration, financial management and engaging volunteers.

The Heritage Lottery Fund has provided a first grant of £10,000. The second project is the subject of a current application for £10,000. The projects will make use of the established CMC Flow digital heritage asset management system and will involve recruiting volunteers who, with training provided by CMC Associates, will build the digital archive. Intellectual Property protection and access agreements have been confirmed. This store of Cupar's history will provide the basis of digital publications to be promoted in due course through web-sites and social media.

The heritage projects are two of a set of three. The importance of the community's capacity for organising public events had been recognized, in particular a need to increase the pool of volunteers experienced in 'event management' responsibilities. Application to the National Lottery 'Awards for All' was made and a grant of £8,500 awarded. This partnership project will culminate in a family festival event taking place in September 2019.

Classic Cupar 123 - The Employment of Core Staff

The Board recognised the need to employ core staff to recruit and support the volunteer teams undertaking these projects. Administrative and financial management of projects would be essential and pro-action to recruit and support the training of volunteers was required.

The three projects were collectively badged as 'Classic Cupar 123' and a project to provide for funding of two staff who would be supporting the delivery of these projects was prepared.

Applications were made to Fife LEADER, Communities Fife and Fife Council's Town Centre Regeneration Fund. Local organisations responded most favourably to our request for letters of support. As a result, the Trust successfully secured grant funding to provide for the employment of two staff: a full-time Community Projects Coordinator and a part-time Administration and Finance Officer. The recruitment of two well-qualified and experienced individuals has most recently been completed.

The Trust was awarded a grant of £40,000 by Fife LEADER. The Fife LEADER grant was matched by the provision of grants totalling £10,000 from Fife Council. These grants cover the staff, office and related costs until December 2019. Fife Voluntary Action have licenced the Trust the use of a room within Volunteer House, Crossgate. This will become both the project office and training workshop. And, a further very welcome help has been the provision by Fife Council of an extension grant of £16,800 from the Town Centre Regeneration Fund. This will extend the employment of the staff until April 2020.

Trust Communications

Expanding the Trust's management policy framework; defining the projects; making applications for grants; and more recently, of recruiting staff has taken priority over the past year.

The unfortunate death of Jennie Hughes compromised the Board's capacity to maintain a flow of newsletters and Facebook posts to members.

Veronica Kirk up-dated the Trust's web-site and in particular ensured that information about the staff posts was made available for potential applicants. At short notice arrangements were also

made for the visit of Mr Kevin Stewart, Minister of Local Govt, Housing and Planning to Cupar on 25th July, ensuring the Minister could meet with available leaders of local organisations.

Concluding Remarks

The Trust has an established identity and is well-regarded across the community.

The project development staff of Fife LEADER, the National Lottery, the Heritage Lottery, Fife Council, and Fife Voluntary Action have provided essential advice shaping the development work and many local organisations have voiced their support. As a result of the funding the projects and the employment of an essential staff team has been made possible.

The Trust has established partnership arrangements with local organisations. Here, special appreciation is due Dr Mike Spearman of CMC Associates. He has guided Cupar's entry into the use of a most powerful digital heritage asset management system.

Working alongside partners, as a result of Trust activity in the 2018, we have defined projects, secure funding, a sound management policy framework, and now, the essential 'hands on' staff.

David Kirk

Chairman, Cupar Development Trust

16th November 2018