

DIRLETON VILLAGE ASSOCIATION

Minute of the Annual General Meeting: 16th November 2023

Present: J. MacLeod (chair); C. Hamer; S. Low; S. Paterson-Brown; Z. Trendell; T. Lonie; B. Thomson; T & C. Drysdale; K. & S. Cornwell; F. Dingwall; V & B. Nimmo; F. Dingwall; A. Orr; C & J. Lindsay. A. Soave; L. Anderson; P. & A. Rintoul; R. Campbell; I. Oliver; S. Oliver; M. McNie; J. Hutchinson

Introduction: JM welcomed everyone.

- 1. Apologies:** H. Wager; F. McClintock; D. Carter
- 2. Matters Arising:** None
- 3. Approval of the Minute of the previous AGM 17th November 2022:** approved on a proposal by SPB, seconded by KC.
- 4. Annual Report and Accounts 2022/23**

JM summarised the Annual Report and draft accounts that were submitted to the membership by Mailchimp on 9th November 2023, which for ease of future reference is detailed below.

Committee Members November 2022 - November 2023

Office Bearers Chairperson: In rotation.

Honorary Secretary: vacant.

Honorary Treasurer: Simon Paterson-Brown.

Minutes Secretary: Carl Hamer.

Membership Secretary: Janice Macleod.

Other Members: Brian Ford, Fred McClintock, Tracy Lonie and Sheila Low Ex Officio: Zena Trendell (Community Councillor).

The State of the Association

Attempts have been made to make the DVA more approachable and increase membership. The number of DVA memberships was 164 in 2022, but this year it has been decided to stop membership subscriptions and instead recognise anyone in the Dirleton Ward area to be able to join. This means it is difficult to assess true membership. The total population was 818 in 2013 but has increased significantly over the last few years.

The Committee

There has been a significant increase in committee members since last year. Brian Ford has stepped down from the Committee and the Committee would like to thank Brian for his contribution to the DVA. The remaining members are standing for re-election.

Communications and Public Involvement

The Association held meetings every two months throughout the year to which all DVA members (and now residents) were invited. Committee meetings were held on other months and on an ad hoc basis as issues arose. The committee members have delegated responsibilities to aid communication.

Simon Paterson-Brown as treasurer, financial matters, Community Council

Carl Harmer Planning, Dirleton Village Website

Fred McClintock DVA Representative North Berwick Coastal Area Partnership

Janice MacLeod email group administrator, membership enquiries, welcome pack, updating Community notice boards.

Tracy Lonie Facebook Administrator

The village website (www.dirletonvillage.org) has been completely rebuilt and has been working efficiently along with the new email system. Thanks to both Mike Howarth and Carl Hamer. The DVA have a new Facebook page. The village noticeboards continue to be used to make information available to off-line residents, non-members and visitors. A new 'welcome pack' was written and is now delivered to all new residents as well as being available on the website.

Planning and Associated Matters

The DVA committee continues to monitor all planning applications within Dirleton and the surrounding areas on behalf of the community to ensure high quality planning and architecture within the conservation area, in accordance with the DVA constitution. Work on the Castlemains Place site for 36 housing units has commenced its final phase and many residents have already moved into the first phase houses. An application for planning permission for two blocks of flats (4 affordable housing units in all) by East Lothian Housing Association was approved but has since been superseded by consent to convert the existing industrial building into a pair of private semi-detached houses. Newmains Farm. Building on this development site has stopped and its future is unknown. Newmains Public Right of Way: Discussions are continuing with ELC in relation to the public right of way around Newmains. We are grateful to Tom Drysdale for his work here. An application for a new house west of the Castle Inn was refused by ELC and a new application is being considered which has addressed some of the reasons for the objections received. There have been numerous applications for extensions to existing properties, some of which are listed, and the DVA has submitted responses to ELC.

Other Activities and Achievements

Representatives from the DVA committee have been attending the North Berwick Coastal Area Partnership (AP) meetings regularly on behalf of the community. DVA committee members have met with various officials of ELC during the year to further the community's priorities which resulted from the Dirleton Discussion Day and subsequent survey in 2017. The War Memorial appeal raised more than was needed for the war memorial repairs. A recent circular to all donors resulted in uniform approval to retain the funds for future projects and the committee is very grateful to all donors for their generosity. A vote to use the funds to restore the churchyard railings cut down in WW2, confirmed that there was not enough support and when combined with the view from the Kirk session, no further action will be taken here. The committee are still awaiting a response from ELC in relation to safety issues concerning the main road through the Green.

The committee submitted a summary view to ELC, taken from information obtained from the Community Day in August 202, regarding Local development Plans. Further work will be required in the New year as ELC develops it's 5yr Local Place Plans. Following feedback from the Community

Day, the DVA committee has submitted an 'Expression of Interest' to the Council concerning the derelict village hall. This does not commit the community to doing anything at this stage, but simply requires the Council to review the situation and respond. A preliminary meeting was held in October, and we await their response. The Dirleton Village Interest Group meets 3 times per year to discuss issues relevant to a wide variety of organisations. The two main issues this year have been how the Market on the Green might be taken forward in the future, including where all its equipment might be stored and whether the DVA should be converted into a SCIO (Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation) which would permit it to own premises. There was unanimous support for this and the DVA is currently developing a SCIO constitution which will be presented at the AGM. The main driver here is to obtain a storage facility within the village which can be used by all the Interest groups.

SPB met with ELC and agreed to share the £1,500 fee for a valuation of the Village Hall.

SPEN are aware of the current outage of the lights around the village green. The replacement heritage lighting is high on ELC's list of expenditure

Accounts

*The draft accounts for Sept 2022-Aug 23 show the account stands at £13,637. Income was £2,726 and Expenditure was £4,548. The detailed accounts were presented by **SPB**. Accounts to be signed by **SPB** and **JM** and forwarded to Michael McFee, the independent examiner.*

5. Election of Office Bearers and Committee

No nominations were received for the role of chairperson. The committee proposed to continue with a rolling chairperson for each meeting as this has proved successful. The schedule of chairperson would be agreed prior to the next meeting.

Although the honorary secretary post remains vacant the secretarial duties will continue to be allocated to **JM** (Membership) and **CH** (Minutes).

SPB will continue as Treasurer.

The remaining committee members (**FM**, **SL**, **TL** and **BF**) were all elected as continuing committee members. **Zena Trendell** was proposed as a new committee member by **JM** and seconded by **CH**.

6. Looking ahead to 2023/24

Fund Raising Events – Possibly a Market on the Green after the Fete & Games although this might be considered to many events in one weekend. Gardens Open is 2 weeks before the F&Gs and has made a generous contribution to the DVA in the past. It was queried whether there is any need for fund raising with the accounts being in such a healthy state.

7. SCIO

SL explained that a SCIO would enable the DVA or another community body to register and interest in or own property such as the village hall or a storage facility. Agreed to use the Gullane Village Association SCIO Constitution as a draft and merge with DVAs. SCIO may need a new name and three trustees. Suggested names

Dirleton Area Association

Dirleton Village

Dirleton Community Association

TD was supportive of the DCA. Final decision would be put to the membership.

AOCB:

- **BT** What is the status of the road safety proposals. Still awaiting feedback from ELC Roads Dept. Might be some time as they have no additional finances.
- Village Interest Group needs storage and wants to be part of the SCIO. **BT** has offered support “behind the scenes”.
- **AO** suggested an Events Group for combined funding applications.
- **IO** queried whether ELC have any initiatives for reinstatement of storm damage to the beaches.
- **VN** confirmed that free access to the Castle requires a Dirleton Utility Bill
- **2024 Meeting Agenda**

Subgroup meetings	DVA Meeting (please note 7pm start)
January 24th	February 15th
March 21st	April 18th
May 16 th	June 20th
July 18th	October 17th
August 15 th	September 19th
	November 21st (AGM)