

Chair's Report 2020-21

Busy year that has seen us move away from the church project, deal with a pandemic and look at how we can help the community recover from the lockdowns.

We announced at last years AGM that we were not taking the Kilmartin Church Project forward, seeing we run an April to March financial year and the AGM has slipped to January we should be reporting this in the present Chair's report.

The church project was hard, clearly the community does not want the building to go to rack and ruin, however we also said that we would not burden future generations with a financial difficulty. The building has some limiting factors, it looks large, but its footprint is small and difficult to divide up to cover the whole of the community's needs and wants. The income the building could generate would be limited, and the running costs quite high. For these reasons the Directors decided that the project was not viable.

Lockdown brought a different set of concerns to us all, the time for the directors was hectic, with opportunities for applying for grants coming at us from every direction. We worked alongside Dunadd Community Council and were awarded grants for volunteers and a hardship fund. The volunteer support was never really needed but we were prepared if it was needed. The hardship fund handed out 46 payments of £60 to Dunadd residents.

Coming out of the first lockdown, we started to look at how to support the communities in this. The first issue was that Argyll & Bute Council were not planning to reopen the public toilets in Kilmartin. We started to explore taking on this responsibility and though we were going to sign a licence to enable this, to then find out that the Scottish Government was giving local authorities extra funding to keep public toilets open, and we were not needed.

We were able to fund a stretch tent and managed to get this up and running after dealing with Brexit and material and distribution shortfalls. The tent was advertised for community use and used for market stalls on four different occasions.

We now have a 10 * 8 metre stretch tent as a community resource.

Gary headed up a wildflower project on Kilmartin Green which soon expanded to Ford, and Slockavullin, and a possible project in Kilmichael.

In April 2021 Development Trust Association Scotland (DTAS) announced some unexpected funding for community enterprise development. We applied for this and were unsuccessful. This is the fourth time we have tried for funding for a development worker, as was suggested in the original community plan. The difficulty we seem to have is that we are a small area with a population of 720 people, going up against associations who serve larger populations. Our membership is 177 we need to use this high percentage to our advantage.

This year sees us needing an influx of directors, during the year we lost Allan McLean and Gary Linstead due to work commitments. I would like to thank them both and the other Directors for the work and commitment to the community over the last difficult year.

Please think about joining us we all have something to bring to the table.

David Bracken
Chair of Directors

January 2022