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**Annual General Meeting**  
**Friday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2019**  
**7.00 Castlebank Horticultural Centre**

**1. Welcome**

Sylvia Russell welcomed everyone to the 2019 AGM and thanked them for coming out on an unpleasant evening.

**2. Apologies**

Apologies were received from: Frank Gunning; Julia Marrs Margaret Seymour; Elizabeth Hunter and Joe Hunter.

**3. Minutes of the previous AGM**

The minutes were read and approval proposed by Jamie Hill and seconded by Roy Russell.

**4. Matters arising from the Minutes**

None

**5. Chairman's Report – Sylvia Russell**

- **Castlebank Horticultural Training Centre Project** – Full funding totalling £191,250 was granted by LEADER and the Renewable Energy Fund. As grants are paid retrospectively, significant cash flow problems were averted by Border Biscuits providing us with an interest free loan of £30,000. The Levenseat Trust gave us a grant of £5964 to cover the cost of furnishings for the centre. The restoration work on the old Sawmill buildings commenced on 5 March 2018 and should have been completed by 27 July 2018. However, the project over-ran considerably and we finally opened on 21 November 2018. George Anderson from Beechgrove Garden performed the opening ceremony. We had a penalty clause built into the contract with the builder and we are currently attempting to gain reimbursement of £5000. However, the contractor is in financial difficulty so this may not be possible.
- **Strengthening Communities Fund grant** – The Scottish Government Fund allowed us to appoint a Development Manager for the Trust. Melissa Reilly commenced work with us on 11 June 2018 and has already proved to be an invaluable asset to us. This is a one-year funding package but this can be extended for a further 3 years. Melissa is doing an excellent job of promoting the Trust and has already brought in several contracts for the Castlebank Centre.
- **Lottery Grant of £99,000 over 3 years** – We were successful in being granted a three-year funding package to employ an Educational Gardener at Castlebank Horticultural Centre. We have now appointed Stuart Rithie who commenced work on 18 February 2019. The reinstatement of our RHS accredited centre status is a priority for Stuart. The work in the Horticultural Centre and the wider park has been carried out by our hard working band of

volunteers under the dedicated supervision of Ernest Romer. We also have excellent support from CCI which has allowed us to continue with the group of special needs pupils from Lanark Grammar School. We have used the Community Payback squad several times to carry out heavy work in the park.

- **SpringFest** – An ambitious 3-day FlowerFest was held in Castlebank Park in May 2018. It was formerly opened by a Chelsea Pensioner and the Lord Lieutenant of Lanarkshire, Lady Haughey. All local schools and nurseries took part. Garden centre from the Clyde Valley participated and local churches got involved with floral exhibitions.
- **WinterFest** – There was a comprehensive programme for this year's Winterfest including the Christmas Market, Late Night / Illuminated Parade and the Festive Taste of Lanark. Two fully-booked Christmas Wreath workshops were held at Castlebank raising £360 minus £72 expenses with a net profit of £283.
- **Christmas Tree Project** - 100 Christmas trees provided to businesses was a great success. The Rotary Club helped change the batteries this year. Many thanks to GP Plantscape who erected the trees and who also store them.
- **Lanark Life Website and Touchscreens** – After the resignation of Andy Alston, who have such good support to the Trust and managed the Lanark Life website and touchscreens via Border Biscuits, it was agreed that our Development Manager, Melissa Reilly, would take over the management of these communication channels.
- **Cameronian Memorial Project** – Cllr Catherine McClymont has been promoting this project and has received funding of approx. £16,000 from various sources to rename the roundabout nearest the Winston Barracks as the Cameronian Roundabout and place a memorial sculpture on the grass verge nearby. A launch event for the sculpture unveiling is taking place at the site, then Lanark Agricultural Centre on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2019.
- **St Kentigern's** – Work to stabilise the building has been carried out by South Lanarkshire Council. A grant of £7455 covered the cost of a feasibility study into possible usage of the site. Douglas Ritchie continues to work hard in liaising with SLC and HES and will explain the plans for landscaping the approach to the building.
- **Bernard's Wynd / The Wallace Close** – A total of £4500 was raised for this project. £2000 from Greggs Foundation, £1500 from Western Recreation Trust and £1000 from Border Biscuits Community Fund. We commissioned a graffiti artist, Ali Smith, from 'Art Pistol' to run two workshops with Lanark Grammar art pupils to design and paint the close, helped by the pupils. This was a great success.
- **Walking Trails** – Three have been developed by Eleanor McLean. We would like to develop more but plans were held up because of the Cemex appeal to extend the quarry into the grounds of Bonnington where we were planning to develop a 'Glaciation Trail'.
- **BID** – Our BID Manager, Gary Winning, and the BID sub committee have worked hard to promote a YES vote in the BID ballot. A comprehensive BID Business Plan was developed and issued to all businesses within the BID boundary.

#### **Other funding**

- Sale of duck food at Lanark Loch – Eleanor McLean (£155)
- John and David Dickman donate £1600 towards the purchase of a defibrillator for Castlebank Centre
- Grow Wild funding of £2000 granted for Wildflower and Tree leaflet and associated activities at Castlebank
- Awards for All funding for a Community Apiary project at Castlebank centre - £6,200

#### **Other awards**

- Shortlisted for Environment and Land Use Award – Scottish Rural Action
- Lanark in Bloom won RHS 'Parks and Green Spaces' award for Castlebank Park
- Volunteer Friendly award from VASLAN

- Green Flag Award for Castlebank Park
- Lanark Closes Project shortlisted as a finalist in the STP Future Town Design Competition
- Finalist for European Network of Rural Development – Rural Inspiration Awards
- Certificate of Merit from RCHS for Ernest Romer for services to gardening and horticulture

### **Plans for the future**

The trustees will continue to progress the above initiatives including Castlebank Horticultural Training Centre, St Kentigern's Church restoration and business regeneration initiatives.

Membership recruitment and community engagement efforts will continue to be a priority. Membership of the Trust is currently 96 and there are 98 Friends of Castlebank Park.

Sylvia thanked Tom Anderson for his financial management of the Trust, all directors of the board and executive team for their support and hard work over the past year. A special thanks was given to John Cunningham for his practical and financial support, and to Jimmy Gilchrist for his support with the Christmas trees project.

### **6. Financial Report & Adoption of Annual Accounts – Tom Anderson**

The Treasurer presented the Unaudited Annual Statements for the year ending 30<sup>th</sup> June 2018. During the year £96,880 (2017 - £27,251) of income has been recorded, of which £92,552 (2017 - £22,218) is restricted grant income towards specific projects. Total expenditure amounted to £88,269 (2017 - £49,657) resulting in a surplus of £8,611 (2017 – deficit of £22,406). This surplus is added to the reserves brought forward, making total reserves of £226,161 (2017 - £217,550) at 30 June 2018.

There were no questions from the floor. Approval of the Financial Statement was proposed by John Russell and seconded by Jamie Hill.

### **7. Sub group reports (3 minutes each)**

- *Executive/BID – Graham McLeish*

Graham reported that the hanging baskets, Christmas trees and High Street banner projects had all been successful in 2018 and need to be looked at again for 2019. The major item of discussion for the Executive Group has been the Discover Lanark BID. The important news to report is that a YES Ballot result was gained on 1 March 2019. The original ballot was scheduled for November 2018, but this was moved to February 2019 due to the largely time consuming work of creating the Business Plan which all of the BID Steering Group worked very hard to finalise. In the final weeks leading up to the Ballot deadline, a small group of 'no' voters made their views very visible, mainly via public social media channels. In the end, 380 ballot papers were issued and 208 were returned (55%) making it one of the highest ever BID ballot return rates. The ballot was won on all counts, voter turnout, rateable value of the yes voters (67.9%) and overall yes (127) vs no (83) votes. There is a lot of work to do over the next 100 days in recruiting a BID Manager, setting up the BID company and appointing the board of directors. 4 members of the existing Steering Group are happy to apply to join the BID board and there will be 8 additional spaces to fill with local business people. There will also be 2 councillor spaces and representatives from South Lanarkshire Council in an advisory capacity. The current BID Steering Group are also looking at implementing some 'quick win' projects to demonstrate the value and benefit of the BID. Graham asked the floor for suggestions as to beneficial projects. Scott McCauley commented that the Chairman's Report showcased a lot of positive work already being done by the Development Trust, and Graham noted that this had been a point of contention with no voters, whose argument was to question the value of the BID if the Development Trust "will do it anyway". Graham mentioned the creation of the 'Lanark Independent Businesses Group', formed of no voters and no sympathisers.

- *Arts & Festivals – Jamie Hill*

Jamie reported that 2018 had seen great progress in establishing 'Lanark Festivals' in the town. The inaugural Flowerfest took place over 3 days in May 2018. 4 garden centres took part, CCI and Lanark in Bloom with competition bed. Royal Wedding theme. 9 x school planter competition. Larger performance marquee. 30 craft marquee. Tea Time, Alan Eliot, Burger van, Duke's Deli. Musicians. Kids entertainment. David Knott talk. 1,700 paying visitors. Sunny weather. Children got in free. Bigger Flowerfest planned for 10<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> May 2019. 11am – 5pm every day. More garden centres taking part. Theme is Women's Football World Cup. 29 crafters. Large food and drink marquee – Duke's and Tea Time. Hog roast. Ice Cream. Performance marquee. Evening entertainment. Sunday garden themed entertainment. Much more entertainment for young people. Accessible minibus around the town. Botanical art exhibition in the Tolbooth. St Nicholas Church doing flower festival. Marketing = flags, posters, buses.

Jamie commented that the 2018 Winterfest was very successful, with the biggest yet programme of 40+ festive events taking place in the town over November and December. The Illuminated Lanimer Parade / Late Night Lanark was also very busy. The programme was delivered to 8,500 addresses in Lanark area. Hope to attract further involvement and build on these successes in 2019.

Jamie mentioned recent developments at the Tolbooth Heritage and Arts centre. A stream of temporary exhibitions has brought in a large number of visitors and income generation through venue hire / commissions. The old Gazette office has been gifted to the Tolbooth Trust, and plans are underway to complete the refurbishment of this space as an office, most likely to be used by the BID Manager.

Jamie recorded his thanks to John Cunningham, without whom the Lanark Festivals programme wouldn't be possible thanks to the very generous contribution from Border Biscuits.

- *St Kentigern's – Douglas Ritchie*

Douglas provided sketches for the group to view and explained that the project to date has been broken into several phases. Pre-phase = feasibility study Glasgow Caledonian University. Board approved recommendations. Phase 1 - Building had to be stabilised – SLC got funding to undertake stabilisation work on gables. Safe, but not 100% complete. Didn't have enough money to top three of the remaining walls. Had to replace the full roof of mausoleum – costing more than expected.

Phase 2 – upgrading the access from the roundabout at retail park and driveway up to church. Sketches available to show potential design. Approved in principle by South Lanarkshire Council. HeS provide artist impression of what the church may have looked like, and on storyboards going up the driveway. Package for implementing requires 3 quotes. SLC prefer package of works to be broken into 3 sections. SLC have intimated they would like to be involved with funding part of the works. Needs to be negotiated with other funders. 1 – triangle. 2 – avenue. 3 – cemetery and around church. Funders still to be appointed and contractor still to be appointed. Marketing side very important as well to encourage more footfall to the historic site.

- *Cameronian Memorial – Sylvia Russell*

In Catherine McClymont's absence, Sylvia Russell provided a brief update on the Cameronian Memorial Project. Around £16,000 has been raised to fund the creation of a Memorial Sculpture dedicated to the Cameronians at the Winston Barracks, beside the newly named Cameronian Roundabout. A contractor has been secured and works will be beginning in the next few weeks. The sculpture will be formed of 4 x soldier silhouettes and a central Cameronian cap badge. The unveiling ceremony is planned for Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> May and invitations have been issued. The unveiling will take place at the sculpture, then refreshments will be served at the Lanark Agricultural Centre. In conjunction with the sculpture unveiling, a Cameronian exhibition will be held in The Tolbooth and Eleanor McLean is working on an information leaflet to highlight the Cameronian's time in Lanark with photos and information.

- *Town Improvements – Frank Gunning*

Frank Gunning was unable to attend the AGM and as such, Sylvia Russell circulated his pre-written report to the floor. Frank's report covered the current status with many local "eyesores" including, the Stone Rotunda, Alston's Yard, Regal / Vogue Building, Royal Oak Hotel, House of Johnstone Building and the former Job Centre Office.

## **8. Development Manager's Report – Melissa Reilly**

Melissa provided a verbal report on areas of her work that had not already been mentioned through the Chairman's report or the sub-group reports.

- New LCDT website launched (400 visitors per month) + Weekly Diary
- Castlebank Horticultural Centre – venue bookings (yoga, meetings, birthday party, botanical art course)
- Friends of Castlebank Newsletter
- Local organisations do community talks here at centre: The Haven, SMHA, Home Energy Scotland...
- CCI – products on sale here at the centre
- Alzheimer Scotland - Dementia Friends training and new Dementia Friendly group starting on 1<sup>st</sup> April
- Course contracts developed – Skills Exchange Scotland and Lanarkshire Carers Network

### *The Lanark Website & touchscreens*

- Taken over management in October 2018
- Implemented site changes easier to use – multi-date events
- Added new sections including: Volunteering Opportunities page, Lanark Jobs Board, new business categories for local crafters and activity providers
- Around 1,000 visits per week

## **9. Educational Gardener's Report – Stuart Ritchie**

Stuart commenced his post on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2018. Stuart reported that lots of contacts were in place when he started, and these are now being developed into more structured horticultural learning opportunities and courses. Our RHS accreditation application has been submitted to allow us to deliver the RHS Principles of Gardening theoretical course, and we will be developing our own 5-6 week practical courses. We are also looking at the delivery of the RCHS Grow and Learn Course with the Lanark Grammar ASN unit –and potentially other schools. We have been working with a group of young people on a Skills Exchange Scotland course, and 3 of them are joining us more regularly on placement. We are introducing a monthly weekend volunteering session, and are also launching a Dementia Friendly Gardening Group on 1<sup>st</sup> April which will then run on the first Monday of the month. Stuart commented that the regular Tuesday and Thursday volunteers are very loyal, and have done a considerable amount of work in recent years in developing the park's gardens and the Horticultural Centre. He would like to seek ways of recognising and celebrating the skills of the volunteers. A Bank of Scotland grant has been applied for to develop the land immediately around the centre to promote a range of horticultural learning and volunteering opportunities, as well as aesthetically improving the area to encourage more visitors and room hires. We are also applying for a Scottish Government 'Community Growing Fund' grant to purchase a third polytunnel, and are in contact with Business Gateway to confirm any licensing requirements to sell organic produce or processed produce.

## **10. Election of Directors**

Under the terms of the Trust Constitution the Trust Board is made up of 11 people. 6 are elected and 5 are co-opted.

Sylvia Russell commented that the Trust were very sad to lose Donald Lammie, who had been with the Trust almost from the beginning. This led to Eleanor McLean (co-opted member) to be moved to an elected member of the board. This left a vacancy for co-opted member, brought on Ian Wilson Leitch.

Two elected members were obliged to stand down – Eleanor McLean and Douglas Ritchie. Both were willing to be re-elected and as no other nominations were received, both were unanimously re-elected.

The 4 remaining Board members were John Cunningham, Frank Gunning, Graham McLeish and Sylvia Russell.

The 5 co-opted members – Jamie Hill, Julia Marris, Ernest Romer, Scott McCauley and Ian Wilson Leitch - were willing to continue, and no other nominations were received.

With Cllr Julia Marris continuing as the SLC's representative on the board, the two other Lanark Councillors, Richard Lockhart and Catherine McClymont will continue as advisors to the board.

Catherine and Richard continue to attend meetings as advisors to the board.

## **11. Any other business**

No further matters were raised under AOCB.

## **12. Conclusion – Sylvia Russell**

Sylvia concluded the AGM by thanking board members for the past year and special thanks to John Cunningham – for his practical and financial support. Also thanks to Jimmy Gilchrist, the huge amount of support he has also given.

Jamie Hill raised a vote of thanks to the chair