

Minutes of the Mavisbank Trust Board Meeting
held at 2 pm on Thursday 17 August 2017 at Swanston

Present

Rhona Brankin	Trustee and Acting Chairman in the chair
Duncan Campbell	Trustee
Charlie Cumming	Trustee
David Harrowes	Trustee
Chris Lewis	Trustee
Keith McIntosh	Trustee
James Simpson	Project Adviser
Jeff Stoddart	Trustee
Ian Young	Trustee

Apologies

Bob Constable	Trustee
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Minutes of the Meeting

Action

Previous Minutes

- 1 The minutes of the Board meeting held on 22 June 2017 were approved with the following alteration to paragraph 3.2 which should read “Companies” House.

Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes

- 2 It was noted that Midlothian Council, although no longer having representation on the board, had still appointed three members as trustees despite the Trust having written to the Chief Executive in April informing the Council of the changes to Trust’s constitution. Chris and Rhona had since followed this up and the Council had now rescinded the appointments.

Resignation of Board Member

- 3 It was noted that Richard Prenter had resigned from the board. The Trust expressed its great appreciation of the contribution he had made during his tenure and wished him well for the future. It was noted Richard had expressed a desire to help the Trust as appropriate. Rhona would meet with Richard.

Rhona

Digital Survey and Documentary Research

- 4 James gave a short presentation on progress with the digital survey of Mavisbank. The drone survey of the grounds had gone well and was now complete although due to high winds it had been late in starting which had meant that there was greater tree cover than had been anticipated.
- 5 The documentary research had likewise made good progress. It was thought that Mavisbank was one of the most completely documented houses within the United Kingdom. The total number of documents available was approximately 1,000. It would be good if these could be transcribed as reading them was not always easy. Possibly Historic Environment Scotland could pay for this. A proposal for this would be sent to Historic Environment Scotland. Many documents, such as the 1732 Sun Fire Insurance Policy had been uncovered.

James to send proposal for transcribing document to Historic Environment Scotland.

Many of the pictures housed within Mavisbank were now in Penicuik House.

- 6 The total cost of the documentary research, digital surveys of the house and grounds and the digital terrain model and reconstruction of the house was £19,500.
- 7 There was discussion as to which would be the most appropriate date for restoration of the landscape. This might be 1760 as opposed to the 19th century picturesque style. The view of Historic Environment Scotland in this respect should be clarified.

Steering Group Meeting of 15 August 2017

- 8 Historic Environment Scotland and the Landmark Trust intended to make a joint application to the Heritage Lottery Fund in November 2018. It had been considered by both organisations that a competent application in 2018 was much preferable to a rushed one on November 2017. The Landmark Trust had hitherto had a 100% record in obtaining funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund. This was a record it would most likely prefer not to break and this indicated some confidence on the part of the Landmark Trust the restoration of the house could be achieved. A Stage 1 Project Grant Expression of Interest had been submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund.
- 9 A meeting would be held between Historic Environment Scotland, the Landmark Trust and the Heritage Lottery Fund on 21 September.

Future Role of the Mavisbank Trust

- 10 In the light of the decision that Historic Environment Scotland and the Landmark Trust would take the HLF grant application for the Mavisbank Project forward on behalf of the Partnership the exact future role of the Mavisbank Trust and how it could support the application had yet to be clarified.
- 11 It was possible that the Mavisbank Trust might become more in the way of a “Friends of Mavisbank” or a supporting type of organisation. Possible roles for the Trust would be discussed at the next board meeting but might include developing community benefit and fund raising.
- 12 While there was a certain amount of disappointment on the part of some members of the board that Historic Environment Scotland had indicated that their internal discussions about the bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund were confidential to it and the Landmark Trust it was agreed that the Mavisbank Trust would write to both organisations setting out ways in which it thought it could assist the project.

Governance

- 13 If the objectives and role of the Trust changed it would need to adapt its governance structure although it’s new Articles already provided considerable flexibility and the time frame for the project was long. New trustee appointments might best have a community involvement background rather than one in the implementation of projects.

Community Engagement

- 14 Doors Open Day would be held in Midlothian on 9 September. Heritage Environment Scotland would arrange two bookable guided tours of Mavisbank.

- 15 A schools programme involving both visits and workshops and featuring the drone survey were under course of preparation.
- 16 A Forestry Commission Woodland Management Grant had been applied for. Any work would be undertaken by the Edinburgh and Lothians Greenspace Trust.
- 17 Historic Environment Scotland intended to undertake an archaeological dig on 9th October.
- 18 A substantial problem with regard to the involvement of the community was that most actively engaged local people were already volunteering for other things and had no spare time.

The Cricket Ground

- 19 David had met with the Penicuik Cricket Club. The club was keen to play at Mavisbank. However it had pointed out that the chances of funding from any public body would be remote and that a pavilion would be essential for matches. It was agreed that if this was to be as part of the Mavisbank project it was very unlikely to be progressed in the near future and would be a long-term objective.

Contacts

- 20 Contact would be made with Midlothian Councillors and MSPs regarding visits to Mavisbank. **Rhona**

Woodlands in and Around Towns Grant

- 21 Now that HES had established an IACS registration for the Mavisbank a grant could be sought from the Forestry Commission Scotland's 'Woodlands in and Around Towns' scheme for a programme of works such as woodland management and the access.

Scottish Natural Heritage

- 22 It was thought that very unlikely that Scottish Natural Heritage would be able to grant aid any work in the policies.

Financial Statement

- 23 A financial statement was tabled. This showed a closing balance of £9,154. The 2016-17 annual accounts were under preparation and it was agreed that a final draft could be circulated for approval by trustees before the next board meeting so as to meet various deadlines. **Chris**

Interpretation Board

- 24 The interpretation board installed by the Trust at Mavisbank in 2014 was damaged and in need of replacement. The previous board had cost £800 and it was agreed that the necessary work should be undertaken to replace it. **Chris**

Website

- 25 The Trust's website needed updating as a considerable amount of information was now out of date. Ideally a volunteer was needed to service it and regularly post project news, etc. but no one had come forward. It was agreed that Sarah **Chris**

Bronsdon should be asked to help with this as she had worked with the Trust previously and understood what was needed. The Board had previously agreed an initial £350 towards this work.

Date of Next Meeting

26 Thursday 31st August 2017

Ian Young 21 August 2017