

## **Minutes of the Mavisbank Trust Board Meeting**

Held at 2.00 pm on Tuesday 19 November 2018 at ELGT Offices, Swanston

### **Present**

Rhona Brankin	Trustee and Chairman in the chair
Duncan Campbell	Trustee
Charlie Cumming	Trustee
David Harrowes	Trustee
Chris Lewis	Trustee
Ellen McCalman	Trustee
Jeff Stoddart	Trustee
Ian Young	Trustee

### **In Attendance**

Pauline Megson	Historic Environment Scotland
James Simpson	Project Adviser
Lucy Wood	Mavisbank Community Engagement Officer

### **Item 1 - Apologies**

Bob Constable	Trustee
Keith McIntosh	Trustee

### **Item 2 - Mavisbank Trust 2017-18 Annual Accounts**

### **Action/Agreed**

- 1 Chris presented the unaudited Financial Statements and Report of the Directors, for the year to the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 which showed a balance sheet deficit of £2,684 (2017: £4,305 deficit). After discussion and with a minor amendment to the text (page 3 para 5) the annual accounts were approved by the Board and for signing by Rhona. Chris was authorised to lodge copies with Companies House and OSCR.

**Chris**

### **Item 3 – Minutes of the Board Meeting of 14<sup>th</sup> August 2018 and Matters Arising**

- 2 The minutes were approved as a true record of the meeting.
- 3 Paragraph 2 - Rhona had met with the Midlothian MP Danielle Rowley at Mavisbank and she was very supportive of the restoration project. It was important that the local MP was aware of the project because a Heritage Lottery Fund grant application would be submitted to its National Board in London. Rhona had also met with the local MSP Colin Beattie who remained similarly supportive.
- 4 Rhona was to meet with the newly-appointed Chief Executive of Midlothian Council on the 27 November 2018. It was noted that Iain Johnson, previously Head of Planning at Midlothian Council, had retired but had been subsequently re-employed by the Council to work on special projects. The Landmark Trust was also intending to meet with Midlothian Council's Chief Executive.
- 5 Paragraph 15 - Pauline said that HES was developing a new Landscape Conservation Management Plan for Mavisbank and that they had commissioned Peter McGowan to carry out the work. All current site information was being reviewed and updated, including ecological and tree

**Rhona to meet with the newly-appointed Chief Executive of Midlothian Council.**

surveys and archaeological data. It was intended that all available digital information would be brought together and that a scoping exercise would be carried out to inform future community engagement. Wider consultation on the draft plan would be held at a later date. In addition, HES had put out a tender for local repairs to the South Drive.

#### **Item 4 – Mavisbank Digital Reconstruction Project**

- 6 James reported on the digital reconstruction and documentary research project and showed illustrations depicting a reconstructed Mavisbank house interior and exterior and the landscape as it was in 1760.
- 7 Aerial and photographic drone surveys of the house and grounds by David McCreadie Associates had established a digital framework of many millions of “points” in a “point cloud”, accurate to within 3 mm. High definition photographs had then been overlain onto this framework to create accurate reconstructions of the house and policies that could then be digitally manipulated to reflect the research undertaken by William Kay and drawing produced by Simpson & Brown.
- 8 William’s historical research had uncovered an enormous number of extremely detailed documents that provided evidence of the construction and cost of the house, as well as revealing the exact appearance of the interior rooms. He had also been able to reproduce the painted internal wall panels (the originals by the house painter James Norrie) used in the digitised illustrations of the house interiors.
- 9 It was agreed that the results of the digital reconstruction should be shown to the Mavisbank Project Group and Carol and Grigor Murray who had supported the project through the Dunard Fund. It was hoped that all the work would be fully completed by the time of the next board meeting. Chris said that the project task/cost breakdown and budget he had circulated showed that much of the work had now been completed and £23,488 of the £26,000 budget disbursed or committed.

**James/Chris to ensure completion of the project by the next board meeting.**

#### **Item 5 – Mavisbank Community Engagement**

- 10 Lucy Wood, the Trust's Community Engagement officer had previously circulated a draft Community Engagement Strategy and Action Plan 2018-19. It was important to identify all relevant community groups and to ensure meaningful collaboration and empowerment. These included the local community, the Edinburgh community and the community of interest which was wider afield.
- 11 Events already in preparation included (a) 25th November - a family event exploring the trees in the grounds and linked to National Tree Week (b) 26th November - a *Mapping Midlothian Memories* event held in association with Historic Environment Scotland's *Urban Past* project. (c) - Future events, such as *Mavisbank and Mining*, in collaboration with the Scottish Mining Museum, and *Victorian and Georgian Christmas traditions* at Mavisbank involving local schools.
- 12 The draft programme was ambitious and it was very much hoped that there would be sufficient resources available to deliver it, especially as many initiatives were reliant on the support of others. The new Mavisbank community Twitter account was operating well and various online initiatives were proposed, including using Facebook and the website.

- 13 Historic Environment Scotland had included Mavisbank in their 'Doors Open Days' programme and some 60 people had attended events on its landscape, archaeology and history. HES were very aware of interest in guided tours and were arranging one for Scottish War Blinded veterans.

#### **Item 6 – Mavisbank Project Steering Group Update**

- 14 Rhona had attended two meeting of the Project Steering Group (Historic Environment Scotland, The Landmark Trust, Midlothian Council and the Mavisbank Trust) since the last Mavisbank Trust board meeting. Work was still been progressed to identify the best way to develop a funding bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund. However, this was being delayed by the uncertainty around the HLF's revised strategy and grants programme which was now due to be launched in January 2019.
- 15 The Historic Environment Scotland and Landmark Trust board meetings (April and September 2019, respectively) were key decision dates and it was anticipated that the Landmark Trust would apply for a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund in the autumn of 2019. Jura (Heritage and Culture Consultants) would advise on possible options for the future.
- 16 In the meantime the project cost estimates were being updated by the Landmark Trust's quantity surveyors, taking into account those previously produced by Morham and Brotchie for the Mavisbank Trust. Revised costs should be available by mid-February 2019.
- 17 It was hoped that the first Jura report commissioned by Historic Environment Scotland could now be shared with the Mavisbank Trust and Rhona and Pauline agreed to enquire whether or not this would be possible.
- 18 For information, Chris circulated a draft table summarising the ownership and access rights of Mavisbank since 1953 that he had prepared for the Steering Group based on deeds and other information that the Trust held. Interestingly, it showed that all the drives had been sold off by the hospital company liquidator (1954-56), the property had never been owned by Archie Stevenson but was by his wife, Willis, and that HES probably did have unfettered access rights to the South Drive.

**Rhona/Pauline**

#### **Item 7 - The Esk Valley Heritage Group**

- 19 David said that the Esk Valley Heritage Group had met on 9 October 2018. The aim of this meeting had been to hear from local landowners and others with an interest in the valleys of the rivers North and South Esk. However, representation had been poor and only one interested person (from the National Trust for Scotland) had attended.
- 20 While a number of useful and interesting ideas had been put forward it was concluded that there was not sufficient interest from a wider representation to continue down this route. However, a connecting theme of an 'Esk Valley Way' footpath along the river North Esk which was being developed by the Esk Valley Trust remained an important and achievable element.
- 21 Chris noted that the Edinburgh and Lothians Greenspace Trust had submitted an HLF Landscape Partnership grant application in 2012 which, although unsuccessful, had gathered together detailed information on many of the themes under discussion by the Heritage Group.

**Chris to pass a copy of the Landscape partnership bid to David.**

## **Item 8 - Financial Update**

- 22 As well as finalising the Trust's 2017-18 annual accounts, Chris said that he had submitted the Trust's Annual Return to Companies House and the second quarter VAT return to HMRC.
- 23 The circulated 2018-19 account summary showed that much of the recent income and expenditure was related to the digital reconstruction project. Once that had been taken into account, the closing balance of £2,776 showed that Trust's funds had diminished considerably and that it needed to take steps to secure additional funding for future running costs. Pauline suggested that Historic Environment Scotland had an organisational support fund which might be able to help.

## **Item 9 - Trust Governance**

- 24 As had been discussed previously, it was noted that the Trust needed to appoint more new trustees soon as changes to the Articles of Association in 2016 meant that most of the current board were due for retirement in December 2019. There were currently ten trustees out of a maximum of twelve and at least four or five of these needed to be replaced. It was agreed that the Trust should undertake a recruitment drive as soon as possible, in particular looking for candidates with skills and experience in community engagement and project implementation. Charlie, Rhona, Chris and Ellen agreed to meet to progress this and report back to the next board.

**Charlie, Rhona, Chris and Ellen to meet to discuss how to proceed regarding new trustees.**

## **Item 10 - Any Other Business**

- 25 Site Visit - James mentioned that he intended to visit Mavisbank with a group of local authority members and other interested persons from Derry and Foyle Council. They were involved with the possible repair of Boom Hall in that area.
- 26 Mavisbank Access - Laura Norris of the Prince's Regeneration Trust, on behalf of the Steering Group, had met with HES and Midlothian Council officers, as well as several local residents to assess possible access options to the Mavisbank site. No particular view had been reached.

## **Dates of Next Meetings**

28th February, 6th June, 5th September and 5th December 2019  
All 2.00pm at ELGT Offices, Swanston.