

**MINUTES OF THE MAVISBANK TRUST BOARD MEETING  
HELD AT 2.00 PM ON MONDAY 17 JUNE 2019 AT SWANSTON**

**Present**

Rhona Brankin	Trustee and Chairman
Duncan Campbell	Trustee
Bob Constable	Trustee
Charlie Cumming	Trustee
Chris Lewis	Trustee
Ellen McCalman	Trustee
Ian Young	Trustee

**In Attendance**

Pauline Megson	Historic Environment Scotland (HES)
James Simpson	Project Adviser
Michael Steven	Prospective Trustee

**Welcome**

Michael Steven attending as a potential trustee and an observer was welcomed to the meeting.

**Item 1: Apologies**

- 1 Apologies were received from David Harrowes, Keith McIntosh and Jeff Stoddart.

**Action/Agreed**

**Item 2: Minutes of the board meeting held on the 28 February 2019**

- 2 The minutes of the Board meeting held on 28 February 2019 were approved as a true record.

**Item 3: Matters arising from the minutes of the board meeting held on the 28 February 2019**

- 3 Paragraph 2 - the updating of HES's landscape conservation management plan was ongoing. There was discussion as to whether this should relate to the landscape as was originally laid out in the early part of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and whether the allées should be restored.
- 4 Pauline said that the new plan was intended to manage the existing landscape over the coming five years. The Mavisbank Trust would be consulted and allowed to contribute to the plan. Peter McGowan, the landscape architect who was preparing the plan, had consulted William Kay who had undertaken the documentary research of Mavisbank for the Trust.
- 5 Paragraph 4 - While HES would not allow the Mavisbank Trust to view a copy of the first Jura report it would be prepared to answer general questions. This was viewed as a disappointing response that was far from a collaborative approach and difficult given that the report would have to be seen first in order to ask appropriate questions. However, as it was only a scoping report for a potential bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) it was now probably outdated.
- 6 Paragraph 5 - Clarification was sought as to the current position regarding the ownership of Mavisbank House and its effect on the proposed CPO. It was noted that the Landmark Trust's (LT) consultants had been in touch with Midlothian Council (MC) to discuss this issue.

**Rhona to approach HES requesting that MT is provided with the opportunity to comment on and contribute to the new plan.**

7 Paragraph 6 - Chris apologised as he had not yet managed to pass a copy of the 2012 Esk Valleys Landscape Partnership HLF bid to David Harrowes. **Chris**

8 Paragraph 7 – Chris suggested that HES's 3D printer at its Engine Shed premises could be used to provide a model of Mavisbank house and policies using the data produced as part of the Trust's digital reconstruction project. **Pauline to enquire about use of HES's 3D printer.**

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

9 James gave a slide presentation on the Mavisbank digital reconstruction project. Whilst the first stage had now been completed it was likely that the visualisations of the house and policies would need updating regularly and there was considerable scope for further project work given the wealth of data that had been produced. Some 1,000 pages of documents had been photocopied from the Clerk archives at Penicuik and this had provided a huge amount of detailed information relating to Mavisbank's construction. William Kay was still unearthing material and had just identified a previously undiscovered drawing by Sir John Clerk of the entrance courtyard at Mavisbank.

10 Although LT had previously restored a property as a contemporary house within an older fabric, it was thought very unlikely that it would do so at Mavisbank. Much of the interest of Mavisbank house lay in its interior and the digital reconstruction project had been able to provide very detailed and accurate information on this as well as visualisations. It was anticipated that the house would be restored as one unit. The current estimated cost of a full reconstruction of the house and grounds was in the region of £20m.

#### **Item 5: Mavisbank Project Steering Group update**

11 Rhona said that LT's board was enthusiastic about the Mavisbank project and had given its approval for a first stage grant application to the NLHF. HES had received informal approval to proceed with the project but needed formal approval at its next board meeting.

12 Ingham Pinnock Associates, an economic development and regeneration consultancy, had been appointed by LT to prepare the Stage 1 bid to the NLHF Fund. The Mavisbank Trust had not had any indication of the content of their brief although Rhona had met with the consultants, LT and HES. Chris said that had been on a site visit with the consultants and was continuing to provide relevant Mavisbank Trust reports and Trust information to them in support the HES/LT NLHF funding bid.

13 It was noted that as the Mavisbank Trust had contributed a considerable number of reports and technical drawings it had produced to the project copyright applied and suitable credits and acknowledgement would be expected.

14 The current intention of the Project Steering Group was to restore the whole of Mavisbank house including both pavilions. LT intended to use the main house for self-catering rental accommodation. Final uses for the pavilions might be subject to further consideration although, currently, it was proposed that the south pavilion would become a centre for craft training skills and the north pavilion a café and interpretation centre. The policies would be partially restored with public access available to both the policies and house (when not let). There would also be additional visitor access and an off-site car park.

- 15 Emphasis would be placed on reuniting and integrating the house with the designed landscape as was originally intended by Sir John Clerk and William Adam. Work was ongoing with Midlothian Council regarding compulsory purchase, access and planning policies.
- 16 The Project Steering Group was applying to have Mavisbank house placed on the World Monuments Fund Watch List 2020. Rhona had recently met with the World Monuments Fund, the LT and HES on-site at Mavisbank. It was hoped that inclusion on the Watch List 2020 would assist with the National Lottery Heritage Fund bid and wider fundraising for the project.
- 17 The next Project Steering Group meeting was the 24 June 2019 and the appropriate HES staff would be identified to provide assistance to the consultants with the NLHF Stage 1 funding bid.

**Item 6: Mavisbank community engagement update**

- 18 The part-time contract of the Mavisbank Community Engagement Officer, Lucy Wood, had been extended until 30th April 2019 but the Trust and ELGT had not been able to secure further funding to enable her to continue in post. This was very unfortunate as Lucy had undertaken a great deal of excellent work which had created significant community interest in Mavisbank. The momentum created by her work would now be lost.
- 19 Although some community engagement work might be continued by volunteers it was still thought that this would be far more effective if done by a paid employee. Creating a new post might be a possibility once the result of the Stage 1 bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund was known. Pauline would assess the potential for this idea at the next Project Steering Group meeting.
- 20 Chris reported that a guided history walk at Mavisbank that had been set up by Lucy as part of the Loanhead 350 celebrations had to be cancelled at the last minute as no volunteer could be found to lead the walk. This had reflected badly on the Trust so he would try to arrange an alternative date, particularly for those people who had booked previously.

**Pauline to assess the possibility of assistance for community engagement.**

**Chris to arrange an alternative guided walk**

**Item 7: Financial update**

- 21 Chris summarised the circulated the Trust's 2018-19 year-end Income & Expenditure Account which included VAT. Income had been relatively low over the year with the exception of a £4K grant from HES. However, the bulk of expenditure related to the Digital Reconstruction project and this had been covered by the remainder of the £18K Dunard Fund donation carried forward from the previous year. The closing balance of the account was £1,166.
- 22 The Income and Expenditure Account for the first quarter of 2019-20 showed a closing balance of £1,170. However, preparation of the Trust's 2018-19 annual account would begin soon and this would cost in the region of £850 in accountancy fees which would leave very little left in the current account. It was therefore urgent that the Trust secured additional funds to cover its general running costs which were in the region of £1,500 p.a.

**All trustees**

### **Item 8: Trustee recruitment**

- 23 Michael Steven was thanked for his application and willingness to be considered as a trustee and he then left the meeting. Following discussion, it was agreed that Michael's qualifications, skills and local knowledge of Mavisbank made him a very suitable candidate to be a trustee. It was further agreed that he should be appointed as a trustee and Chris was authorised to make the necessary arrangements for his appointment.

**Chris -Michael Steven to be appointed as a trustee.**

### **Item 9: Any other relevant business**

#### **Wildlife recording by The Wildlife Information Centre**

- 24 The Wildlife Information Centre had undertaken a recording outing to Mavisbank on 12th and 13th May 2018. A large number of species had been noted and the results of the survey, which had recently received by the Trust, had been circulated before the meeting. It was queried that there was no apparent evidence of badgers noted in the survey. Ian would ask The Wildlife Information Centre why this was as he was a member of its board.

**Ian to enquire with TWIC as to badger activity at Mavisbank.**

#### **Future role of the Mavisbank Trust**

- 25 The Board discussed various options with regard to the Trust's future role in, and relationship to, the current restoration project, both in the immediate future and longer term. Depending on how the project developed it was likely that the Board would need to attract a range of different skill sets through trustee recruitment although this was currently proving difficult to achieve until the future direction of the whole project was confirmed.
- 26 It was noted that through its endeavours over many years the Mavisbank Trust had kept the possibility of the restoration of Mavisbank house and policies alive. Despite having few resources, it had accumulated a great deal of expertise and valuable documentation which was now being made available to support the current project and partners.
- 27 It was important not to lose the expertise that the Mavisbank Trust had built up and a mechanism was needed to ensure that those who wished to do so could maintain an association with the Trust without necessarily being a trustee.

#### **Date of the Next Meeting**

- 28 The next meeting would be held at 2.00pm on 5 September 2019 at Swanston .