

DORES COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TRUST

CHAIR'S REPORT TO THE 2021 AGM

The main activity of the Trust in the year to 31 March 2021 was in distributing funding provided by the Scottish Government via Highlands & Islands Enterprise (HIE) to alleviate financial problems caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. The Trust was approached by HIE to act as a community anchor organisation. Together with Dores and Essich Community Council it prepared an application for funding and was granted £5,500 from the initial Covid-19 fund. This was used partly to fund an upgrade of the community website, but mainly for hardship payments to local families. When this fund closed an application was made to the successor fund to cover potential future hardship payments and £6,000 was received. Thankfully it would appear that few families in the community have continued to be adversely affected financially by the pandemic. Consequently few applications were received and very little of this additional money was distributed. This fund has now closed and the remaining balance will be returned to HIE.

In addition to the Covid-19 payments, £1,725 was paid out of the Trust's own funds in educational bursaries in the year to 31 March 2021.

Since the year end £416 has been provided to subsidise the prescription collection from the Foyers surgery. £1,000 has been allocated, but not yet spent, towards the installation of a line of marker buoys in Dores Bay to delineate a 5mph safe area for swimmers, paddle boarders, kayakers etc, £1,540 has been committed towards this year's educational bursaries and £300 to cover the costs of the 2020 and 2021 Halloween events in the village.

As well as responding to requests for funding the board has been considering three other issues that will affect the Trust's future. They are linked by the wish to generate greater participation in its activities. Firstly, as can be seen from the paragraphs above the Trust is not receiving many applications for funding, possibly because people are not aware of what is available. Secondly, membership is declining. A number of the original members have passed away or moved out of the area and less than ten new members have joined since 2007. Thirdly, the community has a major decision to make within the next couple of years as to whether or not to invest in the Red John development. If it does decide to invest, it is possible that some of the Trust's funds might be required for that investment.

Moving onto more immediate matters, two directors are retiring this year, having completed their four years, Louise Robertson and myself. We therefore need two replacements. These are not onerous positions and anyone interested should contact our Secretary, Fiona Cairns.

Finally I would like to thank my fellow directors for their contributions and support, particularly Fiona and Clare Cuthbertson, who took over the Treasurer's role, and I would like to offer my best wishes for the future to the incoming board.

David Mason
November 2021