**BLACKHILL WINDFARM COMMUNITY FUND**

**AGM for year ending 31st March 2024**

**6.30pm Wednesday 14th August 2024**

**Hope Room, Duns Volunteer Hall**

**MINUTES**

Welcome from Chair of Board of Directors.

The AGM is the highpoint of our year, where we get to listen to stories of what people have done with our modest funds.

The last financial year BWCF supported 16 applications to the amount of approx. £32k. We have modest funds which vary year on year. - £35k to £40k a year approx. We spent less than our income this year which leaves a healthy balance at the moment which we wish to allocate to the right projects. We encourage and welcome applications.

Present – Keith Dickinson, Adam Prokopowicz, Joy Dobie, Stuart Renton, Andrew McEwen, Sharon Cleghorn, Julian Amaral.

Joined by -

Dorothy Dickinson, Candy Philip, Craig Knight, Andrew Lester, David Bisset, Gareth Stott, Melanie Deans, John McEwen.

1. Apologies – Tim Myer
2. Approval of Minutes of AGM for year ending 31st March 2022 (attached) - Approved
3. Approval of Annual Report for year ending 31st March 2024 (attached) – Approved to be signed by Tim.
4. Update from 2023/2024 successful applicants – email invitation sent 24/07/2024
* Andrew Lester – Duns Countdown 2000 – £3,000.00
* The scribe and current holder of the begging bowl for Duns Countdown which looks after the Christmas lights in Duns.
* The lights are switched on by the current Whitsome Maid every year at the beginning of Dec.
* Other areas have the lights put up by the council however in Duns it is all put up by volunteers. This includes £6,500 in working kind including the equipment – 8 men 4 days to put up.
* Last year one cross street motive needed a major repair.
* The funds awarded was spent on repairs, insurance and purchase of new lights.
* They also raise money by donations from the public and appeals to local businesses.
* As it was 5 years since the last call to local businesses for funding the committee will be discussing doing this again in the near future.
* Current reserves £2,500.00
* Candy Philip – Keeping Duns Bloomin Marvelous – £2,988.71
* Keeping Duns Bloomin Marvelous was started in 2015 and has gone from strength to strength.
* In 2019 they purchased Billy Bowser (water tank on back of Polaris vehicle) which is used to keep everything alive and they would not be able to survive without it.
* There are now 23 beds in Duns that are filled with sustainable planting, which does not need watering.
* However, there are many planters throughout the town and a veg patch which need watering on a regular basis and all new beds also need watered in.
* Billy Bowser is a fully electric vehicle which is serviced by Reivers Garage, free of charge.
* In 2022 the batteries started to go faulty and in 2023 a new set of 8 batteries where needed
* Thank you to BWCF for 100% of funding for the new batteries.
* They also raise funds by using use Billy, with a trailer, to pick up Xmas trees which are shredded and used for mulching.
* David J Bisset – Borders Youth Theatre – £3,500.00
* Advisor to BYT and responsible for sourcing funding and projects.
* The charity has been going since 1989 and provides workshops in 6 different locations across the Borders.
* Workshops for all ages have been held in Duns for many years.
* Started holding intergenerational projects a couple of years ago, this involves going into a primary school and working with a senior class doing drama, presentation skills etc.
* Older people from the area then invited to be interviewed by the children on life 50/60 years ago. “I mind of that”
* The children interview, record the information, and then decide which information they would like to make sketches from. They put this together to make a play for everyone involved and the wider community.
* This gives the older people the opportunity to meet and chat about their lives.
* The project lasts about 10 weeks, 1 morning a week.
* BYT does not fund anything outside their core work, therefore this intergenerational project would not happen without the funding awarded by BWCF and other funders.
* Especially grateful to BWCF for funding this project in Westruther even though it was technically outside our catchment area.
* BYT has performed a couple of workshops and plays at DunsPlayFest.
* Craig Knight – Duns Players – £1,636.33
* Thanks to BWCF for the grant to DunsPlayers to purchase theatrical drapes.
* These drapes where first used at DunsPlayFest.
* Our funding started the ball rolling and allowed Duns Players to apply for other funding to get lights and other equipment.
* Now have plans to take the show on the road and they would not have been able to do this without our initial funding.
* Gareth Stott – Peer 2 Peer Mindfulness – £1,500.00
* Free mindfulness courses across the Scottish borders for people who suffer with anxiety and other physical illnesses.
* Originally in Kelso, Hawick and Gala however people were travelling from Duns and surrounding area to attend these courses.
* Funding was awarded to delivery 2 x 9 week courses at Southfield, the 1st has already run and 2nd is scheduled for December.
* 26 people started the first course and 16 finished, this is a typical number of participants.
* Positive feedback from participants who were all offered continuation support with monthly drop ins and online sessions twice a week.
* Melanie Deans – Border Links – £3,000.00
* Our funding was part of a larger grant to raise £300k to provide a hub to offer training and a social setting for people with learning difficulties and their families.
* The funding went towards creating a disability hub to provide support and bring people together under one roof.
* Border Links started in 2006 at Cornhill now run 18 sessions a week, 3 in Duns, supporting individuals and their families.
* The hub is in Berwick, in Ramparts Business Park and Border Links will be moving in next month.
* BWCF will be invited to the opening.
* Dorothy Dickinson – Word Weavers – £618.00
* Word Weavers were originally Writing for Wellbeing which BWCF supported in 2017.
* From this initial group 5 people carried on writing and became Word Weavers.
* They have performed at DunsPlayFest and have created a number of anthologies.
* The funding received from BWCF paid of a local actress to help them with their performance at DunsPlayFest and the printing of 100 copies of the works performed at DPF in 2023 and 100 copies of the works performed in 2024.
* They have made a recording of their work for the Talking Newspaper and have been invited to DPF 2025 and Berwick Literary Festival.
* Open to new members.
* John McEwen – DunsPlayFest – £3,500.00
* The funding received from BWCF was split between the artists and admin for the workshop programme.
* This workshop programme was a crucial part of the Festival which approx. 150 people attended 15 different workshops.
* This year feels like the Festival is now established and this has led to 2 years of funding from Creative Scotland.
* BWCF have supported DPF from the beginning and our small initial sums have helped build credibility of the project which then helped them gain funding elsewhere.
1. Appointment of Directors.
* Keith Dickinson – Gavinton & Fogo CC
* Stuart Renton – Duns CC
* Joy Dobie – Abbey St Bathans, Preston and Bonkyl CC
* Adam Prokopowicz - Lammermuir CC
* Independent Directors - Tim Myer and Andrew McEwen stepped down and were re-appointed.
* Juliana has unfortunately stood down and is not looking to be reappointed.
* Thanks to Juliana for her contribution over the last 3 years, she will be sorely missed.
* Juliana has offered her help going forward to work in any informal way she can.
* We now have 2 spaces available for 2 independent directors. – SC to email all projects representatives present asking if they would be interested in becoming a member. – Emailed 27/08/2024
* Geographical location is not an issue for independent directors.
* Advertise again with Berwickshire News, Borders Community Action, Social Media, Duns News.

1. Appointment of Independent Examiner - Doyle Accounting - Approved
2. A.O.B.