

## **Minutes of Holmehill Community Buyout Open Meeting**

Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> July 2006 in Leighton House

**In attendance:** Caroline Crawford (chair), Phill Tebbutt, Deirdre Wilson, Mr and Mrs Woolley, Alison Brown, Steve Mason, John Seddon, Caroline Smillie, Alan Booth, Liz Law

### **Welcome and Apologies**

Caroline welcomed all present. Apologies were received from Sylvia Jackson, Rosemary Bland, Malcolm Wilson, Dave Topliff, Claire Watt, Gerard Hastings, Andy Gould.

### **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> May were approved.

### **Matters Arising**

Thanks were expressed to Deirdre and Margaret Stewart for holding a tombola at the SCH Open Day that raised £60.

### **Appeal Case**

It was noted that Andy Wightman had moved to Addis Abbaba. Hilton decided not to pursue us for costs. The Executive had pursued us and the Board made them an offer which they accepted on condition that the Board not disclose the amount of the settlement.

### **Reapplication to register**

There was discussion of the possibility of reapplying following the indications from Rhona Brankin that the Executive would consider a reapplication. It was decided that further information should be sought from the Executive about this. Alan agreed to contact the Executive and to present options to the AGM.

### **Finance**

Steve reported that over £5,000 had been raised from pledges and people had been entirely generous. There is £1081 in the bank, of which possibly £500 will be owed to Simpson and Marwick for recent letters. The income and expenditure for the year were around £14k and £13k respectively. The meeting thanked Steve for his tremendous work on finances.

The appointment of Andy Gould as the independent financial assessor was agreed.

### **Meetings with Caledonian Trust**

Steve reported that he, Gerard and Rosemary had initially met with the Caledonian Trust who said they were interested in the land if they had community support and would donate the rest of the site to the community. There were differing views among Board members about meeting with the company. After the initial meeting the Board met with the Development Trust who had a clear position against built development. The Board had not yet been able to meet with the Community Council. Subsequently, six Board members met again with Caledonian and their architect; they had revised the plans after the first meeting to include affordable housing. Steve talked through these plans. He reported that the outcome of the second meeting was that the company would revise their plans again. The aim of

the meetings had been to find out what might be on offer rather than make any decisions.

Caroline clarified the planning status of the land as green space, and of the old house site as zoned for particular office use. Steve clarified the stated position of the Director of Planning, which that the land will not be built on in the short term but its long term status cannot be guaranteed. There was then some debate on the pros and cons of built development of some sort, and the pros and cons of discussion / negotiation with Caledonian. Several people expressed concern over the likely strategy and tactics of developers of this kind who expect to bank land for long periods, are keen to present themselves as having 'consulted the community', and whose developments on the ground may bear little resemblance to the plans.

There was debate on the options for ensuring that the land is well maintained, including the suggestion that built development would protect the land from deterioration. Caroline reported that the Council is about to start consulting on its Core Path Network which she believed might include the way across the hill and which therefore might be maintained by the Council.

Steve clarified that the Board had no obligations to Caledonian in terms of giving their plans a platform in the community.

### **Business Plan**

Caroline reported that both the Land Fund and the Big Lottery had offered funding for the ballot and business plan, and that we had taken that from the Land Fund for a business plan. This is about £6,000 and is on condition that we have a formal agreement to manage / own the land. This has a 6 month time limit to be used, but it is likely that we could extend this. The potential contractors had been informed of a delay.

### **AGM**

Caroline and Claire are preparing the AGM agenda, which must be notified to members by July 24<sup>th</sup>. It was agreed to publicise the AGM in the Allanwater News. There was a discussion about whether the (now outdated) plans should be presented at the AGM, but it was agreed not wait for a later meeting. It was suggested that the AGM should include a statement of intent and the remit for the company for the coming year, and discussion of the Land Reform Act registration options. Nominations will be sought for new Board members given that Jim Bennett has resigned and there are currently 11 members. It was proposed that there be refreshments and a guest speaker. Caroline agreed to ask Andrew Thomson from Dunning community woodland.

**Date of next meeting:** AGM on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> August at 7.30 in Scottish Churches House conference room. NB the normal meeting on the third Wednesday of the month will not be held in August due to the AGM being held two days earlier. In the following month the meeting will be on 20<sup>th</sup> September