



Lasswade District Civic Society

Newsletter

Autumn

2016

Chairman's Report

We had a very positive AGM session at the end of April. Membership is increasing, now well over 400, the 20mph pilot has been confirmed as permanent, and we heard about another excellent local garden, the Lost Garden of Penicuik House from our guest speaker.

We handed out the remaining tree saplings received from Action Earth which now means that over 400 new trees have been planted locally. And our finances are stable with costs being controlled and membership resilient.

We welcomed two new members of our Committee, Cheryl Ashworth who was elected at the AGM, and George Clark who subsequently volunteered and was co-opted onto the Committee at our May meeting. A big welcome to both of them.

The biggest challenge for the future seems to be the Midlothian Local Development Plan which, we learned a few days after the AGM, is having a few small changes made to it in the light of consultation responses and will then be sent back to Scottish Ministers for approval.

We will look at the final version, and the Council's published responses to consultation points, and will monitor progress once the implementation phase arrives. Our aim will be to identify where there will be an impact on the Lasswade area. Look out for further news on this.

Most likely this will be related to transport issues on most of our roads, and we will look out for ways of extending the 20mph limit where justifiable as well as encouraging recognition of the limit by drivers and enforcement of the limit where appropriate.

Other challenges (for us at least) include the development of a more robust website and identifying the best use for our members of social media. We think that developing a library of photos of the Lasswade area, showing it in all its glory, might be a good first move.

Litter continues to be a big problem locally, and our litter-picking and scrutiny will continue to be an important part of our activity. We see a focus on the local heritage of Lasswade buildings, through obtaining oral histories from current or former local residents, as being potentially valuable in enhancing current knowledge sources about our area.

Do let us know your concerns as soon as they arise – we are here to help.

Michael Stoneham

Chairman

Welcome

Winter is upon us and I do hope you have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. This Newsletter has been issued rather later than I might have liked but we wanted to include the latest news as it is unfolding. The Pollution Survey in Lasswade will determine the impact of traffic through the village and the change in status of Mavisbank may stimulate debate about its future.

We have been fortunate in having 2 very interesting Speakers this year. Roger explained the History of the Lost Garden of Penicuik House. It was fascinating to hear of the re-discovery of the Garden and the work being done to restore the Greenhouses and to create a sustainable future for the project, which is open to the public on the first Sunday of each Month.



We were grateful to Sheena Dryden for sharing her experiences of volunteering with the Vine Trust on the islands of Lake Victoria, Tanzania. Sheena, a Cancer Specialist Nurse, spent 2 weeks working with remote communities in Africa offering Health Care and Education, in an effort to promote sustainable Services. Her Talk was illustrated with some wonderful photographs, representing the light and colours of Africa.

The Vine Trust is based in a boat in Leith and operates in both South America and Africa.

There have been a number of successful Community Garden and Litter Clean-ups throughout the year and we would like

to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has taken the time to be involved.

Mavisbank House and Grounds

It has come to our attention that Mavisbank House was de-scheduled from Ancient Monument Status to Listed Status on 10th October 2016. The Ancient Monument Status was conferred on 11th January 1991. The authority to de-schedule was conferred on Historic Environment Scotland under section 1(1) of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979.

The de-scheduling includes Mavisbank (New Saughton Hall) house, doocot, polices and earthworks. We are, at the time printing, unable to ascertain why the designation has been changed and what implications, if any, this will have for the future use of Mavisbank House and Grounds. The view of the Society, having canvassed you our Members on two occasions, is that we would support a 'Light touch approach' in respect of any future development. We believe that Mavisbank represents valuable green space that provides an excellent public amenity.

These views are compatible with our aim to protect the status of the North Esk Valley as an Area of Great Landscape value. If you are interested in the future of Mavisbank, please contact us by e-mail dequinceyrose@aol.com or by telephone 663 6651.

Free Trees!

As some of you are already aware Adam Lansdown our Treasurer is pleased to announce that once again we shall have some free young trees available for planting out this bare root season. Adam made a successful bid to The Conservation Volunteers and we have native UK broad leaf species supplied with protective stakes and spiral guards, available to you at absolutely no cost. Should you wish to have some of trees please contact Adam by e-mail Adam.lansdown@gva.co.uk or call him on 663 1230

Dates for your Diary

Reps Afternoon Tea Party - (to thank our Reps for all of their work throughout the Year) Sunday 5th February 2017 at 2pm (an invitation with the details of the venue will be sent out)

Annual Party – Friday 17th February at St Leonards Church Hall from 7.30pm – Tickets £5

Clean -up - Meeting at Lasswade Churchyard on Sunday 19th February at 2-4pm Equipment will be provided, please bring gloves. There will be coffee and cake!

Do you have any photos or memories of old Lasswade that you would like to share?

As part of our current refresh of the Civic Society's web-site and Facebook pages, we plan to include a section on recent local history, for example information on the former roles of the buildings in the centre of Lasswade, photographs, perhaps stories from former pupils of the primary and secondary schools in Lasswade or employees of former local businesses.

If you have any photographs that you would be willing to be included on our web-site or facebook page, or if you would be willing to provide information about Lasswade's history (either verbally or in writing), then please contact Cheryl Ashworth on cjashworth@fsmail.net

LDCS Membership matters.

The Membership Secretary is very pleased to report that area representative Howard Turner now has halved the size of his membership list in the Westmill Road area. Very many thanks to David Urquhart Smith for stepping up to the role of area representative and helping out in the Westmill Road area.

The Area Reps do a sterling job helping to gather in membership subscriptions and delivering Newsletters and reporting back to the committee on any matters arising concerning members in their area.

If your Area Rep has left a note saying he or she has visited, particularly when membership subscriptions are due in February/March, it would be very much appreciated if members could communicate with their rep to make an arrangement to allow their rep to collect subs at a mutually convenient time. I speak from personal experience as an area rep myself, as well as Membership Secretary, that repeated visiting to find an empty house becomes a bit dispiriting and makes the reps job seem that bit harder.

LDCS Reps Tea Party

In order to reward the valuable work done by the Area Representatives, an afternoon tea was hosted by the Membership Secretary to thank the reps.

Email addresses

The Membership Secretary reiterates her plea for members to advise her of any updating required to email addresses. This allows members to ensure they receive information about LDCS events such as litter picks, community garden clean ups, talks, social events and the AGM. Please email dunlop.jacquie@gmail.com.

Air Pollution Survey in Lasswade Village

Midlothian Council have agreed to carry out an air pollution survey on the main road through Lasswade Village. The Society negotiated with the Public Health Air Quality Department and the Survey is expected to begin in January 2017 and will continue for a period of 12 months. Passive Diffusion Tubes will be used to record the air quality. There are guidelines that will be followed for the placing of tubes. Indeed their survey processes have been reviewed by SEPA and Scottish Government and they have had their protocols audited without adverse comment.

The tubes will be changed monthly and sent to for laboratory analysis. Bias correction methods have been developed to reduce the error in results of the diffusion tube survey. The most robust of these methods is expected to be used, co-location of the tubes with a continuous monitor to calculate the bias. Results are expected within the next 18months.

We would like to thank Ed Angus for raising this issue with the Society.

Planning Matters

There are 2 current Planning Applications that have been brought to our notice by Members, should you wish to make comment on either of these Applications there are contact details below:

1. Erection of 9 dwelling houses, formation of new access road and car parking and associated work.
Midlothian Council Planning Dept. Ref No. 16/00733/DPP - Open for comment until 6th December 6TH December 2016

This is on the site, of the now demolished, 'Old Primary School' adjacent to the Laird and Dog Hotel. Concerns have been raised about the road access and density of housing on this site.

2. Haverall Wood – Application has been made to fell the majority of the trees. The wood lies in the valley between Loanhead and Lasswade. There is approx. 5 acres of woodland.
Concerns have been raised over the loss of amenity for both wildlife and walkers. A path runs through the wood.
Should you wish to comment please contact: Forestry Commission Scotland, Central Scotland Conservancy, Bothwell House, Hamilton Business Park, Caird Park, Hamilton ML3 0QA
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Committee Members

Chairman -	Michael Stoneham
Secretary -	Rosemary Mackay
Treasurer -	Adam Landsdown
Planning Secretary -	George Clark
Membership Secretary -	Jacquie Dunlop
Social Secretary -	Sheena Dryden
Media Secretary -	Cheryl Ashworth
Committee Member -	John Blackwell

Please contact us by e-mail dequinceyrose@aol.com through our Website Lasswadecivicsociety.com or Telephone 663 6651