



Moretonhampstead Development Trust

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Thursday 26th September 2024
Green Hill

1. Welcome, Introductions and Apologies: John Willis, MDT Chair

Present: John Willis (Chair of Trustees), Koy Thomson (Vice Chair of Trustees), Richard Foxwell (Trustee), Peter Turner (Trustee), Richard Kelly (co-opted Treasurer MDT)

MDT staff present: Peter Nottingham (MDT Finance Officer), Carol Harvey (Green Hill Arts Curator), Camilla Rooney (Wellmoor Coordinator), Helen White (MDT Administration Officer, minutes)

Darren Weeks (Panto and Youth Club), Catherine Venn (Local Resident), Nicky Cardew (FOML), Lorely Murphy (FOML), Becky Beesley (Morecare, Community Club), Corine Koppenol (Local Resident), Sean Lyndon (Local Resident), Judith Denman (Swimming Pool and Sports Centre), Charles Montgomery (Local resident), Juliana Montgomery (Local Resident), Stephen Beesley, David Bridger (MPC), Michael Edwards, Jane Willis (Film Club), Lionel Holmes (Fairtrade), Liz Prince (MAPs), A Turner, Penny Simpson (Penny Simpson Ceramics).

Apologies: Pauline Harrison (Trustee), Alastair Wimberley, Andrea Foxwell, Abby Stopard.

2. Minutes of last AGM 17th July 2023 - to approve and follow up matters arising: John Willis

Community Larder and Friendly Fridays:
These will still continue to operate.

Resolution:

The resolution to change the name of the Trust was withdrawn. Instead, the Trust has focused on presenting itself more clearly through its communications and will be continuing with this initiative.

The draft minutes were accepted and agreed.

3. Being a Trustee – what does it involve? Koy Thomson

The process of recruitment of Trustees is ongoing and happening all the time, not just at AGMs. The board duties of trustees are serious with many laws and regulations to take account of when running a charity.

The Trustees share a common vision for the Trust: individuals and families to be healthy, to be contributing to the community and to be protecting the local and global environment. The Trust delivers on its objectives by working with others to bring about change.

There is a volunteer culture and community in Moretonhampstead from which the Trust can draw Trustees. They bring shape and strategy to the vision and with their skills develop the plan and programme in a responsible and transparent manner.

The Trust needs lots of different skill sets and experience on the board. The work is demanding but fantastically rewarding. New trustees learn on the job and are supported by mentoring during an initial period of induction. The trustees share experiences, contribute ideas and get new perspectives from others. It is a way to give back to the community but also gain new skills. People who hold Trustee positions are often viewed favourably by employers when it comes to promotion opportunities in their careers.

Trustees are especially needed in arts, environment and fundraising. There are opportunities to be a lead trustee and work closely with staff to deliver programmes. The Trust also have advisory groups with roles for volunteers if that is a more suitable environment in which to get involved.

Being a Trustee is hugely rewarding, hard work!

4. Election of Trustees / Directors (normally for 3 years)

4.1 Standing for the first time:

Richard Kelly, Treasurer (co-opted during the year)

Koy proposed, Juliana seconded

Richard elected

4.2 Existing Trustees seeking reelection:

Peter Turner

Richard F proposed, Koy seconded

Peter re-elected

4.3 Trustees wishing to continue and eligible for another year:

John Willis

4.4 Existing Trustees willing to continue for two more years:

Richard Foxwell, Koy Thomson, Pauline Harrison

4.5 Trustees who have resigned:

Nina Bailey, Imogen Hallam, Catherine Back, Rebecca Jameson, Jodie King and Cameron Caverhill

5. Annual Report and Accounts January 2023 to December 2023.

Peter Nottingham

Peter referred to a Summary Accounts Handout that he had prepared that was available at the meeting.

He described the past year as “vibrant”. A lot more had been done and achieved. The Development Manager had challenged the Trust on its organisation and working procedures and those challenges have been taken onboard.

We had a lot more money coming in creating an increase of £43k income. . As a not-for-profit organisation, the additional money has gone mainly on the subsequent increasing staff numbers and delivering more projects. Expanding the skills sets of the staff and creating a bigger, focused team has strengthened the Trust’s position and its ability to deliver.

However, the activities of the year resulted in a £20k loss to the Trust compared with £6k the year before. But taking the Development Manager’s costs together with the depreciation of the Green Hill Building out of the figures, the loss is reduced to £2k. This puts the loss into perspective considering the energetic year the Trust has had with all the additional work undertaken.

There is still money left in the bank with the total net funds down by £2k.

The hospital debt with the NHS was also finally resolved satisfactorily and removed from the balance sheet.

6. Our Stories

6.1 The Green Hill Centre: John Willis

The Centre is fully occupied and is a great asset. The income helps the Trust to keep going. It is home to the History Society, the Youth Club, the Green Hill Arts Exhibitions, the Art Shop and MDT offices. It also has five studios for artists and four office spaces for rent.

6.2 Green Hill Arts: Carol Harvey

Green Hill Arts had a good year with many people coming through the doors who benefitted from the art through wellbeing to education for young and old, creating community through engagement. The success has also been to support the artists exhibiting in the gallery and shop.

The Gallery had a vibrant programme of exhibitions through the year:

How the land lies:

Lisa Wisdom using corrugated roofing, copper and wire to depict her Cornish surroundings, Ray Balkwell gathering remnants of boats, wood and fibreglass and Sally Baldwin using waste silks.

Ordinary Worlds:

This exhibition was about the everyday, community, friendship and potentially longing. We had artists Kushuma Holyoak, Clover Robin, Molly Lemon, Jill Davies and Leslie Hook.

Open 2024

The Green Hill Open 2024 was our biggest yet with five selectors looking through 600 pieces of work from 225 artists compared with 165 entries in 2022, whittling the number down to 160 pieces on show in the gallery itself. Thanks goes to Nicolas White, Hillary Burns, Rosie Sanders, Katie McCloud and Bruce Chivers for their hard work and willingness to support us as a gallery. The footfall alone mounted to 1752 visitors.

Spirit of Place:

Rosie Sanders and Dominic Welch in Spirit of Place, who have exhibited all over the world and who both sell mainly through London galleries.

Winter Fair:

The Winter Fair is coming up fast and is usually a very rewarding show with over one hundred artists and crafts people exhibiting and selling their creations to a seasonal audience.

Engagement:

During this year alone we have had 3766 visitors through our doors, many engaging in workshops and on top of this we have increased our numbers by 1000 on social media.

Workshops:

We have had a good year of workshops, engaging young and mature in different forms of art practices from drawing, collage, print, sewing and felting. Green Hill Arts intend to continue making arts and crafts in all formats available to the public. This form of engagement we believe encourages sharing, wellbeing and community. Also we have had great success in our Q&A sessions following each exhibition, these have been an opportunity to get to understand the artists motivations and art practices a little better and have been very popular.

Benefits:

As a destination for visitors we believe not only that individuals benefit from engagement in the arts but that our town, businesses and community benefit economically from increased footfall.

Arts Award:

Recently a successful bid sourced funding for a 12 week National Arts Award delivered through the after school club scheme at our local school in Moretonhampstead. problem solving and determination. The work undertaken will be focussed on the 100th carnival theme which will culminate in a local exhibition and go towards celebrating this important heritage milestone for our town. Our wish is to source more funding for the Arts Award so that we can spread this scheme to outlying villages and eventually to all age groups.

Skill Development Survey:

We are also supporting our community by giving back through a programme of Skills Development by working alongside us at Green Hill Arts. Currently we are running a survey to determine what people are looking for and what would benefit the most. This survey will determine our next funding application as we see this idea as creating lasting real impact and ongoing value to those we reach.

Volunteers:

Green Hill Arts have been running for the best part of 13 years now, improving year on year, building with the steadfast dedication of all our volunteers. The volunteers are such a precious asset to Green Hill Arts and we are immensely proud of our achievements together. They support us in the setting up of an exhibition, painting plinths and walls, hanging works, arranging numbers, checking and checking again that all is right and the taking down, returning artworks to artists or buyers and clearing the way for the next exhibition. Our shop is supported by volunteers on the shop floor and behind the scenes, stock checking, refreshing and arranging from cards to ceramics. Volunteers support us as the welcoming person that visitors see once they step in the door, they navigate sales of individual pieces and engage with the public on Green Hill Arts behalf.

Our Arts Group ,consisting of five volunteers, suggest artists to exhibit and view proposals from the public, they visit prospective artists and select the yearly program. At events the volunteers support Green Hill Arts by making things look effortless at the same time as turning the cogs. Without all our volunteers Green Hill Arts would look very different. We thank them from the bottom of our hearts.

Dreams:

The Green Hill Arts employees, Helen, Billy, Peter and myself Carol have got to know each other better over the last year and have become a team with purpose and with that sense of purpose we also have big dreams. We have dreams of borrowing artworks from National collections, dreams of being 'The destination' for arts and crafts enabling us to support our makers, dreams

of subsidised workshops, a Green Hill Arts friends scheme that brings people together, general art clubs for all and dreams of engaging many more schoolchildren through inspiring exhibitions and workshops and I have no doubt that with help and support we will eventually achieve these dreams.

6.3 Health and Wellbeing, Wellmoor:

Richard Foxwell and Camilla Rooney

Richard:

Wellmoor is an integral part of the Moretonhampstead Development Trust. It is funded mainly by projects and some voluntary money. The team is led by Camilla and comprises four part-time staff. Wellmoor has good relations within the town and also with the surrounding area.

Camilla:

Wellmoor is involved with many different and varied activities. It is busy, vibrant and sometimes a bit overwhelming. There have been lots of new developments and it's great to see how far Wellmoor has come.

Wellmoor is governed by its Steering Committee of Staff, Trustees and Peter Nottingham. It also has a health and wellbeing Advisory Group that helps guide new projects and provides a forum to find out what else is going on in the area.

A key focus this year has been supporting Unpaid Carers – working with the families and surveying their needs. Moreton Health Centre is now the Carers' Champion for North Devon.

Another key area for Wellmoor is mental health especially Mens' mental health. This was discussed in the Advisory Group and led to the "Check Mate" incentive which provides signposting for people to find help. Men's Walks have also been established as a men's supportive, networking activity. And Devon Day Trips has benefited from Torie gaining her minibus license.

Physical health has been supported by the Seated Dance and Strength & Balance sessions. Raised at an Advisory Group meeting, The Swimming Pool and Sport Centre wanted to use funding to get more people exercising. Wellmoor was able to help them to reach their audience and made free swim session tickets available to them.

Cost of Living support has continued to be provided (55 households) as too Friendly Fridays which has become a regular event in the community. It has been a valuable activity to be able to signpost people to other projects.

Wellmoor has activities working with nature and the environment and art. It manages the Community Allotment and ArtRaft. It can see lots of potential developments to work with Green Hill Arts and Environment in the future.

Wellmoor is also looking at the Community Builder role. It needs to find out what opportunities there are within the community and to scope out the role as to what might be possible.

7. Looking Ahead; Koy

The Trust has many activities on the go. The Community Shed is about to launch a pilot programme to ascertain the appetite for this offering to Moretonhampstead. It is also working on

Climate and the Environment to shape, with others, what can be done to support and serve in this area.

7.1 Community Shed; Peter Turner

Peter updated the meeting on the Community Shed. He explained that they had been working on the project since Covid as somewhere to help bring people together and combat loneliness. They have been looking for a site for two years and identified the BT substation as a suitable building. However, BT pulled out of the deal. Since then they have found the property in the Yard that was previously occupied by the Med Theatre. They have organised a five year lease which they hope to have signed shortly.

Koy added that Peter has got lots of plans, tools and equipment together already and he has already put in an incredible amount of work on the project.

7.2 Environmental: John Willis

The Trust is working in support of others in the community over Environmental issues. The Moreton Environmental Group (MEG) has been established to provide a forum to find out what is being done in the town. It has been raised as to whether we can become a "Transition" town.

At the moment, the key activities will be around advice on home energy savings. For instance, the Energy Club where members can have access to cheaper, locally produced, renewable electricity.

There is also the problem of black silage waste which has been identified by the Plastics Group. This needs further research as it is a controversial issue with the local farmers.

Water Meadows

The Bakers Estate own the larger part of the field. The trust has put in a gate and are trying to get planning permission for a sign.

The proposed Community Path was to link the new estate with the Wray Valley Trail through the orchard. The advice the Trust has received is to do nothing with the Water Meadow at present to allow nature to re-establish itself. It is designated as agricultural land so it could be grazed which is a controversial issue with some local people.

Richard Kelly said the Hingston View Management Company will take responsibility for the Hingston View side of the Water Meadow once Bakers Estate has given the field to them. All residents of the estate will be part owners of it and they will be able to make a decision about the path. Legal access would have to be considered for the public. He suggested that they should engage an expert to evaluate the field and share this with the Trust.

8. Any Other Business

8.1 Library:

The library is occupying the Peter Gunning room in the Parish Hall after flooding in the original Bowring building. Bas Payne has been working on the plan to have it transferred to the Bowring Library Building Trust. The DCC wants this to happen by the end of the year and Bas is confident that the trust will be able to meet their criteria.

Meanwhile the DDC is mending the drainage from the roof.

8.2 Change in the Chair of Moretonhampstead Development Trust

Koy marked the change in the chair from John Willis to Pauline Harrison. John has held the position for 20 years since 2004. He has done so much for the Trust with his time and tenacious character – sticking at things and seeing them through. He has been a tremendous resource for the community. The Trust extended a big thank you and presented John with a plate made by local ceramic artists Penny Simpson and Michael Edwards to mark the very notable occasion.

Koy closed the meeting with thanks to the participants for attending.

Signed

Date