

Bridgend Inspiring Growth (BIG)



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Sunday 6th June 2016, Bridgend Farmhouse

DRAFT MINUTES

Present: Will Golding, John Knox, Brendan Hill, Ruth Nay, Roman Pawlickir , Arleen Sinclair, Mark Hayward, Russell Clegg, Anne-Marie Donaldson, Yasmin Ali, Hazel Flett, Tania Stuart, Mike Henderson, John Cooney, Ursula Busch, Jessie Harrington, Claire Stevens, Joy Stockley, Dorothy Jack, Simon Ashpool, Dougie Todd, Ant Cornish

Apologies: Anna Danby, Hilary Morrison, Richard Whitson, Niel Hansen, Andrew Naismith, Jamie Ross, Paul Allinson, Chris Macefield, Darla Eno, Nicole Read, Ruby Alba, Wendy Robertson

In attendance: Graham Harper, Jessica Harper

1. Introductions and welcome

Will Golding, Chair of BIG, welcomed everyone and invited everyone to introduce themselves individually. A record was taken of attendees.

2. Minutes of AGM held 22nd March 2015

These were circulated. John Knox proposed their adoption, Ursula Busch seconded. By a show of hands the minutes were approved as a correct record.

3. Reports

a. Project Manager Report

Graham Harper reported on his first two months in post. Site acquisition from City of Edinburgh Council is nearly completed. Most of the consultants have been formally appointed, on fixed fee basis. Quantity surveyor is preparing the bill of quantity, which the contractors will use as the basis for their tenders. Big Lottery requires us to get a minimum of three contractors to tender. Aim is for tenders to be submitted by the end of July. Contractor's working/store site has been

identified. Some outstanding design items will be decided by the Board at their June meeting.

Will Golding proposed a vote of thanks to Graham for the speed of progress. Brendan Hill drew attention to Graham's technical background and expertise and John Knox commented that Graham was crucial to keeping the building work to budget.

b. Chair's Report

Will Golding circulated and talked to the Annual Report. Highlighted the extent of development and progress since 5th June 2010, BIG's first ever meeting. Since then, ownership of the farmhouse has been acquired, over £1 million secured from Big Lottery Scotland and the Board of Trustees has been strengthened. The bothy build project is underway, a series of community projects has taken place (some resulting in qualifications for participants) and the Sunday drop-in has run every Sunday for the past 18 months. The ceilidh earlier this year sold out and was a tremendous success. He thanked Yasmin Ali for the part she played in preparing the Big Lottery application. He also thanked John Nowak for the three short documentary films made for YouTube.

Will highlighted current and future plans, including the need to identify further funds, to meet the shortfall. Plans include setting up an arms-length community shares organisation. Will thanked members for their support and enthusiasm and emphasised that there were plenty of ways for everyone to get actively involved in the project. Brief questions and discussion followed. Brendan Hill proposed, and members agreed, a vote of thanks to Will for his chairing of BIG again for the past year.

c. Financial report

John Knox, BIG Treasurer, circulated the Annual Accounts 2015/16 which had been independently verified by Ann Thanisch. He gave a verbal report on the accounts. Income received in the twelve months to March 2016 totalled £72,262 and expenditure was £58,106, meaning an end year surplus of £14,156. Cash in the bank at 31st March was £44,462 and the stated value of the farmhouse was £200,000. John pointed out that the Big Lottery Scotland grant is phased over 5 years, £54,745 having been received so far. He thanked members for individual fundraising efforts, including Anna Darby for her run in the Lake District which raised £614. Brief questions and discussion followed.

John proposed a vote of thanks to Ann Thanisch, for examining and verifying the accounts. He asked that the accounts be formally adopted as a true record. Ursula Busch proposed their adoption, Hazel Flett seconded this, and by a show of hands the Annual Accounts 2015/16 were formally adopted.

d. Sunday Drop-in Report

Mike Henderson gave a verbal report on the success of the Sunday drop-ins. He highlighted the personal journey he had been on since Darla Eno first introduced him to the drop-in, over a year ago, and persuaded him to get involved. He talked about the personal benefits of feeling you are contributing and making a difference, the enjoyment of working alongside like-minded people with similar values and a clear purpose, how you can achieve so much more as a group than by yourself, and how it can help lower defences and open up. Mike explained he has been able to offer and use his gardening skills to help get projects underway, including the herb garden, pond and raised beds.

Will thanked Mike for his report and his involvement and encouraged all members to come along to the drop-in, or indeed to come along and do some gardening during the week.

e. Bothy Build Update

Arleen Sinclair of SEDA (Scottish Ecological Design Association) gave a verbal report on plans for the sustainable build bothy project. SEDA secured funding to design and build this and are working in partnership with BIG to develop and build the bothy on the farmhouse site (where the former piggery/cow stalls were). The formal planning application will be submitted imminently. The bothy will be constructed using special straw bales, then plastered, with a turf covered roof and hemp insulation in the roof space. There will be a paid volunteer coordinator and 4 places reserved for unemployed people as volunteer builders. Courses, eg green roof making, will be fee-charging to additional participants. There is a free event on 9th July for 16 people, to tour sustainable build places in Edinburgh and Fife.

This item of the agenda concluded with a tour of the proposed bothy site.

f. SkillsPath Training Kitchen and Café

Anne-Marie Donaldson of the City of Edinburgh Council local coordination team gave a verbal report. The team supports and provides activities for adults with learning disabilities, and as part of this Skillspath develops skills for employment. The partnership with BIG will see Skillspath running BIG's kitchen and café once the building is open, building on their success in running three other cafes across Edinburgh, and providing training, employment and a service to the community. Food options will be healthy and cooked from scratch. Trainees are on placement for 12 months and have the opportunity to get a qualification, but there is equal value in the sense of place and social connection that their participation creates.

Anne-Marie reported that it was exciting to be involved in the design and planning of the kitchen and café from the onset, as in other areas of Edinburgh Skillspath was working in kitchens/cafes that already existed.

4. Election of Board of Trustees

Will introduced the item and explained that all existing Board members (Trustees) had to stand down at the AGM in order that a new Board can be elected. All existing Board members were willing to be elected again, aside from Jamie Ross and Ursula Busch who were retiring from the Board. Will recorded his thanks for their active contribution.

Claire Stevens took the AGM through the process of electing new Trustees to the Board. She circulated a paper summarising the BIG constitution's rules on Board elections and the names and brief credentials of the 8 people who had formally indicated they wished to stand for election. Those present noted that a maximum of 12 Trustees may be on the Board and that at least 50% of Trustees must be BIG members, ie local residents.

The following people were then individually proposed and seconded for Board membership and approved by a show of hands:

- Will Golding – BIG's Chair. Community education and youth worker.
- Anna Danby – BIG's Secretary. Environmental and science educator for local charity.
- John Knox – BIG's Treasurer. Local resident. Freelance journalist.
- Hazel Flett – existing BIG Trustee. Community worker.
- Brendan Hill – existing BIG Trustee. Local resident. Educator, journalist , broadcaster.
- Andrew Naismith – regular BIG volunteer/active member. Local resident. Works for Network Rail.
- Niel Hansen – new BIG volunteer/member. Local resident.
- Claire Stevens – new/active BIG member. Local resident. Runs a national charity.

Two further members were then formally proposed and seconded and approved by a show of hands. These were:

- Ruth Nay - local resident and community/environmental development worker
- Tania Stuart – local resident and social worker.

It was noted that the election of 10 Board members leaves the possibility for a further 2 appointments to the Board during the coming year, if appropriate.

Any Other Business

There was no other business, so Will thanked everyone for attending and concluded the AGM.