**Meeting with DTAS Notes , Monday 20th November 2023**

**1.Present:** Gordon, Sarah, Joan, Di and Lynn Molleson, DTAS (by Zoom.)

**Apologies:** Kathleen, George, June, Don, Magnus, Frances.

(Could not get laptop to work so Zoom meeting by mobile phone!)

Lynn introduced herself and explained who DTAS were. The Development Trust Association of Scotland has 350 members, mostly rural groups. Most do not have full time staff, some have part-time staff, some just volunteer led. There are 3 other groups in Shetland (North Yell DC, Northmavine CDC, Nesting Scrapstore). DTAS has a website and allows for an exchange information between community groups. They also have access to legal and financial advice for members. Provisional membership is £50, Full is £90 per annum.

We outlined the activities that we do (Shop, Skip, Map, Ootnaboot Club, Printing, Tourism and relocation advice, websites, etc.) and what our future plans were. **We do not have a Community Development Plan so at the moment can only be provisional members.**

Lynn said “Social Prescription” was popular just now. Described as “Bite n Blether” it was where communities set up warm hubs where people could go for food, tea and a chat. (A bit like the weekly NYDC “winter warmer” lunches.) She said NHS might provide funding for this as they would often “prescribe” this activity to patients to combat loneliness and perhaps reduce attendance at GP surgery.

DTAS also have a Community Learning Exchange scheme, where groups can apply for funding to visit an area that has a project similar to one they are planning. Lynne suggested a virtual link with Shapinsay in Orkney who have started a community housing scheme. Once we are full members, we could apply for funding to visit Shapinsay, although budget limit was £700.

Lynn also pointed us to the Mull and Iona Community Trust recycling centre called “Castaways” where they receive money from Argyle and Bute Council to recycle rubbish.

If we are trying to increase our membership (not been done for a while) we need to ensure people are agreeing to the GDPR data protection rules for storing email and home addresses.

Lynne said we need to have a Fair Work Policy in place to support any staff or volunteers and that employees have “Representation” on decisions being made. i.e. that they are kept informed about our activities.

We should remind the community of our value – what would happen if we were not here?

We need to put a Community Development Plan together, outlining our ideas for the next three years.

We should try to think of ways of increasing our income, to make us more sustainable or capable.

Lynn mentioned the “Acorns to Trees” fund that DATS could give to groups for legal or admin advice (not available for staff or running costs).

If we were looking at saving energy on our building, we should look at CARES or Local Energy Scotland grants. The Energy Saving Trust had grants too, for example solar panels – although the building needed to have a good EPC (Energy Performance Certificate) rating first. (Ours is G, Very Poor. It needs roof and wall insulation and maybe an Air Source Heat Pump.)

DTAS can also offer 90 minutes of free HR support and cheap insurance quotes.

They hold online Board meetings once a month, the next one being on Thursday, 5-6pm. This allows groups from all over Scotland to meet or raise issues.

**Meeting closed 5.15pm.**