

Community Archaeology Westray (CAW)

Minutes of Meeting 11/6/19 2:00 p.m. Learning Centre

Present:

Peter Needham (PN) (Chair)
Ian Ricketts (IR) (Treasurer)
Elizabeth Drever (ED) (Secretary)
Stephen Hagan (SH)
Hazel Moore (HM)
William Turnbull (WT)
Graeme Wilson (GW)

In Attendance

Ann Marwick (AM), Heritage & Tourism Consultant

Apologies

No Apologies

PN welcomed everyone.

1. Minutes of Meeting of 20/3/19

The minutes of the meeting of 30/4/19 were circulated, approved by SH, seconded by WT and signed by the Chairman.

2. Historic Environment Scotland (HES) 30/4/19 item 2

It was noted that HES had visited Westray in May but no contact had been made with CAW. GW said representatives from HES may be visiting Westray again in June or July.

3. Westray Golf Club (WGC) 30/4/19 item 3

WT had brought the matter of the lease amendment to a WGC management meeting and advised that WGC are happy with the proposal that part of the Westray Development Trust (WDT) land currently leased to WGC be leased to CAW. WGC would wish to see a rabbit & golf ball fence between the new path and the golf course similar in height to that at the school playing field & WGC would require to use the new path with a gate provided to allow access to the golf course land.

4. Planning Application & Site Access 30/4/19 item 3

(b/f) **PN** would contact Mark Fresson regarding the planning process for the LoN Centre.

(b/f) **PN** would contact OIC's Access Officer to discuss access requirements for the proposed LoN Centre.

It was agreed that a site visit should be arranged with Mark Fresson when he is next in Westray.
PN/ED

GW left the meeting at this point.

5. Collaboration 30/4/19 item 5

PN had invited Ann Marwick, Heritage & Tourism consultant, to come to Westray for a meeting to discuss the project and she would be joining the meeting.

6. Treasurer's Report 30/4/19 item 6

Nothing to report

7. Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) 30/4/19 item 7

It was noted that CAW is now a SCIO (Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

8. Visit Scotland 30/4/19 item 8

Visit Scotland representatives had been to Westray on 9th May and had met with Stephen Hagan and also with WGC including WT.

9. Action Plan

Members had received a copy of the action plan drawn up by PN & IR. It was agreed that PN should inform the public of CAW's SCIO status through Auk Talk. Further publicity should wait until agreement for progress was reached with HES. **PN**

AM & HM joined the meeting. GW rejoined the meeting

Peter welcomed Ann Marwick to the meeting.

10. Yarrows Research Station/Field Studies Centre

Information had been circulated and HM explained a bit about what Yarrows Heritage Trust's focus is – more about carrying out archaeological excavations rather than for visitors at this stage

11. CAW

The following points were made a wide ranging discussion with very useful input from AM:-

- a) AM had done a feasibility report for WDT in 2017.
- b) Westray had so much to offer visitors & there was much interest for hands-on archaeological experiences. Links of Nolmland (LoN) was of particular interest as it was a relatively recent dig.
- c) CAW still require formal go-ahead from HES to enable progress.
- d) Visitors were looking for a quality visitor experience.
- e) CAW ticks so many boxes as does Westray as a whole.
- f) Joined-up thinking was needed.
- g) The plan was for HES to concentrate on the archaeological side of the project with CAW dealing with the infrastructure & visitor centre.

GW left the meeting at this point

- h) The Chair of HES Board had visited Westray and was very enthusiastic about the project.
- i) Highlands & Islands Enterprise were very supportive.
- j) A site visit would be arranged with Mark Fresson (architect) soon to establish where the building should go and what surrounding land would be required.
- k) A path from the visitor centre through the archaeological area would show points of interest within the site and also off-site landmarks as viewed from the path.
- l) Areas of ground could be used to grow traditional crops.
- m) Links between Orcadian archaeological sites would be valuable.

- n) There is very little archaeological archive information for visitors – this presents a great opportunity.
- o) Cruise ship visits to Orkney including Westray are growing steadily.
- p) Valuable information could be gleaned from B&B proprietors about visitors opinions & wishes.
- q) Packaged tours are very popular.
- r) Agreed that vehicular access to LoN should be restricted.
- s) The path from the road to LoN gives onto pleasant views.
- t) Earsets/headphones giving visitors information on their way along the path.
- u) Shortest scheduled flight in the world from Westray to Papay was an added attraction – and Papay has much to offer as well including archaeology and boat trips to the Holm.
- v) AM said our plans were very good and would fit in an Orkney-wide plan – quality visitor experiences were so important and Westray was an extremely attractive island for many reasons.
- w) Visitors were fascinated by the continuity story – with archaeology, old buildings, coastal erosion etc.
- x) LoN needs to be attractive to local people as well as visitors.
- y) Engage & build links with Destination Orkney (previously Orkney Tourism Group) which had been set up to promote Orkney. Ask Destination Orkney what we should be doing – invite them to Westray.
- z) Cruise ship visit organisers from Mainland had visited Westray – they were keen to have information on what Westray could offer including visitor packages.
- aa) Independent visitors would probably come for longer stays.
- bb) Westray needs to take ownership of visitors.
- cc) LoN is part of the Orcadian Archaeology story and is unique.
- dd) The discovery of the Westray Wife at LoN was a major find.
- ee) School access to the site was very important.
- ff) CAW should approach schools, Visit Scotland, Destination Orkney, Ness of Brodgar, of Papay Development Trust.
- gg) Link our website to Destination Orkney's? If possible meet with their representative(s) in Westray.
- hh) A letter should be sent to the Chief Executive of HES giving an update on progress.
- ii) Gather support to show interested parties.
- jj) Having the LoN archaeologists living on Westray and involved in the project was important and a valuable asset.
- kk) A meeting should be arranged with the Tourist Association and the Chair of Westray Heritage Trust to discuss how we can all work together for the benefit of Westray's tourism sector.

12. Date of next meeting

To be arranged

The meeting ended at 4:40 p.m.