

Largs & District Historical Society

Registered Charity No. SC001454

Date of Meeting: **30th May 2023**

Venue: **Largs Museum**

Minutes taken by: Richard Topping

Attendees:

James Rankin (Chair)	Christine Thomas (Treasurer)	Linda Grieve	George Newlands
Jonathan McLaughlin	Richard Topping		

Apologies received: **Anne Cowgill** (Secretary), **Fiona Hamilton**, and **John Riddell**.

Topic	Decision / Action
Previous minutes Minutes of 18 th April were approved. Proposed by: Linda Seconded by: Jonathan.	---
Matters arising from Previous Minutes. None	---
Treasurer's Update & Fund Raising Current bank balance is £4,270 Recent Fundraising car boot sale event raised £240 The Jean Donaldson bequest is still in the hands of the family's lawyers but will be monitored by Christine. A coffee morning to be planned, probably for end-August when Anne returns. Note that the hall hire is approx. £60. The VisitScotland annual fee of £170 to be paid. PayPal account to be set up to facilitate future sales of books, postcards, DVDs etc. The attendees were reminded by Christine that the Card Reader must be left Powered ON at all times. It was also confirmed that the heating system should remain OFF in the meantime, but that the Dehumidifier should be operated at George's discretion.	All to identify friends & family members who can assist. Christine Christine Richard will inform volunteers via WhatsApp.

<p>SCIO application</p> <p>This was submitted just over one month ago and is on target to meet OSCR’s typical 3-month approval process. We have been allocated a contact within OSCR to assist when required.</p>	<p>No immediate action. Include in future meeting until completed.</p>
<p>Book collections</p> <p>George outlined the provenance of the Society’s book collection(s) which he has been cataloguing and sorting into groups according to their local relevance and potential resale value.</p> <p>It quickly became clear that some of the books which we no longer want to keep are not legally ours – they were loaned by the now-defunct Largs Town Council (LTC) which was superseded by North Ayrshire Council (NAC).</p> <p>Although we have in our possession a letter dated 2014 from LTC stating that they have no interest in claiming ownership, it was agreed that Jim should send a letter to NAC to confirm that this situation remains unchanged before disposing of any of the subject book collection.</p> <p>It was agreed that Richard should get advice from his NAC contacts to find the most efficient way of progressing this.</p> <p>Some of the low-value books that we DO own could be included in a future Book Sale, possibly held within the Museum.</p> <p>George then gave us the benefit of his professional experience as a book dealer and retailer to describe that various re-selling options that are available to us, should we decide to raise funds by selling off surplus books.</p> <p>It quickly became clear that the normal selling routes available to us would result in a low return for a sale (less than 50% of the market value). This will need further investigation.</p>	<p>George to outline our plans in the next Newsletter</p> <p>Richard to informally contact NAC and report findings to committee asap</p> <p>George to propose a solution that will yield the best sales return for the Museum.</p>
<p>Security & Safety (1)</p> <p>Jim explained that the concern raised recently by a Safety expert that our fire alarms might not be heard has now been quashed thanks to the new security system, which is triggered by sound and/or vision.</p>	
<p>Security & Safety (2)</p> <p>Richard mentioned that the new security system which was installed in mid-April has been working well.</p> <p>We can now consider getting a weekly rota to monitor the system via Smart Phone. Committee Volunteers reqd.</p> <p>The subject of personnel access to the Office & Loft was discussed and we agreed that it needs to be clear to Society members that, for good safety & security reasons,</p>	<p>Anyone willing to monitor the system should contact Richard, who will provide training.</p>

<p>membership does NOT automatically entitle anyone to access the archives.</p> <p>Access should be restricted to committee members, approved researchers, and those involved in maintaining facilities.</p> <p>It was agreed that a small keysafe containing the office key should be obtained.</p>	<p>Jim to investigate</p>
<p>Visit Scotland report</p> <p>Christine read the content of the report, and a discussion followed.</p> <p>The assessment was very good (70% overall), with Jonathan being singled out as being an excellent host for the VisitScotland auditor, who arrived unannounced.</p> <p>Items that we need to improve on are listed in the report, but the absence of a website and indication of disabled access were high on the list.</p>	
<p>Open Doors Days</p> <p>After some discussion based on our experiences from 2022, it was agreed that there was no benefit to the Museum in actively taking part in this event. The Museum will be open with free admission as usual, anyway.</p>	
<p>AOCB</p> <p>Linda described valuable services offered by the Scottish Oral History Group.</p> <p>The training that they offer could be very useful for our own oral history projects.</p> <p>Richard has prepared a draft version of our new website for committee members to critique prior to sending to Bryan Brown for comments/suggestions.</p> <p>The membership now stands at 50, and the number of volunteers is 30.</p> <p>It was agreed that Membership of the Society should be a pre-requisite for becoming a volunteer.</p> <p>When SCIO status is confirmed, all new membership applications will have to be approved by the Trustees as per our new Constitution.</p>	<p>Linda to distribute a link to the Group's website / Facebook page.</p> <p>Richard to send Bryan Brown a link to our new (draft) website</p> <p>Richard to ensure that all volunteers are members of the Society</p>
<p>Next Meeting</p> <p>18th July at 10:30am</p>	