

Draft note of Tynninghame Village Community meeting with Georgina Weston, representative from Galbraith, acting on behalf of Lord Haddington's Estate, at 7pm on 11<sup>th</sup> October 2024.

Ian Staples, chair of the Tynninghame Village Hall and Community Committee (TVHCC), opened the meeting, welcoming Georgina and the villagers (approx. 20) to the meeting. Ian reminded attendees that village residents were invited to provide their questions or concerns for discussion in advance of the meeting and that the discussion would focus on the matters they had raised relating to the Estate's management of those parts of the village still under its ownership. This was a repeat of the event held last year on this subject, offering another opportunity for residents to ask questions.

Georgina had asked that three of the raised questions be grouped together for her response, specifically regarding Rick's workshop, the fallow field and the vacant properties on Long Row. People are concerned that the properties on Long Row had been empty for a considerable time and are deteriorating - a resident had pointed out that there is a shortage of low-cost rental properties in the area and asked if the properties might be brought up to the standard for renting out, or if the Estate is planning to sell the properties? Residents had asked if the Estate is preparing to sell Rick's yard or is there some other use planned for it? What did the Estate plan to do with the fallow field?

Georgina reported that there were currently no plans to sell additional village properties and that a team of professional advisors is assisting the Trustees with their deliberations. Georgina had hoped that she would have been in a position by this time to better inform villagers on the decisions and likely direction taken by the Estate's Trustees, but she wasn't currently able to do so. However, she informed that deliberations on the in-depth research and discussions between Estate management and the Board of Trustees were ongoing. The key considerations for the Trustees are the sustainability of the Estate and future financial investment. In response to a question from the floor regarding sustainability, Georgina responded that this was both financial and environmental, and what the Trustees wish to invest in the future. Georgina stated that once the Trustees had considered the options and concrete decisions had been made, she would inform the TVHCC, hopefully before the end of the year.

A resident pointed out that the Estate had a legal obligation to maintain trust assets and it seemed that the Trustees/beneficiaries were taking a long time to make decisions on these matters, particularly regarding the properties in question on Long Row. Villagers were very concerned about the deterioration of these properties, and it was thought that the Trustees should be equally concerned. Georgina was asked to report back to the Trustees that the village residents were very concerned that due diligence was not apparent and that the Trustees/ beneficiaries of the Trust should also be concerned about this – it wasn't only the visual impact of the deterioration of these properties in a conservation village, but also the potential impact of their deterioration on adjoining properties.

Georgina was asked what are the Estate's views on the future of the Cafe over the next 5 – 10 years? Georgina responded that the Estate had no view or plans for this property and if David wished to continue running the café, the Estate was happy for him to do so.

Some residents expressed concern that the footfall from cafe customers had led to a deterioration of the village centre. The changes made at the café, specifically the increased seating, both indoors and out, had, it was thought, increased the number of visitors to the village and consequently an increase in the number of vehicles being parked on Main Street. At times this had created congestion, preventing residents from being able to park their cars or enter/exit their properties. Residents' concern had been further heightened by the recent incident resulting in significant damage to the bus shelter by a reversing vehicle delivering to the cafe. It was noted also that visitors continued to park on the turning circle at the front of the cafe, preventing its use.

It was acknowledged that the increased parking had become a significant problem and is detracting from the look/feel of the conservation village. Residents were concerned about this, the increased traffic, noise, smell, litter, erosion of green areas, risk to historical landmarks (pump, tree) and trackways.

This topic generated much discussion. It was noted that many who park on Main Street are not visiting the café but are going out and about in the wider area. This may be a consequence of the parking charges now imposed at Tynninghame Links and other popular places to visit around Dunbar - there is no charge for parking in Tynninghame. It was thought too that the increased advertising of local walkways may have increased footfall and exacerbated the problem. It was acknowledged that these issues have created difficulties for residents and tensions in the community. Georgina stated that the issues around parking were not for the Estate to resolve, and villagers should perhaps approach East Lothian Council. Ian suggested that perhaps a small group of residents could be established to specifically look at the issue of parking and make suggestions on possible solutions. It was agreed that TVHCC would facilitate this, but it should be noted that this was not a TVHCC problem to solve, noting also that any proposals would require the support of residents, East Lothian Council and the Estate.

Georgina gave an update on the progress on reinstating the bus shelter. She confirmed that all technical discussions had been completed and that the insurers have now engaged a stone mason to commence the initial work on the gable wall of the Old Post Office. The contractor would source the required red sandstone for the shelter. Lime mortar was required for the building work and for this reason the work would be best undertaken in summer.

*After the meeting, Carol asked Georgina to ensure when reinstating the shelter, that consideration is given to including a facility to hang decorations/lights, etc. As the Shelter has in the past been the focal point of seasonal activities, this would avoid possible damage to the structure.*

Georgina was asked what were the Estate's plans going forward regarding the future maintenance of the green areas of the village? In addition to grass cutting, will these plans include tree, hedge and track maintenance? Will the Estate continue to cut the grass on the football and cricket pitches?

The management of the Estate owned and shared communal green areas had been discussed at the last meeting and Georgina reported that the Estate's position on this hadn't changed since then. She stated that the situation remains property dependent, with the responsibility for grass cutting resting with the property owner. Georgina confirmed that Rick or another designated person would continue to cut the grass where there was shared ownership and on the cricket and the football pitches. Georgina reassured that the grass cutting on the pitches would continue for as long as the Estate owned these fields and that Lord Haddington saw them as a community asset.

Several issues arose regarding the broader management of the Estate. It had been reported that the road at the entrance to Tynninghame mains, extending to Tynninghame House, had significantly deteriorated, with many large potholes posing a potential hazard to vehicles. Georgina was unaware of this situation and agreed to bring it to the Estate's attention. Rhys raised a question about the trees on Estate land in the village. He understood that the Forester employed by the Estate conducts an annual assessment of all trees, identifying those that may require remedial management. Rhys asked Georgina if the Village Hall Committee could review the assessments for all those trees on Estate land that could impact village residents. Georgina indicated that she would be happy to provide this information. She assured residents that the Estate remains committed to managing or replacing dead, damaged, or felled trees on its land in the village.

The above issues were budget dependent as far as timescale was concerned. Georgina encouraged residents to contact her with any concerns, no matter how small - problems were not always apparent to her when she made her Estate visits.

Georgina was asked how the Estate plans to preserve and maintain the village's conservation attributes. Georgina stated that the Estate would continue to be responsible for its properties, but this was a matter largely for East Lothian Council (ELC) to enforce. There followed discussion on the individual owner's responsibilities regarding their own property, ie colours, extensions, types of windows, etc. Property owners should apply for approval to ELC before making changes to ensure compliance with regulations.

Ian asked Georgina if the Estate would have any objection to TVHCC placing a new bench on the football pitch and a replacement bench on the cricket pitch. Would she prefer them to be fixed or movable? – there would be no objection and preferably these should be movable.

Ian reported to the meeting that a sub-group of the TVHCC is exploring the feasibility of a community heating system, possibly using latent heat from the River Tyne. This is very

much at the early stages of discussions. He asked Georgina if the Estate would be open to discussion about facilitating the installation of the necessary infrastructure. Georgina thought that the Estate would be open to this - she reported that this was being looked at elsewhere in the Estate. There was a positive response from the meeting to this.

Ian gave thanks to Georgina on behalf of village residents for agreeing to attend to respond to their questions and concerns.