

CELCA AGM
10th November 2020
Chairpersons Annual Report

Welcome to the CELCA AGM - and a very special welcome to any of you who are new to the area and also to anyone for whom this is your first CELCA meeting.

My name is Alison Landale and I have chaired this committee since 2015 – I did say it was only for 3 years but here I am still; always ready to stand aside when someone else wants to have a turn! It is both an honour and mostly a pleasure to do so but I will be very happy to pass on the chair to someone else – whenever – and there will certainly be a point at which I shall do so.

Content: I intend in this report comment on 3 things.

First what CELCA is and how it works

Second on some of the applications and projects of note - some of which were new in the past year; some on going. We will all have a different sense of what is most valuable.

Third and finally will be a brief personal comment (orchard, reservoir, walk, hall, broadband, helpers, ethos of CELCA)

So what is CELCA? Most of you already know this so please be patient for the benefit of any who have forgotten or are new! We have been constituted as a charity since December 2012 although I believe we received funding as far back as 2004 when the Community Council managed the moneys.

Funding comes from 2 local windfarms, Crystal Rig (CELCA 1) and Aitkengall (CELCA 2). We disburse these funds in response to applications to the committee. We keep the accounts separately and try to use CELCA 2 for larger projects – sometimes called ‘Heritage Projects’. The treasurer, Corinne Mycock, Ellemford, will speak to these funds in her report. Incidentally, Corinne, is our unpaid treasurer, Kim Drysdale, is our paid financial administrator. The treasurer and secretary according to our constitution must be local and may not be paid. However, the work load became increasingly onerous and it was decided to create 2 paid and supervised posts from outwith the community to take on that work; hence we have Kim and our secretary Beth Landon – both very able and much appreciated.

Back to how CELCA functions. Everyone, over the age of 16, in the community of Cranshaws, Ellemford and Longformacus is a member of CELCA and has voting rights. The Management Committee or Trustees number 18 maximum.

Each of our Community Council members (10 for a full group) automatically becomes a CELCA trustee, that means, is on the management committee. Additionally, there are 8 others on the committee from amongst the community; people who have either volunteered or been asked; due process is followed for this process; a person is proposed and seconded. We do appreciate people volunteering – as a small community it's helpful if we can divide up tasks widely. We have 4 meetings a year to deal with funding applications normally alternating between village halls. Anyone can attend, comment and ask questions. I try to keep people brief – not to allow too much repetition whilst at the same time trying to make sure people are and feel heard. Your opinions matter!

We have a constitution. According to this, the moneys must be used for the benefit of the residents of this community; that can include events in Duns like the Duns Show which everyone from here can attend and enjoy. Often funding is proportional to how much the application will benefit local community members.

I shall now comment on some new and some longer running projects; it's always good to have different people applying with new ideas. Sadly because of lock down many projects have been unable to take place or have had very few events. However, you will now see first what is going to be a regular feature.

We have 2 Heritage Projects which are hugely pleasing.

Cranshaws Walk is almost completed; a 4 kilometre walk fenced and marked along one side of the Whitadder, over the river and up along part of Harehead Farm, courtesy of Professor Penny. The fencing is mostly completed and stiles, steps, bridges and plantings are either done or partially done.

Dave Lochhead and Neil Anderson have mostly masterminded and brought this to pass. Part of what they hope to do in future is to have a disabled access path as far as possible along the river.

Dave will speak about the Cranshaws Walk in the general meeting after this as we look at the funding applications.

Longformacus Village Hall is the second Heritage Project - almost at the starting point for their exciting and creative alterations. These alterations have passed all the planning and building controls and now await a start date with the builder. There is a SKIO registered with OSCR awaiting finalising; this will happen once the bank has transferred the halls financial assets from the old

account to the new one. This is in process with the bank; life with Covid-19 seems to take longer for due process to materialise!

In the meantime several activities are taking place in Longformacus Hall.

We are now on to my second points – CELCA 1 applications; some new and some older.

The Community Larder is new this year; it runs weekly from there providing food from Fareshare which prevents wastage whilst allowing all residents to collect free fresh and tinned food stuffs as well as packeted foods and various other goods. These items might have been improperly labelled or have almost reached their 'sell by' dates. Some packs are sent round a few households who cannot access the hall. Very recently there is an undercover holding space in front of the hall with tins and other products to which folk can help themselves. Such a good idea.

The Winter Fuel Project is a new and worthwhile asset to the community.

With rising poverty levels, job losses and income reductions, it seemed wise, and according to our constitution, to provide fuel for those who wished to apply – up to a value of £60 as a first round. Pauline Stewart (Hodge) and her team organised this; all 30 possible allocations were taken up.

Those applying are known to a few on the management committee and always sign for their fuel.

Pauline will also talk to this project during the general meeting and may be asked questions.

Reuseable Sanitary Pads were funded for Pauline, again, to make from old fabric (rags) and distribute locally; popular it seems and necessary for many in Scotland which is hard to believe; we live in a very unequal world.

Something outwith Longformacus; Duns Golf Club had part funding for a new mower which particularly improved the greens. By doing this the Golf Club has enhanced it's attraction to golfers. In return for funding the club will offer free trial times on Sundays next spring, they hope, for any residents from this area; trial days especially aimed at young folk and potential golfers!

A Ceilidh Club which will be held in the village halls to both teach and just enjoy Scottish Country Dancing; great for mental and physical agility!

Duns Golf Club were part funded for a green cutting mower

The Windmill Café took over from Lily's Café just over a year ago and was going well with craft days mixed with just a happy coffee time with friends. This will restart next Saturday organised by Heather Bewick and helpers – all Covid safe as well as children friendly. There are new small tables in Longformacus Hall which allow for correct social distancing.

An accapella singing class was started and ran successfully until 'lock down' but will restart when we are allowed to sing together again! May that be soon; and funding is in place for A Ceilidh Club at which Scottish dancing will be taught and just enjoyed on a regular basis. Good for fitness, co-ordination and basic brain exercise!

Seniors outings are valued – happening in Spring and usually just before Christmas. A bus takes any residents to some place, often a secret until arrival; lunch is provided and often coffee en route. These are fun and lively and interesting outings. Annwick Castle with lunch in the tree house; a garden centre; lunch in the Hub in Edinburgh – very grand but slow slow service! The driver had to race everyone back.

Whitadder Water Sports is very new since last meeting - funding to reinstate sailing on the Whitadder; the project was submitted to Borders Region and won by a group who are forming a trust. It will be wonderful if everything comes together for the group but and local residents can again have sailing classes as well as other classes at the reservoir. This will be discussed during the General meeting.

When sailing courses happened in the past there youngsters had to be able to swim to join in so lessons at the pool were very helpful.

CELCA funds Swimming is an ongoing longstanding marvellous activity – Childrens lessons free, family, general and senior membership part funded; all organised by Sharon Baker who will talk about this during her application in the general meeting. We are grateful to Sharon!

And Yoga another longstanding activity in the hall and now restarted there; warm, cosy and safe for those who appreciate that!
What my / our hopes for the future are

Finally almost, it is an amazing privilege, though much work, to chair this committee. We have funded a vast and varied number of projects over the years. Hedge planting, riding classes, school trips, mindfulness classes, Village

hall improvements, festive season tree lighting in each village, bowling, childrens messy church sessions, high school P.E. equipment, seniors outings, stick making, kilt making, BAVS vehicles, Duns and Ellemford Shows, Childrens Christmas shows and playgroups; swimming pool inflatable, musical instruments for the high school and materials for, a wheel chair + rescue boat able to take people with disabilities out on the water. These are but a few.

...and very finally, at the first AGM I chaired in 2015, I think, I said I had a dream that one day we would have a community orchard. Well I need a new dream now, as The Cranshaws Walkway included a Community Orchard... and hopefull we will even be able to have fruit tree care and pruning classes on site in the near future.

Thank you all for your patience and God bless each of you and our community