



Watif Board Meeting Minutes

Date: 11 November 2025

Time: 19:30

Location: Tarbrax Village Hall

1. Welcome and Apologies

- Chair welcomed attendees and thanked everyone for coming.

2. In Attendance Trustees

- Mima Cairns, Margaret Fields, Chris Froom, Geraldine Hamilton, Marnie Jones, Alistair Marshall, Lewis Rennie, Rosie Rennie, Tommy Rennie, Patricia Tucker.
- Apologies: Lesley Andrew

Members of the Community

There were 17 members of the community who signed in. Estimated around 30 present.

3. Appointment of Officers

Patricia Tucker appointed as Chair

Marnie Jones appointed as Vice Chair

Patricia explained that with so much work needed at present it will be helpful to have two Vice Chair Trustees.

Rosie Rennie appointed as Assistant Vice Chair.

Lesley Andrew appointed as Assistant Vice Chair following her co-option

4. Introduction of Trustees

The Trustees introduced themselves to members of the Community present.

5 Co-option of Trustee

Lesley Andrew has agreed to nomination as a co-opted Trustee and if elected to act as Assistant Vice Chair. Lesley's Bio read out and accepted. Her appointment as a co-opted Trustee was confirmed. NB Lesley cannot act as Treasurer due to HMRC employment restrictions. It was suggested that for a Charity Board this may not be the case. It was confirmed that Lesley has confirmed that in her current post she is not allowed to take on the role of Treasurer.

6. Staffing

- Adverts for two part time Administrative Assistants have been placed. Over 50 applications received so far, shortlisting in progress.
- The next advertisement posted will be for an Operational Manager (Job Description pending, it will be different from the previous Chief Officer JD)
- Treasurer role still vacant; job description to be developed.

It was explained that currently there were only two staff in post, James Lindsay and a part time cleaner. Admin Staff have been identified as a priority, currently Trustees are fulfilling



this role on a voluntary basis. Adverts have been placed locally in the three Villages, and online on Facebook, Indeed and GoodMoves. The posts must be widely advertised in case we try to obtain grant funding towards the cost.

Selection of candidates was discussed: Issues of fairness, equity and best practice raised by a member of the community and discussed by Trustees. Trustees carrying out the recruitment reassured everyone that they will check on best practice guidelines and ensure they are followed.

7 Activity to date

a Admin: Mima explained that she has been carrying out essential Admin, monitoring the contact@watif.scot box and prioritizing payments.

b Banking & Payments: Payments delayed due to access issues and awaiting delivery of Bank Cards and associated PINS. These are expected within 5-7 days. Apologies have been sent to suppliers.

c Website and Communications: We have experienced problems with IT and Finance: accessing emails, laptops, FaceBook and the Website.

Website hosting had expired – now resolved. Email inbox (contact@watif.scot) still problematic. FaceBook Community page still down. Investigation ongoing.

Possible reasons were discussed with helpful suggestions from community members present.

Cost of IT support discussed.

d Patricia gave feedback on contact with Lottery funders and gained clarity on when current funding is due to end – June 2026. Application to continue/renew must commence around January.

e Patricia gave feedback on her visit to Loanhead Farm. James showed her all around the site using the all terrain mobility scooter. (It is not always obvious how inaccessible many areas of Loanhead are to those with limited mobility). Items discussed were James's views on the way forward on current projects, his views on projects discussed and agreed upon when Patricia was a Trustee a couple of years ago, and how his job could be made easier. These were all reported back to the Board for further discussion.

f Governance and Meetings: It was explained that Trustees have been very busy and although we had planned to meet monthly, due to the workload, we have agreed to meet every two weeks and the Board will open all meetings to the public going forward. Members will be free to ask questions or comment should they wish to do so. If there are HR items to be discussed related to individual staff members or Trustees, they will be taken at the end of the meeting and public will be asked to leave for this topic.

g Confidentiality Agreement

The previous Confidentiality Agreement had been revised and circulated to the Board prior to the meeting. The restrictive clauses have been removed from the previous version to align with member led principles. **The new version was approved by the Board.**

8 Tea Room

We are aware of Health & Safety concerns that have been raised so these need to be addressed before we can open the Tea Room. The intention is to open Saturdays and Sundays 10am – 2pm with volunteers initially. Trustees will also provide refreshments for those volunteering their time and services at Loanhead during the week.



Future Consideration: Use of the Cowbyre space for additional activities or Café space when required.

Café review & Community Feedback – (collected from 15-20 people who'd stopped attending): Reasons included poor hygiene, opening times, food options, customer service. Long term goal is to ensure café meets community needs and becomes a hub for social connection.

9 Health & Safety / Risk Assessment

Alistair will review the Health & Safety Risk Assessments and carry out a further walk around assessment at Loanhead Farm.

The Barn Floor is currently unsafe and must be 'sorted' before the public can use it.

Before opening to the public, all existing risk assessments must be reviewed and updated. Comments noted regarding H&S issues at Loanhead, priority to resolve these.

10 Income Generation & Loanhead as an Education Centre

a Centre for Education and Learning

Tabatha had introduced those members who attended a meeting at Loanhead on July 17th to the plans for Loanhead to become a 'Centre for Education & Learning' in the future. Plans for this have been on the website for some weeks. Currently the Trustees intend to continue with this plan as it is intended to be a means of income generation and the availability of numerous grants which were once available to WATIF has long since disappeared.

However, we need more information about the plan which we will access once the website is up and running properly again.

b Plans currently in place which will be continued

Woodwork and metalwork Courses

Scout Jamboree Summer 2026

Twin Town partnership – Catherine McClymont is contact for this

Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme: (Equipment will be stored at Loanhead for Watif to use as they wish)

Biggar Little Festival: (Cancelled this year). Last year's event attracted 300+ people over two days, during which the café generated significant income. Aim is to revive it next year with Kirsten's support.

c Financial Overview

No financial statement was presented. There was little change from that presented at The EGM

Payments are pending due to banking delays, some lottery funding income has been received.

Lesley's expertise will help present future financial information in a more easily understandable format.

It is vital that Loanhead becomes independently financially sustainable. Currently it is not.

11 Future Development Plans

Solar panels with battery storage planned, awaiting completion of three-phase electricity connection

Barn completion and cowbyre building remain priorities

Old Dairy building requires urgent roof replacement and treatment of woodworm



Possibility of small caravan site registered as Certified Location discussed as alternative to costly glamping pods in current plans.

Newly installed Toilet Block and accessibility issues.

‘Veterans’ Garden’ proposal to create a peaceful sanctuary space supporting mental health and wider community engagement.

12. Community Engagement Project Group - Model Proposed

Patricia presented the idea of having small Project Groups involving members of the community to look at urgent infrastructure issues at Loanhead and activity throughout the WATIF area in general - not just Loanhead.- Thus ensuring that future decisions are not made by Trustees alone but involve interested members of the community as well.

May be sub-groups within larger projects focused on specific topics or locations.

Ideally Trustees would be involved in each Group

Trustees are agreed in principle, details to be developed.

Considerable discussion followed this proposal with many concerns raised that there will still be a top down approach. A member suggested there is much anger in the community towards WATIF and that we need to communicate that it isn't as it was before. The question was raised ; What is WATIF? Ensure we get that message out there

Many community members indicated a willingness to assist. A member thanked the Board for their hard work - this was much appreciated by the Board.

13 Decisions Made

- Officer appointments confirmed as above.
- Proceed with recruitment process for admin staff under transparent guidelines.
- Agreement to prioritize Admin hire before Operational Manager recruitment
- Board Meeting frequency changed to fortnightly until workload becomes sustainable
- Confidentiality Statement updated and Approved
- Decision to open Trustee Meetings to the community approved
- Formation of community project group and subgroups approved in principle
- Cowbyre building and Barn development agreed to be high priority
- Old dairy building identified as high risk; agreed that it needs urgent assessment
- Continuation with existing plans for Loanhead to become Centre for Learning & Development in order to become sustainable approved.

14 Actions Agreed

OSCR to be informed of Lesley Andrew's co-option	Patricia
Continue dialogue with National Lottery Funders	Patricia
Continue recruitment process for Admin roles	Patricia & Trustees
Risk Assessments	Alistair
Operational Manager Job Description to be drafted	Patricia & Lesley
Process invoices once Bank Cards & PINS arrive	Marnie & Mima



Monitor contact@watif inbox & action	Mima
Website & Communications (FaceBook)	Marnie
Help provide lunches for Volunteers at Loanhead	Mima & Margaret
Main Trustee contact for Loanhead	Rosie
Monitor issues with IT	All trustees

Next Meeting ***Tuesday 25th November***

7:30pm at Tarbrax Village Hall

Meeting Closed. 21.00