Gatehouse Development Initiative

Wednesday 5 August 2026 7.30pm The River Room

Trustees Meeting

1. **Present:** Francois van der Zee (Chair), Peter Taylor, Ken Smyth.
In attendance: Julia Weston, John McMuldroch.
Apologies: Tarena Dickie, David Steel, Ian Carson, Sara-Leigh Cain

   Mark Laird has stepped down as a trustee since the June meeting. He was thanked by the chair for his contribution as a trustee.

2. **Minutes of previous meeting:** Peter noted that his intention is to step down by the end of September, not August as recorded. Minutes approved Peter/Francois.

3. **Matters arising:** None.

4. **Financial report:** Peter provided a short report on the current finances.
A discussion considered options for selecting a new treasurer. It is hoped to employ a bookkeeper to handle routine financial recording. This will relieve some of the burden on a new treasurer. An advert will be prepared for advertising beyond Gatehouse.
It is felt that more advice re the vat position for charities is required. John agreed to check for specialists who could advise with particular reference to charities.

5. **Current Projects:**
Gatehouse Greenway: Ongoing
Drystone Route: The lead partner (Mallorca) has advised that due to staff shortages they will need to put submission of the route to the Council of Europe back until next year's round to allow more time for the preparation of documents.
Gatehouse Squirrels Group: The number of grey squirrel records reported in May-July for the area around Gatehouse has shown a marked peak in the past, with another in September-November. The early peak has disappeared, with a decrease of nearly 90% since 2023. Active control and pine marten predation are the two most likely causes of this. With almost no control this year and little in 2024, it is pleasing to see no resurgence in the number of records. Hopefully there will be a repeat of this pattern in the autumn. The GSG had stalls at both the Creetown and Gatehouse Galas recently, which attracted plenty of attention and spread the word on red squirrel conservation. Peter Garson is giving a talk in the Mill series at 7.30pm on 26 August [Post meeting rescheduled to 21 October].
Newsletter: Ongoing.
Town Hall Bridge: Discussions ongoing. Fleet Valley Volunteers have been requested to clear access to the bridge to allow inspection.
Fleet Valley Volunteers: In recent weeks the volunteers have cleared the path to Trusty's hill; they have tidied an unsightly triangle of ground on the approach to Gatehouse near Cardoness castle and tidied the area around the kiosk; they have worked at Castle Haven and have readied the Town Hall garden for gala week. The annual cutting of the grass along the boundary wall on the approach to Gatehouse has been completed.
Community Website: All well.
Wheels of Fleet: All running smoothly.
Woodside Housing Project: A full report was provided by the Project Manager.

6. **Any Other Business:**
   None.

7. **Dates of future meetings:** Full meeting Wednesday 7th October. Woodside progress meeting Wednesday 2nd September.