

Largo Communities Together

LCT is Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation - Charity No. SC048447

Dear Members

Largo Communities Together – AGM Chair report – 9 Nov 2020

Firstly, a big thank you for taking the time to engage and read this report. A very special thank you to those who have become members and volunteers of many kinds. Welcome, all of you.

We incorporated as a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation or SCIO at the end of June 2018, existing before that as a steering group of like-minded locals since September of 2017. We are still very young and learning much in a constantly changing environment.

In a year which will be forever in our living memory, defined by the challenges and tragedies of Covid. The people of the Largo Area have stepped forward to build community groups to help our own people and re-build community assets. As you will read in the sections below, Covid did not stop our community, it girded it to give and do more.

Unbeknown to us in LCT, we had been creating conditions for the ability of our community to have the structure, treasury and governance to be able to organise, meet virtually, and seek and receive government funding because we were already a community run charity. We also need to say a big thank you to Zoom!

Bringing people together to build community groups of interest and sustainable assets for people to utilise remains our mission. Below are developing stories of what has been happening, despite Covid!

1. Largo Estate

In the light of the expansion of special interest groups in LCT, "Largo Estate Group" has formed this year as a distinct group chaired by Martin Schmidt and Vice Chair, Stan Green. They have eight members drawn from local and subject knowledge experts. They have kept an open dialogue progressing with the owners and have been actively exploring our options as a community for access and possible purchase with our partner organisation, The Development Trust Association Scotland (DTAS). The group are utilising your views from the large community consultation which took place over 2019 in eight locations. If you wish to view this, here is the link.

<https://www.largocommunitiestogether.org.uk/news/LCT%20Consultation%20Report%20v1.3.pdf>

Legislation significantly changed in April 2020, which widens our options as a community. We expect this to be an area of substantial shifts this year!

2. Largo Pier

The Largo Pier Group joined LCT in February of 2019, chaired by Jimmy Simpson and Vice Chair Steve Wood, a very able team of 8 passionate people who wish to see our pier restored with a mission to make it more fitting for our present and future community needs. On top of the £6,500 raised last year for surveys and drawings, this year our Community raised £20,000 through donations and grants towards the next phase of the Pier restoration. In partnership with Fife Coast and Countryside Trust the group are progressing to the next phase of detailed submissions for substantial funding. They have astutely kept back a fund to continue with basic repairs over the winter to prevent further deterioration.

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In the middle of the Covid lockdown, the Pier group organised and ran a community consultation about re-building of our Pier. The findings drawn from that exercise inform the future work in progress.

At this goes to press the ownership of the Pier is in the hands of a liquidator. It is hoped by the time of the AGM, the new owner will be known. In the meantime, conversations are progressing with possible bidders in how we can partner with them in their restoration of The Crusoe and us of the Pier together.

<https://www.largocommunitiestogether.org.uk/pier/pier.html>

3. Largo Area Coronavirus Response Team (LACRT)

In March this year just as lockdown began, a group of people came together representing Largo Parish Church, Largo Community Council and LCT chaired by Irene Kay and Vice chair Stuart McLaren. They joined LCT as an official special interest group in the summer. From the early days of Covid, they were having nightly Zoom sessions to bring into action Deliver2U (essential food supplies), Support2Connect (Helpline), civic work (beach cleaning, planters, Kites for Kids), assisting locals with computer technology problems and supporting two local foodbanks. They have also because of the pandemic secured substantial funding for "Support in Times of Need" (personal grants for those experiencing hard times). Future projects include "Men's Sheds" and "Largo Befriending" amongst other initiatives which have seen us through Covid wave one and are all still in place for this second wave.

When Covid hit 101 of you came forward as volunteers to deliver shopping, man phone lines and co-ordinate action. Thank you to you all. Not everyone was able to be utilised this time. Watch this space!

As Irene Kay LACRT Chair comes up for re-election this year, she requires a place on our board to continue the excellent work she and her team began during Covid.

<https://www.largocommunitiestogether.org.uk/LACRT/LACRT.html>

4. Largo Arts Week (LAW)

In August 2019 after a very successful Largo Arts Week, one of its founding team members, Dougi McMillan, has joined us as a trustee with a view to all of us sharing resources and helping each other across our range of projects including media, people to help and possible ownership of community assets in the future.

Understandably, Largo Arts Week took the decision to cancel this year's programme after consultation with us as a community.

<https://www.largoartsweek.com>

Contact us by

EMAIL

You can email us on this email address; contact@largocommunitiestogether.org.uk

BY POST

Largo Community Library & Hub, 7 Lundin Square, Lundin Links KY8 6BH

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5. LCT Funding Team (Treasury/Compliance)

Our board Treasurer, Emily MacDonald has been on the board since our inception and has expanded her team to include a funding applications ability with Ronnie Graham joining this summer. They are joined by Barbara Simpson in her role as Membership liaison. Emily's work in holding, reporting and accounting for our funds in a secure and ethical way is key for LCT.

Emily has carried out sterling work for LCT and its subgroups since our start and comes up for re-election at this AGM. We very much need her to continue the steady ship she has steered in all her work for us.

6. LCT – Communications and newsletter Team

As promised in last year's report, we have now convened a Communications and Newsletter team headed by Jan Kerr, and a team of 5 others. Our new Community Newsletter entitled "Largo Links" will have its first edition in November this year.

We require Jan to have a board seat so that she can be fully involved in communicating to you our membership, with full knowledge and information of the entire LCT.

7. LCT – Lead for Sustainable Community Development

As a result of the new Land Reform "Right to Buy Land to Further Sustainable Development" Act, we have coaxed Jill Miller on board. We also recognise that the 'Largo Area' does not sit in isolation from the greater 'Leven Area' and its rail project, and we are the gateway to the East Neuk. It is to this end; Jill will take up the lead role once she is voted onto the Board at our AGM. Her role will be to ensure we both make use of the Act where it is in the community's interests and link to the projects that affect us in our wider locale. That means considerable relationship building, and this is Jill's innate skill.

8. LCT – Membership

Membership numbers are now: 350 Ordinary, 42 Associate, 3 Junior. This comes from around 3000 in our voting ward. Well over the 300 or 10% required to be able to act on behalf of the community in aspects such as the legal "right to buy" for community land and assets.

Barbara Simpson a current board member has taken up the role of Membership liaison. This role is to provide a local connection to liaise with members and gather membership needs and offers.

9. LCT - IT Website/GDPR/Training/Docs/Office 365 Doc store/Teams

In this year, Martin Schmidt, our lead in this area has successfully created a virtual office and telephone line for LCT and its groups with the support of Howard Coates of Coates IT. We now have e-mail, document storage, governance of GDPR, a functioning web site and the use of Teams and Zoom. Virtual meetings have been key as we have not been able to meet each other, or our supporting agencies face to face since March. None of what we have achieved through Covid would have been possible without Martin and his skills.

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10. LCT - Company Secretarial / Governance

Steve Wood as our Secretary and supported by Nora Conlin as Minute Secretary have been guiding us on all matters of governance and regulation for the LCT SCIO. Steve is stepping down from the board but remaining on both the Largo Estate and Pier groups. On behalf of LCT I would like to take this opportunity to thank Steve for the huge amount of work he has done to get us to this place. It is hoped Nora will step into the Secretary role as Steve steps down. These roles are a matter for the first board meeting after the AGM board elections.

11. LCT Board Next Steps

Our plan last year to open up our meetings and allow access to our documents via a portal on the web site was running well until Covid hit. Up until March 2020, we did do this, and many members and non-members attended and spoke up. Openness and transparency are key to representing the community's views. From November 2020 onwards, we will post the meeting dates on the website and members can request a Zoom meeting invite for the first hour of our monthly board meetings.

Last year, two community young people from Waid Academy were co-opted onto our board, Kyle Forgan and Beau Russell. Kyle has subsequently left to take up a scholarship at a school a distance away. We wish Kyle all the best. Beau remains on the board and is now the minute secretary for the Largo Estate group.

Stan Green our Vice Chair has like me been on the board since the beginning. Bringing his knowledge of horticulture, community and wider board experience, he is also standing for re-election. I hope you can see your way to supporting him in all he does for both the LCT and the Largo Estate Sub-group he vice-chairs.

OUR COMMUNITY FUTURE.

We need your ideas. Call or email via the website or write to us at the library. We promise to read and respond to everyone as we have endeavored to do, even in this challenging year.

Thank you all of you for your continued support.



Louise Robb. LCT Chair

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