

## THE IOHDT IN THE LAST 18 MONTHS

The team at the IOHDT thought that our members might like to hear about the projects that we have been involved in since our last AGM held in May 2019. Below there are a list of topics, what has been achieved within them, and where we hope to get to in the near future.



### DIRECTORS

The structure of the Directors has changed since last year's AGM. We thanked Adam Clark for his service to the Board of Directors after his resignation, and welcomed Moira Cossar, Keith Dempsey, Liz Train, and most recently Scott Johnston.

The office bearers are now as follows: **Chair: Debs Jaques**  
**Vice Chair: Moira Cossar** **Treasurer: Ian Davidson**

In addition to the above roles, some of our Directors are involved with specific areas which include:

Debs Jaques – Bus Service, ReFlex project and Community Action Planning

Max Collop – Renewable Energy, specifically the turbine

Moira Cossar – Health and Wellbeing and HR

Ian Davidson – Finance and Longhope Playpark

Liz Train – Longhope Playpark and Early Years

Keith Dobney – Heritage

Lindsay Hall

Keith Dempsey

Jayne Traynor

Rob Seatter

Scott Johnston is our latest addition to the Board and attended his first Directors meeting in 2020.

### BUSES

The Community Buses continue to run successfully with the full service consistently transporting residents and visitors around the Island. The IOHDT have so far continued to be successful in securing funding to support the service from the Bus Service Operators Grant and the Community Transport Grant Scheme. Although these funding resources are absolutely essential to the on-going financing of the bus service, there is a shortfall which is funded by the IOHDT.

The buses are regularly transported to Kirkwall for essential maintenance and the safety of our travellers is our priority. For this reason, the increasing expense of this maintenance resulted in the IOHDT considering alternative options for the future of the service and as a result, the team investigated the purchase of a new diesel bus. This bus arrived in November 2019 and has so far been a real benefit to the service and the Island.



Our regular drivers that have been with us for some years, Vincent Bird and George Cload, continue to drive our buses, and you may have noticed some adjustments in our team over the past 18 months. We waved a fond farewell to Debbie Rhodes and Dougie Edgar who remains an extended team member but no longer regularly drives on the Island, and welcomed Roger Bolton, Mike Moldau and Martin Vellacott. Our relief drivers are Ian Avis and Jo Sinclair.



## HEL BOARD STRUCTURE

Max Collop: Chairman  
Brian Clegg: Operations Director  
Lindsay Hall: Trust Representative  
Sandy Dennison: Financial Advisor  
Geraldine Ferguson: Legal Advisor

### **Employed:**

Max Andrews: Turbine Responder

## LEGACY PROJECT

The Legacy Project, which aims to make domestic level renewable generation / storage available for the whole community, started in February 2019 with project development, technology selection and development partners being finalised by June 2019. The prototype system was then tested rigorously for over 6 months on Hoy to complete proof of concept and further develop bespoke system features. February 2020 saw the IoHDT commit additional funding to start a five-property pilot scheme, whilst funding for the wider roll out phase is being sought via external funders.

## WIND TURBINE

The Hoy turbine project has been performing well over the last 18 months. Reliability issues related to wear and tear coupled with rising operational costs have become increasingly apparent, but are within expectations. External issues such as grid / cable failures have also been apparent, resulting in lost revenue, but have been mitigated at least partially by insurance / compensation claims.

## REFLEX PROJECT

Since our last AGM, the IoHDT has been successful in becoming involved with the ReFlex project. This is a £30 million pound Orkney wide project with core aims to demonstrate new technologies and their ability to balance the local electricity grid through renewable energy generation and storage. The IoHDT had the opportunity to participate in the 'community demonstrator' tasks and created links with Community Energy Scotland in order to obtain 2 electric people carriers for Hoy through the ReFlex project which included new rapid charge facilities to be installed at the YM. The specific purpose of the people carriers is yet to be defined, although it was established that community benefit and a demonstration of how communities can operate and benefit from this technology would be paramount. At present, one of these people carriers is being used to deliver prescriptions during the pandemic and the other people carrier is being used by the turbine company for travelling to and from the turbine. There are various other ideas for usage beyond the Covid-19 pandemic.



The pioneering project is funded by UKRI and led locally by the [European Marine Energy Centre](#), along with consortium partners [Aquateira](#), [Solo Energy](#), [Community Energy Scotland](#), [Heriot-Watt University](#) and [Orkney Islands Council](#), as well as multi-national energy company [Doosan Babcock](#).

Whilst the funding has been secured externally, the IoHDT will cashflow the project and apply for quarterly reimbursements from CES.

## STAFFING



Since 2012, the requirements within the office have increased dramatically along with the projects that the IoHDT is involved with. With ever-demanding finance and accounts requirements, the IoHDT decided to enlist the help of an independent HR consultant to assist with restructuring and re-organising the office as well as establishing clear and defined roles. This process was completed in 2019.

As a result, further training continues to take place, hours have been increased and an additional staff member has been welcomed to the team. Interviews took place and the successful candidate, Adam Black, was set to commence employment at the start of April 2020. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, he has not yet had the opportunity to work within the office or meet Community members through his work with the IoHDT, however, we look forward to this once the ease of the restrictions take place.

## HEALTH AND WELL-BEING COORDINATOR

At the end of 2018, VAO secured funding from the Aspiring Communities fund to commence recruitment for a well-being team based on 4 of the isles as well as a project manager post at VAO in Kirkwall. 5 of the isles expressed an interest so all Development Trusts involved contributed to the funding to extend the project to include all 5 islands. Denize Lace was subsequently appointed as the Health and Well-being Coordinator for Hoy and Walls and came into post on the 25<sup>th</sup> March 2019.



Denize embarked on the creation of a development plan for Hoy and investigation and development of various projects to improve well-being on Hoy took place, as well as consideration for the legacy of the project once project funding ceased. After a hopeful application process, an extension of funding from the Investing in Communities Fund was unsuccessful, however, another application into the Aspiring Communities Fund was successful and the role was extended beyond March 2020 for another 2 years. The Trust has agreed to contribute to the funding to allow Denize's hours to be increased from 14-21/week so that the project can be expanded from its original focus on older people to include all age groups.

Since March 2019, Denize has managed to establish some very successful projects including the Daily Living Aids Resource Centre and the Dementia Loan Library in September 2019 at the Health Centre (supported by their Patient Fund). Denize has been working with occupational therapists to come across to Hoy to undertake individual assessments and has also been working with individuals to identify gaps in existing services to support access to other organisations e.g. Social Work, Care & Repair, Advocacy, as well as providing advice around available benefits support. A services convention had been arranged for March this year with around 16 different organisations sending representatives to a community event on the island, however, unfortunately this had to be postponed due to Covid-19. Other ideas for enhancing health and well-being on the island have been identified and will be explored further once we are through the current Covid-19 crisis. Denize's coordinator role has been central to the Trust's Covid-19 response with Denize having the lead role in developing the Advice and Support Hub, Community Grants and Community Larder.



## LONGHOPE PLAYPARK

The IoHDT were aware of the reduction in facilities and maintenance at the Longhope playpark and decided to try and take action. A proposal was submitted to the OIC for the take-over of the Longhope Playpark lease and a sub group was created in order to carry the project forward. After successful application, funding was realised from YIYC fund to renovate it and additionally, previous playpark committee funding was also transferred to the new project

Liaison between the sub group and OIC's Gary Burton has taken place throughout and the group have now gained his support for the project. The proposal was due to be submitted at an upcoming council meeting which will be delayed until usual service is resumed at the OIC beyond the pandemic.

A great deal of research into similar projects and available services has been taking place behind the scenes to include correspondence with similar project managers regarding the process, support, and professionals that can be utilised locally and further afield.

Finally, a contribution from Hoy's Half Hoolie 2019 enabled the sub group to increase the balance for renovation by an additional £1351.30.

## SURVEY & COMMUNITY ACTION PLANNING GROUP

Once the IoHDT had compiled the results from the island survey, interested individuals from different organisations on the island came together to create a Community Action Planning Group which was representative of as many aspects, age groups and locations as we could gather. These organisations include the Community Council, the Hoy Kirk, the IoHDT and many more. Work took place on creating a



number of sub groups to carry the themes forward who were set to enlist the help and support of other stakeholders, organisations and community members who had interest and involvement in the specific topics. This process revealed areas which were already being addressed, but which were not communicated effectively assisting in the overall goal of resolving these issues.

With the support of the SCDC in Glasgow, the Community Action Planning Group created and structured a draft island development plan with the hope of utilising input from the Community at a number of community feedback events to continue to shape and structure the plan. These will take place once restrictions are lifted. The Group are hoping that the draft will reach as many islanders as possible, and intend to compare and build on the themes which came out of both of the YIYC surveys. The Community Action Planning Group hope to incorporate the themes from this exercise into the development plan with further involvement from the Community, in order to make it as representative as possible.

## AND FINALLY....

**We asked Directors, Stakeholders and Staff to say a few words on their own experiences with the loHDT and asked them to comment on any areas that they thought they'd like to highlight. Here's what they had to say....**

BRIAN CLEGG

“Having worked for the loHDT and HEL for over 11 years, including close liaison with four other Orkney development trusts, I feel reasonably well placed to comment on the loHDT achievements. The Trusts performance, particularly with regard to delivering targeted outcomes speak for themselves - Community Turbine, YM refurbishment, Community Bus Service, educational and training bursaries, Heritage projects, etc. - but, what perhaps goes unnoticed or unsaid is the low key professionalism with which the trustees deliver these projects and services and of course the fact that they are doing so on a voluntary basis. Over recent years the loHDT has gained wide respect within the Orkney third sector and is indeed often seen as a benchmark to which other organisations aspire.”

MAX COLLOP

“When the opportunity arose in 2006 to build a community wind turbine, it was seized on as a chance to provide core finance for our embryonic development trust. With a lot of hard work and support from Community Energy Scotland, this has delivered as hoped. Today the turbine underpins many of the Trust's day to day activities and projects. It has also helped greatly reduce the carbon output of the island's electricity usage.

The challenge now is to maintain the turbine as it approaches middle age. The climate and conditions here are a challenge for mechanical devices and a turbine is no exception, being highly exposed to anything the weather can throw at it. Regular maintenance is a big factor, coupled with a certain amount of luck, avoiding lightening strikes and suchlike hazards. Behind the scenes too, there is constant work on the administration of the business; keeping the bank, accountant and taxman happy and attending to a myriad of other tasks and events, some routine, some completely out of the blue. The failure of the subsea cable last year comes to mind as an event which could have shut us down for months had it not been fixed at the final attempt.

For the future, we aim to provide a lasting legacy for the island. The feed - in tariff which has made our project viable is not currently available to support a replacement scheme but hopefully may one day be reintroduced. This would allow us to repower the site with an updated machine and prolong the project lifetime. Our other plan, under development, is to provide solar energy sourced power to a range of domestic properties here, backed by battery and heat storage. The aim of this is to alleviate the high cost of electricity here and the consequent fuel poverty which exists. Unfortunately, we are unable to sell power directly from our turbine to the community as currently, no system exists which would enable this to happen.

The turbine is the gift that keeps on giving and will hopefully underpin many aspects of community life here for years to come.”

## SCOTT JOHNSTON

“The IoHDT is working on various different projects at the moment which continue to benefit the Island. I personally would like to see the continuation of the IoHDT’s encouragement of families and young people returning to the Island to live and work. This might include investigation of currently available services, and consideration into enhancement of these services in the hope that Hoy can offer a level playing field to that of the mainland for young professionals and families. The school offers a fantastic education for the children of Hoy with a dedicated team, I hope to see numbers increase in the coming years.

I believe a key benefit to Hoy would be the availability of apprenticeships on the Island and would like to investigate this in further detail.

I also have an interest in the Legacy Project and am looking forward to working closely with the IoHDT and learning more about the technology involved.”

## IAN DAVIDSON

“During the last 18 months the Trust have achieved several major goals. Internally the Human Resource review has helped to provide staff confidence and set us on the road to the future. The Reflex project has secured 2 fully funded electric people-carriers for the community and the development of the Legacy project promises to provide major benefits to the community in the future. The coronavirus support that the Trust has instigated deserves a whole section on it's own. My number one though is the Playpark because it provides a great example of what I would like to see happen more often. The Community identified that it would like to improve the facility so they linked with the Trust. Liz Train joined the board with a particular interest in supporting Children and Families and created a community led group of like-minded community members to pursue the playpark development. It was identified that the OIC’s responsibility should be taken over by the Community so the Trust entered into legal and financial negotiations with the Council. Once there is a signed agreement the Community group will get on and create a fantastic community space. I would love to see more of this type of collaboration between the Community and the Trust with more people coming forward with their ideas and the Trust helping to support them.”

## DEBS JAQUES

“The Trust has been working hard to make the bus service as efficient, reliable and as green as possible. Although we have had some setbacks in acquiring a fully electric bus, recent funding from the ReFlex Project has enabled us to purchase two electric vehicles which will enhance our current service. This project has also provided the funding to upgrade the electricity supply at the YM which will help us to progress our aims to a greener future.”

## MOIRA COSSAR

“it feels that there’s loads of potential in Hoy and Walls to take things forward with the help of the Community either with our aims to improve Health and Wellbeing, restoring the play park to a brilliant family space or working with other organisations on people’s priorities from the community survey.”

ROGER BOLTON

"I think that the IoHDT community bus service is an enormous asset for our Island. Often passengers taking the bus live in remote and isolated areas and the bus provides an opportunity to meet with others and chat, joke and connect with other members of our community. The bus is a friendly, reliable and effective service that supports us all."

DEANNA JOHNSTON

"As a family, we feel extremely lucky to have involvement in the IoHDT. Whether that be in the form of employment, Director involvement, or being able to apply for funding for both our children and ourselves to utilise the Training and Learning Grants. What an opportunity for people to take up a new activity, improve their employment prospects or get back into learning! From personal experience, it is a pleasure to work for a forward thinking, caring and responsible employer and I feel truly blessed that I was able to join the team 4 years ago."

LIZ DAVIDSON

"It's a pleasure to work for the Development Trust and to see the progress made over the years, the bus service, the upgrade to the YM, the energy projects, Well-being projects and many more. My personal favourites do remain the Training and Learning fund and the Event Support Fund for the help they can provide to individuals and to groups looking to put on community events. The response to the COVID-19 situation also deserves its own mention, much time has been put to this by voluntary directors and as an employee of a third sector organisation, it is fantastic to have this support and also the support of my colleagues who have gone over and above the call of duty".