

VISIT EAST NEUK MEETING/AGM
Wednesday, October 26, 2022
7pm, Elie Sailing Club Meeting Room

VEN Committee Members Attending:

Martin Dibley (VEN Chairperson & Treasurer), Sophie Latinas (Vice Chair), Gail Sorley (Secretary), Gordon Bell, Grizelda Cowan, Graham Johnston;

Guest speakers: Colin Smith, Glamis Consultancy;

Guest Attendees:

D. Chalmers, Janice Watson, David Tod, Kevin Lancaster, Eleanor Spens, Anna Spens, Debbie MacCallum, Maggie Picken, Judith Dunlop, Jim Taylor, Jackie Simpson, Gillian Maclaren, Sandy McNaughton, Jamie Robertson, Shona Jones, Ken Jones, Stephen Marshall;

Linn Williamson began the meeting at 7pm, announcing that Martin Dibley was enroute and arriving shortly. She then introduced **Colin Smith**, of the Glamis Consultancy, a business devoted to enhancing wide-spectrum tourism development opportunities for regional areas (i.e. the East Neuk).

Colin began his presentation, focusing on the status and benefits of the Cycle 50 project, a bike path route travelling from Kirkcaldy to Dundee. Speaking for some 30 minutes, Colin detailed:

- how the final bike route would benefit and affect tourism-centric businesses such as accommodation providers and restaurants/pubs, and other general businesses;
- what “type” of cyclists such a bike route would appeal to – casual cyclists? families? racers?
- needs and infrastructure changes for cyclists using route: services such as chargers; lock-up / storage facilities; repair / maintenance facilities; etc;
- roads coming in/out of Fife/East Neuk – what changes may be necessary?
- business generation as extra nights before/after a cycling race may be taken by participants; end-of-journey extended stays;
- the possible need for a separate East Neuk marketing unit to concentrate on publicising/marketing *just* the East Neuk portion of the bike route, highlighting what services/amenities are available to cyclists using *this* particular portion of the bike route;
- identifying problems/drawbacks regarding the bike route so changes can be made if necessary.

Colin wound up his presentation by answering various questions from attendees and clarifying information he had presented.

Martin Dibley, the Visit East Neuk Acting Chairman for the past year as well as the Treasurer, then gave a summary of activities and actions which VEN has undertaken in the 2021/2022 year to date:

- 3000 East Neuk Visitor Guide booklets, the residue of a printing of some 10,000 printed before the pandemic, have been distributed to visitor information centres as well as local East Neuk businesses;
- Linn then spoke up about the booklet needing to be updated and the format changed to make it more “generic” for longevity, eliminating specific business references, and using QR codes to obtain more information;
- Martin spoke about VEN social media pages, the growth in the number of visitors to such pages, and the enthusiastic contribution to the pages of photos highlighting numerous areas and activities by local photographers;
- Maps of East Neuk villages, their formats, and how they will interlink with each other as well as social media page, Fife Tourism Partnership pages, etc. is also a project Martin is pursuing; Anstruther Community Council has already been contacted for their input/assistance in this;
- Information boards in each village, about each village, need to be reviewed and updated to expand on the “offerings” that a particular village has for the visitor; tourist “hot spots” can be highlighted to drive visitors to explore more than just the high street, as an example;
- East Neuk Preservation Society – Martin has been in touch, they have their own projects underway;

- Crail Community Partnership – Martin to meet with them, possibly coordinate on joint projects?
- Fife Coast and Countryside Trust – Martin to meet with them, possibly coordinate on joint projects?
- Local area community councils – Martin has sent correspondence to the area CC’s to set up meetings for learning/discussion; he has met with Elie & Earlsferry CC and is awaiting answers from others;
- East Neuk Local Tourism Association – a business only, business-to-business group page, is growing slowly and is a good conduit for tourism related businesses.

The meeting then turned to other general questions, news and updates:

- St. Andrews BID – doing a Scotty Dog trail with 20-30 dogs ideally Sept/Oct. 2023 as a charity fund raiser; route will run between Lundin Links and Tayport;
- Fife has been named “the happiest place in Scotland for visitors” in research conducted by VisitScotland;
- There will be webinars in January on subjects such as sustainable tourism, cycling, other subjects which should be informative and useful;
- The Fife Tourism Partnership site has undergone an overhaul, with a business-to-business aspect useful to East Neuk businesses;
- Welcome to Fife is a site for businesses to reach / inform visitors – participation is invited!
- **Linn** clarified the mandates of the various social media pages: Visit Scotland is to get visitors interested in visiting; next is the Fife Tourism Partnership site, highlighting what each of the regional local tourism associations has to offer and differentiating them; Visit East Neuk is one of the LTAs promoting the East Neuk area running along the east coast from about Elie/Earlsferry north to about Kingsbarns, and inland including Arncroach;
- The budget for the VEN East Neuk Now “app” development, maintenance and publicity was £15,500 in 2021, and in 2022, £14,061 has been spent; costs included payment to an editor/manager for the app to approve new listing applications, answer questions, assist in setting up new listers, etc. This editor is paid on an hourly basis on an as-needed basis.
- **Gordon Bell** was asked about the East Neuk Now app and spent some ten minutes giving an update and explanation on this free, business supportive, visitor friendly social media site to attendees.

The subject of short-term licensing required by Fife Council arose:

- Short-term lets licensing/new regulations by Fife Council was also discussed; questions such as who is responsible for liability and insurance issues, filing the FC forms—the owner of a property or the appointed manager?
- This licensing requirement is still having changes made to it and kinks worked out, so Linn could not provide definitive, final information – but suggested referring to the Fife Council page for updated news and information about all this;
- There will be a webinar event to further explain and clarify what is necessary (date to come); Fife Council has multiple short-term-lets information pages at Fife.gov.uk, with forms available by request to shorttermlets@fifecouncil.gov.uk;
- The Association of Scottish Self Caterers – ASSC – is also an up-to-date source for information.

The AGM was then addressed, with current committee members all having resigned prior to the meeting so that new or additional committee members could come onto the committee. With no new nominations, it then became a question of the current officers – **Martin Dibley**, **Sophie Latinas**, and **Gail Sorley** – remaining as officers. It was generally accepted that they would. Gillian Maclaren questioned whether this slate should be put forward to all the members of VEN, not just the AGM meeting attendees, to vote on and approve/deny. It was agreed it was the role of the AGM to appoint the committee.

Meeting was concluded at 9:10pm, with attendees invited to stay for tea and to visit with each other.

Respectfully submitted,

Gail Sorley, Visit East Neuk Secretary