**Meeting of UEDG Heritage Trail sub-committee**

**17/3/16 – at the Hub**

Present: Jock Miller, Chair, UEDG, Victoria Long, Dr Tom Kennedy, John Furlonger,

Maia Lilley. Marilyn Harris.

Apologies: May Reid, Diana Lilley, Steve Scofield and Penny George.

Minutes of last meeting: these were approved by Jock. This was seconded by Victoria.

Matters arising:

* Victoria has not managed to get a price for development of new display panels. Asked for advice on where to start with this task.
* Quote from Tony Carruthers for repairing/building of frames and nest boxes, has not yet materialised, although Victoria has been chasing him.

Report by John Furlonger who had visited all the Prehistoric sites as if a visitor: Report attached.

Matters that arose in relation to report:

* There must be dialogue with owners of the land on which the sites are situated.
* **John Furlonger will contact** the Forestry Commission about access by car for the less able walkers visiting Bessie’s Hill. Also, to enquire if identification signs could be put on the site itself (as identified by an archaeologist). Andrew Nicholson would need to be asked to do this.
* Castle O’er: needs better road signs.
* King Shaw’s Grave: **Tom Kennedy will find** the site and update narrative of how to get there. New signs/way markers clearly needed for this area.
* The Knowe: sign does not show the best way to get there.
* It was suggested that outdoor seating at the sites could be introduced.
* **Tom & John** will clearly find sites, so we know exactly where they are

Information Sheets: Plenty of these need to be printed out, laminated and placed in the ‘nest’ boxes, so that they can be taken to tour the sites. A Please Return sign should be put on all the ‘nest’ boxes.

The Book: Eastern Dumfriesshire is the best for identification of the sites: costs about £40. Should hopefully be added to the Project costs. **?Penny.**

It was agreed that the improvement to the sites should not wait until a Project Manager has been found so they could be made accessible for this summer. We could employ temporary people. (If funding not found soon, this would have to be paid by UEDG, upon permission of the board. **Victoria talk with Penny** to find out where we stand with this)**.**

Panels could get a fresh backing and new supports, better than just touching up current structures. Some may just need painting and cleaning though. Victoria has asked for a quote for any new supports needed/repairs to existing and ‘nest boxes’

Brown signs need to be moved (they currently point in odd directions). This should be confirmed by road dept. **Wait to hear from Tom Kennedy and John Furlonge**r on the issue of the signs and where they should be placed.

**Agenda Items**

Loss of Over Rig sign:

This may be impossible to find. Tom Kennedy has details for the person who made it: John Hills. However we know someone who could possibly produce another one. Could cost £400-500.

**Tom Kennedy will** check if someone still has original design for the sign

Development of a heritage interpretation centre

No one felt ready to plan start making the Hub as a centre for the trail.

The group made a tour of the Hub. The larger of the two room upstairs was identified as the most likely spot for a permanent display though it was agreed that there should be a ‘taster’ downstairs, to lead people to it. However, it was felt that a visit to Whithorn Trust Archaeological Centre would help clarify our way forward. Screens on castors were suggested. Or 3 or 4 screens coming from a central post with covering conical ‘roof’ for out in back yard.

Any display board, screens etc would have to be in keeping with the general look of the hub. The visit to Whithorn will hopefully give ideas.

The on-site replacement interpretation panels could cost up to £5000-6000. It could also be the same for the displays at the Hub. For the whole of the displays a total of £15000 was estimated.

No one knew the extent of information to display or what form it would take.

Tom suggested **everybody could write 10 questions** - what they want to know about the trail and Tom could try to answer them. This info could be used for information about trail for visitors, a survey could be done about it, what information is wanted**. All those in the group were asked** to give an idea of how they envision the indoor display will look. This should be **done for the week after the visit to Whithorn.**

Prehistoric trail is one of the most significant things about Eskdalemuir, should be always available as display of info in the hub – permanent setup, Hub is only place where this info should be permanently displayed – could be a sign outside for when hub is closed, perhaps at the back of café.

Main issue should be where the information could be put & how much room is needed.

Marilyn wants a massive panel of ariel view with sites marked.

Digital reconstruction of sites, possible idea

Trip to Whithorn: **Jock will investigate** short term funding for the visit to Whithorn and arrange a suitable date. Most people at the meeting would like to go on this day trip.

Education packs: could be used by schools visiting the Hub. Different packs needed for different levels of education, so 2 or 3 could be needed. Teachers from each level of education would have to design these. **Victoria will contact** Penny about this. It was felt this was difficult but to see what Whithorn has in terms of similar resources.

Grant application

Preliminary investigation, not completely sure how much Penny needs to know in order to apply, the more we know the better.

Who will take a lead on the project & be main contact in Eskdalemuir for application

**Maia will consider position of Coordinator**

**Tom Kennedy will** get email address for woman who can make signs and we could enquire from her how much signs will cost, Tom thinks it would be about £500 per sign at each site – for new ones.

Things Penny had missed: we could not really answer this.

Other comments and ideas:

* Extra signs needed for approaching the sites, not on actual sites themselves
* We need a road sign directing visitors to get more info at Hub. ? Cost.
* Info centre needs to be self-explanatory and permanent.
* Possible expansion of number of sites marked was discussed, contact universities & archaeologist for this – this is an issue for later
* Hyslop’s grave should be one we could add now, though not part of prehistoric trail. However, very close to Hub (on way to Samye Ling.)
* Idea of Facebook page for trail.
* Webpage that exists for trail – (<http://www.langholmwalks.co.uk/pht/test.htm>) **Sharon could make a link from our site to this one.**
* If image was created for Loupin Stanes it could be used multiple places, eg leaflet, or projected somewhere in hub.
* It was agreed that we should also have a new leaflet.

The original site costs: 13 years (2003) ago were about £23000 included ‘work in kind’ (voluntary work) as matched funding, worked through Heritage Lottery Fund . Total probably about £30000 + .

Heritage or just prehistoric? Project enquiry doesn’t specify which - **Penny**.

Booklet: Tom Kennedy is writing a booklet about trail roughly 12 pg, This could be an amplification of the leaflet. An addition to the leaflet and could be purchased – at cost price to cover publishing/printing

Next Meeting: this will be arranged after the visit to Whithorn.