

# “Trust Talk”

## News and Views from The Corstorphine Trust September 2020

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Dear Friends,

We hope everyone reading this letter has stayed safe and that you, your family and your friends have remained healthy too.

2020 was to have been a year of celebration of the Trust's 50<sup>th</sup> birthday and a commemoration of the expansion of the City of Edinburgh in 1920 when Corstorphine was transferred from Midlothian.

The Trust had begun planning events and exhibitions but all those activities were knocked back by Covid-19 and the consequent lockdown that imposed restrictions on movement. Activities were cancelled and both the Astoria and Heritage Centres were closed in mid-March. It was important to us that all our members, volunteers and visitors should stay at home and safe from this deadly virus.

Your office bearers have kept in regular communication and although our buildings have remained unused they have had to be maintained and some small improvements made. We were pleased to receive a small Government grant which acknowledged that costs continued whilst income did not.

Ian Anderson, Chairman

**Astoria Centre** in preparation for re-opening hand sanitiser dispensers and additional cleaning materials have been acquired and ventilation improved. Entry through the front door only and exit through the fire door to the car park will assist 'people flow'. The Government's phase 3 plan will allow the centre to re-open in September. Some of our regular tenants are eager to return but they will be responsible for adhering to the social distancing guidelines and clean equipment to make their own members safe. They will have to record the contact details of all participants just in case this is required by the authorities. The terms of let have been amended to reflect these new responsibilities.

**Heritage Centre** re-opening this historic building will be much more difficult. There are so many 'pinch points', especially the narrow corridors and staircase that a one-way system is impossible. Social distancing indoors would reduce the potential numbers in the coffee shop and at concerts in the Kilgour Room as to be economically not viable. Similarly, user groups may decide that their activities are so restricted by social distancing that they cannot resume yet. Until the guidelines change considerably the Dower House is unlikely to open again until next year. (See note on Archive).

**Volunteers** although we have appointed two new caretakers to look after our buildings we have also to consider that all our own activities are run by volunteers and they need to feel safe before they decide to return to help us.

**Remembrance Service** at the War Memorial in Kirk Loan each November has been organised by the Trust for a number of years. This has grown to the extent that several hundred people attend and over 40 wreaths are laid. Our Executive decided that it would be irresponsible to bring so many residents, young and old together and so we took the sad decision not to hold a service this year. Individuals and groups who wish to lay private tributes may do so during Remembrance Week and the Trust will lay one wreath on behalf of the community on 11<sup>th</sup> November without ceremony.

**Archive** during lockdown the number of enquiries we have had through our website has increased. I have tried to answer as many questions I could with notes I have at home. As the Dower House will be closed for the foreseeable future, I am offering appointment based booking where I will open up the archive to anyone who wants to do some research. If you would like to use this facility please email me, Frances MacRae, Archivist at [archivist@corstorphinetrust.co.uk](mailto:archivist@corstorphinetrust.co.uk). Covid 19 rules will apply.