



Edinburgh Tool Library – 27/05/19

Awesome General Meeting 2019

MINUTES

1. WELCOME and intro – Jo Holtan

Jo Welcomed the 30-ish attendees and gave an overview of the agenda. She also thanked everyone involved with ETL to create its amazing culture. The current Trustees introduced themselves to the meeting and then officially stood down as Trustees for re-election (or not) later in the meeting. The Trustees are:

Chris Hellowell – Founder, Trustee and ETL staff member

Jo Holtan – Chair

John Sinclair – Secretary

Cathal Hone – Treasurer

Gill Eunson - Trustee

Chris stated that the board are actively seeking to recruit another Trustee, perhaps someone from a corporate/ business background. Please contact a current Trustee if you have someone in mind who could be this person.

2. Review of the year – Chris Hellowell

Chris gave an entertaining run-through of the year gone by and a copy of his report is included at the end of these minutes.

During the operational hours of ETL a tool is borrowed every 5 minutes.

Local businesses have been a bit slow on the uptake for the ETL disability access ramps so please encourage any that you know to get in touch. These are free to the businesses.

Tools For Life is now entirely funded by ETL membership income. Two new trainees are being recruited for this programme.

3. Research trip to Baltimore – Janet Morales

Janet reported on her and Chris H' trip to the USA to visit tool libraries there and see how they operate. It was great to be immersed in a different, but familiar environment, and to share ideas between each other. An interesting observation is that US tool libraries focus on the social and economic impact whereas here in Scotland the focus is on the environmental impact. Station North Tool Library in Baltimore is 75% self-funded through membership and tool rental income.

Chris H said how proud he is of ETL and the sheer amount of things/ projects/ people it has involved in its operation, in comparison to the tool libraries visited in USA.

4. Financial Report

Treasurer Cathal was unable to attend the AGM due to a family bereavement but Chris H delivered his report and a copy has been included at the end of these minutes.

The accounts have been independently audited and successfully submitted to OSCR. ETL always submit to OSCR on time which is a visible positive marker for potential funders checking out ETL's reputation.

With the loss of Climate Challenge Fund money in 2020 ETL is having to cut back a little on what it does and will concentrate on core activities.

Self-generated income is almost at 50% for 2020 projected income.

5. Strategic planning – Catherine Lyons

Catherine outlined the work she has been doing to help grow ETL and other tool libraries in general. Friends Provident are a partner in this work. The aim is to figure out how to make ETL a household name in Leith through: Intensification; Expansion; Inclusion; Replication; Enterprise. ETL has asked for £188K over two years from Friends Provident to achieve this.

6. EasySharing - Terence

Terence and Catherine told the attendees about ETL's latest initiative designed to open up access to ETL's tools to people further afield in Edinburgh (not local to Leith or Portobello) and who live in areas of multiple deprivation. Broomhouse, Wester Hailes, North Edinburgh Arts, and Granton Hub are the four locations that Terence will visit each week to drop off and re-collect tool loans. People wishing to sign up for EasyShare ETL can do so for free as this project has been fully funded for a 6 months trial period by NESTA.

7. Volunteer strategy - Cecile

Cecile started off by reminding the meeting that ETL volunteers won the 'Inspiring Volunteer' award for their work last year. Cecile is now a full-time member of staff and it is her mission to develop the core volunteer programme. Retention and engagement of volunteers to avoid staff covering volunteer shifts at ETL sites is a priority.

The new system of splitting the volunteer pool into 3 teams is working much better now and volunteers commit to 3 shifts a month.

The plan for 2019 is to setup volunteer committees for things like membership, events, merchandise, social, etc. The first one will be an events committee and will focus on something like the Stand comedy club night that ETL ran a year or two ago.

8. Year Ahead – Chris H

Chris kicked off the final leg of the evening. Being more volunteer managed has and will allow the ETL staff to focus on the strategy and fundraising side of things to make ETL more sustainable.

He spoke about a new idea for ETL of corporate support through offering tool library membership as an employee perk at large corporations/ businesses in Edinburgh.

He highlighted the fact that 15 volunteer hours are needed every week just to prepare reserved tools to go out on loan. ETL in general needs 66 volunteer hours every week.

The loss of the Climate Challenge Funding did pull the rug from under the feet of ETL but there is now a strong plan in place to counter that loss.

9. Board re-election

The AGM decided to re-elect the current board of Trustees. No new Trustees came forward, but are welcome to do so throughout the course of the year.

Date of next meeting:

TBC

Chris Hellowell's Annual Report

Tudor Trust Annual Report for the Edinburgh Tool Library



An ETL Volunteer Assembly, deciding on volunteer build projects

How I have performed in my role, what works, and what doesn't

This has been a big year for ETL, which has seen an increase in staff numbers, and the movement of some staff from freelancers to salaried staff. Firstly, from my perspective, having two years of funding for my role from the Tudor Trust has really made a difference, and allowed me to focus on improvements in the way ETL works. In terms of my personal development, I feel I have been able to become more of an organisational leader rather than someone who does a bit of everything, and in reflection, this has had a really positive effect on the wider tool library community. Other staff and core volunteers have been given the opportunity to step up and take ownership of projects, and I feel there is a much better division of labour.

The lending side of things has increased again this year, and demonstrates an increased interest in sustainable living in the general public. Thanks to David Attenborough, there seems to have been a drive for people to reduce their environmental impact and it has pushed a lot of new members our way. This increase in membership has led to the rapid

increase in tool borrowing, and so this year we have implemented a more robust maintenance and repair strategy.

Membership levels remained roughly the same, but the number converting interest from just online (non-paying) members to paying membership has increased. This has resulted in 76% increase in membership revenue (estimated to June 2019) on the June 2017/18, up to £14,431, and increase of £6,221 (Figures are all adjusted to June 2019 to reflect the funding period from Tudor Trust)

The number of tools borrowed has also increased again, to 5144 loans, up 31%. The increased number of tool loans results in an estimated carbon footprint reduction for June 2018-19 of 95 tons, saving our members an estimated £219,000 this year. We also recorded that over 11 tons of "waste" materials were reclaimed from landfill.

As part of our Climate Challenge Fund project, we developed the Young Tooligans programme, engaging 242 12-17 year olds from youth groups and high schools in a Curriculum for Excellence applicable class looking at design and carbon literacy, building a 'Chair for the Future' using reclaimed materials and justifying what to use.

Fork in the Road, our mobile bike kitchen project was a huge success. It engaged with 26 local organisations and over 700 people, and we even had time left to write a book about it all, which we have made available through open source, for other projects to replicate or integrate in their own practise (<https://edinburghtoolibrary.org.uk/fork-in-the-road/>).



Mo, our lead staff member for Fork in the Road

We were given a small grant by our local neighbourhood partnership this year, as part of

the Leith Decides participatory budgeting exercise, and have been building accessibility ramps for local small businesses. This has been a wonderful collaboration with Euan's Guide, which reviews visitor attractions, restaurants and shops for disabled people, and has meant we can jointly promote the idea of smaller businesses thinking more inclusively. Our Volunteer Assembly programme this year was great fun, with a varied group of projects supported. We built a potting shed and shop for a community garden, outdoor furniture, planters and bird feeding station for a residents' association, have installed giant art on an old police box, built a series of raised beds for herbalism social enterprise, and made a marquetry bar from reclaimed materials for a volunteer arts festival.



The Piershill Residents' Association brought in the Tooligans to build a variety of planters, garden furniture, and this bird feeder

Tools for Life, our mentorship programme, has been ongoing, and we were really pleased to see one of our trainees leave the programme to go on to make things for income. He is coming in to our workshop independently and building coffee tables, using reclaimed wood, and the skills he has built up over the last 18 months of the programme. He is also in part time employment, and has a stable housing situation. Another of our younger trainees has been accepted into college, and has also moved on. This year we have welcomed two new mentors to our small team, so we now have four groups working together at one time.

Our next challenge is to make sharing something that is a no-brainer for everyone, and we have begun piloting a regular mobile tool-library run into areas of multiple deprivation, engaging with community centre delivery partners in each area. It is also in the west of the city where we have thus far only had minimal presence. This project, 'EasySharing', aims to "make sharing easier than shopping" by delivering shared items to the neighbourhoods that would benefit most from the money saving aspect of sharing. It is in conjunction with myTurn, the US-based company that runs our database, and i-puk, a German project management tool. The hope is that once the system is ironed for tool sharing, other things can be shared, and it can be a platform that can roll out and be replicated elsewhere, used by all sorts of sharing organisations.

One of the more challenging chapters of this past year was over a four-month period before Christmas where we decided to take on several fabrication jobs for paying clients. Whilst we did cover our costs financially, we didn't generate large amounts of funding for the charity, and the management of this strand, together with the need to continue my other role, meant I was doing 70 hour weeks at some points, which was not sustainable. It might be something we explore again in the future, but for the moment, we are leaving this side of things. After the board took this decision, I felt a huge sense of relief, which I took as meaning it was the right thing to do.

This year also involved some interesting research collaborations. For EasySharing, we are working with researchers from the University of Edinburgh's Science, Data and Innovation Studies department to examine the project findings. We have also been one of the subjects of research by a German PhD student who is looking into developing models to accurately measure and report some of the more tangential outcomes from sharing libraries. The early results suggest we are currently serving 7% of our community in Leith (a community of 26,000), but that it is possible that by implementing the correct systems and practises, we can eventually reach 25%. This would then make us 'mainstream' in our community, a point at which we can begin to achieve mainstream behaviour change. This is a long term target, but we are hoping that by this time next year, we are serving over 10% of the community.

One of the things I have been reflecting upon this year is what ETL does well, and what it is challenged by, and also, personally, what are my strengths and weaknesses. In many ways, there is a correlation – in such a small charity, it is inevitable that personalities will influence practise. I see this as a positive challenge, in that by recognising these areas, we can look to build on our strengths and develop our weak areas.

We have identified that we lack skills and knowledge in branding and marketing, and have addressed this by drafting in support from two service design and branding experts, who are helping us review our processes, to inform our new website development, and how we communicate who we are and what we do.

Recently, myself and a colleague have been to Baltimore, USA to spend some time with the Station North Tool Library, a well-established tool library, getting ideas for more efficient ways of working, and looking at some of their income generating streams. We also took time to visit other tool libraries and maker spaces in Baltimore, Philadelphia and Virginia. It has given us great perspective in some of the things we do really well, and areas in which we can become more self-reliant and financially sustainable. It has motivated us to focus on income streams, and in particular, expanding the offerings of classes we have. We are also challenging ourselves to serve a more diverse membership base, and to ask more from our volunteers. Baltimore really was a fabulous example of a volunteer led project, with committees deciding the direction of SNTL, and undertaking the vast majority of the work. It has emboldened us to ask more of our volunteers, freeing up staff to do more work on the development of ETL.



Janet and I visited the Station North Tool Library in Baltimore

We had a setback this year when a third funding bid to the Climate Challenge Fund was rejected, but after getting over the initial disappointment, we believe we are now in a more desirable position where, even though we are operating with a smaller budget, there is a much higher proportion of it that is unrestricted. This means we have a year of honing what we are good at and enriching our offering, rather than being pushed to do different things that don't align perfectly with where the organisation sits. The Climate Challenge Fund also allowed us to open a fit out a second workshop in the East of the city, helping us reach a different community, and allowing a more classroom based approach to learning. Although there is a small budget deficit in this coming year's projections, our financial reserves cover this, and we are still applying for funding to supplement what we already offer.

Finally, this year is going to be an interesting year in terms of staffing. We have a member of staff leaving on maternity leave, and are taking the opportunity to recruit someone with a different skill set for maternity cover, which if everything goes as planned, will help us design more volunteer led classes, and make us more financially independent from grants.



Annual Accounts 2018

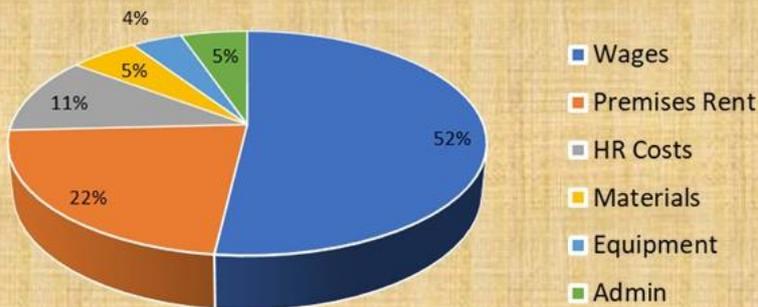
- Receipts and payments accounts approved by the trustees.
- Clean Report from our Independent Examiner.
- Submitted to the Charity Regulator December 2018.



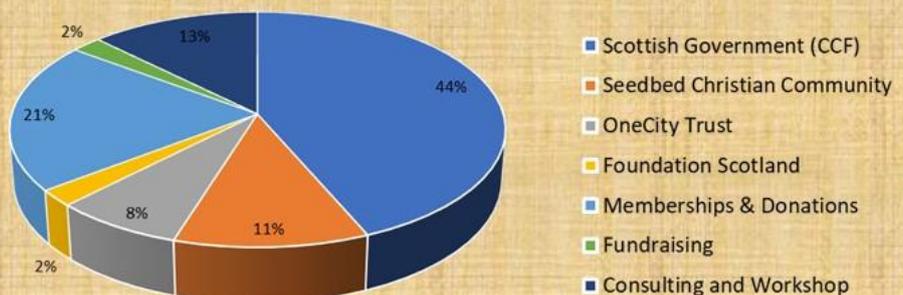
Mailing Cycle	Financial Year			Annual Return				
	Year End	Income	Expenditure	Issued	Received	Checked	Overdue / Late	Latest Accounts
2016	31 Mar 2016	£7,801	£4,526	31 Mar 2016	01 Nov 2016	03 Nov 2016	No	
2017	31 Mar 2017	£27,634	£18,930	31 Mar 2017	18 Dec 2017	19 Dec 2017	No	
2018	31 Mar 2018	£62,313	£66,970	03 Apr 2018	28 Dec 2018	03 Jan 2019	No	ETL Year End 2018_Redacted.pdf
2019	31 Mar 2019			01 Apr 2019			No	

- Latest accounts are available via the OSCR website
- <https://www.oscr.org.uk/about-charities/search-the-register/register-search/>
- Edinburgh Tool Library Charity Number: SC045162

Expenditure 2017/18



Funding 2017/18



Income / Expenditure Totals



Funding

