

THE SOUTHSIDE ASSOCIATION
117 Nicolson Street
Edinburgh
EH8 9ER

**Minutes of meeting held in the South Side Community Education Centre
on Tuesday 1 March 2011, at 7pm**

PRESENT: Carol McHugh (Chair), David Allan, Vera Anderson, Margaret Bagan, Tom Bonallo, Colin Christison (Secretary), Margaret Dalziel, Mary Devine, Linda Femister, Jane Hedley, May Linton (Membership Secretary), Sandra McCormick (Vice-Chair), Kenny McLeod, Maureen Miller, Rose Mongan, Ethel Murray, Cllr Ian Perry, Molly Ross, Jo Scott, Lisa Sibbald, Pamela Spiers, Marjory Watson and Joan Young.

1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence

Carol welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies for absence were received from Atif Ahmed, David Baines, Robert Beaton, Sarah Boyack MSP, Jan Fraser, Bob Hodgart, Tom King, George Pitcher, Robert Ross, Fiona Scott (Treasurer), Keith Smith, Louise Smith, and Maggie Wilson.

2. Guest Speaker: David Allan, from the charity Scottish Love in Action

Carol introduced David Allan, a trustee of Scottish Love in Action, who gave an illustrated talk on the charity's work. He thanked the Association for inviting him, and said it was very important for the charity to become well known. He described the charity's origins, and outlined how it helps feed, clothe, house, educate, and provide medical care for over 560 destitute children in the Indian state of Andhra Pradesh. The following is an extract from the SLA's website:-

'Our Indian partners identify children in desperate circumstances who need our help, and take them into our homes. Many have been surviving by scavenging in rubbish tips, sleeping rough and begging on the streets, or working as unpaid domestic servants or bonded labourers, effectively slaves. Because there is no comprehensive system of state care for these children in India, often they have been cruelly exploited. Frequently the children are brought to our homes by family or friends who have nowhere else to turn for help. These children are often orphans, bereaved by AIDS, other illnesses and accidents. Others come from families simply too poor to care for them. Almost all the children are Dalits, the so-called Untouchables that for centuries have been stigmatised by Indian society as unclean, ignorant and beneath contempt.

We care for the children, some of whom come to us barely out of infancy, until they reach the age of eighteen and we strive to ensure that, before they leave us, they can go on to further education or find employment. Our aim is to bring these children safety and security, then dignity, self-respect and love.'

David discussed their various fund-raising methods, and gave examples of how funds were used (£6 provides education for one child for a month, £10 feeds one child for a month, £14 provides housing, clothing, and healthcare for one child for a month, and so on).

After some questions and answers, members thanked David for his presentation.

3. Police Report

No officer present.

4. Minutes of Meeting held on 1 February 2011

Approved; proposed by Linda Femister and seconded by Maggie Bagan.

5. Matters arising

None.

6. Secretary's report and correspondence

6.1 April Meeting – Colin Symes on his Street Pastor work.

6.2 May Meeting - AGM – speaker likely to be from the EUSA Volunteering.

6.3 Nominations are invited for the office bearers and committee for 2011-2012.

6.4 Former **Odeon** cinema

Colin invited Lisa (the Association's representative on the SCC) to update the meeting on the Community Council's progress in its efforts to save the building for the community. She said that over 4000 people had signed the petition, and it was to be presented to Jenny Dawe (Leader of the City Council) by the boxer Alex Arthur, on Wednesday 2 March. There would be media coverage. People are very impressed by what has been achieved in four weeks. Lisa distributed postcards which can be used to send objections to Duddingston House Properties' application to demolish the auditorium, citing valid reasons which she outlined, and which are listed below

I object to this application because the building was marketed at an unrealistically high price, not one reflecting its location, condition and current market conditions, and there are potential buyers offering a realistic price who consider repair of the building economically viable.

I object to this application because the building is a rare example of the work of William Trent, a leading cinema designer of the 1920s, (1 of only 2 in Scotland) and Historic Scotland say the building is worthy of a category A listing.

I object to this application because a cinema / arts venue would give greater economic benefits to the area than would a hotel. I believe this could be proved with an appropriate evaluation. There is very strong feeling in the community that this iconic building should be retained as a cinema / arts venue.

I object to this application because the potential buyers know that there is an economic future for the building. It is clear that the local community would use the

building if it were a cinema / arts venue. The enthusiasm for the recent poster and petition campaign has shown that.

There are about four weeks left to lodge objections and members were urged to complete the postcards. They can be left in the Community Centre.

An event will take place in St Patrick Square on 12 March – details will be made available very soon.

7. Treasurer's report

7.1 In Fiona's absence, Colin reported that the most recent balance was £1122.44.

7.2 *John Ross Memorial Fund (South Side Association) Account with Lloyds TSB (Clerk Street)*

Colin Christison (Secretary), on behalf of Fiona Scott (Treasurer) reported that the existing signatories were unable to be traced or contactable and the Bank could not confirm the names. The meeting declared that all existing signatories should be removed and replaced with two new signatories from the current office bearers of the Association (Fiona Scott and Colin Christison) who have the instruction to close this account and transfer the remaining funds to the Association's account held with the Clydesdale Bank, Nicolson Square. The Association will use the funds in accordance with John Ross's interest in projects associated with the South Side.

8. Environmental matters

None.

9. Question and Answer Session with the attending Councillor

Cllr Perry discussed the Odeon campaign with members. It was important to keep the pressure on DHP, especially using a sustained press campaign. The discussion included how it was possible for DHP to avoid a compulsory purchase order by submitting planning applications He also said that the Council was still in discussion with some groups which were interested in the Craggs Sports Centre, and it was hoped that the local community would be able to retain some access to the building.

10 Any other business

None

11. Date of next meeting

Tuesday 5 April 2011.