

GUILDRY & MORTIFICATIONS FUND COMMITTEE FEBRUARY 2025

LORD DEAN REPORT

The Committee Members and Trustees will be pleased to know that there were positive outcomes to the awards made 2024. All six recipients of the laptops went on to Higher Education in subjects of their choice.

Six of the seven people whose Construction Skills Certificates were paid for from the Fund are still in employment in the construction sector.

The Burgesses of Guild have continue to make a significant contribution to a variety of initiatives, projects and charities in the community. Their contribution in kind is immeasurable. Throughout the year we have also endeavoured to raise awareness of areas of need, research and civic projects which could benefit from input from the Burgesses of Guild.

The Burgesses of Guild have, at every opportunity, shared the awareness raising with the Burgesses of Trade, Seven Incorporated Trades.

This year I submit three proposals for consideration, all three meet the criteria of the Trust Deed:-

1. The Flourish Project

The Flourish Project exists to equip young people to develop healthy self-esteem, mental and emotional wellbeing. This is done by helping young people, identified as vulnerable, to develop a growth mindset, creating helpful thinking patterns and enabling the young person to start to understand their potential, realizing future aspirations and setting goals for the future.

It is the objective of the Burgesses of Guild to support young people on their pathway to appropriate studies or vocational aspirations. 1 in 10 children and young people aged 5-16 years old have clinically diagnosable mental problems. The statistics paint a picture of a generation increasingly struggling with mental and emotional health resulting in anxiety, depression, self-harm and suicide. These young people need urgent help to get on a positive pathway. They are those who are displaying high absenteeism, disengagement and low achievement levels. At an early age they are doomed to be unemployable, but if their pathways can be changed they could achieve academic and vocational positive outcomes. Without good seeds a flower cannot grow.

The Lord Dean is on the Aberdeen Steering Group of the Homeward initiative and in this role has learned so much about homelessness. Young people who are homeless at school leaving age have little or no hope of gaining employability. Preventative and remedial actions at an early stage can change what has been accepted as inevitable outcomes.

2. Code the City

This initiative will deliver evening classes on introductory coding, specifically focussed on young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. Extra-curricular classes for advanced technology usually carry a price tag beyond the means of many families. The skills taught give the successful participants an employability advantage. With the support of funding as outlined in the proposal we have an opportunity of establishing a sustainable delivery vehicle for disadvantaged, able students in Aberdeen.

3. Tall Ships 2025 Traineeships

The Traineeships offered by the Tall Ships organisation are unique. They are not aimed at young people focussed on futures as mariners but at young people in general. The most common description by young people on completion is that the traineeship changed their lives.

It affords the trainee the opportunity to experience confidence building, teamworking, communication skills, problem solving skills, resilience, indeed – all key attributes sought by further and higher education and employers alike. Such a traineeship is usually beyond the grasp of young people from deprived backgrounds. There are already a good number of Traineeships identified by the participants of the Tall Ships Aberdeen event. Many of the applicants will be self-funded but the opportunity should not be beyond the grasp of young people whose personal financial circumstances prohibit them from applying.

The Burgesses of Guild of the City of Aberdeen wish to support a young person and the city with the aim of achieving a positive outcome for both the person and the city.

Recommendation:

That the Trustees consider the proposals as submitted and grant the appropriate funding to facilitate support to areas of need with the ultimate aim of providing support for young people to achieve their academic or vocational potential and /or goals.

2024 was the first time the Burgesses of Guild had made application to the Fund for many years. The Fund has grown and the city benefits from its existence. It is hoped that the Trustees will look favourably upon the proposals as each proposal supports young people in Aberdeen who otherwise would not benefit from the initiatives thus having lasting repercussions on their futures.

Sylvia Halkerston

Lord Dean of Guild