

Trust News

keeping you in touch with Balerno Village Trust

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<http://www.balernovt.org.uk>

Good Progress with Ravelrig Walled Garden

Sometimes things can take a little time to get going, but there's been good progress recently on a number of fronts with the walled Garden.

Consultations - Discussions with the landowner, Greenbelt Group, are continuing, and we are hopeful that we can agree a lease in time for access to the Walled Garden for the 2014 growing season. Greenbelt will shortly be consulting with residents who pay them a management fee, regarding the proposed project. BVT will then be holding wider consultations with anyone who is interested in being part of this exciting new venture!

Funding and community support - We are also submitting funding applications to cover both the start up and running costs of the project. We are delighted that two local schools and other community groups have indicated that they would like to be part of the Walled Garden, and have expressed support for these applications.

We have recently established a Steering Group for the project, which will provide management of the Walled Garden as it develops, covering both the allotments and community garden activities. This includes BVT Directors and other interested volunteers.

How will it work? - Most people know what allotments are: a piece of land that is leased to an individual or group, for them to cultivate and produce fruit, vegetables etc for their own use. Community Gardens are organised in a range of different ways. Here's one summary from Greenspace Scotland: "**Community gardens** are locally managed areas of land developed in response to the needs of the communities in which they are based. They have a strong social focus and function, often providing much needed greenspace in urban areas. Most of the gardening is communal with groups and individuals contributing to the cultivation of the whole site. Many community gardens include significant elements of fruit and vegetable growing within their activities" (From *Our Growing Community*, Greenspace Scotland).

We are also hoping to have regular open days, events and learning programmes open to all. In addition we're keen to restore the fruit trees that used to grow around the walls of the garden, and work with Greenbelt to improve the paths around the garden, which will improve access between Ravelrig and the village in all weathers.

If you haven't made contact with us already and wish to be kept up to date or be involved, then email us at company_secretary_bvt@gmail.com. or check our website for further updates and info re meetings in January and February.

Lord Provost's visit to Balerno Farmers Market



The Lord Provost shares a joke with Jennifer Phillips of Hopetoun Farm
picture by Ian Gidney

Over the past year BVT have been theming some of the monthly Markets and in November we celebrated Martinmas the traditional festival of lights, with lanterns on each stall. And we had a special visitor too in the person of the Lord Provost, the Rt Hon Donald Wilson.

The Lord Provost was in Balerno principally to present certificates awarding Fairtrade Village status to Balerno, and separately Fairtrade school status for Dean Park Primary School. BVT however managed to hijack him on his way there and we were delighted to be able to show him the Farmers Market. We were also delighted that he accepted our offer of honorary membership of Balerno Village Trust with the membership number of Hon0001.

During his visit the Lord Provost met several stall holders and customers and also had the opportunity to hear about the work of the Trust. He has a particular interest in micro hydro scheme opportunities and was very interested in the Harlaw Hydro project. Fortunately he was able to discuss the intricacies with members of the Hydro Board; Harlaw Hydro shares the BVT stand at the Market and people are always willing to discuss progress. BVT also updated him on the Walled Garden project.

The Martinmas Market was the latest in the series of themed markets which started with last year's Christmas Market and continued with the Valentine's Market in February, the Daffodil Market in April, Maypole Market, the Water Market in June to mark the downpour which almost inundated the Maypole. We are planning a Mill market for February or March at which we hope to have a pedal driven oatmeal mill, and we will be processing the 2cwt of Balerno oats from Upper Dean Park Farm, and really bringing the Farm to the Market. Before then there is the Christmas Market and once again stall holders are being invited to decorate stalls for the event. There was keen competition last year and, from comments at the November Market there is likely to be an equally fierce contest at the 2013 Balerno Christmas Farmers Market.



Gordon takes on a new apprentice at Arran Cheese
picture by Ian Gidney

Apple Day - back with a bumper crop!



how many kilos of apples?

Apple Day 2012 had to be cancelled because of the poor harvest; but Apple Day returned in triumph for 2013 with capacity crowds turning out to show that apple juice straight from the fruit is Balerno's favourite tippie.

The signs earlier in the year that

this was going to be a bumper year were borne out and the only pity about that was that 2013 is a

year too early for the 170 apple trees planted around Balerno as part of the 2010 Sustain Balerno project. However 2014 should be just about right.

Something around 150L of apple juice was produced this year, and such was the demand that the supply of bottles proved unequal to the task.

Putting on Apple Day involves a host of volunteers and lot of very hard work; but there is huge enthusiasm for it. The team were washing apples under arc lights until late the night before, and the cutting team were on early, not to mention the hauliers barrowing apples in and waste for composting out. The apples press fortunately was not short of eager volunteers.

If you'd like to know more about Sustain Balerno then contact Hugo Whitaker on 449 3439

Zzzzzzzzzzz..... Sleep tight

The Bee Group tell us that having successfully homed the three nuclei acquired in the summer the hives have now been bedded down for the winter.

Hydro happenings

After the (prolonged) flurry of activity in the spring when Harlaw Hydro surprised even themselves by raising the entire capital requirement in the share issue - £330K if you have forgotten - things have been happening equally frenetically but behind the scenes.

At a well attended meeting on 20 November Directors of Harlaw Hydro updated shareholders on progress, highlighting in particular the appointment of the Design Contractor. There are 271 investors in the scheme, 50% of whom are Balerno based and with most of the remainder living in Currie or Juniper Green. 17% live elsewhere in Edinburgh.

The company have to apply for pre-accreditation by end of december to benefit from the government's Feed in Tariff scheme, and they are confident of being able to achieve that.

While the timetable leading to the scheme becoming operational has slipped slightly, with generating now estimated to commence in autumn 2014, the company is also confident that it can meet that. It aims to order the turbine/generator in December 2013 and commence construction works in spring 2014.

Watch for further general updates in Trust News.

Further details about BVT activities and all the current projects are available on the BVT website - <http://www.balernovt.org.uk>

Only 10 weeks to Tattie Day!

What has Duke of York in common with Dunluce and Casablanca? It may not yet be Christmas, but BVT's Sustain Balerno Group are already looking forward to getting stuck in with potato planting, and the first step on that is Tattie Day of course. So make a date in your diary to meet them all, including the Duke, at the Foremost spud event of the year!

Tattie Day is back with the 2014 edition, on Saturday 22 February 2014.



BVT plans for the future

Over the years BVT has successfully started a number of projects including the Farmers Market, the Balerno Music Festival and most recently the Harlaw Hydro project. Some of these have spun off to form independent organisations, and that has the real benefit of allowing those interested specifically in those projects to concentrate on developing that activity.

But BVT is now at something of a cross roads, and we know that in order to continue to develop and deliver projects

for the benefit of the community we have to strengthen the central organisation. Running the Farmers Market for example takes a lot of time and effort, and the upcoming Walled Garden project will involve considerable organisation not only at the design and build stage but also in management and development of the vision once operational.

BVT have therefore applied for funding to the Development Trusts Association for Scotland and hope to hear before the end of the year about the next steps.

Winning Shot!

Congratulations to Mike Molleson for his picture - below - which won best Photo of 2012/2013 at the 2013 C&B Awards.

The picture appeared in the April C&B News and was also front cover on the April Trust News; we thought it was a great picture then and we still do. Truly, the picture that raised £330K to fund Harlaw Hydro. Well done Mike, and many congratulations!



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