

AGM of Tarland Development Group 16 August 2011

Chairperson's Report

Introduction

Since the last AGM on 24 August 2010, the group has held eight meetings. In addition to this, several subgroup meetings have been held to further the development and maintenance of current and future projects. Close working links have been established with Cromar Community Council, Tarland Welfare Trust, the MacRobert Trust and Cairngorm Open Access Trust.

The last year has been an exciting one as far as the development of new projects is concerned, and the hard work of new and existing members, as well as from additional volunteers from the community, has enabled existing projects to grow in scope, and new projects to be established.

TDG Projects

As in previous years, the Tarland Development Group has depended entirely on the voluntary effort of members of the local community to establish and maintain its projects. When projects have been agreed by the group, a great deal of work has been done by individual members in identifying sources of funding and submitting applications for funds. Small scale fundraising has been carried out by the group, and generous donations have helped further our objectives. The MacRobert Trust, the Cairngorm Outdoor Access Trust and the Marr Area Partnership have been especially generous in their support in the funding and maintenance of projects.

In addition to maintaining existing projects, we continue to look to the future in identifying projects which can involve and benefit the local community. Community consultation is a key component in ensuring the maximum involvement of local people.

New or Expanded Projects:

The following are projects which have been established or expanded in the year 2010-2011:

- youth project: consultation with young people of secondary school and late primary age in the village identified their wish for a wider range of recreational activities in the village. Top of their wish list was a youth cinema, and thanks to a generous anonymous donation as well as funding from Kincardine and Deeside Arts Forum for the purchase of the relevant

equipment, the fortnightly cinema opened its doors in June 2011. An enthusiastic group of young people are instrumental in the running of the cinema alongside adult volunteers from the community, and feedback has been very positive.

- Aboyne-Tarland Cycle Route: a successful application to the Climate Challenge Fund has raised sufficient funds for the final phase of the creation of the route. Work on the route is ongoing and expected to reach completion by autumn 2011.
- Tarland calendar: in addition to the creation of a new set of Tarland Christmas cards, a very successful calendar was produced of photographs of local scenes through the seasons. Due to the demand for the 2011 calendar and cards, new images are being collated for the 2012 issues.

Ongoing Projects

The following successfully established projects continue to run and develop:

- community composting: this scheme is in its second year of operation. Results of a questionnaire completed by participants at the end of the 2010 season showed a high level of satisfaction with the fortnightly collections and the majority of the users signed up for a second year. The garden waste has been rather slow to compost down due to adverse weather, but is now looking promising for use later this year.
- the path network continues to be very well used by locals and visitors alike. Additional funding has been received for improvements to some paths e.g. fencing off the border of a field to separate walkers from livestock. The MacRobert Trust has taken over the task of grass mowing on the paths, and volunteers are involved in other aspects of maintenance.
- wetland area: Tarland Primary school pupils have volunteered to become involved with maintaining the wetland area, and will be encouraged to utilise the site for environmental projects.
- the bi-annual local market continues to attract stallholders and customers.

Future plans

The following ideas have been put forward for future projects:

- community allotments: discussions are underway to explore the possibility of establishing a community allotment area with communal polytunnel for the use of local residents. It is envisaged that this project could provide educational opportunities for schoolchildren, access to gardening for people with disabilities, and opportunities for social contact, as well as for sharing gardening expertise.
- community energy project: the MacRobert Trust is keen to generate power from wind turbines in the area in conjunction with local farm

tenants. Discussions have taken place to explore the feasibility of community groups purchasing a share in this scheme in order to raise funds for community projects. This idea is in the early stages at present, and further decisions will depend on the outcome of community consultation which is due to take place in the near future.

- squirrel bridge: funding for a rope bridge across the Aberdeen-Tarland road at the entrance to the village has been received from Gillian Masson, and the MacRobert Trust have agreed to erect the bridge during tree cutting work in the autumn.
- archaeology trail: some initial work has been undertaken to map out a possible archaeology trail in the Tarland area. It is hoped that this will develop further in the coming year, with the possibility of an illustrated booklet to accompany the Tarland walks publication.

Ongoing maintenance and other commitments

- regular inspection of the path network to identify any repair and maintenance issues.
- meetings with Cairngorms Outdoor Access Trust and the MacRobert Trust to address path network development and maintenance issues.
- updating and maintaining the Tarland website
- collating information re. availability of volunteers in order to draw up a rota for the composting project.
- Regular contact with other community groups such as Cromar Community Council and the Tarland Welfare Trust to address common issues, and ensure joined up working.

Membership

Bill Harvie has recently tendered his resignation form the group. As one of the original members of TDG, Bill has been a valued member of the group, and an enthusiastic volunteer on various projects. We wish him well and thank him for his commitment to the Tarland community.

Thanks go to all group members for their work in initiating new ideas for community projects, making applications for funding and for giving their time as volunteers in the development and running of projects.

Lindsay Stewart
Chairperson

