



Appendix 1

Chair's Report 2022 - 2023

Introduction

Tarland Development Group continues to balance the needs of ongoing projects whilst developing new ones. This year saw two major successful projects celebrate their 10 year anniversary - The Community Garden and The Food and Music Festival.

Since our last AGM we co-opted Sandra Van Heusen as Secretary. We said goodbye to Liz Cooper as a trustee as well as Karen McHarg who stood as the trustee for the Wetlands project. Thank you for their time supporting TDG projects.

In Shona Donaldson's absence Will Redpath has stepped in to be employed by TDG to support the Food and Music Festival which was hugely successful again in 2023. Our newest employees are Mike Law who took up the post of Tarland Trails Maintenance Officer and Carol Anderson who looks after the composting loos at the Tarland Trails, Pittenderich. The bee group have also employed Rebecca Van Heusen as a gardener. We are grateful for their hard work.

Throughout the past year we have secured a significant amount of funds from a range of sources. We are very grateful to all trustees and steering group members for their work on completing these applications to support the wide range of TDG projects. Also we are very grateful to all the volunteers who support our projects.

Chris Redmond, Chair, 27th September 2023

Project Updates:

- Tarland Bee Group (Lead Trustee: Yvonne Davidson)

This year has gone well for TBG with normal activities resumed post Covid. We had a series of winter talks held at Oldtown, followed by a beginners' class and have since held 'Open Hive' sessions every two weeks. Our next series of winter talks will begin in November. We have had a number of visits to Oldtown from various groups, The Beavers, SWRI, other beekeeping organisations and of course we were open for part of the Food and Music Festival. We now have extraction equipment and had our first community honey extraction last week.

The Bee Bothy has been augmented by a lean to shelter at the rear, primarily for the Apple Pressing Group. This was completed last month and we now have lighting, power and water outside to assist with the apple pressing. Macrobert Trust were the generous funders for this welcome addition to our facilities.

Tarland Bee Group young beekeeper Findlay Taylor was selected by the SBA to represent Scotland at the International Meeting of Young Beekeepers along with two other Scottish team members. They did extremely well, coming in 12th of 30 countries. Findlay was 12th individually

out of 100 entrants, amazing work for the youngest participant there at 13 years old.

Thanks to all our supporters, funders and volunteers. Thanks to our members who continue to support their community group, attending talks and practical sessions and always willing to help when work-parties are required for painting, gardening, DIY and general tidying up.

• **Tarland Paths Group (Lead Trustee: Liz Cooper)**

Liz stepped down as the trustee for paths this year but she aims to continue informal maintenance with the Tuesday Tramping group. Gillin Needham continues to represent Tarland on the Marr Paths Forum. We contracted Jim Prince to cut back the overgrown section of the Tarland Way from Coull Bridge to Heughhead Bridge and the final downhill section to Aboyne. This has much improved this section. Thanks to volunteers who support the network by doing small jobs, sharing photos or information about issues. Development of new paths projects (new footpath towards Craiglic (Lumphanan) and Petts / Black path) are on pause until a trustee can be appointed to lead these. Contact has been received from Gordon Drummond about a connection to Tarland from Cairngorms Lodges.

• **Tarland Wetlands Group (Chair: Kathy Dale. Lead Trustee: David Hirst)**

The group's vision is to develop a set of natural wetlands fitting within the farming system, for the benefit of wildlife, the environment and local people. The group has undertaken upkeep and management of the Waste Water Treatment Works (WWTW) hide and wetland. This includes signage, vegetation management, and water level management for birds in the adjoining field. The Viewfield Wetland in the village is also being managed by the group. A new interpretive sign will be erected soon and the ponds will be de-silted again this autumn. Another scrape has been created on the Ordie wetland (Green Moss) and the small dam is being maintained.

The Wetlands Group and its partners have completed the Development Phase of the Nature Restoration Fund (NRF) funded project on the Tarland Burn and the final report from the consultants is available here: [Tarland Burn restoration design - Dee Catchment Partnership \(deepartnership.org\)](https://deepartnership.org) The Project Team have met with The MacRobert Trust to discuss the next steps. The Trust requires that 1. the project will not cause any additional flooding to the village; 2. the tenant farmers affected are in agreement with it; and 3. the village is in agreement with it. It is hoped that a way forward for the project can be found but this will require additional funding. The community and the Flood Group are asking about measures to alleviate flooding in Tarland that could be done upstream. These could include more bunds and leaky dams, which are being investigated. Funding would be required if they were to be installed at a landscape scale.

• **Community Composting (Lead Trustee: Dave Hirst. Organiser: Denise Hansford)**

The garden waste collection service continues to run well, organised by Denise Hansford, with stable numbers and supported by a dedicated band of volunteers.

• **Cromar Food Waste Project (Lead Trustee: Linda Cunningham)**

Since the last AGM in 2022 we have continued with our regular food pop ups in Tarland and Logie Coldstone, free to all, every fortnight. We have a dedicated team of volunteers who keep this going. Throughout 2023 the number of customers has remained high (apart from over the summer break) and we are thankful for funding from Marr Area Partnership and the MacRobert Trust who allow us to supplement our stocks when needed. Our main stock continues to come from Aboyne Co-op (ambient food which we freeze), Aboyne Fareshare Depot (cupboard items) and Number 1 in Banchory (fresh produce) and when in season, magnificent surplus vegetables and fruit from Douneside House gardens.

Much of the stock that comes from the Aboyne Fareshare Depot is now donated or bought in using the Aberdeenshire Food Challenge fund, but we still receive, and pass on, out of date items that are still usable. For example a 12.5kg bag of chocolate muffin mix, became treats for our Easter pop up, a bucket of banoffee caramel which coincided with a glut of bananas from the Coop, was given out with a recipe for Banoffee pie, and a 3.5kg bag of jelly crystals became pudding for the Tarland Food and Music Festival Community Kitchen event along with ice cream.

In November 2022, Tarland Guides invited us to give the girls a cooking workshop using as much surplus from the Coop as we could. They made a three-course meal including soup, pasta bake, and fruit crumble and ate some on the night and took some home. We were delighted to get a generous donation too, and the donation of a dehydrater which allows us to dry surplus fruit and berries from the Coop.

In January 2023 we were surprised to be invited to meet King Charles III in Aboyne's Men Shed. He wanted to hear from groups concerned with food and fuel poverty in Aberdeenshire and two of our team spent a few minutes explaining to him what we do and how we fit in with other agencies.

In the year to come, we will continue to assess the requirement for fortnightly pop ups, and if possible, will go back to monthly pop ups and concentrate on food waste, which will give us more time to do cooking and workshops.

A huge thank you again this year to all our helpers who are all volunteers. Anyone wishing to help out by picking up food, admin, manning the pop ups, doing deliveries or whatever comes along, should please contact us at CromarFood@gmail.com

• **Food and Music Festival (Lead Trustee: Dave Hirst)**

Since the last AGM we hosted the 2022 and 2023 Food and Music Festival. The 2023 was a very memorable weekend with this year being the 10th event and a sell out on Saturday evening. Will Redpath did a great job filling in for Shona as organiser. The events included the usual mix of concerts, music and food workshops. Additionally the Doon Tha Brae enduro was held on Sunday. The festival despite being well attended loses money but is supported by grant funding. The group need more volunteers on the steering group to help with the organising ahead of the weekend.

• **Tarland Trails (Drummy Woods and Pittenderich) (Lead Trustee: Chris Redmond)**

Tarland Trail, Pittenderich opened on 10th April 2023. Since opening the trails have seen over 20,000 visits. The trails have been very well received by local and visiting mountain bikers. The development of the management of the facility continues to be adapted as we learn how to manage a larger set of trails with more users than expected. Further funding has been confirmed to develop the facilities with installing power (EV chargers) and water being explored.

• **Apple Group (Lead Trustees: Dave Hirst, Sandra Van Heusen)**

Last year's apple pressing was just beginning at the time of the AGM. We have completed one apple pressing this year, which produced 84 bottles. (*This year's apple crop is considerably lower than last year's.*) All 84 bottles were sold at the Tarland Food and Music Festival. We have two more apple pressings scheduled on the 29th of September and 1st of October. The new slabbed, covered area behind the apiary is working well and pressings are no longer weather dependent.

• **Gone to Seed (Lead Trustee: XXXXX: Organiser: Lizzie Shepherd)**

Saturday 25th February event was very busy with people attending from far and wide. Lizzie continues to run the project and we should continue to seek a trustee to take it on.

• **Tarland Community Garden (Lead Trustee: Ana Pena del Valle)**

The garden celebrated its 10th year. A garden AGM was held in January with a transition taking place. Workshops and work parties were held as well as open for the garden opens day and the food and music festival.

New for this year:

Tarland Calendar (Lead Trustee: Julian Davies)

Calendars sold well last year - 80. More planned for this year with a new company and increased quality.

Tarland Lego Club (Lead Trustee: Hayley Lockerbie)

Tarland Lego Club had its first meeting in December 2022, where 55 people came along. Since then the club has gone from strength to strength, with 80 being our biggest attendance so far. A range of ages attend the club from baby siblings through to granny and grandads. It is mostly families who attend, with representation from Tarland, Logie Coldstone, Towie, Strathdon, Lumphanan and Aboyne primary schools. Feedback from those attending the club is consistently positive.

The club was initially funded through MacRobert Trust, and since then we've been successful in securing money from Marr Area, Aboyne Rotary Club and Ballater Charitable Chiels. We have ran two fundraising activities - a guess the number of legos in the jar, and a Lego walk of fire. The Lego walk of fire was particularly successful. Duncan and Calum Lockerbie are currently fundraising by training to run the Pitlochry half marathon and the Illuminator 15 mile course. So far they have £615 in sponsorship. This puts the club in a good position to continue operating without cost to attendees, and ensuring there is enough Lego for the numbers attending.

The club has had visits from MacRobert Trust, Girl Guides from France, and the Cromar Food Waste pop up. Most recently the club held a drop in session at Tarland Food and Music Festival which was attended by approximately 50 people, some familiar faces and some new faces.

Film Club: (Lead Trustees: Hayley Lockerbie, Organiser: Charlie Ritchie)

Restarted tonight, the night of the AGM making use of the NEAT screen to hold it in the main hall.

Other:

TDG and Tarland hosted four French guides in the summer to support a wide range of TDG projects. A big thank you to all the projects that hosted the guides and to Yvonne for coordinating.