



Knocknagael: a Green Hub for our Community

Newsletter 2024/2

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Welcome to the Summer 24 edition of our newsletter.

In our Spring edition of this newsletter we reported that *'the bureaucracy entailed in the Asset Transfer process trundles on'*. The update is that the bureaucracy entailed in the Asset Transfer process trundles on, and on...

There is much agreement about the way forward, and enthusiasm from all parties involved that the transfer of the Smiddy Field at Knocknagael should proceed as described, though a couple of knotty technical issues remain to be resolved. There is a significant amount of work going on behind the scenes to resolve these issues involving ourselves; the Scottish Government's Rural Payments & Inspections Division, who currently own the

Smiddy Field; the Scottish Land Fund, who we hope will provide the funding to purchase the field; and the responsible Government Minister and his Civil Servants.

We fervently hope that the Autumn update will not state that the bureaucracy entailed in the Asset Transfer process trundles on, and on, and on...

In the meantime we will offer an opportunity for members to come and chat with us where we can provide an informal update over morning coffee— details below.

Also in this newsletter, please find news about successful grant applications, a budding orchard and a report on April's ceilidh. Despite the hiatus in the Asset Transfer process, a lot is happening!

As reported previously, we were successful in securing some funding from the Highlands & Islands Climate Action Fund to support another Apple Grafting Day in April at Des and Kay Kelly's orchard at Torbreck. The result, as you can see below has been an impressive number of saplings ready to form the basis of our community orchard



We have had some more very positive news about grant funding recently. An application to the Highland Council's Community Regeneration Fund was successful and we have been awarded a significant sum to support the development of the necessary technical specifications and designs for the Smiddy Field, get the technical advice & drawings that will be required for planning permission, carry out an archaeological survey and undertake some small amount of initial work on the car park. Although we have some delays with the Asset Transfer, the main point of this grant is to position us to meet the conditions of transfer and progress application for funding for infrastructure once the Smiddy Field is transferred.

And finally, some dates for your diary:

- ⇒ Meet the Board & Informal Update - ***Botanic Gardens cafe, 11a.m. Friday 23rd August.***
- ⇒ Incredible Edible Inverness & Knocknagael Picnic as part of the Highlands and Islands Climate Festival—***Sat 7th September 1.30pm-3.30pm at Bellfield Park.***
- ⇒ Community Woodlands Ceilidh — ***Friday 4th October.***
- ⇒ Archaeology Community Event at the Smiddy Field, possibly mid-October—***date to be confirmed.***

The Ceilidh...

The second annual Knocknagel Ceilidh was held on Saturday 13th April at St Mary's Hall on Huntly St. The evening was a great success and over £900 was raised for Knocknagael funds, approximately twice the amount raised last year. The challenge will be to double this amount again in 2025!

A huge 'thank-you' is appropriate to all those that helped on the night, to those that contributed food and drink, and not least to the wonderful band 'Get Reel', who provided the entertainment. Specific thanks to band-member, fiddler and Knocknagael member Dr Catherine Brown.



The fabulous Get Reel



Andrew Thomson from the BBC – winner of the ever-popular Whisky Game



Roll on next year....



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