



Ltd

## ABERDEENSHIRE LOCAL RURAL PARTNERSHIPS

### FUNDING REPORT FOR 2013-2014

Submission: 28<sup>th</sup> February 2014



#### **Formal Opening of Methlick Play Park.**

*"Revival of Methlick Play Park" - A busy Pirate theme.*

Rod Gunson,  
Development Officer,  
Formartine Partnership Ltd.,

The Formartine Partnership is a company limited by Guarantee no, SC 301273  
29 Bridge St., ELLON, Aberdeenshire, AB41 9AA.  
Tel: 01358-720584, 01358-726452;  
E-mail: [rodgunson@formartinepartnership.org.uk](mailto:rodgunson@formartinepartnership.org.uk)  
[www.formartinepartnership.org.uk](http://www.formartinepartnership.org.uk)



Flower bed on Udry Green.



Large Planter outside Pitmedden School.

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Methlick Park Football Pitch.



MacDonald Woods Community Garden.

## GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT.

The Formartine Partnership was formed in 1997. Since 25<sup>th</sup> April 2006 the Formartine Partnership has been a Company limited by Guarantee, (SC 301273). It is not a registered charity. Currently there are twelve directors on its Board including a Chairman and a Company Secretary. The Board meets approximately every six weeks.

The Formartine Partnership employs one full-time employee, a Development Officer, who submits a regular Report and plan of work to the Board at each Board meeting. It is currently advertising for a part-time administrator.

The Partnership members include all twelve Community Councils in Formartine:-

Auchterless, Inverkeithny and Fisherford; Belhelvie; Collieston and Slains; Ellon; Foveran; Fyvie, Rothienorman and Monquhitter; Meldrum, Bourtie and Daviot; Methlick; Tarves; Turriff and District; Udney; and Ythan.

The following fifty one (mainly) voluntary groups:-

1<sup>st</sup> Monquhitter Brownies, Cuminestown; 2<sup>nd</sup> Ellon Rainbows; Aberdeenshire Care and Repair Project; Aberdeenshire Council; Aberdeenshire Environmental Forum; Auchterless School; Balmedie Beaver Scout Group; Balmedie Christmas Lights Group; Balmedie Eco Group; Barthol Chapel Primary School; Better Balmedie Group; Busy Bees Playgroup, Turriff; Collieston Amenities Committee; Cultercullen Eco group; Daviot Playgroup; Daviot Primary School; Ellon Biodiversity Action Group; Ellon Can-do Community recycling; Ellon Civic Pride; Ellon Duke of Edinburgh Open Award Group; Fintry School; Formartine Oral History Project Group; Foveran Partnership; Friends of Haddo Country Park; Friends of MacDonald Park; Fyvie and District Amenities Committee.; Fyvie Playgroup; Fyvie Scout Group; Girl Guide Association- Ythan District; Gordon Park Development Group; Gordon Park Playgroup; Gordon Rural Action; Meldrum Amenities Improvement Group, Methlick Community Garden Project; Methlick Under-fives; Millbex Public Hall; National Farmers Union of Scotland; Pages; Royal Society for the Protection of Birds; Scottish Agricultural College; Scottish National Heritage; Scottish Rural Property and Business Association; Tarts and Crafts Limited; Tipperty Primary School- Parent Council; Turriff and District Ltd; Turriff and District Heritage Society; Turriff Baden Powell Centre; Turriff Brownies; Turriff Town Pride; Woodhead and Windyhills Community Trust; Ythan District Fishery Board; Ythan Project Volunteers Group; and Ythanbank Community Association.

And Any resident of Formartine may also become a member.

The most recent AGM was held on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2013 and the audited accounts for 2012-2013 were approved. One Director, Alisdair McRae, stood down and all the other directors were re-elected. At the first Board meeting after the AGM on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2013, John Loveday was re-elected Chairman, John Loder was elected Vice-Chairman, Yvonne Milne was elected Treasurer and Alistair Sinclair was elected Company Secretary.



**Collieston.**



**Methlick War Memorial.**

## ACTIVITIES, ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:** the Partnership will need to help groups in their area with information, implementation, and community engagement, to build inclusive and sustainable projects.

### Formartine Beginning to Blossom/ Formartine in Bloom 2013

#### *Formartine Beginning to Blossom 2013*

Eight schools entered this year, the same number as last year. However, there was a substantial change in participants. Fyvie and Pitmedden were new entries and Ellon Primary returned. Auchterless, Balmedie and Daviot withdrew to develop new projects from last year.

It has been clear since the first FBB in 2009 that several schools were working towards a plan over several years and thus competition will get much more intense in time. This is clearly illustrated this year with five schools achieving Gold Awards. With schools withdrawing for a year to develop new projects can only increase that intensity.

The competition is practical as well as theoretical, linking the educational curriculum- ecology, sustainability, horticulture, maths, biology, with wider practical issues, such as cooking, food quality and healthy eating. Judging provides a fascinating 1.5 days. The range of activities carried out, the enthusiasm displayed and the confident presentation are all impressive. It is hoped that this will engender in young people an appreciation of their environment and a sense of belonging and identity with their communities which will be carried forward into adulthood.

#### *Formartine Beginning to Blossom 2013: Awards*

**GOLD AWARD & Winner** ~ Fintry School;  
**GOLD AWARD & Runner Up** ~ Slains School;;  
**GOLD AWARD** ~ Udhay Green School; Arnage School, Tipperty School  
**SILVER GILT AWARD** ~ none;  
**SILVER AWARD** ~ Fyvie School, Pitmedden School;  
**BRONZE AWARD** ~ Ellon Primary School.

#### **Judges' Prize.**

This is a new award given to the school which, in the opinion of the Judges, has done something "very special" independent of the points awarded or the overall marking scheme. The award is a wooden plaque with an owl in a tree applied using pyrography created by Mrs V Hudson.

The winner of the first Judges' Prize is **Fyvie School** for a wide-ranging campaign against dog waste in the local area including the woodland walks.



**Arnage School: spider's web and poetry.**



**Maths at Slains School.**

#### *Formartine in Bloom 2013*

Sixteen communities entered the same number as last year. There were three large communities, seven medium and six small. Disappointingly, Better Balmedie withdrew for they were widening the

challenge in the large category. Against that, Rothienorman re-entered and Newburgh, one of the few Formartine communities who had never participated, entered for the first time. Graham Waters, recently retired Formartine LSO, has at last found exactly the right size of garden to suit him!

Recycling is one of the criteria on which entries are assessed. There is an amazing range of recycled planters- lots of concrete sewage pipes of very different sizes at Pitmedden; several old baths at Fyvie; delivery bicycles and an old shopping trolley at Cuminestown; and tree bowls, toilet bowl, old agricultural machinery (turnip masher, seed drills, and others) at Auchterless. They must have the most original recycled item too. Their red PO telephone box recycled into the village tourist information centre complete with maps and leaflets!



**Auchterless: the ultimate in re-cycling?**



**Wyverie Court, Oldmeldrum.**

Finally, it is nice to see joint activities between communities and its local school which we encouraged last year. Udney Green School has taken responsibility for some of the village planters and one of the beds on the Green; Pitmedden school now cares for the very large planters outside the school. The support also works in the opposite direction too- individual community members supporting activities in the school notably at Fintry and Slains Schools.

As usual judging is a very inspiring day. The effort and commitment of volunteers is obvious and the sense of pride in their community is palpable. I still believe that one can tell one is in Formartine by the brightness of the displays. However, this may be more difficult in the future because Buchan are now following in our footsteps with a very similar competition including one for schools.

### *Formartine in Bloom 2013: Awards*

#### **Small Community**

**Winner** ~ Auchterless;

**Runner Up** ~ Collieston;

**Highly Commended** ~ Udney Station, Woodhead of Fyvie, Ythanbank, Udney Green.

#### **Medium Community**

**Winner** ~ Pitmedden;

**Runner Up** ~ Newburgh;

**Highly Commended** ~ Methlick, Tarves, Cuminestown, Fyvie, Rothienorman;

#### **Large Community**

**Winner** ~ Oldmeldrum;

**Runner Up** ~ Ellon;

**Highly Commended** ~ Turriff.

The Awards Ceremony for both competitions was held on 26<sup>th</sup> Sept in the very comfortable staff room at Meldrum Academy and was again attended by over 100 people including representatives from most of the participants.

FP would like to thank the judges Carole Baxter from the Beechgrove Garden, Jack Grant from Aberdeenshire Council, Richard Walker from Cruickshank Botanic Garden and Bob Davis from

Formartine Partnership. We would also like to thank the sponsors:- Oceangrove Geoscience Ltd., JRD Equipment, Udney Station Hotel, Kairdson Business Centre, Rambos Tyre Services and Sinclair Contractors- who provide all the prizes and thus produce the competitive element to the competitions, and Aberdeenshire Council who cover the cost of administration.

#### **Formartine Partnership AGM.**

This took place on November 21<sup>st</sup> 2013 in Udney Station Hotel and was attended by 20 members. Thanks to Stephen Archer, Director of Infrastructure Services, Aberdeenshire Council, who gave an excellent presentation on Bringing Better Broadband to Aberdeenshire entitled "*From Mountain to Sea- The Digital Story.*"

#### **Grants Administration: Town and Village Enhancement Grant Scheme and Rural Youth Transport Scheme.**

FP continues to administer the above grant schemes on behalf of the Formartine Area Committee. This fosters Community engagement and helps the Partnership to develop positive relationships with the applicants. FP can also find additional match funding or alternative grants if the project doesn't fit with the criteria.

### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: 1. PLANNING FOR REAL<sup>®</sup> & COMMUNITY ACTION PLANS.**

#### **1. Planning for Real<sup>®</sup> (PfR<sup>®</sup>).**

This widely used method of community consultation uses a public exhibition format where a model of the local community is displayed on which comment cards are placed. These suggestions are collated, analysed and the results taken back to a public meeting for endorsement and prioritisation into Actions. The community then take ownership, producing and championing the resultant **Community Action Plan**.

However, Community Action Plans were becoming rather delayed because of the workload of Community Councils. Accordingly, Formartine Partnership and the Formartine Community Planning Officer have decided to jointly produce draft Action Plans on the Community Councils' behalf, before the information becomes out-dated. The drafts are then sent to the CCs for approval. The following have initially been chosen, as their information is at an appropriate stage. The first one, The Udney Parish Community Action Plan, was completed and published in December 2012 as part of the Community Action Plan series (previously *Making it Real* series) which are produced by the Aberdeenshire Rural Partnerships and funded by Shell and CPP. It is intended that these will follow:-

##### **1.1. Belhelvie CC PfR<sup>®</sup> Potterton, Belhelvie and Whitecairns, Black Dog.**

Belhelvie CC held a PfR<sup>®</sup> for the above communities in March 2010. Belhelvie CC collated and analysed the initial results and organised three separate prioritising meetings, held in March and April 2011. However the CC Secretary resigned through pressure of work and DO is currently producing a draft Action Plan for submission to Belhelvie CC.

##### **1.2. Cuminestown PfR<sup>®</sup>.**

Monquhitter Amenities Association held the initial public meeting in March 2012 and the prioritising meeting in April 2012. This will be the next CAP to be published,

##### **1.3. Fyvie PfR<sup>®</sup>.**

Fyvie and District Amenities Committee is considering organising a PfR<sup>®</sup> consultation and has made initial approaches to FP.

##### **1.4. Auchterless PfR<sup>®</sup>.**

Auchterless and CC have asked for a meeting to discuss a PfR<sup>®</sup> consultation.

#### **2. Community Action Surveys (CAS).**

This follows the procedure pioneered locally by CLD in Balmedie and recorded in the document: *Balmedie Views*. The major difference is that locally-based researchers are employed to distribute and analyse questionnaires and to write up the Report and the Action Plan. Thus they go to the members of the community rather than the latter come to an exhibition. The suggestions are still put before the community for endorsement and prioritisation.

### 2.1. Rothienorman CAS.

Survey and questionnaire work is complete. The Community Profile and a Village Directory (of groups, activities and services) are both published. Analysis and prioritising is complete. DO is writing the Community Action Plan.

### 3. Community Profiles.

**COMMUNITY FACILITIES:** Provide a local advice service to groups seeking to develop Community assets and facilities.

#### PROJECTS WHICH ACHIEVED THEIR FUNDING IN 2012-13.

Last year, 2012-13, was the last year of LEADER 2008-13, and Aberdeenshire Council introduced a one-off fund, The Town and Villages Fund, to help advanced projects complete their funding. Together, this meant that a large number of projects achieved their funding targets last year. Some of these were large projects and have spent much of this year completing all processes, not always straightforwardly, before embarking on construction. I will report on these first.



**Collieston Community Hall.**



**New Daviot Community Hall.**

**Collieston Community Hall-** under construction, completion imminent.

This project will double the size and upgrade Collieston Community Hall by incorporating the attached school house. The project has been awarded £40,932 from the T&V Fund towards the total estimated cost of £100,000 and £56,000 from SITA. Currently construction is well advanced and has gone smoothly. Work on the school house is complete and the connection between the two buildings has been achieved and expected to be completed by April 2014.

**Daviot Community Hall-** under construction, completion imminent.

This is a £447,700 project for a new-build hall to replace the existing Community hall. LEADER has awarded a grant of £97,700, A Brick and Keystone campaign has raised £22,365 and it was believed the T&V grant of £59,323 had completed fundraising but it turned out that £86,000 was not confirmed, but dependent on planning permission for a new Wind Turbine, and this was refused on 11<sup>th</sup> December 2012. However, the planning appeal was successful on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2013, funding was completed and construction is well advanced and due for completion in April 2014.

**Ellon: Friends of MacDonald Woods Community Garden-** completed June 2013.

This group has converted a derelict area of MacDonald Woods into a community garden. The group has obtained a formal lease from the Woods' Trustees and have been awarded £7,630 from Awards for All. New paths and stone dykes have been constructed; trees, shrubs, heathers and wild flower meadow planted; and four benches installed to celebrate the Queen's Jubilee. The site is close to sheltered housing, care homes and children's playgroups and nurseries. It was formally opened in June 2013.

**Foveran Hall-** completed May 2013.

This hall is used by Foveran School for gym lessons. The project replaced the roof. The project has received a grant from T&V Fund for £15,000 towards the quoted cost of £25,000 and an application to

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Hill of Fiddes Community Fund completed the rest. Construction was carried out in the Easter Holidays in 2013 and the project was completed in May 2013.

### **Methlick Playing Field.**

*Phase 1: Reconstruction and drainage of football pitch.*

This project, costing £56,500, is complete. Unfortunately the top soil deteriorated over the construction period and remedial work has been continuing over the year to improve the soil, re-grade the surface and improve drainage.

*Phase 2: "Revival of Methlick Play Park"- completed 15<sup>th</sup> September 2013.*

This is a £70,000 project to install modern pieces of play park equipment at the existing play park area. It has strong community support and is designed with a maritime pirate flavour. The community hosted an opening day in September 15<sup>th</sup> 2013 and since then it has been tremendously popular with most school children and their parents heading for the play park after afternoon school!

*Phase 3: All weather court.*

Future project



**Foveran Hall.**



**Gallows Hill Community Pavilion.**

**Newburgh: Gallows Hill Community Pavilion-** under construction, completion imminent.

This £203,547 project, run by Foveran CC and the Foveran Partnership, is to build a new changing facility located between the modern full-size football pitch and the existing multi-purpose courts to serve both facilities. As well as changing rooms and toilets, there will be a galley kitchen and community room for educational and recreational use. Improvements to the courts' surface and floodlights will be funded separately. Delays to the construction have resulted after HMRC demanded that VAT be paid but the group has successfully adapted to this challenge and construction is well under way. Completion expected April-May 2014.

**Turriff: Baden Powell Hall-** under construction.

This project will provide a new community facility for use by local organisations and businesses at a total cost of £417,000, including £160,000 from LEADER and £72,000 from T&V, There will be a large stand-alone hall located immediately behind the existing building with meeting rooms equipped with audio-visual and internet facilities. The start of construction was deferred by various issues including a need for an engineering assessment and delays in obtaining a building warrant but construction started in January 2014 and completion is expected in September 2014.

### **NEW PROJECTS.**

#### **Belhelvie Community Trust.**

This is a new group which wants to act for other community groups in Belhelvie Parish to help with advice, funding and administrative support. DO is on the steering group and has helped to develop its constitution. The Trust has applied for start-up funding and would like to organise a community engagement event to investigate the needs of Belhelvie young people.

#### **Greeness Community Hall Association.**

FP has been working with this group to develop a new community building to replace the very dilapidated portacabin which they use currently. The new building will be based on a modified new-

build house, probably a kit house. Previous community facilities were destroyed when the school burnt down some years ago and the portacabin was previously that school's kitchen.

Aberdeenshire Council have confirmed that the resultant insurance pay-out totalling £62,000, can be used to core fund this project. The group have developed a strengthened Business Plan, commissioned architect's plans, obtained planning permission and were narrowly unsuccessful in an application for LEADER funding. They are exploring a possible application to Biglottery while waiting for the new LEADER to start. The quoted cost of £120,000 make this project an innovative approach which has a much wider potential by providing community facilities in small, scattered, isolated communities throughout Scotland and beyond.

**Meldrum CC Turbine Committee.**

The DO has continued occasional contact with this group and has agreed to meet to discuss approaches to establishing a community turbine group and to support them.

**Meldrum Park Users Group.**

The DO has been supporting this new group helping to draw up its constitution. The group is formed of the Park user groups who intend to develop a co-ordinated and coherent development plan for the park. It includes Meldrum Play who upgraded the children's play park so successfully in 2011. Planning Gain money has been allocated towards the funding. Until costs are confirmed for each project it is unclear whether other match funding will be necessary.

**Meldrum Park Users Group: Park Drainage.**

The User Group successfully argued that the full benefits of the upgrades would be impossible to achieve unless the park's drainage being upgraded. Landscape Services completed this in April 2013.

**Meldrum Park Users Group: Upgrade to the Changing Pavilion.**

This is a relatively modern building and the intention is to totally re-design its internal layout to provide public toilets for all park users, not just sports teams, and to use the internal space more effectively for the community. The upgrade is being driven by the tennis club although it used more fully by Formartine United Football club for coaching local youngsters. A detailed plan has been agreed with an estimated cost of £85,000 which is slightly above the allocated Planning gain money.

**Meldrum Park Users Group: Pavilion: Construction starting imminently.**

This is an old wooden building used as the headquarters pavilion on Meldrum Sports Weekend. Plans for a new, slightly larger, single story building on a similar position have been approved as a replacement and it will form an additional, comfortable meeting room for other Meldrum groups through the year. There will be a kitchen and covered outdoor tables and it could be used for a tea room and ice cream parlour for the park. Costs were estimated at £69,000 and construction is starting mid March 2014.

**Meldrum Park Users Group: Tennis Courts upgrade.**

Quotations have been received to resurface the two courts with an all-weather surface, replace the fencing and add floodlights which may face two ways to include the football field as well. One of the courts will be for multi-use, particularly five-a-side football and basketball/netball, the other just for tennis. The initial estimated cost at £70,000 is higher than the planning gain allocation.

**Methlick: Beaton Hall.**

The Hall committee is intending to upgrade the toilets and entrance lobby, following advice given in an earlier Feasibility study. Funding is complete- £10,000 from Awards for All, £4,000 from Aberdeenshire Council, £4,000 from a local turbine towards a £34,000 cost; planning permission is agreed and tenders accepted. However, construction has been delayed until April 2014 to avoid disruption to user-groups during the busy winter period.

**Methlick Scout Hut.**

DO has met with Methlick Scouts to discuss funding for Biomass boiler but group is put off by unavailability of grants as opposed to loans paid for by future putative savings on heating costs.

**Newburgh: Gallows Hill Tennis Courts.**

This is adjacent to the new Pavilion. Foveran CC and the Foveran Partnership have been awarded £100,000 from SportScotland to resurface, the courts and add floodlights. Construction will follow on from completion of the Pavilion.

**Pitmedden, Udney and Tarves Community Cooperative.**

Put has purchased a compact tractor and loader, mower and rotovator at a cost of £24,090 with funding from Awards for All, Aberdeenshire Council and Udney Turbine Trust. The machinery will be available for community groups in all three villages.



**Gallows Hill Tennis Courts.**



**Rothienorman Community Hall.**

**Rothienorman Community Hall.**

Rothienorman Hall Committee are exploring a major £100,000 upgrade to the hall- including upgraded kitchen, toilets, draught lobby, heating and insulation and a new floor. In preparation for this, a new strengthened Committee has been elected, the constitution has been updated and the group have been in consultation with SCVO Village Halls and Climate Challenge Fund.

**Rothienorman Trust Fund.**

DO has advised on a Constitution for turbine fund.

**Turriff Academy Garden Project.**

Teachers are looking for funding to develop a new garden to be used as a teaching tool for special needs pupils.

**Udney Green: Dr Spence Memorial Hall.**

The Hall committee have completed two phases of a gradual piecemeal upgrade to the Hall:- disabled access and toilet improvements. It has now decided to follow a more comprehensive strategy and completely refurbish the Hall. Having invited presentations from local architects, they have appointed one group to prepare plans and costings in consultation with users and the community. They have successfully applied for £10,000 from Investing in Ideas fund and are applying to Udney Turbine Trust and Aberdeenshire Council to complete the funding for this stage of £31,000.

**Udney Community Trust Co. Ltd.**

UCTC awarded £73,000 in their first financial year and opened a dedicated office in the centre of Pitmedden on 17 November 2013. They completed a footpath into Pitmedden Gardens and have prioritised other footpath projects with the help of Paths for All.

**COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: provide basic, initial business and administrative advice to community and social enterprises seeking to develop economic opportunities.**

**Balmedie Leisure Centre- under construction.**

BLC Committee are extending and upgrading the Leisure Centre with a new entrance, a coffee shop and a multi-gym. This project suffered major problems for the tenders were massively higher than the estimates, perhaps because of a boom in office building for the oil industry in nearby Aberdeen city. Plans had to be modified to reduce the cost and the multi-gym has had to be postponed to a later date but the new entrance is complete and construction of the coffee shop is well-advanced with completion expected in early summer 2014 at accost of £300,000.

**Community Benefit.**

Aberdeenshire LRPs have continued to meet to investigate means of standardising and bringing transparency to Community Benefit from turbines across Aberdeenshire.

**Energetica Walking and Wildlife Festival 2014.**

FP has been asked to organise the second Energetica Walking and Wildlife Festival 2014.



**Balmedie Leisure Centre: Coffee Shop.**



**Ellon Academy from the footbridge site.**

**ACTIVE TRAVEL PROJECTS.**

**Formartine Cycling Strategy: Ellon Riverside.**

A proposal, resulting from a Formartine LCPG Forum, is to upgrade the existing footpath along the River Ythan from Ellon town centre, eastwards to The Meadows Sports Centre and the proposed new footbridge to connect with the new Ellon Academy. This would be conducive to cycling and form a safer route to the Academy, avoiding heavy traffic and the busy town centre. It would be helpful if the completion of this project were to coincide with the school's opening in August 2015 to ensure its availability from the outset.

In **Turriff and Oldmeldrum** a number of cycle parking facilities have been constructed, again following suggestions from the Forums.

**Meldrum Paths Group.**

This is a new group working to improve footpaths around Meldrum. It has completed a £12,000 feasibility study for its flagship project, The Meldrum Meg Way, a £2 million cycleway from Meldrum to Inverurie.

**Ythan Way- long distance trail.**

The Ythan Way is a potential long-distance trail along the Ythan Valley from Forvie to Fyvie. It would connect all the major tourist attractions in the area and link the existing long distance footpaths and cycle ways. This project has long been an aspiration of the Formartine Partnership. The first stage is to find funding for a feasibility survey to establish a preferred route; identify suitable access points with car parking, bus interchange and picnic areas; establish land ownership; estimate construction costs; and suggest phasing. Both Energetica and Aberdeenshire Council have supported the concept but have not been willing to lead.

**NEW Sustrans Community Links Fund.**

This new Scottish Government funding is designed to increase active travel and provides 50% funding. Aberdeenshire Council has packaged a series of cycle ways and footpaths from across the Shire and applied to this fund. It has also allocated budget provision. Within Formartine the Ellon Riverside route, Meldrum Meg Way and Ythan trail are all included.

**Formartine Tourist Map.**

This continues to be distributed around the tourist venues in Formartine.

**Walking in Formartine.**

This series of pamphlets been reprinted. It is distributed round Formartine Libraries and tourist venues for sale.

### **Wood Recyclability.**

DO met this social enterprise to advise on funding sources of £70,000-£100,000 to replace machinery.

### **Ythan Invasive Species Project.**

Funding of £4,300 has been awarded to FP by Formartine Community Planning Group to manage a pilot project using volunteers under trained supervision to eradicate Giant Hogweed and Japanese Knotweed from the Ythan catchment above Fyvie. Also involved are the Ythan Trust who have surveyed the locations of these dangerous invasive species and Ythan Project Volunteers who will provide supplementary funding of up to £2,000. It is hoped that this will establish an economical and effective method for wider use and make the land more productive and safer.

This project takes FP back to its 'roots' in Environmental care and Conservation and involves a rather unusual combination of community groups to that with which FP and Community Planning normally works.

## **FUTURE CORE FUNDING AND REVENUE GENERATING: Investigate possible sources of future core funding and undertake revenue generating activities, to ensure the long term viability of Formartine Partnership Ltd.**

All FP's core funding comes from Aberdeenshire Council. Thus all our eggs are in one basket and, for several years, FP has been investigating alternative sources to become less dependent and more sustainable including investigating the purchase of a forest.

### **1. Wind Turbine Project near Arnage**

In 2011, FP was presented with an exciting opportunity by David Smith, a local farmer, to share in a wind farm development on two sites near Arnage. This would help FP achieve long-term financial security, and, also, to offer additional financial support through a Trust Fund to Communities and Community Organisations throughout Formartine.

FP have set up a Joint Venture with Mr Smith, *Formartine Renewable Energy Partnership LLP*, and applied for Planning Permission for three 800 kW turbines at the first site at **Cairnadailly**. But it has not been a smooth progress despite the application having received only one objection from the public, agreement of Landscape planners and Environmental health and no objection from MoD. NATS (National Air Traffic Systems), a Statutory Consultee, lodged an objection which stopped any progress. However, in 2012, NATS upgraded the Perwinnes radar near Aberdeen Airport giving it a capability to mitigate the effect of turbines and discussions continued throughout 2012 as to how this could be applied. In January 2012 FP understood that the new system would not be able to deal with the three turbines at the Cairnadailly site but would be able to deal with two- one '*blanked*' turbine and one un-blanked. An amended plan to this effect was submitted and advertised but NATS immediately lodged an objection. Discussions between NATS and Aberdeenshire Council, about how the new system would be applied, continued until November 2012 when it was announced that single blanked turbines had to have a minimum separation distance of 20km. Again an amended plan was submitted and considered by Formartine Area Committee on 11<sup>th</sup> December 2012. Unfortunately, there were two other applications within that 20 km distance. All three were considered at the same meeting and all three were refused permission. Cairnadailly, and one other, appealed the decision and on 4<sup>th</sup> April 2013 our appeal was allowed and planning permission for a single turbine at Cairnadailly was granted. But further delays have followed. Because of the delays in planning, the connection to the electricity grid was lost and delayed until Autumn 2015 and in November 2013 we were informed that it had been further delayed until 2018. This has created considerable uncertainty as it is impossible to assess its commercial viability so far ahead.

The second Arnage site, **Hillhead of Turnerhall**, is for two 800kW turbines. It has received a CARES loan of £124,000 to cover pre- Planning expenses. It has been delayed by the Cairnadailly planning delays but a planning application was submitted in May 2013. The planning procedure is ongoing. There are four public objections, an objection from MoD and a holding objection from NATS. Again grid connection has been delayed until 2018.

### **2. Wind Turbine Project near Auchterless.**

In June 2012, FP was offered a further opportunity, by MacWind Ltd, to share in a wind turbine project at **Floors Farm** consisting of three 2.3 MW turbines. This was submitted for planning permission in

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November 2012 and has received twenty-four letters of objection and seventeen letters of support. MoD has withdrawn an objection and NATS have withdrawn their objection providing the application is reduced to one turbine. A revised application to this effect was submitted on October 2<sup>nd</sup> 2013 and this application continues to proceed through the planning system.

### **Turbine Trust Fund.**

The **Trust Fund** will serve both projects. It will probably be a Company Limited by Guarantee and a registered charity to benefit from tax allowances and so increase funds for disbursement. We believe that this will be a very effective use of Community Benefit because:-

- Every Community in Formartine will be eligible to benefit;
- It is not dependent on the presence (or absence) of turbines in the locality;
- It is not dependent on Developers' whims;
- It will be professional, neutral and transparent, and have clear policies and criteria;
- Income will be approx. £75,000/MW annually, rising over the 20+ years of the turbine's life.

The Trust Fund will also allow FP to be more effective in the support we give to organisations for we will be able to:-

- Provide grant funding for projects which we are already facilitating- thus establish a '*one-stop-shop*' and a '*bigger bang*' for our facilitation;
- Provide '*seed-corn funding*' and '*pump-prime*' access to match funding- the initial grant is often the most difficult to raise.

**INFORMATION FLOW:** Act as an intermediary between Aberdeenshire Council, Community Planning Partners the Local Community Group and the wider community ensuring a two-way flow of information relating to needs and priorities as one of the voluntary sector partners.

### **Aberdeenshire Rural Partnership Joint Marketing Prospectus.**

FP is involved in producing a pamphlet to promote Aberdeenshire Rural Partnerships to partners in the Council services and Community Planning Partnership. Presentation made to full Council meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2013 and follow-up meetings are being arranged with Aberdeenshire Directors

### **Formartine Community Council Forum; Formartine Community Planning Group.**

FP regularly attends the Formartine Community Council Forum and is a partner on the Formartine Local Community Planning Group. It is a member of the steering group for the various Community Action Surveys. The DO provides regular Reports which update FP's activities for these bodies.

### **LEVERAGE.**

Last year, 2012-13, was a bumper year because several long running projects were able to come to fruition thanks to the last round of LEADER and the new Town and Village fund from Aberdeenshire Council. Many of these are large and have been under construction during 2013-14.

<b>Projects under construction- funding completed 2012-13.</b>	<b>Total cost</b>
Collieston Community Centre	£100,000
Daviot Community Hall.	£447,700
Ellon: Friends of MacDonald Woods.	£7,630
Foveran Hall	£25,000
Methlick Playing Field- Football Pitch reconstruction	£56,500
Methlick Playing Field- Play Park Revival	£70,000
Newburgh: Gallows Hill Community Pavilion	£203,547
Turriff: Baden Powell Hall.	£417,000
Balmedie Leisure Centre: new entrance and coffee shop.	£300,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£1,627,377</b>

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<b>New Projects 2013-14.</b>	
Greeness Community Hall Association.	£120,000
Meldrum Park Users Group: Upgrade to the Changing Pavilion.	£85,000
Meldrum Park Users Group: Pavilion:	£69,000
Meldrum Park Users Group: Tennis Courts upgrade.	£70,000
Methlick: Beaton Hall- Toilets and entrance upgrade.	£34,000
Newburgh: Gallows Hill Tennis Courts upgrade.	£100,000
Pitmedden, Udney and Tarves Community Cooperative: Tractor and tools.	£24,090
Rothienorman Hall: Major upgrade.	£100,000
Udney Green: Dr Spence Memorial Hall: comprehensive upgrade.	£31,080
Ythan Invasive Species Project.	£6,300
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£639,470</b>

### NETWORKING AND COLLABORATION.

FP is an active member of Aberdeenshire Rural Partnership Federation (ARPF);  
 FP attends the Bi-annual CED Partners meeting with senior members and officers of Aberdeenshire Council;  
 FP works closely with Community Learning and Development on Community Profiles and Community Engagement exercises and on the latter with Formartine Community Planning Officer too.  
 FP also works closely with Landscape services on Play Park makeovers and community gardens.

#### **HMIe Inspection of Meldrum Academy Learning Community November 2013.**

FP supported the HMIe Inspection of Meldrum CLD attending the briefings, being interviewed in our own right and assisting with the interview at Rothienorman Community Association. Meldrum CLD received a strong Report gaining one very good, two goods and a satisfactory for the four quality indicators which were assessed. The very good was for Impact on the local community and the Report goes on to say that “The effectiveness of successful, resourceful and skilled community led organisations is a key strength of the learning community. Across community organisations, volunteers demonstrate high aspirations and strong levels of skill. Volunteer community members actively apply very effective project management, technical and other skills to establish successful organisations.... Community groups exercise strong levels of influence. The Formartine Partnership provides effective support....”

FP belongs to The Development Trusts Association Scotland and the DO and a Director attended its Annual meeting in Cumbernauld in September 2013.

FP is a member of Community Energy Scotland and attended its Annual meeting in Partick on 5<sup>th</sup> November 2013.

FP also is a regular attender of the Aberdeenshire Community Wind and Hydro Group.

FP attended the All Energy Exhibition in May 2013 and Renewables Scotland in June 2013

FP had a joint stand at Fit like Ellon 8<sup>th</sup> June 2013

### EXPLAIN THE MAIN CHANGES AND CHALLENGES TO BOTH THE ORGANISATION AND THE COMMUNITIES.

#### **Increase in Aberdeenshire Council Funding.**

Aberdeenshire Council approved an increase of £60,000 pa in the LRP budget for 2013-14, thus reversing the cutback imposed in 2011-12. This increase was distributed evenly between the six administrative areas. This increase makes the LRPs much more secure and restores their ability to meet demand for their work which was becoming problematical. For FP this will mean an increase of £10,000 to approximately £37,333 pa. FP is using this increase to appoint a part-time administrator.

#### **Rural Aberdeenshire LEADER.**

Rural Aberdeenshire LEADER has now closed and is no longer accepting further applications for funding as the programme is completed. It has been very successful, supporting 142 projects in Aberdeenshire and contributing £4.725 million towards total project costs of approximately £20

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million. In Formartine it has supported 21 projects with grants totalling £1.128 million towards total project costs of £6.138 million.

FP is actively involved in the new LEADER programme and is organising a community engagement exercise. It is expected to start in early 2015'

### **Scottish Government support for Third Sector- Single Interface.**

The Aberdeenshire Rural Partnerships, despite their very significant contribution, are not recognised by the Scottish Government as being part of the infrastructure support for the Third sector in Aberdeenshire.

The ARPs have two areas of concern arising from this situation:-

1. The invisibility of the ARPs to the Scottish Government- the lack of awareness let alone recognition by Scottish Government that there is a very effective Third sector support mechanism in Aberdeenshire independent of the CVSs;
2. The exclusion of ARPs from current and future Scottish Government funding and, indeed, from communications, information and notices of relevant funding opportunities;

### **INCOME and EXPENDITURE 2012-13.**

The audited accounts for 2012-13 are presented as an **Appendix**.



**Fintry School Butterfly Garden.**