

**Minutes of the TBI Food Group meeting
Tuesday 18th October 2011 at Netherton Farm**

Present: Anne Thomas, Agric Hadron, Romay, Toni Clark, Julie Brewer, Rosie Simpson

Apologies: Trish McKeggie, Penny Edwards, John Wood,

1. The future of Culbokie Community Garden

Loch na Moid garden at Muir of Ord

May 2011 21 people turned up on the one weekend, of them, a family of three and a group from the Community Mental Health group ('Eddie's' team) come regularly, and one lady from the first year still comes. Eddie's team has established its own plot but also contribute to general maintenance work on the allotment site (e.g. washed the poly tunnel recently).

The garden would support one other group, another family or 2-3 individuals who would use it regularly.

There is an annual membership fee of £10. This has been paid willingly at the time that people signed the agreement to use the garden. People using the garden want to contribute something towards it. On joining, members of Eddie's team did not pay the individual £10 membership fee; instead £10 was paid for the group as a whole. On renewal of the group's membership it is likely that each member will pay £10.

Next Tuesday - meeting to discuss planning for the garden over the winter months and to think about next year and how to advertise. No enquiries on use of the garden for about 6 months.

Culbokie Community Garden

This has been under-used. Agric believes that over the course of the year there has been a total of 10 man hours by other people and he has had to do the majority of the work.

> How to increase the use of the garden?

- Advertise
 - sign pointing down to the B&B and the garden from the main road
 - This would need to be professional-looking
 - good idea to feature the B&B as well
 - *Agric to contact Wendy with request to produce a sign*
 - *Agric to contact Bruce Morrison about possible Council restrictions on erecting the sign*
 - Agric focused on advertising the garden for use by locals but efforts have not resulted in a sustained interest.

- Try targeting areas further away > Inverness and Dingwall (i.e. more densely populated areas where there are people without their own green space to cultivate).
- Bus service runs from Inverness to Culbokie. At present this service is under-used and could be promoted.
- Through The Greenhouse, Dingwall

- Target existing groups
 - attempts to encourage use by cubs, scouts and schools have been made, but to no avail.
 - Advertise the garden with Volunteering Highland > co-ordinate a start-up group with the assistance of the two FoES interns - Graham and Rosie
 - WWOOFers (World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms) - Romay would be happy to have them work on the garden and would be able to register as a host, but would want them to be supervised and would prefer the supervisor to not be a member of TBI. However, Romay welcomes a TBI member to help maintain parts of the garden.
 - Action for Children - Romay was happy with the previous Action for Children group which was using the garden and would be happy for another group from the same organisation to use the garden in the future.
 - Mental Health Groups - Toni going to a Food and health conference next week and may have an opportunity to speak to health professionals and find if there is a mental health group near the Culbokie garden who could make use of the garden.
 - *Agric to contact Community Council*
 - *Agric to contact The Greenhouse, Dingwall*
 - *Agric to contact Bruce, explaining the situation and the need for help in over-seeing the garden and a hand-over of responsibility for the future of the garden.*

- Increase information that's available to public on community gardens
 - Produce a fact sheet explaining how community gardens work
 - Guidelines for growers to be produced - Garden at Muir of Ord has grower guidelines which users are supposed to have read and accepted before signing the membership sign-up form and paying the membership fee.

- Need to forge links between cooking and using garden produce
 - Susan, at teacher at school in Dingwall Academy has lesson plans and has been pro-active in encouraging use of garden produce in cooking.
 - Possibility to work with schools or running cookery projects
 - *Agric to contact Susan*

2. Community Market at Avoch

There was a consensus amongst those present that there is capacity, demand and need for a community market at Avoch. Anne to continue to liaise with the community council about this.

3. Climate Challenge Fund proposals

Proposal for a food-orientated project: a Fareshare scheme in conjunction with the Highland Food Bank. Operating from Inverness, the Highland Food Bank collects and distributes non-perishable foods to those living in Inverness and the surrounding area who are in an emergency but will only supply food for a limited time. Usually 3 days to tide people over an immediate crisis.

The Fareshare model works elsewhere in the UK. Their nearest projects are Dundee and Aberdeen. This provides food for those who struggle to put food on the table and also to various charities such as homeless shelters and enables them to use their donations on other things. The food collected is food which whilst edible, is no longer suitable to be sold to consumers through commercial supply chains but could also include food from farms which they cannot sell. It might be worth finding out from farmers e.g. why they sometimes plough vegetables back in or if they have a problem with food being rejected by supermarkets e.g. because it's the wrong shape.

The fareshare project would need a van and an organiser and some storage space. A feasibility project might be an option.

This may be a project that would be best geared towards Inverness rather than rural areas > perhaps this could be a Transition Inverness or Friends of the Earth Inverness and Ross project as that group is based in Inverness.

It might be possible to do a combined project with an electric van used Mon-Friday for Fareshare project and available on Saturday for the collection and distribution of the food to Community Markets etc.

4. Grow North 2- Could this be self funding?

- Try running a Grow North course at Culbokie - bring people to the garden. Romay thought this worked well last year.
- Sheila has lesson plans, could be the course tutor and would charge a going-rate for package of classes in growing food
- Could provide people with option of paying for one-off weekend course at slightly higher fee than the course average
 - *Agric to contact Sheila with the proposal of running a course at Culbokie and ask Sheila for a quote*

5. Potato Day

- North Kessock Hall to be the venue
- Anne to check hall availability and make a booking for use of hall for the full day

TBI Food Group

- Community Market will take place in the morning and potato day from 1pm - 5pm
- Serve soup, coffee, teas in the interim period between the community market stalls moving out at end of market in order to hold people at the hall and ensure they remain for beginnings of the potato day
- Publicity for the event is to begin now and in any event must be before Christmas as this is when most people will otherwise make arrangements to order their seeds
 - *Agric to advertise the event on the TBI website*
 - *Agric to promote through the Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens*
 - *TBI open meeting - announcement*
- Pre-ordering system so that people can collect on the day
- Team of 3 people plus Agric to work on organising and promoting the event
 - Possibly draw someone from the Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens
 - Possibly ask Maggie Wormald to join

Apple Press

Apple Press has been well used. Agric reckoned it made 12 litres per hour at the Culbokie Market (36 litres) It's since been borrowed by 2 families in Muir of Ord and they reckon they made 75 litres.