

# Brora Development Trust

## Newsletter

# June 2022

### NEWS

#### Newsletter

Brora Development Trust is delighted to launch its first community newsletter. The newsletter is available to read on the Trust's website <http://broravillage.scot>, and from the library on Gower Street, Brora. Members of the Trust will however receive the newsletter by email or post. If you would like to receive the newsletter in a different format please contact Sarah Morrison, contact details below.

#### New Name

At a meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> May, the Board of Brora and District Action Group agreed to change the Trust's 'known as' name to Brora Development Trust, to better reflect its role. The Trust is a registered Scottish charity (SC043968) whose function is to address social, economic, environmental and cultural issues in Brora and District and enable the community to play a bigger role in shaping its own future. The original logo has also been updated, to a fresh and crisp version of the original iconic Brora bridge.



**Brora Development Trust**

#### Expanding the Team

Brora Development Trust is managed by a volunteer Board of Trustees, who have formal responsibility for governance and management of the charity. Joining the Board this month are two energetic individuals, Hazel Urquhart and Deirdre Mackay, who bring a great deal of experience and enthusiasm to the Board.

Originally from a small village near Inverness, Hazel trained in journalism and media before deciding to turn her hand to whisky. Starting her career at Glen Ord Distillery in Muir of Ord, Hazel moved to Brora at the start of this year to work as Assistant Manager of Clynelish distillery Visitor Centre. Hazel also enjoys performing stand-up comedy and hopes to organise some comedy nights in the village later in the year.



*Hazel Urquhart, second left, trying out an E-bike at Clynelish Distillery*

Deirdre Mackay, former Councillor, has also joined the Board. Deirdre, who was the Councillor for East Sutherland and Edderton, stood down earlier this month but continues to work hard to support the local community.



*Deirdre Mackay*

Amongst her many achievements, Deirdre was active in attracting the support of NC500 and North Highland Initiative to look at how Brora could benefit from the opportunities presented by NC500. Working with the community this culminated in the production of the 'In Love with Brora: A 2020 Vision' which Brora Development Trust is driving forward. See <http://broravillage.scot> to read this strategy document. Deirdre also helped create the Sutherland Community Partnership, a multi-agency organisation tackling inequality and poverty in Sutherland, of which Brora Development Trust is an active member. The Board warmly welcome Hazel and Deirdre and very much look forward to working together.

The Otter's Couch, a social enterprise, is delighted to have recruited Emma Horne as Retail and Marketing Assistant under the Highland Employment Recruitment Offer (HERO) scheme. Emma is an experienced and talented artist and a valuable asset to the team. For more information about the scheme visit [https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/20014/economic\\_dev\\_employment/966/highland\\_employment\\_recruitment\\_offer\\_hero](https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/20014/economic_dev_employment/966/highland_employment_recruitment_offer_hero).

Brora Development Trust is also delighted to announce the appointment of Sarah Morrison as Development Officer. Chair, Tony Gill, says "Having a dedicated Development Officer will help drive forward the Trust's aspirations and enable the Trust to deliver on its strategy". Sarah's position is funded by the Scottish Government through the Development Trust Association Scotland.

## PROJECTS

### **Signage**

The need for improvements to village signage was identified as a priority during the community consultation process in 2019. Findings of this consultation are contained in 'In Love with Brora: A 2020 Vision', at <http://broravillage.scot>.



*Fountain Square, Brora*

A subcommittee has been formed and is working hard to address the matter of signage in the village. The committee is made up of volunteer members of the local business community and the Board Trustees. The subcommittee has also been attended by Ian Sutherland, from GoGolspie, which has recently very successfully installed new signage in Golspie. Brora Development Trust is very grateful for the support of all members of the subcommittee on this project. The committee will be reaching out to the Brora community to ask for input into the design of the signage.

### **Beach Awards 2022**

Brora Development Trust is delighted to announce that for the third year Brora has been successful in its application to Keep Scotland Beautiful for a Scottish Beach Award for Brora's front beach. The Trust would like to thank everyone who has contributed to this award through their efforts to keep the beach clean. The Trust also thank The Highland Council, through the Ward Discretionary Fund, for their support in funding the cost of taking part in the Award.



*Brora's award-winning beach*

## **Tern Project**

In partnership with Brora Golf Club and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, the Trust completed work in April to put up notices and fencing in strategic locations along the shore to protect the Arctic Tern colony on Brora beach.



*Arctic Tern*

The Arctic Tern (*Sterna Paridisaea*) is the world's longest migrating species travelling in excess of 25,000 miles each year as it travels between the arctic and Antarctic. Disturbance of the colony allows predation of eggs and chicks by gulls and other species and approaching too close may lead to some close encounters as they are fiercely protective of their nests. While you are enjoying a walk along Brora's spectacular beach, please give these enigmatic birds a wide berth, thank you.

## **Fascally Park**

Development of Fascally Park is another community priority contained in 'In Love with Brora: A 2020 Vision'. Plans include the provision of much needed facilities to support visitors travelling with campervans and motorhomes as well as the provision of enhanced play facilities. Clyne Heritage Society are the current tenants of the Heritage Centre and have plans to relocate to Clyne Old School. The Trust is in discussion with the landowners, The Highland Council, as an environmental assessment will need to be conducted before there is any change of use to the site. The assessment may show that remedial work will be required to be carried out. The Trust will discuss with the Council the way forward regarding this matter.

## **Gateways**

The Trust is currently communicating with BEAR and Transport Scotland about gateways planned for north and south entrances to the village. Village gateways were also identified during the consultation process in 2019 as a community priority (see 'In Love with Brora: A 2020 Vision' at <http://broravillage.scot>).

The original gateway design has been amended to meet with BEAR and Transport Scotland requirements. However, the plan is still to have dry stone structures, with plaques engraved with Welcome to Brora and representative images embedded in the wall. Once satisfied, planning permission will be sought. If planning permission is granted a competition will be launched for the design of the plaque, with the winners choosing a charity of choice to receive a donation.

## **Brora Railway Station**

Brora Development Trust are continuing to act as 'station adopters' as part of ScotRail's *Adopt a Station Programme*, a national scheme to support and encourage volunteers and groups to take care of the physical environment of railway stations. Brora Development Trust is immensely grateful to dedicated volunteer Angela Barberton, who carries out a vast amount of work at the station, along with the other volunteers.



*The Wee Train, Brora train station*

Plans for this year including building up flower beds to increase the soil depth. If anyone would like to join in and help with this project please contact Sarah, Development Officer. The station is looking very welcoming, along with the 1<sup>st</sup> Brora Beavers and Brighter Brora planters too.



*Flower beds, Brora train station*

## **Brunch and Blethers**

Many thanks to the generous Brunch and Blether hosts, who in the first quarter of the year provided a warm welcome and very delicious food for the community at different venues in the village. Engaging with Activity at Brora Village Hub, The Scout and Guide Hall and Brora Free Church gave their time and energy by providing a place for people to meet up and enjoy tasty homemade food. The events were well attended and enjoyed by all.

Following a review of these events, the three organising partners, Tykes, Engaging with Activity, and Brora Development Trust are planning a breakfast club for school aged children in Brora once a week in the summer holidays. The breakfast club will be hosted by Engaging with Activity at Brora village Hub.

A series of activities is also being planned for the winter months, taking place at different venues in the village and open to all to attend. The Trust is grateful for the support of a microgrant from Brora Community Council to help support these community activities.

## **100+ CLUB**

The 100+ Club is a significant source of fundraising for Brora Development Trust and runs from April to March at a cost of just £12 for a year. A winning number is drawn at the Trust's monthly Board meeting. There is one prize of £20 each month with a grand draw in December, with £100, £50 and £30 prizes. If you would like to take part and have a chance to win, please contact Sarah Morrison to receive an application form.

## **Otter's Couch**

The Otter's Couch celebrated three years of successful operation in April this year. The social enterprise continues to thrive and attracts local customers and visitors alike. Over 40 local crafters and artists sell their produce in the shop, with local charities also supported. The shop is staffed by volunteers, crafters and one part-time paid employee. Brora Rangers football club also have merchandise for sale in the shop. Current opening hours are: Monday to Saturday, 10am to 4.30pm.



*The Otter's Couch, Rosslyn St, Brora*

## **MEMBERS**

Brora Development Trust now has over 200 members whose support is highly valued. All Members will be invited to take part in the next Annual General Meeting which is planned for December 2022.

If you would like join Brora Development Trust please contact Sarah Morrison, Development Officer to request a form or visit the website where a membership form is available. The Trust's Constitution is also available to download from the website.

## **COMING UP**

The Trust will be one of many groups taking part in The Platinum Jubilee Garden Party and Fete, to be held on Sunday 3rd July at Dunrobin Castle, organised by the Rotary Club of East Sutherland. Tickets for the event are available at the Otter's Couch or online at <https://ticketpass.org/event/EVZNDU/the-platinum-jubilee-garden-party-fete>