

TAKE A PRIDE IN P&K ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

Note from the Chair...

Issue 2 - Spring 2021

Delightful Daffodils, cheery Cherry Blossom, bonny Bluebell Woods – Spring has well and truly sprung despite the recent ‘wintery’ weather and it certainly has lifted my spirits. With the easing of restrictions there is hope that we will return to some sort of ‘normality’ soon and that the wonderful ‘family’ of Bloom Groups in Perth and Kinross will be able to continue to care for and enhance our precious natural environment.

For many of us, being able to work in our garden or take a walk in our local park has been good for us, both physically and mentally, during lockdown. Bloom Group members have long known about the health benefits that come with the regular tasks that have to be carried out to keep our greenspaces looking their best. Which brings me neatly to the excellent article on Green Prescribing written by our Project Development Adviser, Kirsten Mathison. She has written that “What is becoming increasingly apparent and of great interest to the health and social care profession, are the positive mental health benefits that being in the outdoors, working with nature and tending to a garden or greenspace can bring”. I love the strap line “Nature adds years to your life and life to your years”.

Kirsten has also brought us up-to-date with her project report on the five projects currently being undertaken with the support of the Association in Abernethy, Alyth, Blairgowrie, Kinross and Pitlochry. All of the projects have been delayed in one way or another due to Covid-19 restrictions. Thankfully, all our project partners and funders have been understanding of the inevitable delays and worked with us to grant extensions to deadlines.

Meanwhile, Elspeth Bruce, Environmental Initiatives Officer with PKC, is ‘Looking to the Future’ and how the Association can help your community. I encourage you to have a read of our new, simple, step-by-step Project Development Guide for Groups who are thinking about starting a project. It is an important part of the ‘support package’ we are able to provide to member Groups. You will find the Guide and more information on our website: www.prideinperthshire.co.uk/get-involved/



Bill Ronald

I enjoyed reading Ian Lamond’s ‘Five Year Celebration’ of Abernethy in Bloom in which he describes why and how the Group started and where they are now, tackling a major project in the development of their Heritage Garden – with the added bonus of photos of bright and cheerful Spring floral displays in his village. As Ian says, “they are welcome friends”.

A reminder that the Association’s 2021 AGM will be a ‘Virtual’ Meeting on 7th of June (see back page).

Enjoy your ‘Blooming’ volunteering, it is good for your health and well-being. Stay safe!

Yours in Bloom

Bill Ronald



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Abernethy in Bloom

A Five Year Celebration

Traditionally 5 years is celebrated with a gift of something made from wood. Knowingly or not, we have just received a donation of a wooden bench! Such spontaneous generosity from the village is one of the things which has made getting involved with Abernethy in Bloom over the past five years so enjoyable.

Back in 2016 a small group of enthusiasts were finishing the renovation of Nurse Peattie's Garden - a small public space at the entrance to our village which had become overgrown and neglected. We celebrated with a village Open Day in the garden and this was the beginning of using it as a focal point for village events such as our annual Christmas Tree lighting and carol singing. A dedicated group of gardeners and growers emerged from the local Horticultural Society to form Abernethy in Bloom and we have been tending to the greening of public spaces in the village ever since. When I say we were "finishing" the renovation of Nurse Peattie's Garden, this is of course not the full story! As all gardeners know, everything keeps growing and changes day by day, season by season and as we look back there is such delight and pleasure in how things have blossomed. As the now familiar plants are emerging this Spring after such an awful year, they really are welcome friends.

Looking back, what has becoming an 'In Bloom Group' actually meant for us and for the village? I think the most important thing is that it has kept us going, given us confidence that we could do more having the support of the Association behind us to help us achieve what we might otherwise never even have dreamt of attempting.

At the moment we are thinking big and have a scheme on the go which illustrates how the Take a Pride in Perth & Kinross Association (TPPKA) is encouraging our work. After consultation in the village, we put forward a proposal to the TPPKA Trustees for help with funding and project management for what will be the Abernethy Heritage Garden. This will be a completely new development for the village on a current empty site and will be a companion to Nurse Peattie's Garden. The Heritage Garden will help tell the fascinating and varied history of Abernethy through its design, planting schemes, special features and interpretation points. We want it to be a little jewel for both locals and visitors alike. We will be working with the Abernethy Museum, primary school and other community groups to bring it to life and make it very much a community project.

TPPKA gave the thumbs up to the idea and has provided support for the development of the area initially with an architectural landscape design plan and full project costings. Vitally TPPKA is instrumental in raising the lion's share of funding for the project through its dedicated Project Development Advisor. Despite the difficult current economic times, we are well on the way to meeting the overall target and have enough funds 'in the pot' to start work on Phase One.

We look forward to seeing you in our Heritage Garden in years to come. If you have an idea for a project in your area, why not get in touch with TPPKA and see whether they can help make it happen for you too?

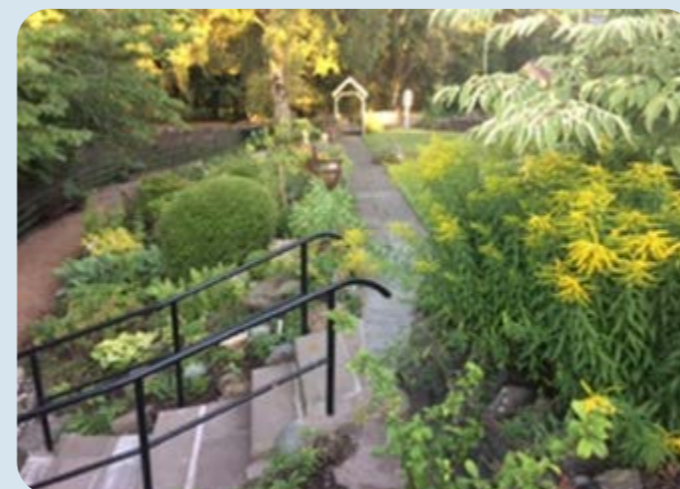
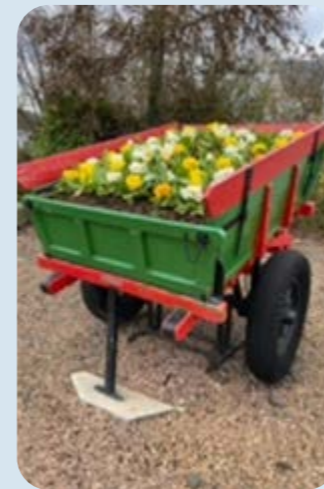
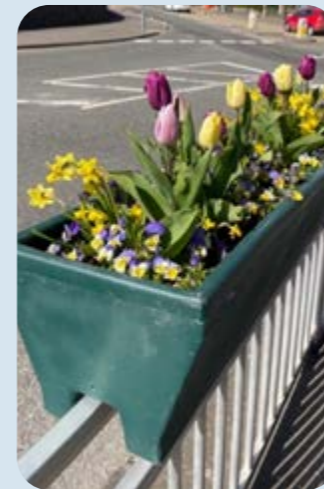
*by Ian Lamond -
Secretary of Abernethy in Bloom*

Top Row (L-R): Nurse Peattie's Garden (Christmas 2020); Christmas Tree (2020); Spring at Nurse Peattie's (Ballo Burn); Spring Planting in the Polytunnel.

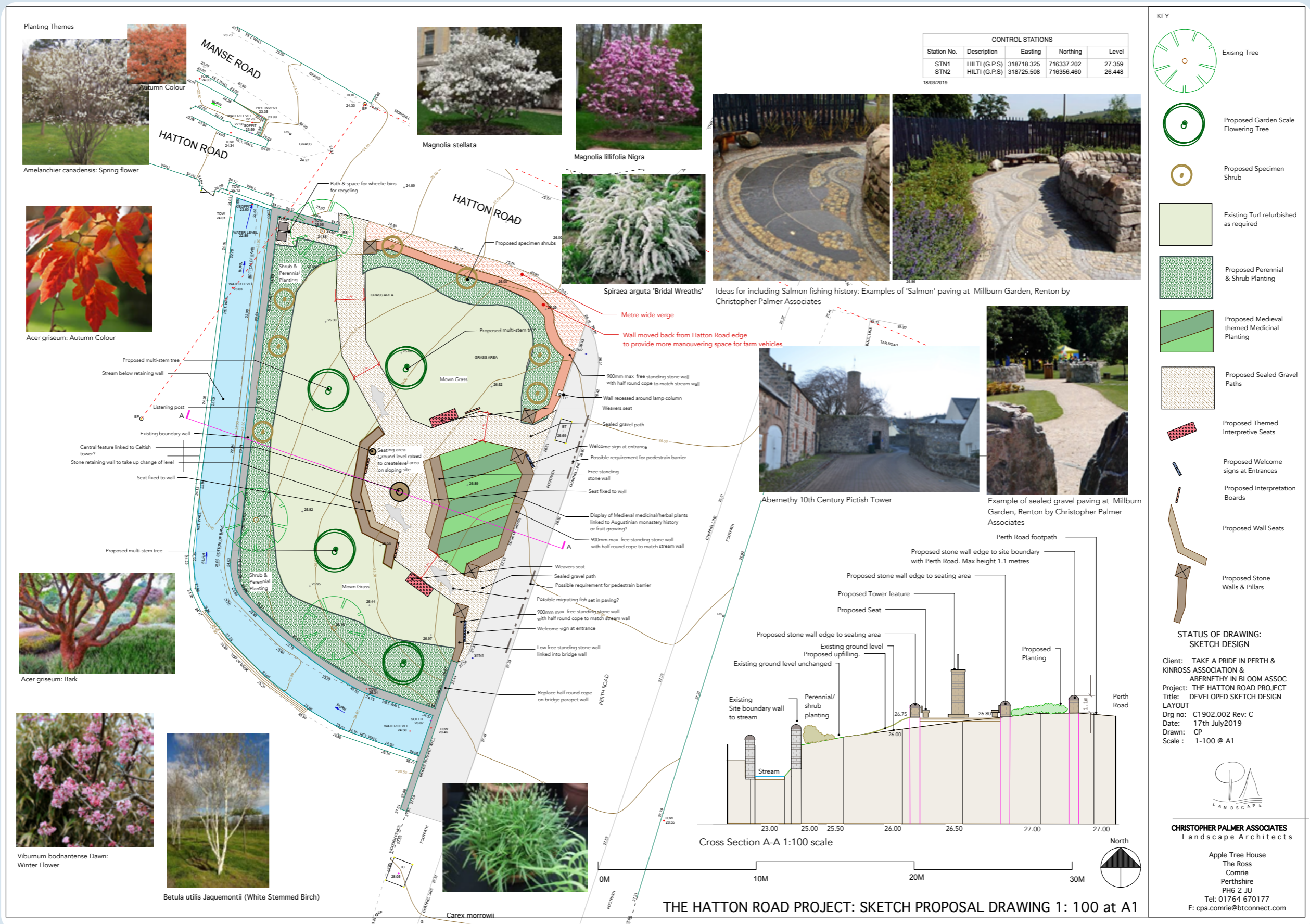
2nd Row (L-R): The Springtime Barrier Baskets at Back Dykes and the School Abernethy.

3rd Row (L-R): Horses Cart at 'Branstons' and Planters on Perth Road and Back Dykes Abernethy.

Bottom Row (L-R): Springtime at Nurse Peattie's Garden (Main Street Abernethy).



Abernethy in Bloom - Project Plans for Abernethy Heritage Garden



Looking to the Future

How The Take A Pride In Perth and Kinross Association Can Help Your Community

Since its launch in 1998, The Take A Pride in Perth and Kinross Association has been instrumental in the realisation of a number of valuable legacy projects across Perth and Kinross, leveraging almost £2m of project value. Such schemes have been diverse and have included the following to name but a few:

- » **The design and installation of sculptures** - the beautiful flying geese on the approach in to Kinross and Crieff's much admired "Leafy Coo's", both of which have reflected the unique sense of place each settlement offers.
- » **Conservation of heritage** - the conservation of the Crosswell Fountain in Kinross; the restoration of the railway wall in Glenfarg and the conservation of the Wash House in Scotlandwell, amongst others.
- » **Improvement of amenity areas** and the addition of educational and informational value for residents and visitors alike - Coronation Corner in Blairgowrie; Benarty View in Kinnesswood; Garrie's Corner in Auchterarder; The Lower Birks project in Aberfeldy and Pitlochry Wildlife Garden as recent examples.

The driving force behind each and every project is the local Bloom Group and its community. Together, with support from The Association's current team of our Chair, Bill Ronald, who brings years of valuable experience to the Association; the Trustees; Kirsten Mathison as The Association's Project Development Advisor, and PKC personnel, this has proved a winning formula for the successful delivery of recent projects.

Often such projects begin with a vision and a desire to improve local facilities – the application process is not at all daunting and we aim to be approachable in discussing your ideas and taking them forward to the next step. Kirsten is responsible for scoping out potential funding streams and completing the relevant applications, project managing and working closely with the community and the Association.

The events of the past year or so have caused us to reflect on our own communities and environment - few counties can boast the diversity and beauty of Perth and Kinross and the Association projects have made significant contributions to further enhance its natural beauty. So, if you have thoughts as to a project, or would like to consider investment in an area and are concerned that you may be "biting off more than you can chew", please do get in touch - we would be delighted to hear from you.

You can find more information and inspiration on our website where you can view our new **Project Development Guide** and **Case Studies**:

www.prideinperthshire.co.uk/get-involved/

by Elspeth Bruce -
Environmental Initiatives Officer (PKC)



Clockwise from Top Left: Leafy Coo's; Crosswell Fountain; Benarty View.

Green Prescribing

Nature adds years to your life, and life to your years.

Bloom Group members and gardeners have known all along about the physical health benefits that come with the regular tasks that have to be carried out to keep gardens and greenspaces looking their best. All the weeding, mowing, chopping, barrowing, digging and planting certainly keeps joints supple, maintains flexibility and burns off a few calories.

What is becoming increasingly apparent, and of great interest to the health and social care profession, are the positive mental health benefits that being in the outdoors, working with nature and tending to a garden or greenspace can bring. It is estimated around 1 in 4 people are affected by mental health problems in Scotland in any one year, however growing evidence suggests this number will increase following the emergence of COVID 19 and the social restrictions imposed during repeated lockdowns.

We have all heard that 'having a healthy body leads to a healthy mind'. It is well documented that being outdoors reduces blood pressure, heart rate, muscle tension and the production of stress hormones. Mentally, engaging with nature can have therapeutic effects of reduced anger, fear, and stress and anxiety. It distracts us from the daily stresses and strains of life, increases happiness, promotes mindfulness, our ability to concentrate and engage, and has a general calming and restorative effect of 'recharging the batteries'. For many of us, being able to pop out to the garden or go for a (socially distanced) walk in the local park or woods has helped to 'keep us sane' and occupy our minds during lockdown.

This connection has not gone unnoticed and 'green prescribing' is becoming more commonplace within health and social care settings across Scotland. It uses Scotland's natural environment as a resource to help tackle some of our key physical and mental health challenges. Trials are being carried out and evaluated across the country including in Shetland and Edinburgh, and 4 larger-scale pilot [Green Health Partnerships](#) have been established in North & South Lanarkshire; Dundee; North Ayrshire; and Highland to find out if better partnership working across



different sectors can lead to increased health benefits through engagement with the natural environment. Led by local health boards and local authorities, the partnerships bring together the health, social care, environment, leisure, sport and active travel sectors in order to make more use of local green space as a health-promoting resource.

Bloom Group activities could be considered as unofficial green prescribing and many Groups continued to operate during lockdown - albeit greatly scaled back and organised very differently to ensure personal safety. This is a clear demonstration of the strength of feeling of the benefits and enjoyment that being outdoors can bring.

Many of us have missed seeing different faces, missed the blether with fellow Bloomers and the well-earned cup of tea at the end of a day's hard work. With the gradual easing of lockdown restrictions, there is hope that normality will return soon and Bloom Groups can renew plans for the coming months with cautious optimism. Looking forward, now is a great time to think about our own green prescribing, by encouraging our communities to come together and take forward plans and projects that get

us into the great outdoors and make a difference to the greenspaces we have all appreciated even more during lockdown.

*by Kirsten Mathison -
Project Development Advisor*



Project Development Advisor Update

How TPPKA can help your group

As the Association's Project Development Adviser, I work closely with Groups to help develop their environmental improvement ideas and turn them into successful projects that make a real difference to the local community.

On behalf of the Association, I can offer help with project management and planning, liaising with stakeholders and compiling fundraising applications. The project remains yours throughout but having the support of the Association can make the process easier to navigate.

As part of our 'support package' for our member Groups, I'm pleased to announce that a new [Project Development Guide](#) is now available. It's a simple step-by-step guide for Groups who are thinking about starting a project that takes you through the process from initial thinking to project completion.



Amongst other information it includes sections on planning & preparation; developing your ideas and design; permissions and legal issues; and costs and fundraising. It is intended to give a realistic impression of what to expect along the way as you bring your plans to life and suggests ways to measure its success on completion. This practical guide draws on our experiences of delivering successful projects in partnership with Bloom Groups across P&K.

Remember we also have examples of excellent projects that have been completed and we are gradually building up a series of case studies; [please do take a look at our website](#).

On the website you will also find a Project Application Form and helpful Guidance Notes. You can email me kirsten@nickisouterassociates.co.uk or telephone **07762 828098**. I look forward to hearing from you.

Project Update

The gradual easing of COVID 19 restrictions during the past weeks has allowed our projects to finally get back on track. All our project partners and funders have been understanding of the inevitable delays COVID has brought, and worked with us to grant extensions to funding spend deadlines and to submitting project report updates; this has certainly been appreciated by all concerned!

Read on to find out what stage each of our 'live' projects is at.

Alyth Burn Side Enhancement (Alyth in Bloom)

Over £153,000 of funds have been secured from national, regional and local sources for this ambitious project which is a fantastic achievement by all concerned. Phase 1 of the works was completed in September 2020 and included the preparatory works of site clearance, tree felling, masonry work on the burnside wall, and preparing the sub-base for the paved surface. Phase 2 was postponed due to 'lockdown' and the impact of local flooding, however work recommenced in April 2021. Phase 2 includes the hard landscaping of a new riverside path and seating areas, installing burnside railings, and replacement tree planting. Phase 3 will see art works, bench seating, an interpretation board and a listening post being installed.

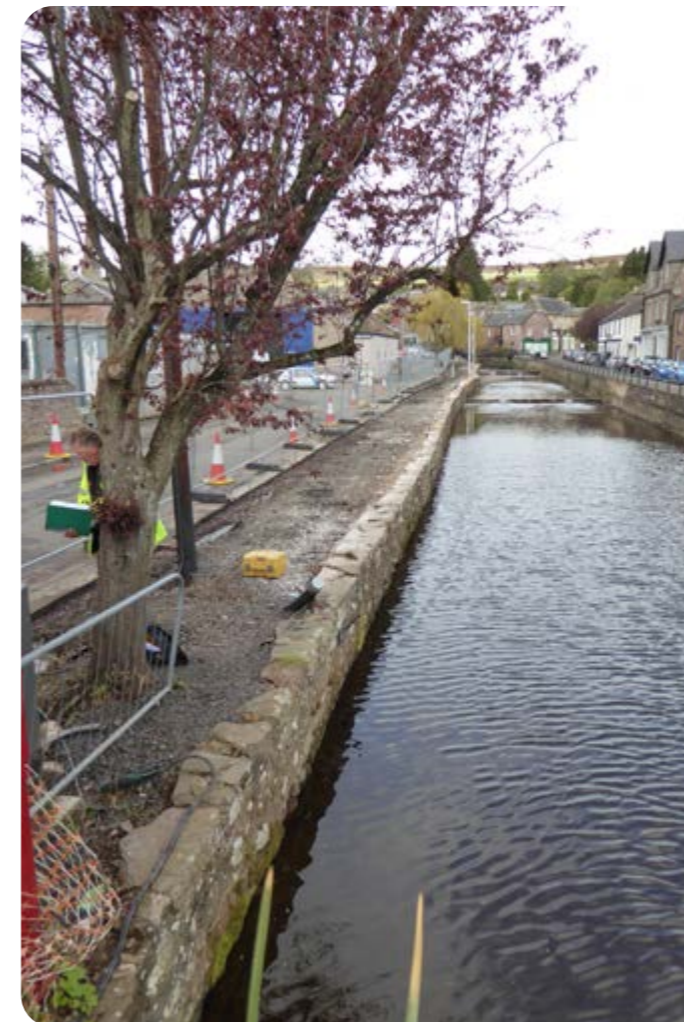
Abernethy Heritage Garden (Abernethy in Bloom)

Design proposals for the development of an imaginative community garden at the prominent Hatton Road corner site were agreed following public consultation and include features that enable physical access and usage for all, thematic planting schemes and interpretation points to inform visitors of the history and heritage of the village. The site is close to 22 Core Paths in and around Abernethy and a new 'green' Active Travel Route will soon be routed past

the site. This makes it an ideal location to upgrade, bringing added value as a convenient stop-off point and enhancing local leisure opportunities. Estimated costs for the project are in the region of £80,000 of which over half has been secured. Abernethy in Bloom has agreed to take on the planting themselves to bring costs down, as well as the proposed 12 months grounds maintenance usually undertaken by the Contractor. A phased approach to this project is being taken and we hope to commence Phase 1 in Summer 2021. This will include site clearance and levelling, walling, forming and laying pathways, installation of electrical ducting, and plant bed preparation. Fundraising for Phase 2 is ongoing and will meet costs for bench seating, a central stone artwork feature, interpretation points, cycle stand, and additional bespoke seating (see p4-5 for the plan).

Pitlochry Wildlife Garden (Pitlochry in Bloom)

With designs having been agreed following public consultation and funds totalling £35,500 having been secured, the contract was awarded for the renewal of the old Wildlife Garden in Pitlochry in Dec 2019. Plans include the rejuvenation the different wildlife habitats to enhance biodiversity and to make the space an inviting place for people to visit. Work on site was scheduled to start in March 2020 but was postponed due to Covid-19. Bad weather resulted in unworkable ground conditions which brought further delays. Finally in early 2021 work got underway and good progress was soon made with just the sowing and planting of wildflowers yet to be carried out once milder conditions arrive.



L-R: Alyth Burn Side Enhancement; Pitlochry Wildlife Garden.

Project Development Advisor Update

Blairgowrie Coronation Corner (Blairgowrie and Rattray in Bloom)

To mark its 40th Anniversary, the local group has planned a number of projects, the main one being the refurbishment of Coronation Corner in Blairgowrie. The site had gradually deteriorated to become a rather unattractive area in the middle of town with over-hanging trees, overgrown and uninspiring plant beds and bench seating and pergola very much past their best. Following public consultation, designs for the site, which included an easily accessible circular pathway, planting beds, bench seating and an events space were agreed, tenders for the works obtained and the contract awarded in August 2020. This project was also delayed due to the Covid-19 pandemic 'lockdown'; however, the majority of the renewal work has now been completed. Funds totalling £41,500 were secured for this project

Kinross Renovation of Crosswell Fountain (Kinross in Bloom)

The 19th Century C Listed fountain was structurally in good condition but required some conservation and stabilisation works. Funds totalling £24,000 were secured for the project and, as described in the previous issue of the Newsletter, work is now complete. Since then, an Interpretation Board has been installed adding the finishing touch to a worthwhile legacy project.

by Kirsten Mathison -
Project Development Advisor



THE CROSSWELL FOUNTAIN

A 'Handsome Structure'

1. The Cross

Givenburgh statue in 1241. Kinross developed in medieval times as a tightly packed settlement with narrow lanes leading off from the High Street in all directions. These narrowways connected urban wells and fountains with their associated 'house', small strips of usable land on the edge of the town. Many of these lanes converged at an open market place in the heart of the burgh known as 'The Cross'. It was here that the town's Market Cross, now located in the Sandgate Park, stood for many years, only a few steps from the door of the Old County Building and Tolbooth which served as a centre of administration and justice.

2. The Cross Well

Opposite the Market Cross was a watering place known as the Cross Well, one of a number of wells and springs that used to provide water for the townfolk of Kinross. A hand-colored engraving of 'Kinross in 1842' (right) shows the crosswell situated in the shadow of the tall steeple that once formed part of the parish church relocated from the Kirkgate to the centre of the town in 1740. Engraved by J. Williams, this image was used as an illustration in an early edition of the 'Water Scott's novel The Abbot'.

3. A gravitation water supply for Kinross

Like many other towns in Scotland during the 18th century, Kinross was subject to outbreaks of infectious diseases such as typhoid, cholera, dysentery, smallpox and scarlet fever, all caused by poor sanitation. By the 1830s public health had become a key issue of concern to the Town Council which set about providing safe drinking water and proper sanitation for the people of Kinross. The burgh's first gravitation water supply was inaugurated with great ceremony in July 1836 when the Provost's wife turned on the flow of water with a silver key. This scheme brought 10,000 gallons of fresh water into the town from the Clack springs to the west of Kinross.

4. The Crosswell Fountain - Laying the Foundation Stone

With a ready supply of water now gushing via three water tanks to water pumps throughout Kinross, it was decided to erect a grand ornamental fountain over the Cross Well. During the summer of 1836, Robert Burns Begg, a local solicitor and grand nephew of the poet Robert Burns, formed a committee and raised subscriptions for the project. Several designs for the new fountain were considered and Saturday 12th December was set for the laying of the foundation stone with full Masonic Honours, an event organised by Kinross Masonic Lodge 353rd which had been established in 1826. At 1.30pm a procession led by the Minstrelsy Brass Band, accompanied by many burghers and other tenants of Kinross, set off from the County Buildings towards the Cross. A large number of spectators turned out to witness the spectacle and on their way the Masons' brethren passed through arches of bunting and flags. The foundation stone was laid with prayers, speeches and ritual Masonic formality and to end the proceedings wine and oil were poured over the stone.

5. A time capsule, 1885

At the colourful laying of the foundation stone, the Right Worshipful Master of Lodge 353rd deposited in the cavity of the stone a 'time capsule' containing a number of contemporary items including a list of subscribers to the fountain, several copies of the day, copies of the Valuation and Voters Rolls for 1885, the Kinross Advertiser dated 12th December 1885, a copy of the Kinross Advertiser and a list of the members of St Paul's Lodge also at the date of the ceremony. In July 1886, following the completion of the octagonal, Gothic-style Crosswell Fountain, this 'handsome structure' was formally handed over to the Burgh of Kinross by Robert Burns Begg in a ceremony witnessed by a large number of spectators.

6. Kinross Conservation Area

In recognition of 'the long history peculiar to the town of Kinross', the Local Planning Authority in 1976 designated the centre of the town as a Conservation Area under Section 163 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act, 1972. The aim of this designation was to preserve the essential character of the interesting and varied selection of tenement features in Kinross. One of these features, the Crosswell Fountain, was also designated a Grade C Listed Building. In 2000 Kinross in Bloom brought together a number of individuals and local organisations with a view to preserving the Crosswell Fountain and providing this information board.

WITH GRATEFUL THANKS TO:

- Architect & Project Team: Kinross Historic Trust
- Local Planning Authority: Kinross in Bloom
- Local Council: Kinross Council
- Local Businesses: Kinross Chamber of Commerce
- Local Residents: Kinross in Bloom
- Local Media: Kinross Advertiser
- Local Artists: Kinross in Bloom
- Local Volunteers: Kinross in Bloom
- Local Sponsors: Kinross in Bloom
- Local Donors: Kinross in Bloom
- Local Supporters: Kinross in Bloom
- Local Friends: Kinross in Bloom
- Local Neighbours: Kinross in Bloom
- Local Community: Kinross in Bloom
- Local Heritage: Kinross in Bloom
- Local Culture: Kinross in Bloom
- Local Environment: Kinross in Bloom
- Local Economy: Kinross in Bloom
- Local Society: Kinross in Bloom
- Local Identity: Kinross in Bloom
- Local Character: Kinross in Bloom
- Local Spirit: Kinross in Bloom
- Local Pride: Kinross in Bloom
- Local Love: Kinross in Bloom



Above: Kinross Renovation of Crosswell Fountain - adorned with Christmas lights!
 Opposite Top: Crosswell Fountain Information Board.
 Opposite Bottom: Blairgowrie Coronation Corner.

Who We Are

The *Take A Pride in Perthshire Campaign* began in 1993 in order to encourage and support local communities to establish constituted Bloom Groups who wished to carry out environmental enhancement projects in their towns and villages.

The Association was formed as an 'umbrella' organisation for the growing number of Bloom Groups in 1998, and we continue to provide support to help you deliver the Campaign - quite literally at a 'grass roots level' - in your local community.

Whilst our formal name remains the *Take a Pride in Perthshire Association*, we are now known as the *Take A Pride in Perth & Kinross Association* in recognition of the excellent contribution of groups in Kinross-shire.

This newsletter brings you up to date with the Groups' varied campaign activities as well as projects that involve direct support from the Association.

Visit [our website](#) to find out more.

Take A Pride in Perthshire Association - Virtual AGM 2021

Due to COVID-19, the AGM will be held via Zoom on **Monday 7th June at 7pm.**

Elspeth Bruce will send the Zoom invitation, the necessary documents, and instructions on how to join the meeting, to the nominated contacts of all Bloom groups by 21st May.

If you don't receive your emails, please let Elspeth know.



www.prideinperthshire.co.uk
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