



*We care for a part of Scotland's history  
which belongs to our community.*

## **Newsletter No.23**

### **Summer 2021**

#### **ORCHARD**

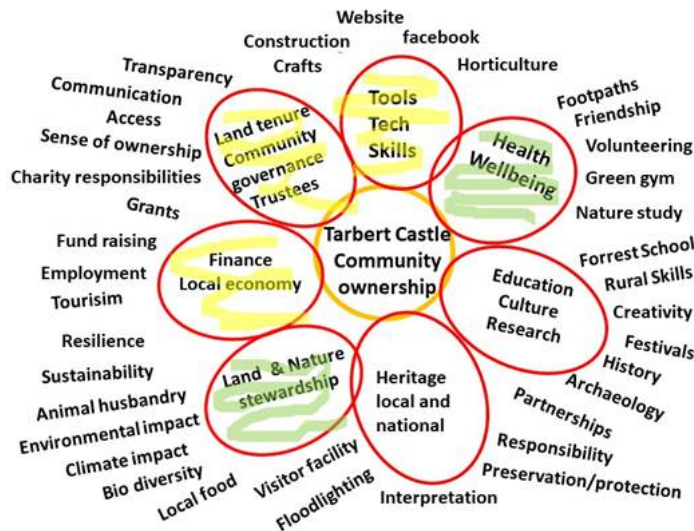
20 kilos of soft fruit have been harvested this summer with a particular increase in blueberries. Still only a small number of apples on our immature trees. Removal of weeds has occupied a lot of volunteer time, both here and in woodland, but the latter is now developing nicely, enclosing paths surrounding the pond.

#### **VISITORS**

We reported, in the spring, how our income had collapsed due to COVID-19, but we are delighted that visitor numbers have recovered and that donations are at pre-Covid levels. The increased numbers, of course, bring wear and tear maintenance issues on access routes. Volunteers have been kept busy, improving path/steps in entrance area and repairs to timber stairs.

#### **COP26**

The National Galleries of Scotland have asked us for a talk and digital presentation of our project for a supporting event around the United Nations framework convention on climate change. Below is an attempt to summarise our activities during the past 17 years. We will be enlarging particularly upon “*Health & Wellbeing*” and “*Land & Nature stewardship*” - highlighted in green - which are the topics most relevant to the event, which is around volunteering as a force to help with the climate challenges ahead. Highlighted in yellow are, however, essential supporting volunteer work, and influences which enable other activities to be planned and progressed.



The activities represent a considerable range of interests, benefits, and responsibilities pursued by volunteers over many hundreds of hours, all resulting from the core of community ownership.

## ARCHAEOLOGY

A group of experienced volunteers, supervised by our archaeologist Roddy Regan, have explored an area at the West Loch (West Loch Tarbert) where the account of Robert the Bruce include a cost to construct a “*pele*”, or signal station, at the head of the loch.

We exposed and surveyed what appears to be a stone-built base, with direct line of site to the Castle. We found no material which would allow us to date the structure or to suggest what might have been located on the base.

Roddy will summarise the investigation and, in due course, we will report further in a newsletter.

## WORK PARTIES

**Work parties are on the first Saturday of each month from 10 a.m. For the time being, please continue to bring your own tea break ingredients. We have hand and tool sanitiser on site, and social distancing will continue. All are welcome to pay us a visit.**

*Best wishes,*

*Robert*