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Triax Social Economy

FROM SMALL ACORNS GROW MIGHTY OAKS



Welcome to the first Annual General Meeting of Triax Social Economy

The Triax Social Economy Project (TSEP) was formed in 2016 following the development of the Social Economy projects, the Community Marquees and the Ballymagowan Allotments. The aim of the TSEP is to engage in activities with Social Benefit for the Community within the Triax area, creating opportunities by securing funding to deliver a range of projects to address the needs of the community.

The Ballymagowan allotment site has become a thriving community hub that incorporates not just the provision of growing areas but also education, healthy eating, mentoring, partnership with the Apex Social Supermarket, environmental awareness raising and a range of activities for both the allotment holders and the wider Apex tenant base in Creggan. The past year has been no exception with exciting new developments being explored and developed.

This progress is testimony to the shared vision and excellent working relationships that have been forged and sustained between the BBI and Apex.

. Ballymagowan – From Small Acorns Grow Mighty Oaks.

Building on Success

Growth of Ballymagowan Project

The opening of the Ballymagowan Allotment Project and Urban Park (BAUP) occurred in March 2014. In 2022 the project can boast:

- 38 allotments being cared for by individuals and organisations that contribute to the physical and mental well-being of approximately 100 allotment users. Users of the site are also automatic members of the Ballymagowan Allotment Association and many of the users supply produce free of charge to the Apex Social Supermarket.

- An onsite horticultural adviser providing expert advice to the allotment users and the wider community.
- 3 polytunnels that ensure onsite year-round activity and provide flowers for resident focused hanging basket workshops.
- An educational classroom for schools and groups
- The provision of a grass cutting and home assistance service to residents of Magowan and Ballymagowan estates
- 1 full-time staff and regular volunteers, creating employment in an area of high economic inactivity and offering work experience opportunities to local young people.
- 2 growing fruit orchard and 1000 + trees that have been planted by local children



A Community Hub.

As well as providing the allotment holders with a top-class facility BAUP has served as a focus for a number of community activities that have focused on resident engagement, environmental awareness, service provision to the wider community and education activities for local schools and youth clubs.

The site has also enabled a number of community based organisations to acquire their own allotment in a secure, safe, familiar and friendly location to pursue their own goals through the medium of horticulture.

Activities

Xmas Events

Ballymagowan Community Days

St Mary's Scouts Creggan – tree planting

Litter Picks

Community Assistance Services – gardening, street gritting

3 Bs Youth Clubs

Other Groups

Pink Ladies / Pink Panthers

Apex Housing Association

Creggan Men's Shed

BB Health Forum

New Initiatives - Communities in Bloom



The last two years has witnessed an exciting new development with the BAUP embarking on a flower and hanging basket project which saw the provision of 12,000 flowers to the Derry public. Flower trays, hanging baskets and window gardens combined to help improve the appearance of the area and more than 200 residents availed of this service.

Despite the challenges presented by Covid-19 in May 2020/21 in association with an Awards for All senior citizen assistance project throughout Creggan.

With support from the Big Lottery Awards for All we were able to build a number of window boxes and flower baskets and made them available to local residents at a reduced price. Despite the difficult circumstances at this time more than 50 residents benefited.



Education & Activities

The BAUP takes a lead role in promoting environmental awareness and activities in the Triax area. As well as participating in the Triax Tús Maith environmental educational which reaches every primary school pupil in the Triax area, we also played an integral role in the Turning Triax Green conference, the Yes Project and a range of environmental activities both onsite, in the local schools and across the Triax area.



This has included more than 30 children from St Mary's Scouts Creggan spending the morning planting trees, and working on allotment plots at the site and afterwards they were taken on an educational tour of the site where our horticulturist Rory spoke to them about the importance of the environment.



Education & Activities



Highlights of Resident Engagement

Tus Maith Environmental Awareness Programme	1,600 pupils
Yes Project	400 pupils
Turning Triax Green Conference	250 pupils
Summer Alternatives	250 children

Community Engagement

The BAUP is an adaptable space hosting family funday at key times of the year. In August 2019 over 300 families and children attended our family fun day. This was organised as an alternative to the bonfire which happens not 500 yards away from the urban park on the back road.



END OF HARVEST BARBECUE

Annually we have an end of season Harvest Barbecue with over 60 allotment holders and their families gathered at the allotment end of August which is used as a social and team building exercise among the allotment holders.



Ballymagowan Fairy Trail



Not just any old fairy Trail

The Ballymagowan Fairy Trail is a bi-lingual fairy Trail that draws upon Irish folklore as well as the more modern fairy traditions and combines these with a focus on the trees that are growing on the site. By combining modern fairy imagery and the more ancient Gaelic fairy traditions with the Ogham alphabet the trail provides an enjoyable cultural experience for the young and not so young.



Incorporating fairy houses, a wishing tree, puca and banshees, a fairy well and an ancient fairy circle the trail celebrates the long history of fairies in Ireland. The trail also celebrates the oldest Gaelic alphabet, the Ogham "Tree" alphabet, through the trees that grow on the site. The Fairy Trail was officially launched by over 30 school children from Bunscoil Colmcille and Gaelscoil Éadain Mhóir and will now be open to schools and youth clubs for educational tours.



Going from strength to strength

Our next phase of development for the site is to improve the site environmentally by:

WATER CONSERVATION ECOLOGY



As we live in a wet environment most of the year round with rainfall on average of 1600mm annually it makes sense that we harness this gift and use it to our advantage. To do this all 34 allotment plots will be provided with a 210lt barrel to retain rain water and those with a shed this will be connected to the gutter system where the rainwater can be harnessed and used on dry spells instead of relying on hose pipes which is a drain on the environment and scarce resources during long dry spells.

Eco pond

One of the major problems allotment holders find is the damage slugs can do to fresh produce. They tend to come out at night and gorge on cabbage, lettuce and other veg rendering them unusable.

An eco-pond is very important, not just to enhance the environment, but also having an allotment pond is a great way to have an even more eco friendly allotment and contributes to the well being of wildlife. Pond water doesn't

only benefit the plants. Birds and bees also need the source of water. Other wildlife like frogs and nutes will make the pond their home, while tackling common pest problems such as snails and slugs. You won't need to go around the allotment plot hunting for slugs since the frogs take care of those pests at night. These environment projects are funded by The Big Lotteries Community Fund.



Next Steps in 2023

In 2023 we will continue to develop the TSEP with two new exciting projects, the Free Derry Coffee Van and the More or Less Refill Shop.

The Free Derry Coffee Van project is about creating employment and opportunities for residents, providing training, employment and experience in a workplace. Also to provide a service at an affordable price for the community and community events.

The More or Less Refill shop has three primary objectives: firstly to reduce single use plastics within our communities by supplying refills of various household products. The second objective is the health aspect is to reduce plastic and chemicals used in everyday products that are linked to cancer, and thirdly saving people money in the current climate. We have recruited 15 volunteers for the Coffee Van and Refill Shop and many have already completed their Food Hygiene training and First Aid Training in the next few weeks.

