



# BALLATER ONE VOICE OUR FUTURE

(BOVOF)

## AN ACTION PLAN FOR BALLATER

October 2009

Compiled by



**BALLATER**  
*Royal Decide*

## CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
3. PROJECT AREA AND PROCESS
4. RESULTS AND
5. BALLATER ACTION PLAN
6. NEXT STEPS
7. ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE ACTION PLAN

## Accompanying Appendices (Separate Volume)

- Appendix 1 – Project Working Group
- Appendix 2 – Statistical Tables and Charts
- Appendix 3 – Housing Needs Survey Results
- Appendix 4 – Living in Ballater Survey Results
- Appendix 5 – Youth Survey Results
- Appendix 6 – Prioritised Themes and Issues
- Appendix 7 – BOVOF Project Plan
- Appendix 8 – Stakeholder Map and Letters
- Appendix 9 – BOVOF Project Documentation

Compiled by



Page 2

## INTRODUCTION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Ballater One Voice Our Future (BOVOF) project follows the setting up of a pilot scheme for the communities of Grantown, Cromdale, Dulnain and Advie by the Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA) 18 months ago. From the pilot scheme a Community Action Planning "Toolkit" was devised and published by CNPA which was considered to be the best way for the organisers to get consistent local feedback to inform the production of action plans. This approach was adopted in Ballater.

The BOVOF project proved to be an unqualified success and the level of follow up activity to the Ballater Action Plan arising from this project summarised in Section 6 is testament to this. The success reflects the support received from the CNPA, the Marr Area Partnership, Aberdeenshire Council, many other agencies, the time volunteered by members of the BOVOF Working Group and not least the valued input by members of the Ballater community, all of which is acknowledged.

### 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Residents and businesses in Ballater were asked to take part in the community consultation called Ballater One Voice Our Future (BOVOF) which aimed to build on identified community needs. It set out to involve everyone in the village in the production of a prioritized community action plan taking into account of all previous consultations and surveys. "Quick wins" were to be identified, eligible for funding and which could make a real difference within the community in a short period of time.

A Working Group was set up by the Ballater and Crathie Community Council supported by the Cairngorms National Park Authority and partners (Appendix 1). It included representatives from Ballater and Crathie Community Council, the Cairngorms National Park Authority, Aberdeenshire Council, the Association of Cairngorms Communities, Ballater (RD) Limited, The Princes Foundation, SCARF and Ballater residents, and particularly, including representation by young members of the community. The Working Group first met in mid-November 2008, and later agreed a 10-step programme in January 2009 which was completed by September 2009 (Appendix 7).

A review of the findings of previous consultations and research surveys was completed. This includes statistical data and charts in Appendix 2. Questionnaires were distributed to all residents and businesses in Ballater, to identify information gaps on community needs, including housing and other ideas which could merit support (Appendix 9).

Compiled by



Page 3

Two drop in consultations called Ballater Blethers were held at the Victoria Hall, Ballater, and were well supported. The first one gave everyone a further chance to air their views to share their thoughts and ideas for Ballater through facilitated discussions, and post-it boards. Many groups and organisations were invited to come along and there was a free Youth Café which gave young people the chance to enjoy themselves and have their say.

A steady newsflow to local and regional media , poster displays, leaflet drops for residents and the school bus, stakeholder letters and meetings succeeded in raising public awareness of the project in a short time (Appendices 8 and 9).

The information from the community consultation was independently analysed and many issues and concerns highlighted of a short, medium and long term nature. At the Second Ballater Blether all residents and businesses representatives from Ballater who attended had the opportunity to review the feedback from the surveys and help to prioritize the issues raised for action and discuss how actions could be implemented. Representatives from public agencies, local groups including young people, people with disabilities, voluntary organisations and local businesses were all invited to participate and contribute to the discussion.

The key findings of the housing survey are as follows:

- Out of approximately 900 household surveys distributed 308 responses came back – a total response rate of 34%.
- As Ballater has a high proportion of second or holiday homes (200 approximately) this can be discounted from the total distributed as a full response from second home owners could not be expected – making the response rate 44%.
- A total of 25 responses from those in second homes did not state a housing need.
- The total number of people in housing need in Ballater (including those who work but do not currently live in the town) is 75:
  - Out of approximately 150 business surveys distributed 18 returns were received, all of which stated a desire by the respondent to live and work in Ballater but currently unable to afford to do so due to the high current house prices.
  - Out of the 308 household surveys which were received, 64 indicated a need or desire to move home, 44 of these within Ballater (67%).

Compiled by



Page 4

- 23 respondents also indicated that someone else in their household has or will have future housing requirements, 13 of which have a desire to stay within Ballater.
- Out of the 75 people who have stated they are in need of social housing, only 26 of these are currently on the Aberdeenshire Council or Housing Association waiting list. This shows the hidden housing need of 49 individuals.

It is evident that Ballater does have a hidden housing need which has now been highlighted through the survey process. It is not only the people in housing need that recognise the lack of affordable housing options in Ballater, a significant proportion of respondents to the community section of the survey have indicated that there is a need for low-cost housing also. Despite a good base of social rented housing in Ballater, the low turnover of social housing means that it is not helping to meet housing need in the village. From the household and business surveys it has been demonstrated that there are 75 households with pressing housing needs. More facts and figures on housing need are to be found in Appendix 3.

The community needs survey "Living in Ballater" highlighted the most recurring issues from the community questions in the survey, and key themes and issues have been extracted. Most people have chosen to live in Ballater primarily due to suitable accommodation and also due to the scenery and natural environment. Ballater is predominantly a retirement town with 36% of respondents indicating their reason for moving to Ballater was to retire and also due to the low number of people indicating their first choice for moving here was due to the safe and secure environment to bring up children.

There was clearly a wide and varied range of issues that are of importance to the community of Ballater (Appendices 4 and 6). In summary, the most recurring key issues that the community would like to see addressed include:

- More affordable housing for local people
- Less holiday homes, 2nd homes and empty properties
- Bigger supermarket
- Halls refurbishment
- Improvement to path and road surfaces
- More affordable sports/ leisure facilities such as a dedicated centre and cinema
- Better policing
- Anti-dog fouling measures
- Maintenance of community spirit, vibrancy and uniqueness of Ballater
- Increased range of tourist facilities

Compiled by



Consultation with young people mirrored some of these but their concerns obviously centered around things to do in the village and in order of priority included a cinema, a bigger public park, a gym, regular events on the village green a club for S1/S2 and S3 and a crack down on noisy boy racers (Appendices 5 and 6).

An action plan for Ballater was compiled based on these results and published. Details of the Principal Issues, Potential Partners and Agencies, and Timescales were listed. Themes, aims and initial actions arising from this were compiled. In addition, a series of Appendices has been prepared in a separate document which contains detailed information received from and about the Ballater community upon which the Action Plan was based. A summary of the Ballater Action Plan was distributed to village residents on 8 September 2009.

Follow up activity has been strong and work is in progress for securing funding for short (quick win), medium and long term projects for Ballater through members of the Marr local community planning group. Since June 2009 when the BOVOF community consultation was completed there has been progress on some important actions. A Housing Partnership Group was set up to pursue the action to explore options for the provision of affordable housing. Work has also begun through individuals and Partnership Groups formed or in the process of formation, and existing development groups to deal with NHS dental care in Ballater, Adult Learning, development of the Old School site, enhancing facilities at the V&A Halls, developing activities and facilities to meet the needs of young people in Ballater and planning and co-ordination of the use of Monaltrie Park. In addition, the Prince's Foundation for the Built Environment (PFBE) held Public Meetings and a Workshop commencing in late September 2009 to evaluate the previous 2006 Enquiry by Design proposals and to discuss where PFBE could assist in delivering some of the outcomes of the BOVOF Action Plan.

## **2. PROJECT AREA AND PROCESS**

The project area was confined to the boundaries of the village and included a narrow strip south of the River Dee from Bridge of Muick to Pannanich, and along the A93 from Tullich to Bridge of Gairn. The postcode map of this area is included in Appendix 9.

The process for the BOVOF project was agreed at a Working Group meeting on 14 January 2009. A facilitated session led by the Marr Area Partnership (MAP) clarified the purpose and outcomes for the BOVOF project based on its aim to help Ballater reach its full potential – to listen, inform, plan and

Compiled by



Page 6

support actions. The purpose of the project was agreed as: "Involve everyone to produce an action plan for Ballater taking account of previous community consultations"

An implementation (process) plan was formulated and the community consultation would be undertaken based on stakeholder mapping.

The process was agreed and comprised ten (10) steps.

1. Identify and compile a review of previous consultations and research/surveys, what happened and identify previous findings and priorities.
2. Press coverage.
3. Develop questionnaire and covering letter.
4. Issue questionnaire (all residents and other stakeholders).
5. Follow up visits on questionnaire.
6. In parallel with (4) and (5) meet key stakeholder groups – these groups could carry out their own consultations based on a template to allow consistent feedback.
7. Independent analyses of all information.
8. First community conversation (to be called a "Ballater Blether" – 4<sup>th</sup> April 2009) to gain more information and prioritisation of needs through discussion groups.
9. Information would then be collated (Housing – FM and EB; Social – GR and CR).
10. Second Ballater Blether – 25<sup>th</sup> April 2009 to agree solutions and determine an action plan.

Members of the BOVOF working group identified relevant stakeholders and the stakeholder map was finalised (Appendix 8).

The schedule and budget achieved for the project can be found in Appendix 7.

### **3. RESULTS and PRIORITISATION**

Details of the feedback from the BOVOF community consultation which included information from housing, community and business survey questionnaires, as well as from the first Ballater Blether, the Youth Cafe and the primary school, are contained in Appendices 3, 4 and 5. Eight main themes were identified which were Housing, Local Economy, Education and Training, Health and Sport, Services, Environment, Community Services and Just for Youth. Within these themes a total of over 120 issues were raised.

Compiled by



Page 7

The second Ballater Blether and a Youth Consultation meeting led to the prioritisation of recurrent issues within each of the themes. This was achieved by means of placing “spots” against listed issues which were of particular interest to the members of the Ballater community. The results of this exercise are to be found in Appendix 6. The age profiles of participants in the various consultations are also included.

#### **4. BALLATER ACTION PLAN**

The themes, aims and initial actions arising from the community consultation Ballater One Voice Our Future (BOVOF) held between April and June 2009 in Ballater are given in the following tables, which also give details of the Principal Issues, Potential Partners and Agencies, and Timescales. In addition, a series of Appendices has been prepared in a separate document which contains all the detailed information received from the Ballater community upon which the Action Plan for Ballater was based.

Compiled by



Page 8

THEME	AIM	PRINCIPAL ISSUES		
HOUSING	To increase access to housing for rent and low cost ownership over the next five years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing to rent and buy for locals.</li> <li>• Permanent supplies (housing burdens, pressured area status).</li> <li>• Possible Ballater Housing Trust/ Association?</li> <li>• Extra points for locals in allocations policy.</li> <li>• Gauge an interest for a probable 2<sup>nd</sup> round of Rural Homes for Rent from landlords.</li> <li>• Use of empty buildings for housing provision (site identification).</li> <li>• To see the Old School converted into use for either housing or education..</li> <li>• Want to see Ballater on the Strategic Housing Investment Programme.</li> <li>• Increase in 2<sup>nd</sup> homes tax to combat problem of empty 2<sup>nd</sup> homes and change planning law to stop 2<sup>nd</sup> home development.</li> <li>• Increase in sheltered housing and allocating funding of wardens for care of individuals.</li> </ul>		
INITIAL ACTIONS	Lead Organisation	Lead/Action Contact	Partners and Agencies	Timescale
1. An open public meeting to discuss affordable <b>housing</b> with agency staff there to give information to the community. This will comprise an overview of what the council/housing associations can do including the	CNPA	Fiona Munro	BRD, BCCC, AC, LHA, RHS, THSCHT	<b>Quick Win</b> Held on Thursday, 2 <sup>nd</sup> July, 2009

Compiled by



background to waiting lists, an overview of the BOVOF project, and time allocated for questions. A list of actions coming from the community to take forward is given below.				
2. To set up a Ballater Housing Partnership Group co-ordinated by the BOVOF - CG to explore various options for the provision of affordable housing	BHPG	Fiona Munro	RHS, AC, LHA, TFHC, THSCHT, CHA, AC, BRD and community representatives	<b>Quick Win</b> First meeting held on 23 September 2009.
3. The community to look at researching the possibilities of setting up a Housing Trust with credible feasible options for development.	BHPG	BHPG Chair	RHS, THSCHT	Medium - term
4. Approach local estates to identify if there is interest in building housing themselves, selling land	BHPG	BHPG Chair	ARHE, Housing Associations, PFBE	Medium- term

Compiled by



<p>to a housing association/trust or if there are empty properties to renovate in order to identify properties and land for affordable housing. Ensure the land is identified in the new local plan.</p>				
<p>5. Identify land banking opportunities.</p>	<p>BHPG</p>	<p>BHPG Chair</p>	<p>RHS, THSCHT, Housing Associations</p>	<p>Medium/Long term</p>

THEME	AIM	PRINCIPAL ISSUES		
LOCAL ECONOMY	To co-ordinate effort to increase the attraction of Ballater as a business and tourist destination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improvements to tourism industry</li> <li>• Cheaper tourist facilities and services</li> <li>• Improvements to caravan park and supermarket shopping</li> <li>• Increased number of B&amp;B's</li> <li>• Improvements to existing hotels</li> <li>• Apprenticeships for school leavers</li> <li>• Increase number of business/ shop units</li> <li>• Office accommodation – cottage industry space</li> <li>• Regular cultural promotions on green</li> <li>• Enlarged service from Heather Hopper with better promotion</li> <li>• Small jobs for youth – e.g. gardening for elderly</li> <li>• Small business centre with IT facilities</li> </ul>		
INITIAL ACTIONS	Lead Organisation	Lead/Action Contact	Partners and Agencies	Timescale
1. To set up a Ballater Enhancement Partnership Group to identify opportunities for improvements in the village. Group activities including provision of education and training needs co-ordinated with other partnerships through the BOVOF - CG	BBA, BEG	BBA Chair	BCCC, BBA, BEG, DMO, CNPA, AC-CLD, AC Highways, CBP, BRD, PFBE and community representatives	Quick Win

Compiled by



Compiled by



Page 13

THEME	AIM	PRINCIPAL ISSUES		
EDUCATION AND TRAINING	To increase the opportunity for learning, training and preparation for employment in Ballater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adult evening classes</li> <li>• Larger library and longer opening hours</li> <li>• Use of Old School for community learning facilities</li> <li>• Computing classes for elderly</li> <li>• Distance learning opportunities – e.g. - facilities for video lectures from Aberdeen University or RGU</li> </ul>		
INITIAL ACTIONS	Lead Organisation	Lead/Action Contact	Partners and Agencies	Timescale
1. Adult Learning Audit in Ballater	AC-CLD	Lindsay Lumsden/Caroline Cowie		Quick Win
2. To set up a Ballater and Upper Deeside Adult Learning Partnership Group co-ordinated with other partnerships through the BOVOF - CG	AC-CLD	Lindsay Lumsden/Caroline Cowie	CNPA-EI, PFBE (and other Princes's Charities), AC-CLD,BCDG, BRD, UA, CS,RGU,WEA,NL,SAC,LEDS	Quick Win First Meeting held on 29 September 2009
3. Identify provider to address demand for adult evening classes, publicise widely and identify local tutors	AC-CLD	Lindsay Lumsden	AC, BRD, BCDG, CNPA	Short term
4. Use Ballater Old School for community learning activities and support action already	BCDG	Ed Bushnell	BRD, CNPA-EI, AC-CLD, AC, PFBE	Medium Term

Compiled by



in progress				
5. Provision of Computing classes for elderly and identify and employ tutors	AC-CLD	Lindsay Lumsden/Caroline Cowie/Alistair Poole	AC-CLD, BCDG, BRD, AC Library Service, Community Organisations	Short term

THEME	AIM	PRINCIPAL ISSUES		
HEALTH	To explore the potential and feasibility of increasing dental care in Ballater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strong demand for a village based dental service</li> </ul>		
INITIAL ACTIONS	Lead Organisation	Lead/Action Contact	Partners and Agencies	Timescale
1. Arrange a meeting in Ballater of representatives of relevant partners and agencies within three months, to review the effectiveness of existing arrangements, and inform on policy, grants and the feasibility of establishing a new sustainable small dental practice in the village.	BOVOF	Ron Drever	NHS Grampian, Ballater Health Centre, Private Dental Practice(s)	<b>Quick Win</b> First meeting held 8 October 2009
2.If required assess the level of demand for dental services in Ballater	BOVOF	Ron Drever	NHS Grampian, Ballater Health Centre	<b>Quick Win</b>

Compiled by



THEME	AIM	PRINCIPAL ISSUES		
SERVICES	To pass on concerns to the police and encourage improved communication with the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unanimous agreement that larger police presence, and longer station manning were desirable, as well as publicised action against offenders, to solve some of the issues of anti-social behaviour and traffic violations such as "boy racers".</li> <li>• Policed hours, (foot patrols), 6pm-midnight</li> <li>• Consistent manning of Police station at widely-published times</li> <li>• Request that consideration be given to employing Youth Workers to help with possible problems with young people and to encourage them to become involved in their community in a more positive way.</li> </ul>		
INITIAL ACTIONS	Lead Organisation	Lead/Action Contact	Partners and Agencies	Timescale
1.To post monthly summary feedback from the Police Service on the village notice board	BCCC	Robin Blyth	Police Service, BCCC, CPP	Quick Win
2. To pass on any concerns raised by the community to the Police Service and to communicate feedback on specific issues.	BCCC	Robin Blyth	Police Service, BCCC, CPP	Quick Win
THEME	AIM	PRINCIPAL ISSUES		
SERVICES	Assist with review and co-ordination of signage for Ballater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beneficial to have a 20MPH speed limit through the village, perhaps realistically only for the length of Bridge Street.</li> <li>• Strong desire for a pedestrian crossing in the main street, zebra not traffic lights. Suggested location was approx. between the Clydesdale Bank and the newsagent.</li> <li>• Some of the more outlying village roads suffer from speeding</li> </ul>		

Compiled by



		<p>drivers, e.g. Sir Patrick Geddes Way.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flashing 30MPH sign at village boundaries</li> <li>• Street signs need to be upgraded, with some “leading to” signs, e.g. for Monaltrie Park.</li> <li>• Should be a large, clear, village centre, information board/map accessible in terms of height, colour, lighting and wording.</li> <li>• Tullich Graveyard additional parking/hard standing is required.</li> <li>• Deeside Way crossing of A93 at Tullich dangerous. Needs signage and feasibility study for a suitable bridge.</li> </ul>		
<b>INITIAL ACTIONS</b>	<b>Lead Organisation</b>	<b>Lead/Action Contact</b>	<b>Partners and Agencies</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
1.To set up a Signage Partnership Group to address signage issues and options in and around the village co-ordinated with other partnerships through the BOVOF - CG	BRD	Jack Coull	BRD, BCCC, BBA,BEG, AC, PFBE	<b>Quick Win</b>
2.To provide flashing 30MPH signs at village boundaries	BCCC	Robin Blyth	BCCC, Police Service, AC Highways	<b>Quick Win</b>
3. To pass on high level of concern to get speed restriction/pedestrian/cyclists signage in place for the crossing.	BCCC	Robin Blyth	BCCC, Police Service, AC Highways	<b>Quick Win</b>
4. Tullich Graveyard – Additional parking/hard standing is required.	BCCC	Robin Blyth	BCCC, AC	<b>Quick Win</b>

Compiled by



5. Signage for crossing at Tullich of Deeside Way and A93. Feasibility study for a suitable bridge over the A93	BCCC	Robin Blyth	BCCC, AC	<b>Quick Win</b>
	BCCC	Robin Blyth	BCCC, AC	Medium/Long Term
THEME	AIM	PRINCIPAL ISSUES		
SERVICES	To maintain in good condition the roads within the village	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concern was expressed at the number of potholes and generally poor state of local road surfaces</li> </ul>		
INITIAL ACTIONS	Lead Organisation	Lead/Action Contact	Partners and Agencies	Timescale
1.To inform and pass on concerns regarding the condition of roads within the village	BCCC	Robyn Blyth	BCCC, AC	<b>Quick Win</b>

THEME	AIM	PRINCIPAL ISSUES
ENVIRONMENT	To raise awareness and encourage engagement to ensure a cleaner and greener Ballater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anti-litter measures: Education and awareness campaign; Adequate litter bins where problems are most obvious.</li> <li>• Dog Fouling: Education and greater enforcement. Increase frequency of dog warden visits.</li> <li>• Review and optimise location and number of dog muck bins.</li> <li>• Street Cleansing: Concern that the village centre is not cleaned now till later in the morning by the large sweeper, this meaning that there are vehicles hampering the activity. Earlier time for cleansing. Extend cleansing to include more regular sweeping of other areas of the village.</li> <li>• Improved Landscaping in village: Schedules for milder parts of the Shire do not necessarily suit the local area. Greater measures to deter dandelion growth, while protecting other plants in the area. Encourage planting of berried shrubs to encourage/sustain wildlife. Maintain village boundary woodlands. Allotments.</li> <li>• Maintenance schedules for flowerbeds and other communal areas to reflect local need.</li> <li>• Solar Panels: Collate information on how to source relevant information and funding for householders.</li> </ul>

Compiled by



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deeside walkway extending to Braemar: Discussions on the issues relating to extending the Deeside Way and the impact of littering and dog fouling in such areas. Ecological impact on the area and how it would affect the river life</li> </ul>		
INITIAL ACTIONS	Lead Organisation	Lead/Action Contact	Partners and Agencies	Timescale
1.Set up a community environmental partnership group for liaising with relevant agencies to deal environmental issues co-ordinated with other partnerships through the BOVOF - CG	BCCC	Robin Blyth	BCCC, AC-CLD, AC, CNPA, SCARF, BRD, COAT, PFBE, voluntary organisations, village orderlies	Short Term
THEME	AIM	PRINCIPAL ISSUES		
ENVIRONMENT	To liaise with Aberdeenshire Council on the relocation and management of recycling centres	<p>1: Recycling in Village: Overwhelming feeling that Church Square Car Park recycling facility needs to be emptied much more frequently. As well as relieving frustration of those prevented from using the containers because they are full, it would prevent the dumped excess from disfiguring the main car park.</p> <p>2: Garden refuse collection – even Spring &amp; Autumn.</p> <p>3: Recycling centre on periphery of Village: Possible locations – Quarry areas near Cambus O,May; Lions Face, Braemar, NOT Aboyne.</p>		
INITIAL ACTIONS	Lead Organisation	Lead/Action Contact	Partners and Agencies	Timescale
1.Liaise with Aberdeenshire Council concerning	BCCC	Robin Blyth	BCCC, AC	Quick Win

Compiled by



management of recycling site in main car park in the village				
2. Locate and commission suitable recycling centre on periphery of village.	BCCC	Robin Blyth	BCCC, AC, PFBE	Medium term

THEME	AIM	PRINCIPAL ISSUES
COMMUNITY SERVICES	To support the development project for the Old School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Old School site could be used for both affordable housing and as a learning/training/educational facility.</li> <li>• The Old School Project (run by the Ballater Centre Development Group- BCDG) needs to be sustainable in the long term and there needs to be an emphasis on generating income from services on offer. (eg. educational centre).</li> <li>• The Ballater Centre Development Group should be broadened to include partners from all sectors of the community and involve young people.</li> <li>• Links to other groups potentially developing services within Ballater (V&amp;A Halls group)</li> <li>• Involve local people that have building and construction skills, and evaluate where the project could incorporate these skills by doing a skills audit of potential volunteers.</li> </ul>

Compiled by



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Ideas for uses:</b> outdoor centre, youth facilities, community centre, business centre/ business units, youth club, development of outdoor centre into environmental centre include CNPA, more FE classes (e.g. yoga), museum, community café.</li> </ul>		
INITIAL ACTIONS	Lead Organisation	Lead/Action Contact	Partners and Agencies	Timescale
1.To update the feasibility study and business plan for the Old School Building and Site	BCDG	Ed Bushnell	BRD, CNPA, CNPA-EI, AC, AC-CLD, SDS, BASIL, SRDP, LEADER, MAP, PFBE	<b>Quick Win</b> In progress
2.To implement a development and business plan for the Old School Site	BCDG	Ed Bushnell	BRD, CNPA, CNPA-EI, AC, AC-CLD, SDS, BASIL, SRDP, LEADER, MAP	Medium term (2 years)
3.Broaden the membership of the BCDG and engage all sectors of the community to define and deliver needs	BCDG	Ed Bushnell	BCCC, BRD, BBA, community youth and interest groups.	Short term
THEME	AIM	PRINCIPAL ISSUES		
COMMUNITY SERVICES	To support the current initiative to enhance facilities of the Victoria and Albert Halls to meet the needs of the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hall refurbishment - attract more people to help with the project.</li> <li>Funding group should advertise in the local press.</li> <li>Needs assessment from community and hall user groups and more of their involvement in V&amp;A Halls Development Association.</li> <li>Feasibility studies and detailed specifications are currently being</li> </ul>		

Compiled by



		<p>commissioned for the development of the halls looking at the potential for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Central heating system and insulation (wood fuel)</li> <li>○ Toilets, kitchens and storage (best use of the space in building)</li> <li>• Access issues for people with disabilities to be taken into consideration.</li> <li>• Improved emergency service facilities</li> <li>• Other suggestions: Indoor sports facilities, cantilevered seating in halls, development of cinema, more fitness classes, improved history and arts facilities</li> </ul>		
INITIAL ACTIONS	Lead Organisation	Lead/Action Contact	Partners and Agencies	Timescale
1.Preparation of updated digital layout and elevation plans for the V&A Halls	VAHIPG	Ian Hay	CNPA, AC, MAP, PFBE, CWS Ltd	<b>Quick Win</b> Completed August 2009
2.Community consultation to identify needs regarding use of the V&A Halls	VAHIPG	Ian Hay	CNPA, AC, MAP, VAHDA, User Groups – current and potential	<b>Quick Win</b> Completed 17 October 2009
3.Improve the communication and increase participation of community and user groups in the VAHDA	VAHDA	VAHDA Office Bearers	VAHDA	<b>Quick Win</b>
THEME	AIM	PRINCIPAL ISSUES		
COMMUNITY SERVICES	To assist in the future development of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct a park audit and a half day event to find out:</li> </ul>		

Compiled by



	Monaltrie Park for the benefit of the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How the park is currently used</li> <li>• What new usages may happen</li> <li>• Look at the issues of: the pavilion, youth shelter, and signage.</li> <li>• How to best promote the park and what it has to offer, to both residents and visitors.</li> <li>• Highlight and look to address conflicts of use/confusion of use.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suggested Improvements to Monaltrie Park: toilet facilities, changing facilities, litter prevention, vandalism, lighting, paths, expansion of park landscaping, community ownership/management, more fitness equipment in park play area, security</li> </ul>		
INITIAL ACTIONS	Lead Organisation	Lead/Action Contact	Partners and Agencies	Timescale
1.Set up a Monaltrie Park Users Partnership Group co-ordinated with other partnerships through the BOVOF - CG	BCCC	Robin Blyth	AC, AC-CLD, CNPA, PFBE, BHGC, representatives of User Groups.	<b>Quick Win</b> First meeting held on 15 October 2009
2.Facilitated Community Event	BCCC	Robin Blyth	AC, AC-CLD, MAP, CNPA, PFBE, BHGC, representatives of User Groups.	<b>Quick Win</b>
3. Audit of Monaltrie Park facilities and usage	BCCC	Robin Blyth	BCCC, AC-CLD, MAP, BRD, PFBE, AC	<b>Quick Win</b>
4.Toilet facilities improvement	AC	Doug Allen	BCC, AC, CNPA, AC-CLD, PFBE	<b>Quick Win</b>
5. To assess further uses of the Monaltrie Park pavilion (as a	BCCC	Robin Blyth	AC, AC-CLD, CNPA, PFBE, BHGC, representatives	Short term

Compiled by



Community Cafe or information and advice centre).			of User Groups.	
THEME	AIM	PRINCIPAL ISSUES		
COMMUNITY SERVICES	To assist with the provision of cinema facilities for Ballater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Victoria Hall would be a good possible venue (multi-purpose).</li> <li>• During the day could be used for schools, media projects, to promote festivals (walking, Victoria weeks).</li> <li>• In the evening main stream and indie films.</li> <li>• Use Ballater Community Bus to take young people to Aboyne cinema.</li> </ul>		
INITIAL ACTIONS	Lead Organisation	Lead/Action Contact	Partners and Agencies	Timescale
1.To assess the viability of cinema facilities for Ballater	VAHIPG, BCDG	Ian Hay, Ed Bushnell	CNPA, AC, DAF, AC-CLD	Short Term

Compiled by



THEME	AIM	PRINCIPAL ISSUES
JUST FOR YOUTH	To develop activities and facilities to meet the needs of the young people in Ballater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More youth leadership/ youth workers</li> <li>• Youth activity selection</li> <li>• Skateboard park</li> <li>• Youth club</li> <li>• More youth events</li> <li>• More youth gathering places</li> <li>• Ice rink</li> <li>• Pool table hall</li> <li>• Skateboard park</li> <li>• Facilities for non-sporting youngsters</li> <li>• More team sports</li> <li>• Encourage more use of golf course by young players</li> <li>• Facilities for motorbike scramblers</li> </ul> <p>On the other issues, the young people's priorities were:</p> <p><b>Community Services:</b> Crack down on noisy boy racers, better recycling</p>

Compiled by



		services, better ambulance service, Monaltrie Park- bigger park, better toilets, area for older youths <b>Health &amp; Sport:</b> Gym, swimming pool, all-weather surface and athletic track <b>Housing:</b> Affordable homes to buy for locals, affordable housing for young families, affordable housing for single people <b>Economy &amp; Environment:</b> Regular events on the green, bike lane through village, apprenticeships for school leavers <b>Community Facilities:</b> Cinema, larger library and opening hours, community café		
INITIAL ACTIONS	Lead Organisation	Lead/Action Contact	Partners and Agencies	Timescale
1.Re-decorate cellar in V&A Halls	AC-CLD	Jennifer Leiper	ESCAPE, BCCC, VAHIPG, BRD	<b>Quick Win</b>
2. Establish Young People's Action Group	AC-CLD	Jennifer Leiper	ESCAPE, BCCC, VAHIPG, BRD	Short term In progress
3.Liaise with community via partner agencies and engage community concerning support and fund raising events for more youth activities/ facilities	AC-CLD	Jennifer Leiper	BCCC, BRD, SMCSG, UDCDG, CNPA, LEADER	Medium Term
4.Youth Club for S1/S2, and one for S3+	AC-CLD	Jennifer Leiper	ESCAPE, BCCC, VAHIPG, BRD, BCDG	Short Term
5.Liaise with landowners to locate suitable	BCCC	Robin Blyth	CNPA, Local Estates, Farmers	<b>Quick Win</b>

Compiled by



ground for motorbike scrambling				
---------------------------------	--	--	--	--

## 5. NEXT STEPS

Since June 2009 when the BOVOF community consultation was completed there has been significant progress on some important actions. Work has also begun through individuals and Partnership Groups either formed or in the process of formation, as well as existing development groups. A number of Partnerships have already had initial meetings.

1. A **Ballater Housing Partnership Group** has been set up to pursue the action to explore options for the provision of affordable housing. It has met twice already on 2 July and 23 September 2009 in Ballater. Housing actions from the BOVOF Action Plan for Ballater were considered and it was agreed before the next meeting on 15 December 2009 to circulate the final copy of the findings of the Housing Survey (Appendix 3) to the group members, look into publicising mutual exchanges, provide feedback from contact with local landowners and estates, prepare a list of options for affordable housing that would be specific to Ballater and an explanation of the funding mechanisms/grants with prepared with examples to indicate how they worked. It was also agreed to start the preparation of a list of green space in Ballater and approach more members of the community to broaden local representation on Ballater Housing Partnership Group.
2. Following up on issues concerning Education and Training the **Ballater and Upper Deeside Adult Learning Partnership** has been set up and had its first meeting on 29 September 2009. Those attending represented a broad range of interests and are listed in the Action Plan in Section 5 of this report. One of those issues is *'to increase the opportunity for learning, training and preparation for employment in Ballater'* – in the widest sense. It was agreed that during October 2009 an "Adult Learning Needs Survey" would be circulated to households in Ballater and Upper Deeside. From this the demand for education and training could be assessed and this would have a bearing among other things on the plans for the Ballater Old School site.

Compiled by



Page 30

3. A **Youth Action Group** has been set up to developing activities and facilities to meet the needs of young people in Ballater.
  
4. Another outcome of the BOVOF community consultation was the concern over planning and co-ordination of the use of Monaltrie Park. A **Monaltrie Park Users Group** has been set up and had its first meeting on 15 October 2009. It was agreed to encourage as many users as possible to air their views on priorities and the future for the park. Current issues related to lights, toilets, the pavilion and the smaller storage shed. The next meeting of the group is planned for 26 November 2009.
  
5. From the BOVOF community survey, it was clear that one of the communities' priorities was for a **Dental Service in Ballater**. NHS Grampian was contacted and a meeting held on 8 October 2009. Current NHS strategy indicates that there was potential for one full time dentist and one part time in Ballater for which three surgery rooms would be required. However, the financial climate at the present time has slowed down the rate of progress in Aberdeenshire, as elsewhere, but it is still possible to aim for an enhanced dental facility in Ballater over the next couple of years. In view of this a way forward to progress this was agreed.
  
6. **Ballater Centre Development Group** has been at work updating the feasibility study and business plan for the development of the Ballater Old School site as an education and training centre. Following the BOVOF consultation a Cairngorm LAG Grant was received in September 2009 to help to complete the study and plans following a community consultation.
  
7. **Victoria and Albert Halls Improvement Project Group** has been working on getting quotations for feasibility and design studies principally for heating and insulation, but also for the refurbishment of the V&A Halls. Following on from the BOVOF consultation, in August 2009, a contract to produce up-to-date digital Layout and Elevation Plans was commissioned by the V&A Halls Improvement Project Group. The contract was completed by CWS Partnership, Aberdeen, was funded by CNPA and MAP and delivered in August 2009. The updated digital plans replace original plans (dating back to 1874) on stable computer ready base.

Compiled by



They have already been used for a successful public consultation on 17 October 2009, and are valuable for the current exercise of obtaining plans, estimates and proposals from heating and insulation engineers, quantity surveyors, structural engineers, cost estimators, and contractors. The plans will also be used for applications to funding organisations.

8. In addition follow up of specific issues within the BOVOF action plan, the **Prince's Foundation for the Built Environment (PFBE)** held Public Meetings and a Workshop between 29 September and 1 October 2009 inviting the Ballater community to evaluate the previous 2006 Enquiry by Design proposals and to discuss where PFBE can assist in delivering some of the outcomes of the BOVOF Action Plan.
9. The scope of the workshop was broad and a number of themes and sites were considered. The Local Economy and Housing featured strongly, and the Old School was a site that PFBE considered in some detail as a key BOVOF project. The sites that were highlighted in the Design Workshop are as follows: Ballater Old School, Church Square Car Park, British Legion/ Pipe Band Huts, Craigview Industrial Site, St. Andrew's House, Fire Station/ Field, Masonic Lodge Garden, Craigendarroch Field, Monaltrie Park, Local Plan Site H-1, Former Sawmill Site, Industrial Park Site.

**The Action Plan for Ballater reflects the views of the community given during the BOVOF consultation. The success of its implementation will depend on positive support from members of the community. So far several members of the Ballater community have made a significant contribution to the progress of partnerships and project development groups. If you the reader would like to help with any aspect of the Action Plan or you have any queries please contact the BOVOF Co-ordinating Group at 013397 55467.**

## 6. ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE ACTION PLAN

B&CCC	Ballater and Crathie Community Council
BRD	Ballater (Royal Deeside) Ltd
CNPA	Cairngorms National Park Authority
DMO	Destination Management Organisation
LHA	Langstane Housing Association
AC-CLD	Aberdeenshire Council - Community Learning and Development
AC	Aberdeenshire Council
THSCHT	The Highland Small Communities Housing Trust
RHS	Rural Housing Service
TFHC	Tenants First Housing Co-operative
CHA	Castlehill Housing Association
ARHE	Aberdeenshire Rural Housing Enabler
PFBE	The Princes Foundation for the Built Environment
AOCC	Association of Cairngorms Communities
MAP	Marr Area Partnership
CPP	Communities Planning Partnership
SCARF	Save Cash and Reduce Fuel
BHPG	Ballater Housing Partnership Group
BOVOF	Ballater One Voice Our Future
BOVOF-WG	Ballater One Voice Our Future – Working Group
BOVOF-CG	Ballater One Voice Our Future – Co-ordinating Group (for Action Plan Follow-Up)
BBA	Ballater Business Association
SDS	Skills Development Scotland
CBP	Cairngorms Business Partnership
BEG	Ballater Enhancement Group
CNPA-EI	Cairngorms National Park Authority - Education and Inclusion
BCDG	Ballater Centre Development Group
UDCDG	Upper Deeside Community Development Group
COAT	Cairngorms Outdoor Access Trust
VAHIPG	Victoria & Albert Halls Improvement Project Group
VAHDA	Victoria & Albert Halls Development Association
DAF	Deeside Arts Forum
BHGC	Ballater Highland Games Committee
SMCSG	South Marr Community Safety Group
SRDP	Scottish Rural Development Programme
BASIL+	Badenoch Learning and Resource Centre
BCC	Ballater Charitable Chiefs
UA	University of Aberdeen
CS	Careers Scotland
RGU	Robert Gordon's University, Aberdeen
WEA	Workers' Educational Association
NL	Network Librarian
SAC	Scottish Agricultural College
LEDS	Linking Education and Disability Scotland

Compiled by



Compiled by

