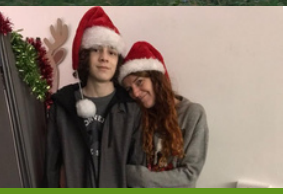
BELVILLE BUGLE

BELVILLE COMMUNITY GARDEN TRUST

Issue date: December 2022



Our manager Sally with her son Conor in Santa hats!

Christmas is a time of togetherness. There's something to be said for the fact that there's a holiday that promotes community more than any other time of year (it also promotes presents, tinsel and cheesy music, but never mind that!). And for us at Belville Community Garden Trust, and hopefully our readers, too, the word "community" speaks volumes. With that said, this month's Big Blether comes gift-wrapped:

WHAT'S THE STORY BEHIND YOUR FAVOURITE CHRISTMAS GIFT?

As always, let us know however you'd like! Our contact details are below.
As for last month's question, the responses are on the next page.

Simply **come in and chat** with us (or **by post**): 53-57 Belville Street, Greenock PA15 4UN
Email us at admin@belvillecommunitygarden.org.uk
Ring us at 01475 276034 (please no cold callers, it's already freezing outside)
Message us on **social media!** (links at the back of the Bugle)
Our opening hours are, as always, **9am-4pm Mon-Thu & 12pm-1pm Friday.**

WHAT'S ON

If something has an asterisk (*), please book in advance

Mondays
Garden Club (1pm-3pm)

Tuesdays
Tabletop* (1:30pm-3pm)

Wednesdays
Knit & Natter* (1pm-3pm)
Bike Café (10:30am-3pm)

Thursdays
ESOL Classes (1:30pm-2:30pm)

Friday
Soup & a Blether* (12pm-1pm)

Last Tuesday every month
The Gay Agenda (6:30pm-8pm)

ACTIVITIES ARE CURRENTLY OFF FOR CHRISTMAS AND WILL RESTART IN THE NEW YEAR

Belville Spotlight

Kasia Taczkowska's been a part of Belville for over a year!
She has so much passion for BCGT that she actively takes part in any drop-ins and classes whenever she can, and even volunteers to write up the menu for every week's Soup and a Blether! So of course, we all had wonderful things to say:

Kasia and her partner Steve dressed for our **Santa's Grotto** event!

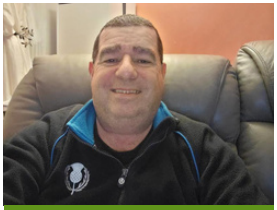
"Kasia gives good cuddles when you're feeling low" - D.M.

"Always willing to help everybody, always concerned for everybody, just wants to save the world" - Sally C.

"Very hard-working, always offers help, and always thinks of others" - Taylor B.

I said in the last issue that this month's Spotlight person would be wearing a Santa hat, it won't happen again! (for at least 11 months...) Oh, and from this issue onwards, the Spotlight will focus solely on volunteers & friends in the community. As for our staff & board...

Our People



Not sure what's better, the selfie skills or the really comfy-looking chair!

Ian McArthur is the Chairman of our Board of Trustees, having been with us since the early days just after we got the Big Lottery grant applied for by Belville Community Association & River Clyde Homes.

Ian's been involved with construction and Health & Safety for most of his career, being the H&S representative of the engineering company that oversaw the demolition of some of the high-rise buildings located where BCGT is now. He's also worked with IBM, the former-named James Watt College (even getting a diploma), and the Trust.

These days, Ian lives with his fiancé Janice and their dog Thor (a WORTHY name!) in the Belville area of Greenock. If you're wondering where that is and you're mid-Soup & a Blether, look around!

BIG BLETHER RESPONSES!

Thanks to everyone who responded to last month's question, here are some of the responses for what you'd all like to see in a community centre!:

"Various activities, community spirit (gin)" / *"Education services"*

"Lending Library, repair café" / *"Workshops & Practical courses"*

"...warm welcome, friendly staff, a range of activities (e.g. exercise classes, discussion groups, cooking activities, foodshare, lending library (garden equipment, power tools & cooks), DIY classes, community kitchen, local information & signposting"

Judging by the feedback, it seems a lot of us are on the same page! Thanks to everyone who responded (especially to whoever suggested gin, that gave us a laugh)!

We've just started our **Sustainability Workshops** where we share some top tips on staying warm & cosy over the holidays, starting with a plant-based Christmas dinner cookery class (seen below). Expect more workshops in the New Year!

(PLEASE REMEMBER TO BOOK IN ADVANCE.)

ELSEWHERE @ BELVILLE

DING DONG, MERRILY ON HIGH, WE'VE BEEN A LITTLE BUSY!
Mostly with cooking, crafting & coffee. Lots and lots of coffee*.

Unfortunately, there wasn't any carolling.
*(no, we don't need an intervention)

A few of our staff & Bike Café participants headed over to the Greenock Wanderers R.C. to take part in a 2-day **Bronze Velotech Course** recently, learning essential bike maintenance skills.

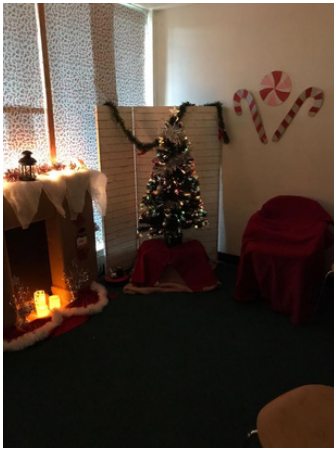
On top of that, our Environment Officer Don Thomas took his bike in on the second day and put his newly-learned skills to immediate use! Huge thanks to Donald from Cycleform for providing the course!

We held our **Volunteers' Christmas Lunch** on December 14th. Think of it as Soup & a Blether, but for our volunteers, and there were also quizzes, games and pulling Christmas crackers! It's our way of thanking them for all the help they've given us throughout the year!

THANK YOU TO OUR AMAZING VOLUNTEERS!

On December 10th, we had our **Santa's Grotto** where parents & guardians brought their children to see Santa who, naturally, asked them what they'd like for Christmas with festive cheer! Complete with a very warm & wintry backdrop, as you can see on the right!

Huge thanks to our very own Sue Harris for organising the event, Steve and Kasia for assisting by fitting comfortably in the roles of Santa and an elf, and Sally for providing everyone with hot chocolate and the cute animal photo on this Bugle issue's back page!
You're all definitely on Santa's Nice List!



Sally has new kittens!

We'd be insane to not have them as this month's cute animal photo, I mean, LOOK AT THEM.

(Feel free to send suggestions on who should be next month's pet!)

Garden Workshops & **Carers' Cookery Classes**: Over the past few months we launched a number of workshops to help the community in finding ways to discover/improve their skills with food as well as other ways of preparing for the winter months. We'd like to thank everyone involved!

Tabletop Crafting: We've finished off the year with a workshop where crafters made wreaths to hang on their doors! Keep an eye out for sessions beginning again in the new year!

(speaking of crafting...)

JOIN OUR MAILING LIST!

We're still crafting a mailing list to send future copies of the Bugle via email! If you'd like to be added, let us know at ***admin@belvillecommunitygarden.org,*** via our ***Facebook page*** or ***simply come in and ask!***
Feel free to provide feedback whenever possible!

We'll be shut over the Christmas Break (except Wednesdays for drop-ins and Fridays for Soup & a Blether) so we can give our hardworking staff and volunteers a much-needed rest! We'll be back in full-swing on Monday 9th January! (23rd January for volunteers)

Alright, that's all for now, we'll see you all in the next issue (late January). Until then, try not to have too much "Community Spirit"!

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MERRY CHRISTMAS!