

# Barmaddy Restored

## Project Plan 2009 - 2012



*March 2009*

# The Rural Vision

Our work to date has been primarily focused in urban areas where 80% of Scotland's population live. Scotland's greatest natural resource, the land itself, is rich in natural heritage, recreational and economic potential. However, the majority of the urban population are largely excluded from these benefits and are losing their cultural and social connection to the land. The Rural Vision aims to renew that connection and foster urban-rural partnerships of mutual benefit.

The GalGael community are currently distributed throughout Scotland, although the majority of members are based in the heart of inner-city Glasgow, where our Urban Skills Centre is located. Integral to our founding vision is the intention to build and sustain a Rural Folk School, as part of a socially-inclusive community where ways of living are explored that balance a community's economic, cultural, social and environmental needs and responsibilities in right relationship. A well-developed rural location will deepen and strengthen the interconnections between the rural and urban areas of Scotland. This will enhance understanding, reduce prejudice, and mutually improve quality of life. Furthermore, it will be a counterpart to our established urban work, allowing us to extend our template for transformative renewal to other areas and creatively match rural challenges to urban opportunities and visa-a-versa. Specifically, Barmaddy will facilitate opportunities for people from rural areas to access our urban facilities and engage in skills exchange and other activities.

In keeping with the approach of starting small and building on success, Barmaddy Restored is the first step in realizing the Rural Vision. Through the project the GalGael can continue exploring how to reweave the fabric of community. We will work to cooperatively meet our needs by life-enhancing and community-efficient means and bring this to bear on rural challenges.





# Barmaddy Restored

## Overview

In its heyday, Barmaddy was a traditional working hill farm, covering a large tract of land on the western bank of Loch Awe from Dalavich down to Ford, in Argyll. The farm raised beef cattle, sheep, and also had a small dairy herd. Forestry Commission Scotland acquired the land in the 1950's for commercial forestry. The farmhouse was maintained, but remained underused, and uninhabited. The building is a fine example of a traditional vernacular farmhouse. It is structurally sound, wind and water-tight, with a good roof and recently fitted double-glazed windows



In spring 2005 Barmaddy came to the GalGael's attention as a potential project, through discussions with the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV). Negotiations began with Forestry Commission Scotland the owners of the property. After a period of consultation, the Forestry Commission agreed to a 10-year lease with a built-in renewal clause, in return for the restoration and maintenance of the farmhouse, and care for the 7.5 acre meadow below the house. At GalGael's request, the lease also encompasses use of a jetty on Loch Awe. The lease was signed in March 2007 and work parties commenced soon after, funded by the National Lottery's Awards For All.

The GalGael Trust aim to work in partnership with Argyll-based community groups to restore and regenerate Barmaddy into a fully functioning bunkhouse and centre for local historical and ecological heritage. Bringing in participants from rural and urban groups, including the young and old, the project combines work with exploration. The long term hope for Barmaddy Restored is to create a place where local and visiting projects can have a comfortable and inspiring venue for exploring the area, and engaging in workbased projects: improving and extending paths, interpreting local environments or historical monuments, learning traditional skills and more.

Over the next three years the restoration process will involve participants in some old-fashioned graft, requiring non-technical maintenance to the buildings, and the planting and care for native woodland in the meadow. This will be combined with exploring the local area with a trained wilderness guide by land, and also by loch.

We hope to run workshops on specific skills, or features in the locality. Beyond the outstanding natural environment, this area contains the Dalavich Atlantic oak woods, one of the highest densities of crannogs in Scotland on Loch Awe, and a rich cultural heritage.



Staying at Barmaddy will introduce participants to the local area, the ecology, the history and the opportunities to contribute to cultural life. A visit to Barmaddy will increase participant's physical well-being through work and exercise, fresh air, healthy food and well-earned rest. Our experience shows that spending time in places like Barmaddy deepens peoples understanding of themselves. Similarly, introducing folk to the experience of inhabiting a place such as Barmaddy builds potential in participants to responsibly inhabit their own places at home. Feeling rooted in our natural and cultural landscape increases participant's mental and emotional well-being and in turn nurtures the well-being of the wider community and the surrounding environment.

## Ethos

Barmaddy Restored is rooted in a long term commitment to regenerating people and place: when the trees grow the people grow with them. We harness the transformational power generated when people come together in community to work and learn. Traditional crafts and skills help us understand the land and our relationship to it, experiences of wild places remind us of our wild nature. This combination of work and play can achieve positive change, and we are developing new working models for this process.

We will work to deepen our 'sense of place,' which comprises of an understanding of local ecological and cultural life, both past, present and future. This involves identity, both on an individual and community level, and active care for the people and places around us. We believe that the wellbeing of people and place are deeply connected, that you cannot have well people on a sick planet, or inside a dysfunctional community. Staying at Barmaddy involves working towards the health of all these elements.

The 'learning community,' where everyone has something to contribute, is a nourishing and supportive environment providing breathing space for personal development and creative flourishing. Change is a long-term process, which will be supported through the development of relationships, the provision of long-term support, and opportunities to continue to work within the project. This will ensure that changes and understanding gained while at Barmaddy continue to be nurtured. As part of this approach, we will work in partnership with organisations that can provide ongoing support for participants before and after their stay at Barmaddy.

Our experiential approach to 'learning by doing,' provides the opportunity to actively contribute to the life and health of Barmaddy, engaging in the whole process of restoration. Strengthening body, mind and environment fosters skills and knowledge that create resilient communities able to meet their own fundamental needs. Developing a felt connection to the fruits of their labour, participants have ownership and responsibility for their environment and community.

There will be many ways of becoming involved in Barmaddy Restored: as a participant, leading the groups as a representative of a partner organisation, or as a volunteer. Also, as part of the yearly cycle of events at Barmaddy we will be inviting people who live locally to come and contribute to the project, they will have the opportunity to see what is going on at Barmaddy, contribute the local knowledge or volunteer on a course. Initially participants will come from Argyll and Glasgow, however as the project develops we will be open to groups from further afield

## Intended Outcomes:

### Overall Aim of Barmaddy Restored:

- To create a centre where people can come together to learn, work and aid in restorative processes, both personal, cultural & ecological

### Intended Outcomes:

- By December 2011, 150 people from rural and urban backgrounds will have improved **physical and mental well-being**, through work and exploration at Barmaddy Farmhouse and the local area.
- Over a three year period, 150 participants will have **acquired transferable life skills**, they will also have an **understanding of the local ecological and cultural heritage**.
- By the end of 2011, Barmaddy Farmhouse will be **fully functional as a basic bunkhouse**, the meadow will be fenced and in the process of regeneration and the garden will be producing food for the participants.
- 60% of the 150 people we plan to work will come from urban areas and 40% from rural areas in year 1 and 50:50 in year 2 & 3. In 3 years, we aim to have worked with 80 folk from urban areas and 70 folk from rural areas.

### Activities (how we will achieve these outcomes):

- Physical restoration works to develop the farm building as a bunk-house, local heritage and skills centre
- Facilitate exploration of the local area by foot and boat, and learning about local heritage and ecology
- Creation of a tree nursery from provenance seed and so develop the native woodland in the surrounding area including cultivating plants for crafts use
- Developing the outbuildings and organic vegetable garden next to the house to engage people in food production
- Involving local and visiting groups from different backgrounds and areas, providing opportunities for rural and urban communities to come together for work, skills sharing and celebration
- Exploring where time and money allows sustainable building practices and energy
- Hosting community events and cultural activities

## Need

We are already witnessing considerable evidence of need for this project through our work over the past year. An example of this can be seen with John, who recently completed *Navigate the Future* at the GalGael Trust and is continuing to volunteer with the Trust. John was asked to join a volunteer party to work at Barmaddy farm. There was a noted change in John's demeanour when he returned from the trip. The mix of work and being in the natural landscape, as well as friendships made in the group, had a positive effect on John's well being.

John has increased his methadone use to compensate for his total withdrawal from Heroin. He also related that "GalGael has been the best thing that could have happened to me." John is very keen to return to Barmaddy and has placed a jar of Barmaddy air on a display shelf at GalGael. Alongside the need that trainees at the GalGael Trust have shown, there is need for continued and better resourced physical and ecological restoration at the site. We have started this process through an Awards For All grant secured from the National Lottery, 12 work parties visited throughout the summer of 2007 preparing the farmhouse for use. Some of the tasks completed included:

- basic cleaning and preparation of rooms for painting
- exposure and maintenance of drainage and pipe-work outside the house
- clearance of foundation levels of stone in preparation for damp-sealing
- getting the range working and the house dried out from the inside
- mapping of habitats and species around the house

There is still a considerable amount of work and volunteer hours needed to restore the building to a basic bunkhouse.



## Project Beneficiaries

The primary beneficiaries of our project at Barmaddy will be disadvantaged people from both rural and urban communities. We have been making links with groups in the Oban area, who have also stated there is a clear need for our project. Barmaddy will be especially beneficial to those who have not had access to active lifestyles or journeys in wild places. It is intended that Barmaddy will be part of a holistic response to the spectrum of issues that conspire to exclude people experiencing disadvantage from economic, social and cultural life. In essence, these people are excluded from a dignified quality of life, which further compounds social problems rooted in marginalisation and alienation. Some participants will have specific support needs and we will seek to work with other agencies to complement existing support networks.

Initially, participants will primarily come from GalGael and specifically our Navigate the Future community regeneration program. However, we plan to attract participants from the local community and further afield. This will be achieved through the development of relationships with local community groups, such as the Soroba Community Centre in Oban, to form an informal cross-referral network and ensure that benefit from Barmaddy is enjoyed by a range of participants groups.

## Glasgow

Greater Govan neighbourhoods feature high up on the Scottish Executive's Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2006 in crime, health, unemployment and addiction. The following statistics paint a stark picture of the realities of life in our community:

- 40 of the lowest 15% datazones sited in our area
- over half of residents in the South West CHSCP living within Scotland's worst 15% datazones
- Hospital admissions for drug abuse are 4 times the national average, and 7 times for alcohol abuse.
- In Ibrox, where our workshop premises are situated, the rates of alcohol admission are 300% higher than the Scottish average!
- South West Glasgow has the third lowest life expectancy in Scotland.

GalGael typically work with groups which include 39% who've recently been homeless, 43% from an addiction background, 57% with previous convictions and 36% with mental health issues. Particularly challenging is the reality that many of our participants fall in to two or more of the above groups.

Barmaddy Farmhouse will offer a range of opportunities not normally accessible to people experiencing these forms of need and level of deprivation. Their time at Barmaddy will allow them to experience greater levels of confidence and self esteem, as they broaden their horizons and experience and master new skills, new relationships and new landscapes. It is intended that Barmaddy will leave people better able to access opportunities both locally and nationally, whether they be rural or urban.

## Argyll and Bute

Naturally, the needs of rural communities differ in a number of ways from their urban counterparts. The dramatic differences between Argyll and Bute and Greater Glasgow demonstrate this clearly; the former is the third most sparsely populated council area in Scotland while conversely the latter is the most densely populated. This is further compounded by the projected decline in the number of 16 to 24 year olds and an aging demographic.

Argyll and Bute is the 15<sup>th</sup> most deprived local authority area on the main SIMD measure, with high levels of access deprivation as would be expected for a rural authority while Glasgow is ranked highest. Argyll and Bute is still home to a substantial number of deprived individuals – 11,200 on the SIMD's income deprivation measure, mainly situated in the authorities main urban centres; Rothesay, Dunoon and Campbeltown. However, deprived individuals are widely dispersed beyond the urban areas where the proportion of people is only slightly higher than for rural areas (15 per cent, compared with 11 per cent). Overall, the proportion of population who are termed income deprived is stated at 10.6% for Argyll and Bute with 39% worklessness (SIMD 2006).

Argyll and Bute, has 43% data zones in Scotland's 15% most access deprived. This may indicate a need for resources and facilities that counteract the negative effects of isolation. These effects can include poor social skills, poor mental health and poor physical health. Barmaddy would offer a place where people from Argyll and Bute can come together in ways which improve interpersonal relations and both physical and emotional health. It would also enable them to make connections with people in urban areas and may become a further means by which they can improve access to wider opportunities.

Alcohol related admissions for Argyll and Bute are 52% over the Scottish average (*Choose Life Local Action Plan – Argyll and Bute 2005*). Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics which show that while the number of new individuals reported to the Scottish Drugs Misuse Database have fallen for Glasgow by 21% between 2002 and 2006, the number has risen for Argyll and Bute by 34%. GalGael has a proven track record of working with this target group and Barmaddy would play a role in tackling this area of need by providing diversionary opportunities imbued with purpose and meaning. It would also support the ongoing recovery of individuals who have come through community rehabilitation services; assisting in picking up social skills, and improved health and well-being.

The Scottish Centre for Research on Social Justice report; *Deprivation and social exclusion in Argyll and Bute* states;

*It is often noted (e.g. Cloke et al 1995) that deprivation is more hidden in rural than in urban areas. Rural communities often consist of a heterogeneous population of affluent and poorer people, living side by side, which can mask the evidence of deprivation, and can cause people to conceal or deny their own poverty. Additionally, measures of low-incomes which rely on benefit claims (such as those in the income domain of the SIMD) may underestimate levels of poverty as take-up rates are slightly lower in rural areas although these problems should not be overstated (Bramley et al, 2000). It is also argued that rural areas may have a higher cost of living (Shucksmith et al, 1996) and this would impact heavily on low income groups.*

So understanding need in Argyll and Bute is perhaps more challenging than in Glasgow. That said, Barmaddy and the activities and benefits that it will facilitate demonstrate potential to impact on a whole spectrum of needs that are common to both local authorities and to both rural and urban areas. Multiple forms of disadvantage will be tackled with resourceful projects that will bring people together to work with common purpose to improve the farmhouse and surrounding area. The outcome will be improvements in wellbeing for both rural and urban alike.

## Understanding Need

GalGael has also engaged in workshop-led research that isolated the 'recurring themes' being dealt with by their trainees and the community. This was a lengthy and intensive process, involving staff, volunteers, participants and other stakeholders. This highlighted issues like loss of meaning, poor emotional literacy, entrenched 'dependency culture', inability to appreciate deferred gratification, low motivation, low confidence and self worth. We knew that in order to put a stop to these issues becoming revolving doors for our participants and demoralising for our staff that we had to try and understand the root causes.

Using Max-Neef's Fundamental Human Needs (see appendix) as a framework for understanding, we charted what recurring themes related to which need to ensure we were focusing our efforts not at the 'symptoms' but rather at root causes and so support people to bring about lasting change. These needs of subsistence, protection, affection, understanding, participation, leisure, creation, identity, and freedom, were found to be met 'synergistically' by various methods of used at the GalGael. For example this might occur when building a boat, which would satisfy people's need for creativity, participation, understanding (of natural processes, cultural background etc.), and finally leisure when it is launched on the river Clyde. It is clear that Barmaddy Restored benefits from this understanding of community issues, and also offers 'synergistic satisfiers' for many of its participants needs.

## Methodology

Delivery of this project is founded on the following values:

- well-facilitated experiential learning allows participants to make connections between their own lives and wider communitarian and ecological issues
- a balance between work and physical recreation allows both the body and mind to function healthily
- the best way to stimulate care and responsibility for places is to introduce participants to the challenges, pleasures and benefits of exploring and working in those places
- everyone has something to learn and something to teach, as such each course at Barmaddy should create a collaborative learning community.

Activities will always be risk assessed, supervised by qualified persons with safety being a paramount concern, facilitators will have undergone appropriate induction and training have considerable experience in this kind of work.

**It is envisaged that a typical stay at Barmaddy will take this form:**

*Monday:* Arrive and get introduced to the house, assign rooms and get unpacked

Do a tour of house and outbuildings highlighting health and safety issues and boundaries

After a shared lunch, walk the boundary of the property explaining the history of the house and encourage participants to look around themselves at what they are experiencing

Return to discuss the schedule for the week, aims and expectations

Prepare dinner (which may be a learning experience for some participants) and spend the evening without TV!

*Tuesday:* *This day would comprise of practical work based tasks such as painting a room, clearing an area for planting, mending fencing*

The evening might include some discussions, stories or music

*Wednesday:* *In the morning prepare for an expedition, hand out equipment, discuss safety issues and other issues that arise*

Either journey from Barmaddy on foot through the woodland, or by boat on Loch Awe, exploring things and places that are seen.

Find a suitable place to camp for the night

*Thursday:* *Return to Barmaddy, unpack, discuss trip over lunch*

In the afternoon a small practical task – e.g. cleaning equipment, or chopping wood

*Friday:* *Tidy the house, and talk about the experience, what it has meant for participants, and how to continue what has been learnt at Barmaddy*

The journey to and from Barmaddy can also be seen as a learning experience, with the need for sensitive 're-entry' into home life.

## Milestones

Period	Milestones
<b>Spring 2009</b>	Funding for 2009 awarded
	The meadow is deer-fenced
	Complete re-wiring of the house
	Establish a system for recording a baseline and progress of the participants
	Prepare the ground for food production
<b>Summer 2009</b>	Facilitated 6 work trips involving 2 rural groups and 1 urban group
	2 skills training days run from Barmaddy
	Bridge across the burn rebuilt
	Hold a community event to introduce the project more widely
	Decorating / restoration of the upstairs of the farmhouse completed
<b>Autumn 2009</b>	5 parties have been led on explorations of the local area by foot and boat, involving approximately 4 people each party
	Woodland regeneration evident inside the deer fence
	Garden has been established and a small amount of food provided for participants
	Seed collection in Autumn for bringing on saplings
<b>Winter 2009</b>	Work on the downstairs of the farmhouse is complete and Barmaddy is functional as a basic bunkhouse
	2009 evaluation completed and operational plan for 2010 written
	15 weeks of visits have been completed by 40 participants who have benefited from a visit to Barmaddy, contributing to an increase in their well-being
<b>Spring 2010</b>	Additional locally provenanced saplings transplanted into fenced area
	Work on re-roofing and converting the Byre commenced
	Improved progress recording mechanisms put in place
	Begin surveying local area with the RCAHMS Rural Past project
<b>Summer 2010</b>	Complete study of local history with aid from RCAHMS
	2 new groups become involved in the project
	One GalGael boat becomes permanent to Barmaddy
	Celebrations involving participants and local residents become a regular part of the calendar
	Garden developed to facilitate work opportunities and produce

	food regularly supplementing meals
	Facilitated 10 work trips involving 3 rural groups and 2 urban groups

<b>Autumn 2010</b>	Byre is re-roofed and converted to a work space
	12 parties have been led on explorations of the local area by foot and boat, involving approximately 5 people each party
<b>Winter 2010</b>	3 winter trips maintain the house through the winter
	Evaluation of the years activities indicates areas of expansion and development, and successful courses for 50 participants throughout the year, increasing well-being, local knowledge and skills
	17 weeks of visits have been completed by 50 participants who have benefited from a visit to Barmaddy
<b>Spring 2011</b>	New funding sources have been identified and the application process is begun
	Planning for evaluation of the three year period (2008 – 2010) started
<b>Summer 2011</b>	Renewable electricity supply is fitted
	2 specific craft projects undertaken, for example re-instating the Loch Awe school of carving, or building canoes
	3 new groups become involved in the project
	Facilitated 15 work trips involving 5 rural groups and 3 urban groups
	A weekend heritage event is held, promoting traditional crafts and introducing visitors to the work at Barmaddy, and the surrounding area through guided walks and boat trips
	Garden providing work opportunities and producing food which regularly supplements meals
<b>Autumn 2011</b>	Significant regeneration in the woodland is visible
	Path constructed linking Barmaddy to Dalavich Oak wood
	2 specific craft projects completed, for example re-instating the Loch Awe school of carving, or building canoes
	15 parties have been led on explorations of the local area by foot and boat, involving approximately 5 people each party
<b>Winter 2011</b>	Planning for wild-life corridors between areas of natural woodland
	17 weeks of visits have been completed by 60 participants who have benefited from a visit to Barmaddy
	Final evaluation and review of the past three years activities indicates areas of expansion and development, and successful

	courses for 150 participants throughout the period, increasing well-being, local knowledge and skills
	Plan completed for next five years

## 2009 Resources

Period	Tasks	Resources Needed
Autumn 2008	Apply for funding	GalGael Trust staff and volunteers
	Set up Barmaddy farmhouse for winter	GalGael Trust staff, and volunteer work by GalGael Trust ' <i>navigate the future</i> ' trainees and volunteers.
Spring 2009	Co-ordinate funding	Outreach and Development Officer with input from Site Manager
	Deer-fence the meadow	Forestry Commission, through funds raised in-house.
	Start program of group visits, begin restoration tasks (see next section)	Project Manager and Outreach and Development Officer. Voluntary hours by participants. Wilderness guides to facilitate expeditions. Basic personal equipment such as waterproofs, boots, sleeping bags etc. Facilitator and materials to help participants record their experience for themselves and evaluation Food and transport
Summer 2009	Group visits to work on specific tasks	Building materials such as paint, wood and cement. Safe disposal of old building materials such as asbestos and the remains of collapsed sheds on the grounds.
	Skills training for those co-ordinating the project and other interested parties	Skilled tradespeople
	Open doors events to introduce people to the project	Local community volunteers
	Begin evaluative processes and plan for 2009	Outreach and Development Officer with input from Site Manager
	Prepare house and grounds for winter	Voluntary hours by participants

# Appendixes

## Appendix A - Work Tasks at Barmaddy

Tasks for the groups to work on will include:

### **Inside the farmhouse:**

- Fit basic electrics in preparation for future energy supply
- Finish mending walls with plyboard
- Wash down and prepare walls for painting
- Prime and paint all areas (room by room)
- Clean out attic
- Put down new flooring
- Clear area for outdoor clothing / footwear / equipment
- Put up information / artwork on walls

### **Outside the farmhouse:**

- Sand-blast walls
- Paint on damp-proof coating
- Paint walls
- Re-point and seal foundation level
- Re-point lum
- Put jenny's on the chimneys

### **Outbuildings:**

- Strip away vegetation and re-point walls of dairy and byre
- Paint and re-roof dairy and byre
- Dispose of asbestos roof of byre in compliance with regulations

### **Grounds:**

- Clear away remains of sheds below byre
- Build bridge across burn
- Tidy area around house of old farm implements, debris etc
- Locate area for garden within deer fence
- Dig and prepare ground for garden
- Monitor natural regeneration within deer fence
- Plant native species in meadow
- Investigation of wind and hydro power options

### **Information Gathering:**

- Create a map of the area, recording sites of interest, habitats, places where the group had certain experiences
- Talk to local residents about their knowledge of the place
- Explore routes by land and loch for suitable expeditions
- Gather and write local stories, songs, poems and paintings