

# BALCASKIE ESTATE 2025 COMMUNITY CONSULTATION EVENT REPORT



Event highlighting **20 YEARS**  
of work and plans for the future.

Three day period from **13<sup>TH</sup>**  
**to 15<sup>TH</sup> JUNE** at Bowhouse  
during June market weekend.

Display boards providing  
**key progress and insight.**

Event publicised to a combined  
following of **60,800 people.**

Total attendees of **4,329 visitors**  
with **148 direct engagements.**

Balcaskie Estate hosted an event at Bowhouse to highlight the work which has been undertaken over the past 20 years and provide information on how the estate is planning to adapt in future.

The event took place over a three day period from 13th to 15th June at Bowhouse during the June market weekend. Both drop in and invited guests from the local communities visited to meet with Toby Anstruther and estate manager Sam Parsons.

A series of display boards visually explained progress over the past two decades and provided insight into key areas as set out under the Scottish Land Commission best practice guidance.

The event was publicised on Balcaskie social media platforms with a combined total following of 60,800 people.

The total number of attendees to the June market was 4329, with 148 visitors directly engaging with either Toby Anstruther or Sam Parsons over the three days.



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In addition, the information provided included QR codes, so visitors could discover more and answer questions on a google form.



# SUMMARY OF INTERACTION CATEGORIES

“One of the most engaging topics, all respondents were **positive about stewardship on the estate** and pleased to see evidence supported by RSPB and Forth Rivers Trust.”

## ESTATE OBJECTIVES.

All respondents were positive and interested in the integration of all estate activities.

No negative responses.

## OWNERSHIP AND STRUCTURE.

One respondent commented that the ownership avoided tax. Response - By highlighting the display on ownership structure and how trusts are taxed, the respondent was satisfied. Other comments were positive to the transparency showing ownership, decision making and beneficiaries.

## ACCESS.

Published core paths and signposting Outdoor Access Code also drew interest from several respondents regarding the right to walk across land not designated as Core Path. With responsible access rights explained, the respondents were satisfied that the estate provided additional information signs and contact details at strategic points.

No negative responses.

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## BIODIVERSITY.

One of the most engaging topics, all respondents were positive about stewardship on the estate and pleased to see evidence supported by RSPB and Forth Rivers Trust. Deer management plan further information QR code has had no visits to date. Most common engagement was due to the Dreel Burn Project which enabled communities to get involved with nature restoration.

No negative responses.

## LAND, SOIL AND WATER.

Organic farming Regenerative practices also featured highly on respondents interest. Farming communities showed interest in how it was working, local communities were supportive of the change, food interested communities were supportive of the change. Several respondents questioned the output of the farms organically in comparison to pre-conversion. Summary of output in both people fed and tonnes of produce from the farm along with findings from soil analysis were available.

No negative responses.

## NET ZERO.

Almost all respondents were interested to understand how Balcaskie is responding to energy need and generation.

There were no negative responses to proposed future wind power, but several notes of interest in becoming involved in a community energy project.

## SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC.

Employment and enabled employment through provision of work space was of significant positive interest to most respondents. The scale of change in employment opportunities over the past 20 years provided context for Balcaskie's response to Fife Council's call for Sites (New housing) Only one concern was reported, over possible housing next to Carnbee Village. Balcaskie's response was to show where development has occurred on the estate and how it is planned. Respondents were interested in Pitch-Up! as a route for new businesses and land use being both innovative and inclusive.

No negative responses.

## FOOD.

Respondents were positive regarding Balcaskie's engagement in food production and processing through organic/regenerative farming practices and food processing facilities. Two respondents asked if let land was organic and how it was possible to have both conventional and organic in close proximity. Response signposted Soil Association requirements and land tenure regulations.

No negative responses.



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# CONCLUSIONS



- ✓ That engagement with our communities is supported by transparency and benefits Balcaskie.
- ✓ That years of political intervention have resulted in misunderstanding and confusion which are both unhelpful to community engagement.
- ✓ That there is a clear demand for a cleaner, more bio-diverse environment for communities. This manifests in demands for more natural habitat, renewable energy, more small-scale work/employment space, and "local" food networks.
- ✓ That there is demand for further rural housing, but, of course, concern when this looks likely to be near where you live. These concerns are not insurmountable but need time and transparency.
- ✓ That there are deep wells of skill and goodwill latent in our communities. These are opportunities for us (and all community members) to benefit from each other's contribution.
- ✓ That the open, continual engagement such as Bowhouse, butchery, courtyard classroom, Grass to Grill Tours, everyday conversations with tenants, regular more structured meetings with tenant groups, neighbours, other community members and interest organisations we have with the communities - of which we are a part, means we are, broadly, in touch with them and they with us. That said, the process of preparing a more formal consultation is helpful to Balcaskie and to them.
- ✓ Responsible stewardship of land buildings, water and landscape are important to communities, communicating and demonstrating how these are managed and how they will adapt to change in the future is complex but important. Partnerships with community interest organisations to deliver improvements is key to peoples ability to engage.

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