



PEP Talk



Pitcaple Environmental Project Ltd News

Issue 4

200 Club Launched!

PEP Ltd are very pleased to announce the launch of our brand new 200 Club.

This is a fantastic opportunity for our members, friends, neighbours, families and colleagues to support the work of PEP Ltd and be in with a chance of winning great cash prizes for themselves too.

For just £5 a month or £60



a year, payable by standing order, you will be entered into a monthly prize draw. With only 200 oth-

★ **YOUR CHANCE TO WIN
£50, £100 OR £250
EVERY MONTH!
WIN £1000
EVERY DECEMBER!** ★

ers against you, the odds are significantly higher than the lottery!

After the prize money has been paid out, the proceeds of this scheme will go straight into the PEP Ltd Unrestricted Funds which is used at the Pitscurry Project to purchase equipment, seeds and plants, fund building works, buy arts and crafts equipment and provide whatever else is needed.

The 200 Club will begin with the first winning numbers

drawn on Sunday 29th April 2012, so you need to act quickly to join this brilliant new venture.

We will be in the Canteen at Gordon House, Inverurie on Thursday 16th February between 9.30—11am selling tickets or you can pick up a membership form at the Harlaw Centre, the Pitscurry Project or contact



Diane at peptalk@pitcaple.org.uk or on 07740 779953.

Good luck!

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PEP Talk is going paperless!

This will be the final version that we will post to you. If you wish to continue receiving it please complete and return the attached form or email us at peptalk@pitcaple.org.uk

Pitscurry Centre to Receive Royal Visit

The Pitscurry Project and PEP Ltd are extremely honoured and excited to be receiving a visit from Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal on 29th February.

This visit will celebrate the close relationship that has developed between the

local community, PEP Ltd, local businesses the Pitscurry Project.

We were last visited by a member of the Royal Family back in the 1990's when Prince Charles came to look around the Harlaw Centre. There have been many changes

since then which the staff and Committee Members will be very proud to show off.

Her Royal Highness will visit the Pitscurry Project in the morning before she heads off to open the Thainstone Spring Show.

Pitscurry Plans

The team at the Pitscurry Project have been busy preparing for the year ahead.

The cabin cladding is now complete and a sedum roof will be going on in the next few months.

We have been looking at the diary and arranging dates for the next Plant Sale (19th May), Open Gardens (August 4th—12th)



Cabin with cladding

and NEOS (8th September), more details in the next issue of PEP Talk.

The Pitscurry compost is, odd as it may seem, a source of pride for the team and take a lot of dedicated time and effort to maintain and turn so that it is ready to fertilize our ground. The ground around the blackcurrants in the vegetable patch has been



Compost Bins

topped up with it and is also used in the polytunnels and for all the hanging baskets that we prepare for Inverurie.

Some trees were blown down in the bad winds so will be felled soon. This time of year is all about maintenance and putting things in place to make sure the year ahead is a success.

PEP Soup & Sweet: From Disaster to Triumph

We held a Soup and Sweet lunch on Sunday 6th November which narrowly missed disaster when staff arrived at the Pitscurry centre to open up only to find the centre flooded.

The overhead tank system above the office had failed, filling the office with water which seeped through the rest of the centre.

Half the team who had arrived to set up for the lunch swung into action with mops and buckets and the other half swiftly and efficiently relocated the lunch to Daviot Village Hall and set up there. Sadly some of the



cards and crafts made over the year for the Christmas Fair were ruined but there was no lasting damage and luckily the water avoided the wood-work.

A plumber was able to fix the leak and signs were hastily put up to redirect people to Daviot and it all worked out well with an excellent turnout who drank every last drop of soup, including some very hungry mopping-uppers!

We managed to raise almost £500 for PEP Ltd unrestricted funds. Well done and thank you very much to all those who made the soup and sweets, worked in the kitchen, waited

in tables and cleared up the flood. We will be holding another Soup & Sweet Lunch on Sunday 4th March and this time we hope to be at the Pitscurry Centre!

**The next
PEP Soup & Sweet will
be held at the
Pitscurry Centre
(hopefully!) on
Sunday 4th March,
11.30—2pm**

£5/Adult, £3/Child

Christmas Fair a Huge Success

The PEP Ltd Christmas Fair was held on Saturday 3rd December at the Pitscurry Project site and was a great success.

There was a steady flow of people visiting the stalls which included a bottle stall, reindeer planters, bird feeders, cards, ceramics, home-made preserves and crafts.

The kitchen hosted a tea room and outside were roasted chestnuts which proved very popular.

We raised just over £1000 for PEP Ltd's unrestricted funds.



This year's Fair has already been set for Saturday 1st December and, by popular demand, we hope to have wreaths for sale again.

Many thanks to everyone involved, it was a great event into which an awful lot of effort goes throughout the year.

Community News

The Pitscurry Project and PEP Ltd are very proud of the relationships that we have begun and built with various businesses and groups within the community.

Over the winter we have been growing herbs in the greenhouse which have been supplied to various restaurants in the area including the Acorn Centre, Inverurie, Touched by Scotland on Oyne and the Old Post Office Team Room in Chapel of Garioch. This was the first time we have done this and it has been an experiment that has worked well. As a result we have worked closely with these venues in deciding what vegetables to grow this year. We are able to grow exactly what our customers need which delights them and ensures we have consumers for our supplies.

We were very grateful to be invited to give a talk to the Kintore Rotary in December and thrilled to receive a donation of £100. This money has been spent on a huge list of seeds for the above mentioned vegetables including artichokes, parsnips, leeks, peas, salad leaves, broccoli and the exotic sounding purple carrots! We will also be purchasing some netting to protect the seedlings from the deer, rabbits, mice and pigeons that visit our site for their lunch.



Three Headed Monster at the Pitscurry Project

Over the past year we have also developed a relationship with Balfour Beatty who have been fundraising for us. On Thursday 26th January they will be presenting us with a cheque as a result of all their efforts. This money will go towards making the kindling store and workshop a much warmer place to work. We already have a woodburning stove in there and its now a cosy space for our service users.

We are pleased to announce that PEP has been awarded a Green Butterfly Award by the [Aberdeenshire Environmental Forum](#). Every year since 1991 the Aberdeenshire Environmental Forum has held the 'Green Butterfly Awards' to recognise the work done by groups and individuals who look after our wonderful natural

heritage and enhance and protect our environment. The award plaque can now be seen proudly on display at the Pitscurry site

We were also very proud of Anne Bissett, our Depute Day Services Manager, who was awarded a 'Volunteer Friendly Award' from the Volunteer Centre Dundee in recognition of groups who are good at involving volunteers. Anne worked hard to gain this with the support of her team, well done everyone.



Case Story: Mike Mair, Day Centre Officer

I began working at the Harlaw Centre in 2003. At first I did some woodwork with service users on Wednesdays, went swimming on Thursdays and ran a men's group on Friday for informal chats on concerns any of them had. I also liaised with outside agencies, including care managers and organised reviews of service for a designated number of service users.

On Monday mornings I came to Pitcaple. When I started there was one polytunnel and no facilities at all. We slowly began to reclaim the site which had become overgrown. I do have a gardening background having worked in Hazlehead Park for fifteen years. I thought my days



Mike Mair

was to prove too strong.

When we were given a portacabin we were able to stay at the site all day. We did up the toilet and reclaimed one of the buildings as a bothy. Slowly the week became two

of gardening were behind me once I had studied at Aberdeen University, gaining an Honours degree in Sociology and Politics, but the pull of gardening

days, three days then finally a week. In the beginning we were a little unsure where we were going with the site. But with input from other members of staff and the formation of PEP Ltd, ideas began to flow.

Pitscurry has changed beyond recognition. We do so much up here now, enabled by our wonderful building including various crafts, metal sculptures, kindling and woodwork. We now have a hard working team of volunteers who work tirelessly. I think it has blossomed into something we must have only dreamed of. The service users love coming here, it is their place, and we as staff and volunteers support them in this.

PEP Ltd

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The Aberdeenshire Council Pitscurry Project, with the help of the Pitcaple Environmental Project (PEP Ltd), provides employment and training for people with disabilities, helping them develop skills that can be used to fulfill work opportunities.

Training and support enables people to improve their practical skills and contribute to local community projects.

The Pitscurry Project is managed and staffed by Aberdeenshire Council Social Work and guided by staff and parents/guardians at the Harlaw Centre, Inverurie.

PEP Ltd is set up as a Co-operative Society for the Benefit of the Community with charitable status to involve the wider community in all aspects of the project. We also fundraise to provide additional facilities to achieve this goal in partnership with the Pitscurry Project. Any person or business who supports the aims of the Society can become a Shareholding Member.

The Pitscurry Project is based within an old Aberdeenshire Council Nursery site. The site includes a sensory area, gardens and polytunnels that produce fruit and vegetables, a heritage garden and an innovative environmentally sustainable centre.

How You Can Help

The Pitscurry Project is always looking for volunteers to help with tasks on site. If you are willing and able we would welcome:

- assistance with gardening, digging, basic construction, pruning and general help.
- anybody willing to work alongside our service users, giving simple assistance and guidance
- Anybody with any experience with or expertise in fruit trees or woodwork

To offer your help please contact Anne Bissett on 01467 621885

In addition, PEP Ltd are always looking to add to our membership. For just £1 you can become a shareholder for life enabling you to



attend our meetings, receive PEP Talk, have your say in the running of the organization and, most importantly, support our work. To become a member please contact Kay Diack on the above address.

Another very simple way to support PEP Ltd is by pledging, via Direct Debit £12 a year: just £1 a month. If you are a UK tax payer we can reclaim Gift Aid of a further 28% meaning your contribution would become £15.36. If you would be willing to help by pledging £12 per year please contact Kay Diack.

And finally, don't forget to join our PEP Ltd 200 Club, details on the front page. You've got to be in it to win it!

Thank you to all our supporters. We could not run without you.