

Digging in for a good cause

A LOCAL charity is appealing for volunteers to get their hands dirty and help a good cause.

Although Erskine relies on donations to ensure the continued running of their care service, staff are also keen to encourage the community to pop in and lend a hand.

There are always a range of projects on the go at the Bishopton estate and Gazette reporters Rosalyn Campbell and Jennifer Black stopped by last week to volunteer their time.

The team were joined by Barrhead News reporters Ewan McInnes and Jennifer Cauley as they set to work weeding the garden of a home earmarked for a new initiative that is being launched later this year.

The Supported Transition project aims to make the move from service to civilian life easier for servicemen and women by giving them accommodation, employment and training opportunities.

Erskine's chief executive, major Jim Panton, said: "This project will

see Erskine providing wounded or injured soldiers who are leaving the Forces with housing, employment and training to help ease the transition back into civvy street.

"This could not come at a more important time due to the ongoing operations our Armed Forces are involved in throughout the world."

A team from BAE Systems have also helped out the project by giving the inside of one of the houses a fresh coat of paint.

Willie McLachlan, charity coordinator at BAE Systems on the Clyde, said: "The company is proud to support Erskine and the excellent work that they do, not only through fundraising activities and charitable donations but also by pledging time to help with various volunteering projects, such as the refurbishment of the residential cottages at Bishopton."

Erskine attracts a range of willing helpers and there is something to suit everyone.

A project that is ongoing at the moment is Erskine's Regimental

Walls of Scotland Garden, currently on display at this years Gardening Scotland event.

Volunteers are needed to clear an area of land where the wall will be rebuilt once the exhibition has finished.

The charity is also looking for some help with a new joint scheme with the Gardening Leave project.

This will see Gardening Leave run a horticultural therapy project to help ex-Service personnel with combat related stress.

Gardening Leave provides a relaxed comfortable environment where veterans are able to feel optimistic about the future. The Gardening Leave team will be available at the Old Garden Centre across from Erskine home on Wednesday July 28 from 10am to 2pm where they would be happy to speak to people who are interested in volunteering with this project.

If you want to volunteer for Erskine or want to find out a bit more visit the website at www.erskine.org.uk or call 0141 812 1100.



GARDENING: Gazette girls Jennifer and Rosalyn do some weeding to help Erskine

