

Wildlife and Sustainability Project

East Haven, Angus, Scotland

East Haven Community Group

BIG Challenge 2015 submission category: Small scale permanent

Project overview

Residents in the rural coastal community of East Haven developed their own sustainability strategy, making links to the 2020 Challenge for Scotland's Biodiversity. They acquired the lease of a derelict piece of land in the village which had been used as a fly tipping site. The site was cleared and a wild life garden with water feature. Created.

Children built a bug hotel and approximately twenty residents built a composting unit, hedgehog, bee and bird boxes. Coastal wild flowers, fruit bushes, vegetables and other pollinator plants were also planted. A daily litter picking and beach clean take place every month between February and September 2015.

Survey information to Marine Conservation Scotland and recycled wood and compost was used reducing costs to around £200.

What were the biodiversity conditions on site, prior to the enhancement?



Photo: Teaching children how to build a bug hotel

Conditions on the site of the wild life garden were poor prior to the clean up exercise which took six months. Residents had to arrange for the proper disposal of asbestos in addition to large amounts of contaminated rubbish and debris which was hazardous to wild life.

Were there any specific conditions that led to you carrying out this work?

The initial motivation was participation in the Beautiful Scotland Campaign and the Three Pillars. Interest grew as the realisation that ordinary everyday citizens

make a real difference in the local environment. Furthermore was the realisation that there was a responsibility to try and restore and enhance biodiversity and inspire others to do similar. National Strategies were used to guide the work and advice was sought from the Tayside Bio-diversity co-ordinator.

What were the biodiversity measures taken?

The residents of East haven were consulted widely to gain support. In addition, advice from bio-diversity professionals and other

interested parties such as the Local Authority, and Friends of the Earth. A wild life professional was invited to deliver a presentation to local children and the community.

The project is innovative in that it is entirely community led and has helped develop a sustainability strategy which links to the 2020 Biodiversity Challenge, Community Action Sustainable Scotland Themes and Scottish Government high level objectives.

Toxic and dangerous materials were removed from the site and a natural stone wall exposed at one end. A composting unit was built along with various wild life boxes all out of recycled materials. Free recycled compost from the Local Authority was used after first checking that it achieved the PAS 100 compost standard.

A new partnership which used free bio-solid pellets was developed. This slow release fertiliser is non toxic to wild life and approved as an enhanced treated sludge which is free from 99.999% of pathogens. New habitats have quickly emerged with Hedgehogs, sparrows, blue tits, bees and butterflies nesting in the garden and all sightings are reported to local rangers and other interested parties.



Photo: Digging in bio-solids as a natural slow release fertiliser

How would you best describe the project?

An enhancement.

Further information

Clearing the site and landscaping the area was the biggest challenge. It was incredibly hard going for months with little reward and it was difficult to maintain a vision for the wild life garden. However, once the ground was cleared and dug over

plans were quickly put into action and the garden has become a beautiful tranquil area which creates a safe wild life corridor in the village.

The main advice to other groups wishing to create a wild life garden would be to obtain as much advice as possible before hand to ensure that you get it right at the planning stage.

What was your personal motivation for carrying out the enhancement?

The personal motivation and that of the other residents involved was a desire to improve the natural world and protect it for future generations.



Photo: Building bird boxes out of recycled wood