

# Grant Stories



A selection of grant stories from April 2012 to March 2014 from the Community Futures Programme delivered by The National Communities Resource Centre based at Trafford Hall

## Community Futures

On completion of a course on the Community Futures programme, funded by the Tudor Trust, groups are invited to apply for a grant of up to £300. Grants are to be used to help kick start a project in their local community using the skills they have picked up whilst attending course.

It is really pleasing to see how groups can come up with such different ways of using their grant money to benefit so many people in their community, and how they can use the money as a stepping stone to bigger things.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Dutton', written in a cursive style.

Gary Dutton  
Programme and Grants Coordinator

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## WINDLEHURST ENVIRONMENT GROUP

### Starting Organic Gardening. June 2011

The aims of the group, based in Stockport, are to raise awareness of gardening and growing produce to cook and eat/distribute to the community, with a result of promoting healthy lifestyles.

A local school, which specialises in young people with behavioural difficulties, has granted use of a piece of land to the group to involve more young people in growing their own produce, the school also generously donated some money to build 4 raised beds to help get them started.

The group has been working with the young people to grow and pick produce which they then cook together to produce healthy meals. With there only being 4 raised beds space for growing is limited and also bad weather can cause difficulties. After attending the Starting Organic Gardening



course in June 2011, the group were successful in their application for a grant from us for £300. They wanted the money so they could build a poly tunnel which could be used all year round for growing fruit and vegetables and which could also be used by the young people in bad weather. The poly tunnel would also give them more space to grow which would mean more produce to distribute to the community.

Bad weather did delay the erecting of the poly tunnel as the ground was waterlogged but in 2012 it finally went up with help from volunteers. The poly tunnel has now had some more raised beds planted inside it which are all being used successfully for growing food to be cooked by the young people with any surplus being distributed to other community groups.



## HAZEL KNUTS GARDEN CLUB

### Growing Fruit and Veg. March 2012

Hazel Court is a sheltered housing complex run by Family Housing Association (Wales). The FHA has set aside a piece of ground for the tenants to use, supplied raised beds, tools and a greenhouse. The tenants set up Hazel Knuts Garden Club to run the piece of ground given to them. They have 13 members in the group, all of which have a designated space in the garden for them to grow.

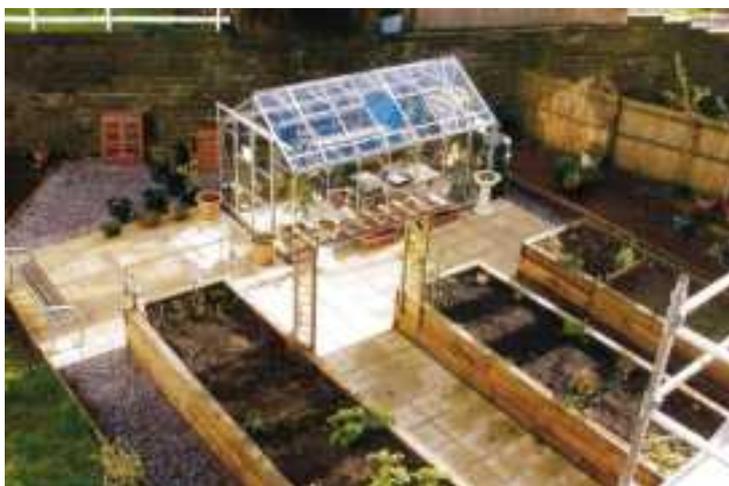
A grant of £295 was awarded to the group to buy additional shelving for their greenhouse and also a compost bin and a cold frame. They wanted to be able to make use of their green house for 12 months of the year to grow plants from seeds and cuttings.



*“The extra shelving and trestle is allowing us to grow more from seed, one gardener is trying to grow olive trees!”*

They now aim to be able to raise plants and bulbs to sell to tenants who are unable to get out to garden centres and to supply the café with surplus fruit and veg, one gardener has already given the kitchen surplus salad.

The group have been asked to provide 6 hanging baskets for Family Housing Association and after seeing the success of this project the FHA have also asked them to take over an extra garden.



## THE WOODCHURCH T.R.U.S.T

### Setting up a Community Garden. June 2012

Woodchurch T.R.U.S.T was formed in 2008 around a need to improve the lives of people living on the Woodchurch Estate, Birkenhead. The T.R.U.S.T provides and organises projects which increase community involvement and encourage people to join up as volunteers.

The group have taken over a derelict garage site which they want to bring back into use and used a community space. They attended the Setting up a Community Garden course as this is what they wanted to use the space for. They were granted £250 to buy a selection of tools which could originally be used to clear and prepare the site, and then when ready, used as communal garden tools.



The project is proceeding well, and the T.R.U.S.T is already engaging with the wider community and has been selling Mothers Day hanging baskets. More volunteers are expressing an interest in joining the project and have been helping prepare the site.

To develop the project they are looking at turning it into a social enterprise that will be self sustaining for years to come. Possibly being able to employ some people, and not have to apply for funding to keep it going.

One problem the group has had is finding money to help pay for volunteer expenses as they have no funding for this, hopefully setting up as a social enterprise will mean they can generate their own money for this.

*“Receipt of this funding has helped equip our project with tools and we are grateful for the excellent training we have received” – Stephanie Williams, The Woodchurch T.R.U.S.T*



## TRANSITION WILMSLOW

### Setting up a Community Garden. June 2012

The Broad Aims of Transition Wilmslow is to get the community working together to reduce reliance on fossil fuels. They recognise that by encouraging and re-skilling people to grow their own food they will help contribute to that aim.

They attended the Setting up a Community Garden course as they had a plot of land in a park which the local council have given the go ahead to start using it for planting. The group were granted £250 to help with 'phase 1' of their project, building raised beds for planting. Once 'phase 1' was completed they felt they would then be in a better position to apply for further funding.



Volunteers have helped with the construction of the garden; residents of a local hostel for the homeless have also been involved.

The group are helping to develop gardening skills in the community by engaging with local people, including school children, at a seedling swap/planting out day.

The next stage of the project is to build more raised beds; they have been successful in receiving extra funding to help with this. As well as the extra money to help their project they have also been linking up with other local groups to share publicity and swap advice. Many people are keen to start growing their own produce so it is expected that the new beds will be well used. The local council are pleased with the work being done and are keen to see more initiatives like this one set up.



*"We at Transition Wilmslow and the food group in particular, are very pleased with our progress so far. Once again our grateful thanks to Trafford Hall for their financial support in this project" – Pat Baker, Transition Wilmslow.*

## SEVEN UP

### Too Good to Waste. August 2012

The Seven Up group are based in Birmingham and have transformed a disused piece of land into a community play space specifically for children. They want to provide quality, inclusive play spaces and opportunities that are built around children with the highest needs, in school holidays and after school.



The group attended the Too Good to Waste training course and learnt different ways in which they could recycle waste dumped on their play field and rubbish from people's homes. They received a grant of £335 to buy some recycle bins to put on the site, whatever was put in the bins they would sort through to find alternate uses for them.

After buying the bins, the money left over was used to have leaflets printed to advertise their project and also an open day where the project would be officially launched.

Since the project started the discarded materials have been used for creative projects, for gardening and for making play equipment such as kites.



The open day was a big success with many more people attending than expected and everyone had a lot of fun getting creative with 'junk'.

Since the project launched they have had a lot more interest in their community garden and lots more junk put in their recycle bins. They are looking to carry on like they are and get more and more people involved.

## I MADE THAT STUDIO

Tailor Made. January 2013

I Made That Studio are a group based in Wigan who encourage people to try new hobbies and positive activities and they provide a safe and welcoming place to share skills.

The group attended the Tailor Made course as they wanted to start a craft workshop in partnership with their already existing Food Positive Café. They wanted the workshop to provide a comfortable supportive place for groups to meet and individuals to try new positive activities. The workshop would also provide volunteering opportunities and local focus to local people.

On the Tailor Made course they learnt new skills which they took back to their community. To help set up the workshop they received a grant of £300 to buy sewing machines and other bits of equipment that they needed.



Six months after the course and the workshops are still going strong, they have fifteen people learning to sew, and they run two classes a week one for beginners and one for intermediates.

The group are planning to start a children's group on Saturday mornings to get them started in sewing. They also plan to put on an extra session a week specifically for their 'debt free Christmas' course, this course will specialise in making Christmas gifts using various crafts.

## HILLSIDE RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

### Tailor Made January 2013

Hillside Residents Association is a group open to everyone who lives in the hillside area of Abbots Langley, Hertfordshire. The aim of the group is to unite the community and to share skills between local residents.

They were awarded a grant of £500 to set up some courses to teach local residents some basic textile and arts and crafts skills. With the money they bought a couple of sewing machines, an iron and a variety of tools and textiles to help get the project started.



So far they have successfully ran two 6 week art and crafts courses to local members of the community. These have been delivered to a cross section of the community; parents with children, mums and senior citizens. Each course had 8 participants which is the maximum they can accommodate at the venue. They are currently mid way through a third course which is also full with 8 people.

The project was set up with the initial £500 and participants are charged £2 per session they attend to cover costs to provide refreshments and also to replenish materials each week. Charging the £2 means that the sessions can now fund themselves and there are plans in place to run more courses next year. The group are also considering delivering one off workshops to sheltered housing type communities.

*"I am hugely grateful to Trafford Hall for taking me on the Tailor Made course, It gave me the confidence to get something set up local to where I live to share my limited knowledge and heaps of enthusiasm. It would not have been possible to set this group up so quickly without the grant money. The grant allowed the group to deliver sessions to an excellent standard from day one. Feedback from participants has been excellent, thank you very much". – Karen Ashworth.*



## ROATH RESIDENTS ACTION GROUP

### Community Allotments February 2013

The Group from Cardiff in South Wales focus on projects that remove barriers, increase participation, and create opportunities to enhance the lives of residents of Roath. A major project they are currently working on is to build a community garden in the middle of Roath. To help them bring together their plans and learn how best to take their project forward they attended the 'Community Allotments' course with us.



The garden was being built on land which had been leased to them by Cardiff Council Parks Department who were supporting the project and who had also donated some fruit trees to help get them started. The group have also received support from 'Tidy Towns' who have donated tools and equipment to the project.

At the time of applying for a grant, 15 out of the 23 planned planters had been built but despite the groups' best efforts to fill them with greenery grown from seeds they still looked



quite empty. The group were successful in applying for a grant of £500 to buy a selection of established plants and bushes which would complement what had already been planted from seed. Local residents would be encouraged to get involved in the planting process of the new plants and it was hoped that once they had been planted it would make the garden look more welcoming to help increase visitors.

Good progress has been made with the garden, mature plants have been bought and they gave an instant lift to what had previously been empty planters and bare earth, and its not just the local residents who have been enjoying the garden with birds, bees and other insects also making the most of the new plants.



Interaction with local residents has also improved as a result and has exceeded the groups hopes, as soon as the plants started to go in passers by started to stop for a chat, with some even joining in. Children especially have taken an interest and are regularly watering plants and sowing new seeds.

The garden is a long a busy area which was previously perceived as a focus for anti social behaviour, now all of the plants in the garden looks stunning. One local resident has said how she used to avoid the walkway as it was a very intimidating place – she now goes out of her way to walk past, because the garden is so beautiful.

Many people in the community have benefited from the garden which is managed by 10 core members of Roath Residents Action Group.

The neighbourhood policing team have been a wonderful support, and introduced them to 11 members of the community payback team, who have spent many hours, moving soil, mowing grass and cutting planters. The local brownie group have adopted a planter in order to complete their 'Gardener' badges. A local refugee drop in centre has also adopted a planter and has some keen gardeners as members, and a local parent and child group also have a planter. The group have signed up to provide outdoor exercise and general support

for residents with mental health problems, as part of a scheme run by a local hospital.



In total, volunteers and trustees have spent more than 600 hours on building and working in the garden. The 2 open days held at the garden have been very well attended, with more than 150 people attending,

*"Everyone is delighted with the way the garden looks, now that all the plants are in. The planters are filled with greenery, the shrubs are settling in, the strawberries have fruited well,*

*considering the problems with the weather, and the herbs have been a great success."* – Liz Gower, Roath Residents Action Group.

## VENSALL TENANTS AND RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

### Community Allotments. February 2013

Vensall Tenants and Residents Association are working to bring their local community together, to promote healthy eating and enjoy the environment.

The group, based in Childwall, Liverpool, attended the Community Allotment training course as they were in the process of developing their own community allotment and needed some direction. They wanted to use the £300 grant to buy tools and a greenhouse to help get them started.



The greenhouse is now up on the site, and garden tools have been bought ready for their first year of growing. The greenhouse is now used to grow from seeds before being planted out on the allotment.

10 volunteers regularly use the allotment growing fresh fruit and vegetables for themselves and others in the community,

The group wanted the project to encourage healthy eating in the community and now distribute their produce to those who are unable to get out and grow their own, mainly the elderly. This has helped bring the community together and have got different groups of people mixing together who normally wouldn't have done so.



The project is going really well and they are hoping to expand on the work that they already do. One thing that they are planning is to include local school children in the growing of produce, and letting them use it in their school dinners.

## GENESIS SALE MOOR

### Setting up a Social Enterprise – February 2013

A voluntary community group based in Sale, Genesis Sale Moor provide activities for children, young people and families living in the area, with the aim to raise self esteem, increase employability and have a positive experience. They aim to support people to reach their full potential.

The group set up 5 years ago with it in mind to build social enterprise into their projects. However up until they attended this course at Trafford Hall they haven't had the expertise to do this. The course has given them the support and information they need to now do this.

They wanted to set up a social enterprise project, with young people at the centre of the work, building bird boxes and flower presses to sell at local events to raise money to put back into other projects. Local young people would be trained to build the bird boxes and flower presses, using hammers, nails, saws and screw drivers, all skills that they could use in life. As the young people are volunteering with the project it will help teach them the values of working and make them more employable.

After completing the course they received a grant of £300 to buy materials and tools to enable them to start building the bird boxes and flower presses.

So far they have made and sold 24 bird boxes and 12 flower presses, they are planning on building another 12 bird boxes on a project running in March 2014.

21 children and young people have been involved, although this isn't as many as the group originally had hoped it has been a good number to work with. As well as the practical skills that the young people have learnt they have also had a greater appreciation for the local surroundings and wildlife. They have learnt about wild flowers and how to press common flowers found in the grass.

One unexpected problem that the group encountered is that the younger people working on their project wanted to keep what they had made and could only afford a nominal donation to the project. In the future they will use older volunteers to make the items that they wish to sell.

The group have 3 set dates in 2014 where they will sell there products and hope to repeat these every year.

*"We have gained a better understanding of social enterprise, and appreciate the support". – Janet Green, Genesis Sale Moor*

## THE FALLOWFIELD SECRET GARDEN

### Setting up a Social Enterprise. February 2013

The Fallowfield Secret Garden was set up to develop a social enterprise that promotes sustainability in its broadest definition at local level, directly engaging with the local community and to promote permaculture as a means of effectively growing organic food in an urban setting.



The group, which are based in Manchester, attended the Setting up a Social Enterprise course as they wanted to turn what they were already doing into a self sustaining project which could even be ran at a profit to then invest into new projects.

They used the £300 grant they were given to buy materials to make their own hanging baskets, they needed the baskets, composts, and plants. As a group they all got together and made the hanging baskets which they then sold at a local open day. The group saw this as starting small with their enterprise, but then building on it and gradually turning it into something bigger.

Not only did the selling of the hanging baskets make the group some money, it also raised their profile within the local community. They now get more interest in their garden and more volunteers come and take part in the activities they put on.

This project was successful in making the group a tidy profit which they could then invest in to other areas of their project, it also helped to brighten up the local community.

## STIRLEY COMMUNITY FARM

### Bee Keeping. June 2013

Stirley Community Farm are a group from Huddersfield that have taken over an unused piece of land which is owned by their local council and they want to use it to bring people, food and wildlife together, to educate local people.

Using knowledge gained on the course they wanted to introduce a hive of bees to the farm, they then wanted to plant flowers for the bees which will help to pollinate the orchard. It would also be a demonstration of bee keeping and will show how producing food interacts with the environment. The group was awarded with a grant of £500 to help cover the start up costs for this project; the money was for a beginners flat kit hive, hive tools and an apiarist suit.

Volunteers helped to build the hive and it is now in place on the farm and under the guidance of an expert bee keeper, bees have been introduced to the hive. An orchard has now been planted next to the hive to provide food for the bees and help pollinate the fruit trees.



Now the hive is in place it is being used in conjunction with the other equipment purchased to give members of the local community access to education and training as well as hands on skills and experience in the field of bee keeping.



An additional hive has been added to the site which has been donated by one of the volunteers.

The group are looking to move the project forward by organising a 'Bee Wise' road show and series of events to get people of all ages and backgrounds interested in bees.

*"We will continue to use the hive and bee keeping equipment purchased with this grant to provide education and training as a resource for community members. The Bee Wise road show and events will reach out further in the future to sections of the community who traditionally show less of an interest in bees." – Lewis Sueman*

## THE WOODCHURCH T.R.U.S.T

### Bee Keeping. June 2013



The T.R.U.S.T was formed in 2008 around a need in Woodchurch, Birkenhead to improve the lives of the people who lived there. They provide and organise projects which increase community cohesion and encourage people to join up as volunteers. Their latest projects have all been environmentally themed after turning a derelict site into a thriving gardening project. It was this garden project that gave them the idea to keep bees.

The group attended the bee keeping course as complete beginners and left the course feeling confident enough that they could go away and start up by themselves. As they were starting from scratch they needed a lot of equipment to get started, they needed the bee hive with stands, bee keeping equipment and the bees' themselves. All of this came to just over £1,000, having raised the majority of the money themselves elsewhere, we awarded them with a grant of £320 to buy 2 nucleus colonies of bees' complete with the queens.

Now the hives are set up and the bees have moved in and are thriving in their new environment, they don't plan on being able to get any honey from the hives this year as they expect to still be learning more as they go. However, next year they do plan on harvesting honey from the hives and selling it on to the local community.

The weather did cause some delays with the project but once the weather cleared up the bees started to leave the hive and explore their new surroundings.

This project has been led by a team of half a dozen volunteers but has had interest from other users of their community garden who are all looking forward to getting some fresh honey.



## QUEENS PARK COMMUNITY GARDEN

Community Involvement in Environmental Projects. June 2013

Queens Park Community Garden are a voluntary community group based in Swindon, the overall aim of the group is to create a vibrant community garden in Queen's Park, which can be used by everyone to develop food growing and gardening skills, and to strengthen relationships between individuals and diverse community groups.



To help achieve their aims the members from the group attended the Community Involvement in Environmental Projects, which ran in June 2013. After completing the course the group received a grant of £300 to host a planting event in their community garden. They used the money to buy a range of medicinal plants, refreshments for the day and also to pay for a guest speaker. They wanted the event would help enable them to take a further step towards fulfilling the gardens purpose as a place which is inclusive, educational and encourages social cohesion as well as a healthy lifestyle.

The event was held later in 2013 and went well, the group were able to promote the garden to a new group of people in the community as they had hoped it would, although it was a smaller group than they had expected. As well as increasing the footfall at their community garden the day has also increased online traffic to their Facebook page, this means that more people are now seeing what they do.

The main difficulty the group had with their project was a low attendance at the talk. Despite previous interest in attending from service users none of them chose to attend the day. However the people that did attend did find the talk very useful and worthwhile.

Looking ahead the group are hoping to invite their guest speaker back to run further workshops, they have already had verbal interest in these, they plan to sell tickets in advance for these workshops to avoid any disappointment of people not turning up on the day.



## HALESMERE WALLED GARDEN

### Community Allotments. September 2013

This walled garden is based in Liverpool and is situated on a site which used to be used for garages. After the garages were demolished the community were given the space to use as a community growing space.

The aims of the group are to turn the derelict garage site into a thriving community garden, encouraging healthy eating and better diet and reducing food miles. They also wanted to bring the community together to benefit the environment.

Needing help on how to get started the group attended the Community Allotments course for help in planning the site and how best to grow when the ground they have is concrete.

The group were advised that raised beds were the way to go and have now installed 16 raised beds which are used by the community for growing.

They have a steel container on site which acts as a base and tool shed and have also had a 30 foot poly tunnel installed.

They received a grant of £300 to kit out the poly tunnel with shelving and planters to help them grow plants from seed all year round.

Currently 13 tenants use the site regularly with another 50 names on the waiting list, these will all be allocated plots after the official open day.

The project has gone very well as a whole but they did have one set back where it cost much more than they originally planned to get hooked up on to the water mains, luckily they managed to get the money together to pay for this.

The group now advertise their site in local newsletters and in the doctors' waiting room, their official open day is planned for Easter 2014, where they plan to hold a celebration day and get even more people involved.



# Community Futures

If you would like further information on our courses or grant programme please contact the training team on 01244300246 or email [training@traffordhall.com](mailto:training@traffordhall.com)

