

Cove in Bloom

When Keep Scotland Beautiful launched National Spring Clean in 2007 Cove Community Council was one of nine groups in the Aberdeen City Council area which registered and organised a litter pick. Since then the group has supported Keep Scotland Beautiful's annual litter clearing initiatives and carried out litter picks every spring.

The annual Cove clean-up took place as usual in 2013 as part of Keep Scotland Beautiful's new mass engagement campaign - Clean Up Scotland. In total 74 bags of litter were collected and removed by 54 volunteers. Litter picking is now also carried out by the volunteers at other times throughout the year.

But litter picking was just the start - under the auspices of Cove Community Council 'Cove in Bloom' was established and in 2008 the group first got involved in the It's Your Neighbourhood Awards, run by Keep Scotland Beautiful in partnership with the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS).



The It's Your Neighbourhood campaign presents an ideal opportunity for volunteer-led community groups interested in cleaning and greening up their local area, whether the street where they live, a derelict space on their estate or the grounds around the local community centre. It is an inclusive non-competitive scheme which is about bringing members of the community together to make a positive change to the place they live, work or spend their leisure time.



It's Your Neighbourhood is therefore an ideal vehicle through which "incivilities" such as litter and dog fouling can be addressed, empowering

communities across Scotland to be clean and green for today and tomorrow.

Cove in Bloom has moved up from an 'Improving' to a 'Thriving' to an 'Outstanding' entrant over the years, leading to a 'Certificate of Distinction' being presented to the group in 2012. Because of this continuous improvement the group was encouraged to enter the national 'Beautiful Scotland' competition in 2013. This campaign rewards groups for their horticultural



achievement, environmental improvements and, very importantly, for encouraging members of the community to become involved. In 2013 Cove in Bloom received a Silver medal certificate for their achievements in this competition.

In 2013 The Cove Community Council's, Cove in Bloom group, joined forces with Cove Garden Workshop and secured the support of local businesses and individual residents of Cove and Altens, as well as from Aberdeen City Council.

Drawing on a wide sphere of volunteers, horticultural enhancement is carried out by a number of groups. For example:

- Local residents turn up to weed and plant the community beds regularly, while the residents along Cove Road have taken responsibility for the roadside behind their houses and beautifying what had become an eyesore after witnessing the work of the volunteers in other areas;
- The scouts and guides have planted herbs and salad leaves in a planter at the school, and maintain the beds during the year.
- The church and dinner ladies of Loirston Annexe look after and water hanging baskets;
- Those with allotments at the Nether Loriston Growers Association have also been maintaining the communal areas as well as their own plots;
- Teachers and pupils of the two schools and the nursery are growing in pots in the school grounds and in allotment plots.



Cove in Bloom has also been responsible for encouraging residents to enhance their own properties with attractive gardens.