



Introduction

Forth, South Lanarkshire is a former mining village situated between Lanark & Livingston. Our group works with various organisations in and around Forth, volunteers, and the local community, to enhance and brighten our village.

We maintain the Gateway gardens into the village along with other raised beds located throughout Forth. These contain a mixture of herbs and flowers, and we are continuing to increase the number of perennial and pollinating varieties.

The eco site, which is situated in Hailstonegreen park, has community organic growing beds and three polytunnels. The site generates its own power using solar panels, harvests its own rain water, and provides fruit and veg to the foodbank, elderly residents and the local butchers where it is available for free or for a small donation during growing season. Our green waste is recycled in our compost bays which were renewed in 2022. The site is also used as a knowledge and information point for the local community, and to grow some of the flowers for our street displays.

Horticultural Achievement

During Spring, we cut back the dead wood from the herb beds and removed weeds. The willow tunnel at the eco site had broken in two halves with the strong winds over winter, and this was weaved so it had a roof again. We also started sowing seeds for our hanging baskets and barrels and also for our beds on Climpy Road. Daffodils and primroses on Climpy Road and at the Gateway in April brighten up the entrances into the village and are wonderful perennials.



Horticultural Achievement



Our Gateway at Longdales



Top row: Roof of the tunnel before and after re-weaving.



Crocuses at our hanging basket trees on Longdales



Beds at Climpy Road

Horticultural Achievement



The Clydesdale Community Initiative helped us add leaf mould to our foodbank beds. We added this as mulch. It had been collected from the Manse garden where it had lain in bags for over a year and was going surplus.



The trees in the polytunnel were given a good prune early in the year to help with fruit production.



Repotting the geraniums which had been overwintered



Introducing perennial and pollinating plants into an area which has problems with weeds from the adjoining site.

Environment



Our eco site is completely off grid. Rain water is collected in 2 10,000 litre tanks and 6 1,000 litre IBC's which are located at the back of the site. The water is then pumped into 4 IBC 1,000 litre storage tanks inside the main polytunnel for use by our bed holders. The pump and all other appliances onsite are powered by 2 banks of solar panels. Our compost bays are used to recycle our green waste.



Compost bays were numbered, with tick and cross signs to help people use the correct bay. The compost from the bays was bagged and used to fill up the planters on Climpy Road, below.



We introduced reusable plant tags, for use with any surplus plants that our bed holders have. They can offer them for free and label them accordingly. This has been very successful.

Environment



Regular litter picks are carried out by Forth Gateway Project group. Litter pickers, hoops and hi-vis vests are available to borrow from Forth Community Resource Centre.

We have also introduced a litter picking station at the eco site and hope this encourages our bed holders to pick litter in their own area within Forth.



Bins were added at Sunnybrae. We hope this will reduce the litter in this area.

We also added new planters. These were planted with the spring bulbs from the previous planters and have now been planted for summer. Nan, one of the local residents has recently taken over looking after the barrels and keeps them looking good for the residents to enjoy.

Environment



Painting our planters on Climpy Road. The Community Payback team also painted our indoor and outdoor beds during the Spring.



Our mining wheel at the Climpy Road Gateway, where we have recently added rockery plants.



One of the poo bag stations located around Forth.



Carved stones were installed at the Forth Gateway Garden. The carvings were done by local residents and represent Hope, Peace & Friendship.

Community Participation



We held a willow weaving class with Forth Community Resource Centre. Wreath bases were created at the eco-site in October, and decorated at the Resource Centre in November. Everyone had a great time and took their own handmade decorated wreath home with them, ready for display in the lead up to Christmas.



Left: Isa Gardiner, one of Forth's oldest residents, switching on our Christmas lights on 19th November 2023.

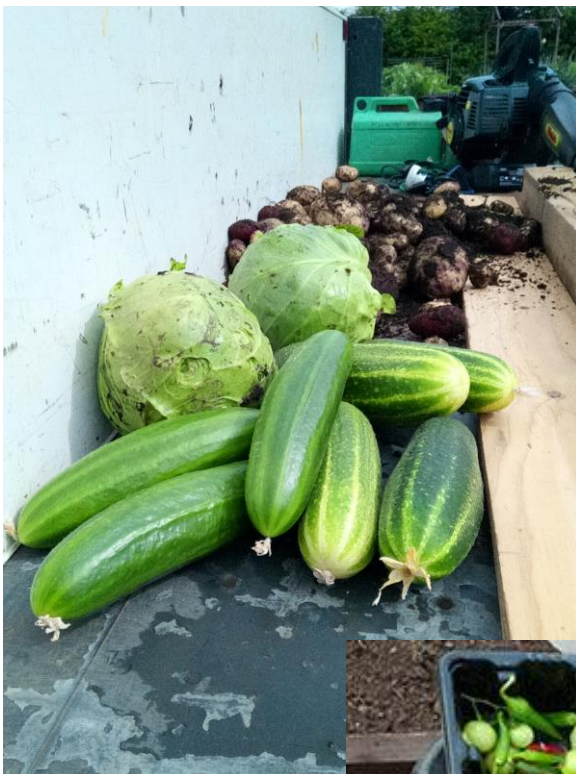
Isa was recognised for her many years helping with the Church. The Christmas light event is held jointly with Forth St Pauls Church, with the lights being switched on in front of the Church. The Christmas tree at the village cross participates in St Andrews Hospice Light up a light.

Community Participation



Wreaths were specially created and given to the Forth Community Resource centre, showing the work they do, and for the Church, showing parts of the nativity story.

The wreaths were made using willow from the eco site and our handmade decorations.



Left: One of our food bank donations to Clydesdale foodbank. These are taken away by Clydesdale Community Initiative who visit us regularly and carry out various jobs around the eco site, such as grass cutting, weeding, painting and turning the compost bays for us.

Below: One of our wheelbarrows of produce which we gave out to the local community. Last year we took produce to the local butchers, the sheltered housing complex, and the resource centre.



Community Participation



We were given free compost by Clydeside Trading Supplies in Kirkmuirhill, and also received compost and plant food from Tesco in Lanark.

These donations allowed us to plant up all our hanging baskets, and fill our street planters. We were also donated compost from Morrisons in Lanark which we will use for our seed sowing next year.



Our volunteers planted up the hanging baskets in May. They were then hung up in the tunnel for the next few weeks where they were allowed to flourish in the heat.



Community Participation



Left: Our barrels, then our hanging baskets went out around the village at the start of June, ahead of our Gala Day.

Below: Our hanging baskets going out in Longdales, where the local residents do a great job looking after them.



We once again worked with the British Legion for their entry into the best kept war memorial, and planted up tubs for the memorials at Braehead and Haywood. We also planted poppies at the Legion in Manse Road.



Website: forthinitiative.org
Email: admin@forthinitiative.org
Facebook: Forth Poly Tunnel



Lanarkshire
CLIMATE ACTION HUB

Ben Sadler from Lanarkshire climate action hub came for a tour around the Eco Site in June. We hope to apply for funding from their seed grant scheme, and to work with Ben more in the future.