



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 which were reskinned this year, using funding from South Lanarkshire Renewable Energy Fund. 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 church cafe. 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 most of the flowers for our street displays.

Horticultural Achievement

During Autumn we collected nasturtium seeds from our hanging baskets, calendula from our street barrels and marigold seeds from the polytunnels. We also collected the begonia and dahlia corms and wrapped them to store over winter.

In the winter we bought kelpie compost and this was used on our outside beds by our bed holders to add nutrients and help plant growth. We also planted bulbs in the street planters.



Horticultural Achievement

The begonia and dahlia corms were taken out and potted up in early March and cuttings were taken from the dahlias in April.

During Spring, we cut back the dead wood from the herb beds on Climpy Road, also removing weeds and added compost to these. The rest of the area was also weeded and given a tidy up. We also started sowing seeds for our hanging baskets and barrels. All the nasturtiums were collected seeds from last year.



Herb beds on Climpy Road



Taking cuttings from the dahlias which were growing really well in the porch at home.



Planting out the begonia corms



Starting to sow our seeds for the hanging baskets and barrels for the streets and also lobelia, nasturtiums and alyssum for the baskets at the British Legion.

Horticultural Achievement



< The rockery plants at the gateway on Climpy Road in Spring. These plants were added last year and give the area a pop of colour.



^ Wild garlic and bluebells at the top Gateway Garden, great for the pollinators early in the year.



< The grass at the Eco Site has been left to grow and this seems to have increased the biodiversity on the site.

Horticultural Achievement

The fruit trees in the single span polytunnel had to be removed as it wasn't possible to reskin the tunnels with them there.

The trees were taken out in March and lay outside. In April we noticed buds appear, so the trees were collected by Belstane Burn action group in Carluke and given a new home doon the burn.

In June, Amanda let us know that some of the trees are now producing new buds.



One of the trees budding doon the burn.



Giving the grapes their forever homes in large donated containers using a mix of compost from our compost bays and peat free compost.



Begonias in June which were planted from last years corms. These will be used in our planting throughout the village.



Repotting the cineraria we bought to grow on for our barrels.

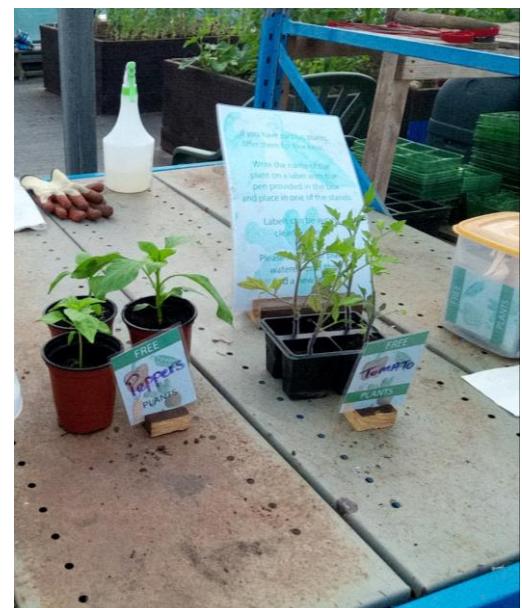


Our tomatoes, onions, leeks, turnips, beetroot peppers, cucumbers and squash for the foodbank were all grown from seed.

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. Another 3 1,000 litre IBC's collect the water from our portacabin roof and this is gravity fed into our single span tunnel. 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.



Our re-useable plant tags, for use with any surplus plants that our bed holders have. They can offer them for free and label them accordingly. This remains very successful. We also encourage the use of natural pesticides such as garlic spray for slugs and tomato spray for aphids.

Compost bays are numbered, with tick and cross signs to help people use the correct bay this is working very well. The compost from the bays has been used to top up beds onsite.

Environment



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

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



Painting our planters on Climpie Road.



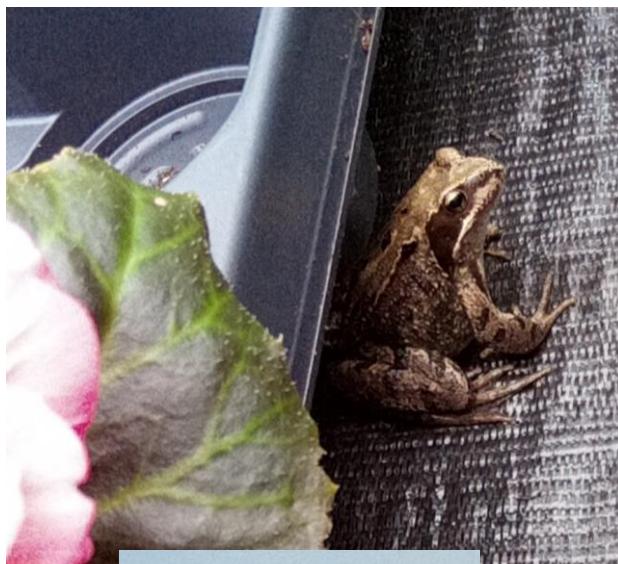
One of the poo bag stations located around Forth.



Environment



Cleaning the sides of the polytunnel to remove build up of algae and enhancing light penetration for plant growth and preventing pest and disease issues.



Bird baths and bee cups have been added around the Eco Site and our grass left to grow. We have a frog that comes to visit along with hoverflies, bees, butterflies and moths.

Environment



Mining Statue as you enter Forth from Lanark. This was installed in December 2024 and represents Forth's mining past.



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



Monoliths to commemorate Willie Waddell, a footballer and manager who was from Forth.



< The Pit Wheel Gateway on Climpy Road, which is situated close to the Abbey Mine and represents our mining heritage.

Community Participation



< A wheelbarrow full of produce which was taken down to the sheltered housing complex and given out to the elderly residents in Forth

Below: Produce which was given to the Church Café to use in their salads and soups, and flowers provided for decoration.



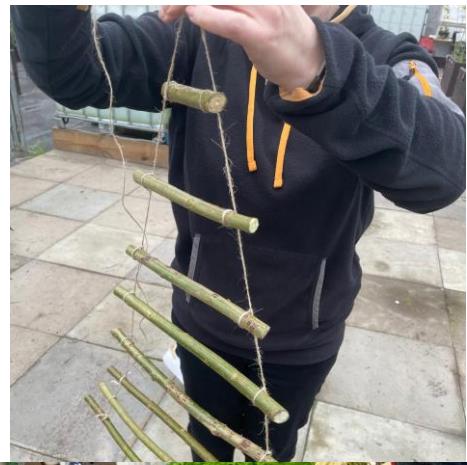
< The 10kg pumpkin which was grown at the Eco Site and donated to Forth Community Resource Centre who used it to make soup for their Halloween themed activity café.



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.

Community Participation



We held a willow weaving class with Forth Community Resource Centre. Wreath bases and willow trees to hang up 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.



< Agnes Gallacher, a member of the initiative group for many years, switching on our Christmas lights on 17th November 2024.

Agnes was recognised for her many years volunteering with the Brownies, Church, and Forth & District Initiative Group.

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.

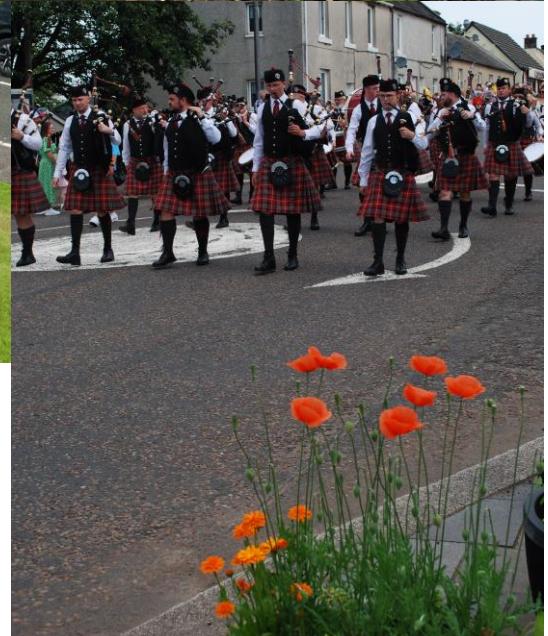
Community Participation



We had purchased compost in October at a discount price from Clydeside Trading Society which allowed our volunteers to plant up our hanging baskets in early May.

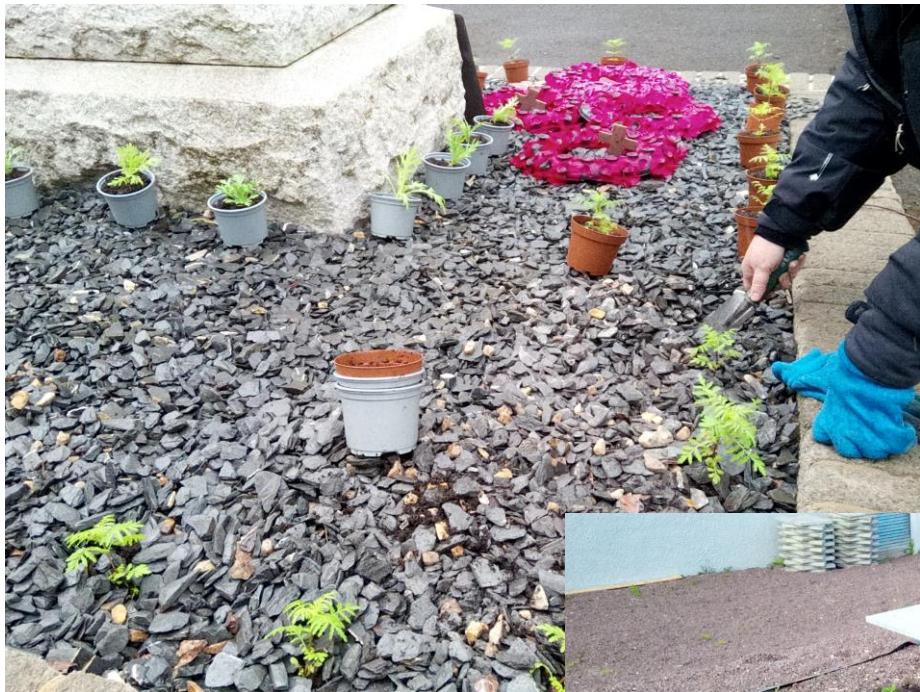
These were allowed to flourish to their full potential mostly in tunnel two which now has crop bars fitted and allows them to hang with less chance of someone hitting their head.

Below: More of our volunteers who helped to put out the hanging baskets at the start of June in time for this years Gala Day. These are then looked after by local residents.



> One of our street planters on the Gala Day. Calendula and poached egg plant were left to self seed from the previous year and have been added to by nature, and we have added nasturtiums. In the planters where there wasn't calendula last year these have been planted with cineraria for the silver theme and nasturtiums.

Community Participation



< We once again worked with the British Legion for their entry into the best kept war memorial. This year we used a mixture of lemon marigolds, yellow chrysanth and lobelia which were grown from seed at the Eco Site and included forget me nots to represent the legion colours of yellow & blue.

We also planted out the garden of Reflection at the Legion in Manse Road. Using plants we had grown at the Eco Site. The cineraria which we bought and plants gifted to us by Carl Walters who grows mainly perennial plants which he donates to local charities or sells to raise funds for local causes. Carl is going to supply us with more plants in the future.



< In September as part of the climate action festival we helped with a seed swap which was held at Forth Community Resource Centre and helped judge the Wildflower poster competition they organised with Forth Primary School. This year we will be helping out again with various activities held at the Eco Site including making willow bird feeders for the garden and holding a bulb planting in a pot workshop.



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