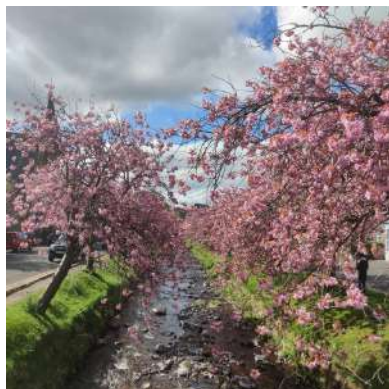


**Dollar Portfolio
Small Town
Beautiful Scotland 2024**





Introduction to Dollar

Dollar is a small town situated at the foot of the Ochil Hills in Clackmannanshire. It is a lively community with many clubs and activities for both young and old. Bridge Street has thriving small independent shops, multiple cafes, pubs, and restaurants which attract many visitors in the summer months.

Dollar Glen and The Ochils are popular with hill walkers and there is also Castle Campbell for visitors to explore. The Japanese Gardens nearby also offer visitors a wonderful horticultural day out.

Dollar Burn is a focal point for the village and runs down from the hills through the centre of the town. It is bordered by cherry trees which create a stunning display in May.

Since 2020, with the help of a small grant, the community took over responsibility for the care of some local sites from Clackmannanshire Council. We started with planting a large and prominent flower bed at the edge of town. From a modest start, we have since progressed with many initiatives which have greatly improved the local environment. This portfolio details some of our activities and illustrates the working of the local community in keeping Dollar Beautiful.

Horticulture

Over the last 6 years volunteers have renovated several neglected sites around the town. We now work hard to maintain these areas so they can be used and enjoyed by everyone. Before and after photos of these sites can be found at the end of this document.

Memorial Garden

In September 2023 we completed our project to bring the Memorial Garden back to life. This area is a central part of the town and had largely been abandoned. The space is now a well-used haven of peace and tranquillity. Over the last year we have continued to maintain the large main bed, two rose beds and the two raised perennial planters. We have:

- Mulched the main bed with wood chips (donated by Dollar Academy and the Council)
- Mulched the Rose beds with specialist rose mulch.
- Planted tulips from our tulip sale.
- Weeded all the beds on a fortnightly basis during the growing season.
- Dead headed the tulips and flowering perennials.
- Pruned and fed the roses with chicken pellets.
- Watered during very dry spells in 2023.
- Removed litter from the hedges.
- Strimmed the edges of the flower beds.
- Oiled the two wooden benches.
- Planted perennials in the flower bed in front of the War Memorial.



In June this year we have also underplanted the two rose beds with Nepeta and Geranium Rozanne to provide some ground cover and extend the season of interest of the beds. In Autumn we will be adding well-rotted manure to the rose beds.

Strachan Crescent



This flower bed sits on the Western approach to the town. It is planted with perennials and grasses to provide year-round interest. In Autumn 2023 the herbaceous perennials were cut back. Bulbs were added to the bed to provide some Springtime colour. The bed is regularly weeded through the growing season. Later in the year we will be adding another layer of mulch to the bed.

Tubs and hanging baskets

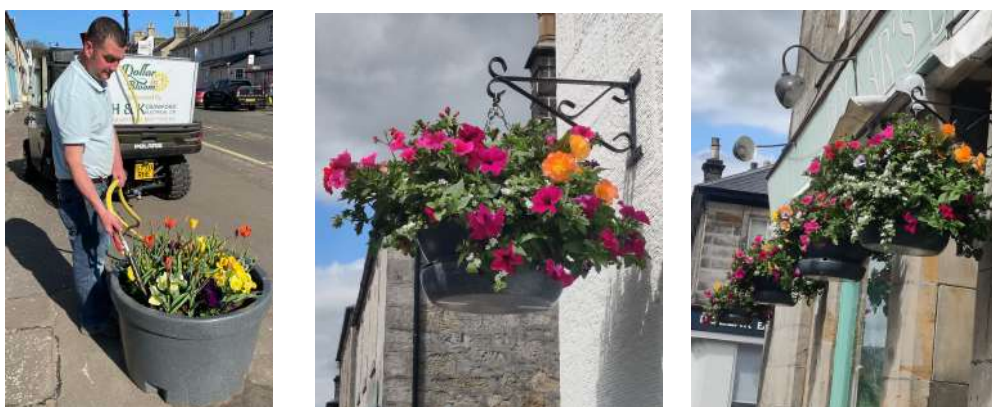
We have over 20 large tubs positioned around the Town. These were originally paid for by the local community through a crowd funding campaign and are now sponsored by local businesses in the Summer. In Autumn we planted these tubs with an array of tulips. These produced a wonderful display in Spring this year. The bulbs were funded by our annual tulip bulb sale.



At the end of May we lifted the tulips (some will be replanted in the Memorial Garden later in the year), added some peat free compost and brightly coloured annuals.



To further enhance the main street of the town, hanging baskets were added to the shop fronts in June. These were paid for by the local shops. We have a team of volunteers that water both the hanging baskets and the tubs regularly throughout the summer to ensure they remain in good condition. We also dead head the flowers in the tubs as needed.



High Street Bed

This area has blossomed over the last year. The plants have matured and are now giving a vibrant and colourful display. We have two dedicated volunteers that look after the flower



beds. Their main tasks have been weeding, dead-heading, and cutting back the herbaceous perennials. In the Autumn we will add more woodchips to the path area.

Health Centre

The Horticultural Club built these flower beds and benches with financial help from



Clackmannanshire and Stirling Environmental Trust in 2021. The aim was to add much needed colour and life to the rather desolate area around the Dollar Health Centre and car park. They are planted with Rowan trees, herbaceous perennials, and bulbs.

This year as well as general weeding, dead heading and watering we:

- Cut back the herbaceous perennials in November.
- Planted 'In the green' snowdrops in March.
- Cut back the Centaurea Montana which had started to swamp other plants in the beds.
- Removed Brunera seed heads to prevent self-seeding.

One area which we will need to tackle shortly is the compost level in the beds. This has settled substantially, and we will need to find a way to top them up without harming the trees.

Burnside Hall Garden

Since 2021 Dollar Parish Church and Young Church have been renovating the area of land beside the Burnside Hall. It had been neglected for many years and was overgrown and blighted by litter. The project started as a means to allow the community to meet outside safely during Covid and has continued with the aim of providing colour, vibrancy and a space for people and wildlife to enjoy.

Before



After



The garden is still a work in progress. This year further planting has been done in the middle bank and wood chip mulch (donated by Dollar Academy) has been added. Weed control has been ongoing with considerable work being done to remove cleavers, penny wort, nipple weed and hogweed by hand.



Last year a sunflower border was also added on the south facing northern wall. In May it was planted with sunflower seeds by the young members of the church.

Over the coming year further work will be done on the planting areas. We are also hoping to refurbish the benches in the garden and add gravel to the pathways around the hall.

Dollar Academy Vegetable Beds

Dollar Academy is strong supporter of local initiatives and is very active in sustainability and environmental initiatives. Over the past school year Dollar Academy has been introducing its primary age pupils to gardening and vegetable growing. They have made new vegetable beds and seating areas. New fruit trees have been planted and the areas around the beds have been seeded with clover to encourage pollinators.



The children have grown a wide range of vegetables from seed, including carrots, corn, peas, parsnips, and kale. They have also grown a range of annuals from seed in the school polytunnel and have used these in hanging baskets decorating the garden.



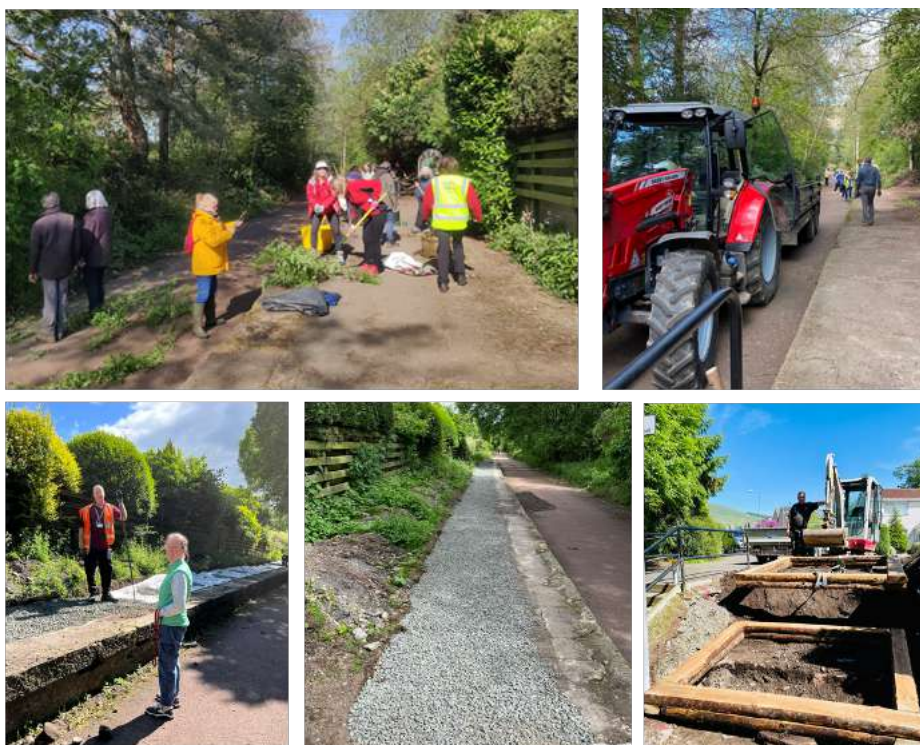
The children are planning to enter some of the produce they grow in the annual Dollar Horticultural and Craft Show in September.

New Project – Train Platform

In April this year we started a new project to refurbish the old station platform in Dollar. The Devon Valley Railway closed to passengers in 1964 and is now a popular traffic free walking and cycling path which runs from Dollar to Alloa. The station platform had become neglected and overgrown.



We have cut back and cleared the undergrowth, laid gravel along the platform and built two new raised beds from railway sleepers.

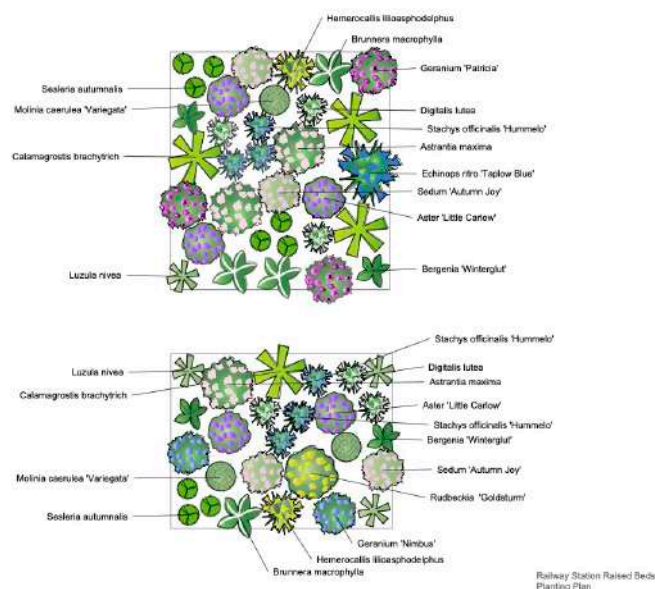


We have received considerable help with this project from local people and businesses. This has included the use of a farmer's tractor and trailer to remove rubbish, diggers to remove old tree stumps, tradesmen to build the raised beds, free gravel from Tillicoultry Quarries and a local garden designer to create planting plans for the new raised beds. We have also

received help from the Community Payback team. A team of volunteers have done a huge amount of work to clear and tidy the area.

Plants will be added to the beds in July once the soil in the new beds has had a chance to settle. The area along the side of the platform will be planted with wild flower seed next spring.

Planting plan



Benches will also be added along the platform to allow walkers and cyclists to enjoy a peaceful break as they traverse the path.

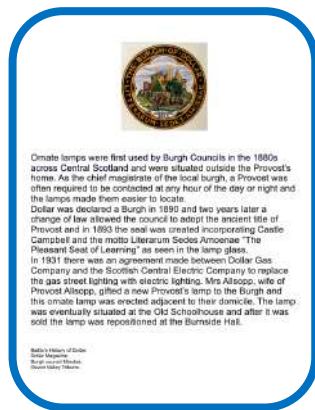
We have also been working with Dollar Museum to create information boards for the platform. These, and a replica of the original Dollar station sign, will be added once the project is complete.



New Project - Provost Lamp

Dollar's Provost Lamp sits outside the Burnside Hall. However, currently you would hardly notice it was there and most locals and visitors alike would certainly not know the significance of the ornate lamp. Working with Dollar Museum we are aiming to rectify this by producing an information board for the lamp. We hope to have the board installed in July.

This is another renovation project which seeks to restore some of the rich historical heritage of the area.



Environment

Our main environmental focus has been helping the Dollar Community Development Trust (DCDT) with the Dollar Nature Festival. The DCDT is a community owned trust that aims to enable and support beneficial projects across the Dollar community. The festival offered a range of workshops and events, from pond dipping to nature walks and moth identification. The aim was to highlight our local environment in Dollar and ways we can work with nature. Over 150 people attended the different events including a large number of children, who were inspired by the beauty and wildlife of the local area.

Pond dipping

20 people spent a morning at a volunteer's pond learning about pond life with "Froglife", a national wildlife charity dedicated to amphibians and reptiles.



Growing with Nature

This is an ongoing initiative. Volunteers learnt all about Heugelkulture and encouraging nature whilst also growing food (see appendix for information on Heugelkulture). A Heugelkulture bed was built using recycled and donated materials. This was subsequently planted with strawberries, herbs, chard, beetroot, and sweetcorn. A dead hedge was created to provide habitat for invertebrates, and a wildflower area has also been created. Volunteers maintain the area and conduct regular invertebrate counts. We have already spotted solitary bees and numerous butterfly species. We are also looking forward to some wonderful fresh produce!



Tree Planting Initiative

Over the last 4 years the Dollar community has planted over 9,000 trees at various sites around Dollar. In November 2023 and March 2024, a further 2,000 trees of native species were planted including Rowan, Green Beech, Hazel, Elder, Goat Willow, Alder, Dogwood, Hawthorn, and Blackthorn. The aim is to increase biodiversity and improve open spaces within the town.



The new trees are cared for by local volunteers who water them during dry spells and remove invasive weeds around them until they get established.

Pollinator bed – Strachan Crescent



Our pollinator bed, originally planted in 2019, has erupted into colour this year. This area was previously laid to lawn. Now poppies, cornflowers, buttercups, vetch and daisies fill the space. A recent FIT Count survey of invertebrates in the area recorded over a hundred bees and insects on the flowers over a 10 minute period.

Litter

Regular litter picks have been done by volunteers over the last year. The town is very fortunate to have a volunteer that conducts litter picks around the town on a weekly basis.



This has been supplemented by a town wide litter pick in February, regular rubbish clearance along the Burn and monthly picks that focus on the verges entering the town. We realise that education is also key to reducing litter and so in May volunteers talked to local Scout Groups about litter and took them on a litter pick around town.

Maintaining the Dollar Burnside

The Burnside in Dollar is a focal point for both tourists and locals alike and is used year-round. In Spring, the cherry blossoms attract a large number of visitors. In Summer, it is the perfect spot for a picnic and a paddle in the burn. As Winter approaches, lights festoon the trees and straddle the burn providing a touch of magic.



The area is managed by a dedicated group of local volunteers. They mow the grass area on a weekly/fortnightly basis throughout the spring and summer. They keep the burn clear of litter, and in Autumn they prune the cherry trees and remove basal shoots. In addition, they oil the 5 benches that sit alongside the Burn.



Other Environmental and Sustainability Projects in Dollar

Repair Café

On the third Saturday of every month, The DCDT run a Repair Café at The Hive (Dollar's Community Centre) where for a nominal donation local people can bring items to be repaired. There are volunteers that can help fix everything from small electricals to musical instruments, laptops, furniture, and clothes. It is a wonderful way to help stop items that can be repaired ending up in land fill.

Recycling at the Hive Community Centre

Dollar has also signed up to TerraCycle and the community is now able to recycle difficult items such as blister packs, contact lenses, electronic toothbrush heads and toothpaste tubes at The Hive.

Community

Dollar is a vibrant and thriving community, and events are run year-round to bring locals together and enhance our local community.

Dollar Horticultural and Craft Show

In September 2023 we once again put on the Dollar Horticultural and Craft Show. This is a celebration of home grown produce, baking, preserves and crafts. In the months prior to the



show, we worked hard to engage with groups that had not previously entered. We publicised it to local schools, craft groups and allotment associations through our website, Facebook page and posters in local shops. We were particularly pleased to see entries from Dollar Academy students, the Brownies, and the local nursery school. To further

increase participation we also changed several categories to widen their appeal and subsequently we had a record number of entries in our Dahlia and other flower categories. This year, after the success of our Great Dollar Bake Off category (we had over 25 entrants following a banana bread recipe) we have added a Great Dollar Crafting Bee category. Here entrants are asked to follow a simple sewing pattern to create an apron.

Tulip Bulb Sale

At the beginning of October we held our annual Tulip Sale. For the first time this year we bundled the bulbs into colour mixes, offering purple, pink, and orange mixes. This proved very popular. We made a profit of over £600 after covering the costs of the over 800 bulbs that we planted into the flower tubs this year.

Remembrance Sunday

The Remembrance Service in November 2023 was the first time the service had been held in the Memorial Garden since its renewal. It proved a fitting environment for such an occasion reflecting the pride and respect of the community. As part of our redevelopment of the area we added two new benches near the War Memorial. These proved invaluable to the older members of the community that joined the Remembrance Day Service.

Winter Festival

The Memorial Garden is also central to the Dollar Winter Festival as it is the location of the Dollar Community Christmas Tree. At the beginning of December, Father Christmas leads a procession through the town to turn on the Christmas Tree lights. This is a wonderful community event for the whole family and culminates with carol singing in the garden.



Wreath Making

In December we held a wreath making workshop. This proved very popular with more than 20 people spending a lovely afternoon creating hand tied wreaths. We sourced all the foliage, pinecones, and dried flowers from our local gardens. One of our experienced volunteers gave a tutorial on how to make the wreath and was on hand to help throughout the afternoon. Participants were also able to enjoy homemade baking, hot drinks, and mulled wine.



In addition to the fun had by all, the event was profitable raising over £100 and we will be running it again in November 2024.

Join up Dollar



Run in January by The DCDT this event aimed to raise awareness of the activities and volunteering opportunities available in Dollar. Activities as diverse as singing, swimming, squash, WI, crafts, and drama were showcased. The Horticultural Club had a table at the event and our volunteers were able to talk to lots of new people about our work. We were also able to recruit 4 new volunteers who are now helping us maintain and develop Dollar's open spaces.

Plant Sale

Our annual plant sale in May is our main fundraising event of the year. We are fortunate that one of our volunteers is dedicated to growing plants for the sale. This year he donated over 300 plants ranging from Meconopsis China Blue, Candelabra Primula, Lupins, and Hostas to Blackcurrants, Rhubarb and Sunflowers. These were supplemented by plants grown by other Horticultural Club members.



We had a wonderfully warm day for the sale and raised £1,977. A portion of this money will be donated to Strathcarron Hospice, a local charity with personal significance to our volunteers.

Dollar Gala



The Dollar Gala in June is one of the highlights of the summer season, bringing together the Dollar Community. It is opened with a procession along the main street by Dollar Academy Pipe Band and includes a funfair, games, a craft tent, food stalls and lots more.

This year the Horticultural Group had a table in the craft tent to promote the Dollar Horticultural and Craft Show and encourage people to enter their produce. We had examples of certain categories on display, for example a chilli plant, marmalade and an upcycled item. We continue to strive to make the show even more accessible each year and attract a wider range of participants.

Future plans – Dollar Community Garden

Over the past 4 years DCDT have been working towards the development of a Community Garden in Dollar. The initiative is led by a stakeholder group comprising of representatives from local schools, youth groups, Dollar Community Council, Clackmannanshire Council, and the Horticultural Group.



A 6.5 hectares site has been identified and detailed plans have been drawn up. This has included 2 community wide surveys, as well as landscape, and soil surveys. There are plans for a community growing area, wetland area, community orchard, therapeutic gardening opportunities for disabled and elderly members of the community, and wildlife areas to encourage more invertebrates and small mammals. A funding bid has been submitted to the National Lottery and we are awaiting the outcome. This is a long-term project which will mature over the next 5 years.

Volunteer Hours

Below is an estimate of volunteering hours across the last year.

	Litter	Admin	Planting	Maintenance	Tulips	Plant sale	Wreath making	Railway	Show	Burnside group	Total
Hours	248	63	17	251	14	103	18	209	342	143	1,408

Income

This year we have raised the following after costs.

Activity	Amount
Plant sale	£1,917
Bulb Sale	£633
Wreath Making	£108
Just Giving Campaign (as of 1st July 2024)	£829
Total	£3,487

Appendix

Heugelkulture

Heugelkulture is a horticultural technique where a mound constructed from decaying wood debris and other compostable plant materials is planted as a raised bed. It is considered a permaculture practice and the technique helps improve soil fertility, water retention and soil warming thus benefitting the plants grown on it.

Before and After Photos

Health Centre - Before



After



After



High Street - Before



During



After



Strachan Crescent - Before



During



After



Memorial Garden - Before



During



After

