



Pocket Garden Stories 2020



In 2020 we adapted the Pocket Garden competition to become 'Pop-up Pocket Garden at Home' as a lockdown project for schools, children and families. Some young gardeners presented their gardens on BBC2's Beechgrove Garden.

Themes for 2020 were Keep Scotland Beautiful's 20th Birthday and the Year of Coasts and Waters.

A Pocket Garden is a miniature garden that uses edible plants, plants that attract wildlife, and that reuses something which would otherwise have been thrown away.

Each year, we invite young people from schools across Scotland to send in their designs for a colourful and exciting environmentally friendly, pocket-sized garden. Pupils who send in the winning designs are then invited to build and grow their gardens to display.

Aboyne Primary School



This Pop Up Garden is a **Coast and Water Garden**. Water is part of our working and industrial heritage from the fishing fleet to the canal transport network, aquaducts, bridges, and the power generated by water mills and modern hydro-electric systems. Water links the natural world to the heart of our cities.

This Pop Up Garden has many interesting layers of plants and a bird feeder to attract wildlife. The colourful painted stones and beads make a lovely border, and the garden is a welcoming home to insects, bees and birds. This garden was a family project by Calum (8) and Helena (10) from Aboyne Primary School along with their mum Gosia.



Mum Gosia says: "We believe we created little garden, which going to keep us happy through the summer and allowing as to have healthy addition to our every meal. Our garden, although not necessarily pop up, will bring a smile on our faces every time we look at it, knowing that we worked as a team to get this project ready (not without disagreement of course).

It helped us to keep our wellbeing and mental health right during lock down and brought us closer together with endless walks together to collect sticks, stones and rocks, designing and painting the stones and seashells, while being creative and silly".

The coast is represented by water in a bowl and by stones and seashells painted to symbolise unity, freedom and happiness. Calum and Helena added a third dimension to their project by including an interestingly shaped stick found by Calum in nearby woods which allowed them to suspend pots with Lobelia and a bird feeder.



Rocks painted with scenery and patterns



Planter made of sticks



Bees love this garden!

The colours of flowers of lavender and chives (also sage blooming soon) refers to Scottish highlands covered with purple heather, and thistle flower of Scotland. This little garden was designed to attract insects, bees and birds. Doors are a symbol that all creatures are welcome to this little haven.



Calum and Helena grew a lot of their plants from seed and received some as gifts from friends. Here is a list of all the plants in this Pop Up Garden.

Herbs:

- Thyme
- Rosemary
- Sage
- Oregano
- French tarragon
- Dill
- Parsley
- Coriander

Other plants

- Poppy
- Pansies
- Sweet pea
- Lobelia
- Lavender

Carrick Knowe Primary School



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This Pop Up Garden reuses an old wheelbarrow as a big planter box. It contains a mini loch surrounded by stones gathered from nearby Loch Voil and lots of edible plants.



Sammy is in P4 at Carrick Knowe Primary School in Edinburgh. He designed and grew this garden. He started with a mind map of all his ideas.

Mum Ele says: "We drilled holes in an old wheelbarrow and filled it with compost from our garden compost bin. Sammy added rotted wood around the edges for the creepy crawlers to live in. He created a mini loch and placed stones that we gathered from Loch Voil around it along with a fossil that we found on Barns Ness beach in East Lothian.

Sammy added a sandy beach and some turtles. He also painted a ladybird with 20 spots to recognise the twentieth anniversary. He added two tin can bunnies as they're his favourite animal and planted wildflowers in them.

To eat he planted peas, strawberries, rocket and lettuce.



Painted turtle rock

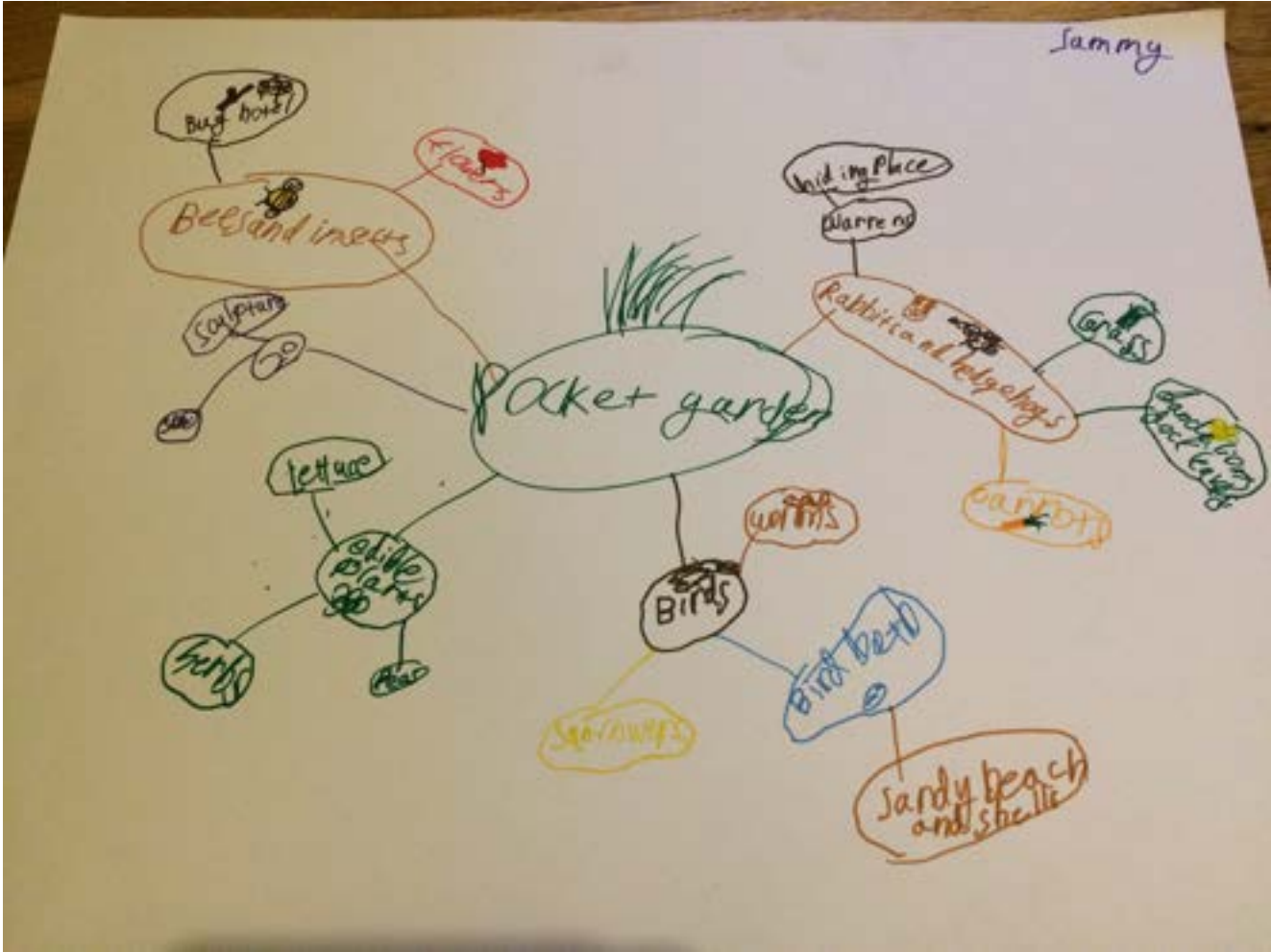


Twenty spot ladybird rock



Bunny planters

He also added some poppy seeds, an aguilera and some little yellow flowers he found in the garden. The rocket grew very big, we ate some and let the rest flower, the bees like it. The poppy was beautiful but only lasted a day as wind blew the petals off. It was a nice lockdown project".



Sammy's design used an old wheelbarrow



Tying up the canes



Hiding spots for insects

Corsehill Primary School



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This Pop Up Garden is a luxury hotel for wildlife with a roof garden on top of a giant bug hotel full of cosy places for insects to live. There's also a pond beside the bug hotel that is filled by a funnel for gathering rainwater.



Garden creator Jamieson says: "This is my Pop Up Garden "Aqua Hotel". It is a 5 water drop rated hotel for minibeasts, amphibians, and small mammals.

There are lots of floors and nooks and crannies to hide and sleep in if you are small.

The roof garden is made up of plants from my garden, including nettle and cow parsley and wild garlic. The nettles are sore but the flowers are beautiful and the bees love them.

Everything it was built with has been taken from our garden like old pallets my dad had, an old fat ball tub for the pool, a bit of hose for the flume, and my mums old under bed container.



The Aqua Hotel



Water collecting device



Bug hotel detail

There is a funnel to collect water for the pool which is easy for creatures to get in and out of.

The floors are stuffed with old plates and bowls for amphibians to hide under, hay, bricks, pinecones, old drainpipes, twigs and sticks and bamboo. The squirrels have been digging up the roof garden!"



Plants in! Now the bug hotel...



Taking shape

Crathes Primary School



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This Pop Up Garden has a built-in watering system made from reused plastic bottles and pieces of guttering. There's a row of sweet peas, lettuce and nasturtiums in reused welly boots and lots of space for flowers to attract pollinators in the raised bed. This garden was built by Ben (6) from Crathes Primary School in Aberdeenshire.



Building the watering system



Measuring wood for the
planting box



Watering system in action

Ben used some off cuts of woods and some leftover guttering and pipes that he found in the shed. He had some help measuring and cutting the wood to the right sizes.

His neighbour had been using some local topsoil in his garden and he had some leftover, so Ben brought it all to his garden site in a wheelbarrow. Ben told us that this was one of his favourite parts of building the garden.



Cutting turf away from the garden site



Emptying the wheelbarrow

Ben wanted to be able to collect rainwater for his garden, so he used some milk bottles and a juice bottle that were headed for the recycling. When the garden needs to be watered, Ben just lets the water out of the bottles, and it goes down the pipes and waters the garden through holes in the guttering!

Ben used some old wellies that have holes in to grow some of his plants. He added some extra holes for drainage, so the plants aren't flooded. He also gathered plants from the rest of the garden where they could be split from bigger plants or moved around.

Ben asked his granny and a neighbour if they had any leftover seeds so he could grow some. He grew sweet peas, lettuce and nasturtiums in his wellies as that's what they had left over. He got his dad to help him assemble the pipes and used some willow branches to hold them up off a willow bush in the garden.

This willow is now growing as well. Ben enjoyed making his garden and watching it grow. He likes to water it and watches for the water collecting after it has rained.





Drilling drainage holes in the
wellies



Cutting wood with a little help
from dad



Building the planter box

Dunbeg Primary School



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This Pop Up Garden started as an old box found while cleaning the attic and ended up turning into a beautiful mountain and ocean scene with plenty of drainage to protect plant roots, and lots of shells for decoration. This garden was built by Kuba (6) from Dunbeg Primary School.



Smooth rocks



Making sure the box is the right
size!



Bug hotel

Kuba's mum Kasia says: "This Pop Up Garden started as an old box we have found while cleaning the attic. Dad helped to cut it in half and joined to make a smaller planting box for the garden.

Kuba's ideas were extraordinary: mountains, sea, rivers, cable cars (Nevis Range) and a sun which would rise above the mountains and set down in the sea. Some of these ideas involved too much engineering and it was a hard job to convince my 6 year old that plants were more important than an underground river. Eventually Kuba agreed that some of his ideas will need to wait for another project!"



From old sheet of oriented strand board, Dad cut mountains and Kuba painted them green. He made the green colour from old fence paints mixed together.

The part Kuba says he enjoyed most was making a bug hotel from a pot and some pinecones. It's looking really good and we're sure it will have plenty of visitors!

Kasia says: "The West Coast is quite wet so we had to ensure seeds and later plants would not rot in wet soil.

Our neighbour was clearing some bushes, so we got branches to use as first layer to make room for water to escape, then piled soil on the top."

The family made lots of trips to beach to collect interesting shells and stones to decorate the beach and sea part of his garden which was made from old pant trays. (Mum says she carried lots of sand!)

Kuba collected yogurt pots, painted them red and planted wild strawberries in them. He chose these seeds to plant: carrots, beetroot, lettuce, radishes., basil, Chive, paisley and dill.

Dyce Academy

20
YEARS

This Pop Up Garden is a **20th Birthday Garden**. In 2020 we celebrated 20 years of working under the name Keep Scotland Beautiful to help people change the way they think about the environment and encourage them to take action to improve and protect it.

This Pop Up Garden was designed by pupils from the Eco-Committee at Dyce Academy and then was built by teacher Mrs Reed. It incorporates both of our Pop Up Garden themes this year: 2020 Year of Coasts and Waters and Keep Scotland Beautiful's 20th Birthday.

Dyce Academy shares a significant birthday with Keep Scotland Beautiful - in 2020 Dyce Academy is 40 years old. The garden's design reflects the link between Dyce Academy, the River Don and the work the Eco Group have done to create biodiversity now and for the future.



Dyce Academy's Eco-Committee built a Pop Up Garden as a group. Ordinarily this would be a fun project to do together while at school but because of restrictions to control Coronavirus, pupils had to each grow their own small part of the garden at home for their teacher to collect and combine into a garden at the school.

Teacher Mrs Reed shared photographs of materials with pupils that she had that could be used in their design. Using the Design Brief principles, the 2020 Themes, the school's location and its 40th celebrations, and the plans that the Eco Group had been working on with the local community to improve the grounds for biodiversity, they pulled together a rough Design Brief.

The group decided to create a garden which shows the location of the school in relation to the River Don and the green area at the back of the school which links to the housing schemes which are the catchment area of the pupils.



[The Dyce Gardeners Club - Dyce in - Bloom](#) have worked to create greater biodiversity along the riverside and the green area by planting hedgerows, trees and having wild grass/flower areas. The Eco Group planted a hedgerow in the school grounds to link these two areas and help create a wildlife corridor.

The idea is that the planting can then be used at the school and distributed in the local area.

During lockdown teachers from the school who support the pupils in the Eco Group took advantage of the CPD courses offered by Keep Scotland Beautiful. As well as training for teachers, they participated in courses for [One Planet Picnic](#) and Pop Up Pocket Garden. These complimented each other, were initiatives where the Eco Group could still work together remotely still involve the whole school and community.

Using Google Classrooms and Google Meets to communicate, the group was able to share thoughts, ideas and plans and record progress.

Pupils submitted sketches and plans. There were some fantastic ideas which they were encouraged to do at home. Most ideas tended to reflect early Spring and the pupils needed to imagine what would be around at the end of June which would have been easier had everyone been in school.

The teachers who support the Eco Group pupils communicated regularly by using posts on Google Classroom, organising Google Meets and using a Google Quiz to collate final opinions.



KSB logo made from plant pots



Crocodile!



Heron the chicken planter

All seeds were free from M&S initiative, collected from Mrs Reed's garden or from bird food. Old broken containers, novelty planters, organic compost from the garden, seedlings, and saplings were again found in Mrs Reed's garden and reused. All twigs and stones, a cement slab, and logs were also from Mrs Reed's garden. Left over outdoor paint was used for the heron. (Chicken)

Containers for starting of seeds were all from recycled containers and pupils were encouraged to mirror the same planting and materials at home including some experiments.

The garden was arranged in tiers to reflect the geography of the landscape and the garden was almost a map in the way it was presented. All of the indigenous sapling and hedgerow plant planting, snakes from the river (crocodile) and the community veg and fruit garden all the way up to the green at the back of the school.

The pupils were also keen to have a mini beast shelter of twigs, a log and old snail shells. This was added to the river hedgerow. Many of the pupils wanted some form of reflection from the river so used wild strawberries in the hedgerows and crop strawberries in the community garden.

We don't have any local crocodiles! but it was a fun, novel way to communicate the river and the blue forget-me-nots the water. An old chicken planter was painted to communicate the local heronry hidden in the reeds and trees.



The school is a stark brutalist style building and the pupils were keen to use an almost bland piece of broken cement slab to show this.

The presentation of the garden was deliberately set up next to the corner of Mrs Reed's house to reflect the housing schemes behind the school.

This location is about $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ a mile from the school and river (this was also why the seedlings and saplings found in her garden were suitable to use).

It was decided to use a repeat not just of the hedgerow but by using 3 watering cans with nasturtiums to show the flow of water from the top of the hill all the way down into the river.

The grass which reflects the school playpark was cut into the figure 40 to reflect the school's birthday. The Keep Scotland Beautiful logo was the inspiration for the final piece of planting using appropriate coloured, recycled planters and more materials and plants found at the riverside.

The garden is now settling in and was at its peak of fruiting and flowering about 2 weeks after the submission date. When pupils return to school the hope is that they will be able to transfer all planting to the school grounds.



Gargunnock Primary School

20
YEARS

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This Pop Up Pocket Garden was created by Rachael from Gargunnock Primary School. Rachael created a basket full of plants for people and for wildlife, along with a miniature pond. She has also built a bug hotel for minibeasts to call home, made from pinecones, sticks and pieces of slate.



Pond in a bowl



Bug hotel with sticks and slate



Plants for everyone

Grove Academy

20
YEARS

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This Pop Up Pocket Garden was built by Ruth from Grove Academy. She built it using a wooden pallet that she found while out on a beach clean. Ruth has built three layers into the pallet and filled them with plants for wildlife and for people including nasturtiums, herbs and wild strawberries.



Lochardil Early Learning Centre

20
YEARS

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This Pop Up Garden was built by the children who attend Lochardil Early Learning Centre and their families. Due to restrictions to control Coronavirus, both Lochardil Primary School and the Early Learning Centre started online learning.

Derek Edwards, one of the Early Years Practitioners at Lochardil ELC set his class the challenge of participating in the Pop Up Garden Challenge. Children created a garden design at home and took photographs to share with us. Mr Edwards says "The children have made us all so proud with the work they have done. Pride is one of our core values at Lochardil along with learning for sustainability so this task is a home run." Here are the photos of their garden creations.





Pinkie St Peter's Primary School



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This Pop Up Garden was designed and built by Annabel from Pinkie St Peter Primary School. She tells us the story of her garden in her own words:

"I decided to make a Pop Up Pocket Garden, because my granny showed me a competition that Keep Scotland Beautiful are running. They want children (aged 3-18) to design and create small living gardens, with food to eat for humans and wildlife. It should provide places for insects to live. It must be finished by 30 June. I started on 10 April, and this project describes the first month.

I designed my garden to include all the things I love in a garden: streams and water, vegetables I wanted to eat, plants I thought wildlife would like, trees to climb, and a house for tiny people (or bugs!)."



Stage 1 - Digging the Plot: "First I had to dig out a 1 metre by 1.20 metre box to make my garden. I asked my dad for help with that and we got that done as quick as we could.

We had to take the grass off and take out all the roots that we could. It took about half an hour, but we ended up with a nice pit. We sieved the soil to remove stones and make it finer. Then I put the soil back in.

Next I had to decide what my Pop Up Pocket Garden was going to look like and have in it.

I decided to have a tree in the back, but it had to be miniature so I went for a box hedge plant, gave it a trim and it's my tree. I put it in the top right corner. Every day I have to give it a good water."



Stage 2 - Planting Seeds: "After I had done the first part I had to plan the veg garden. In the rules it said there had to be something for you to eat and for animals.

Four days later I planted vegetable seeds. I planted radishes and carrots (2 rows) and parsley (an herb). I chose them because radishes grow quickly, and I love carrots. I am also going to plant runner beans but am starting them off in a pot inside.

Next I planted grass seeds. I had to prepare the patch they were going in by making sure the soil was very smooth, removing final stones and roots. A few days later, I planted a holly hedge around three sides of the veg patch. I found the holly seedlings all around my garden and moved them carefully."



Stage 3 - Planting the Willow Hedge: "I planted willow cuttings. I got them from the river bank. Me and my mum picked around 20 and took them home to plant. Willow is meant to grow very easily from sticks.

We planted them the next day behind where the pond will be. They have been looking sulky ever since, we hope they perk up. I've also planted out three runner bean plants next to the old spade they will grow up.

We have been watering everything regularly and making sure they're thriving. After a few days the willow just looks dead but I hope it will improve if I keep looking after it."



Stage 4 - Pond and Stream: "I created my pond out of an old bucket 26cm diameter. I dug a deep hole and firmed the soil around the bucket. Later, I worked with my dad to attach a pipe to the pond, this is my stream coming from the welly boot!

I planted three small clumps of chives around the pond, they look like reeds but will be good for eating and their flowers will be good for bees.

I will gather plants from around my garden to put round the pond, stream and welly boot. Along the sides of the plot there are either hedges or I am working with my dad to make fences out of bamboo and string."

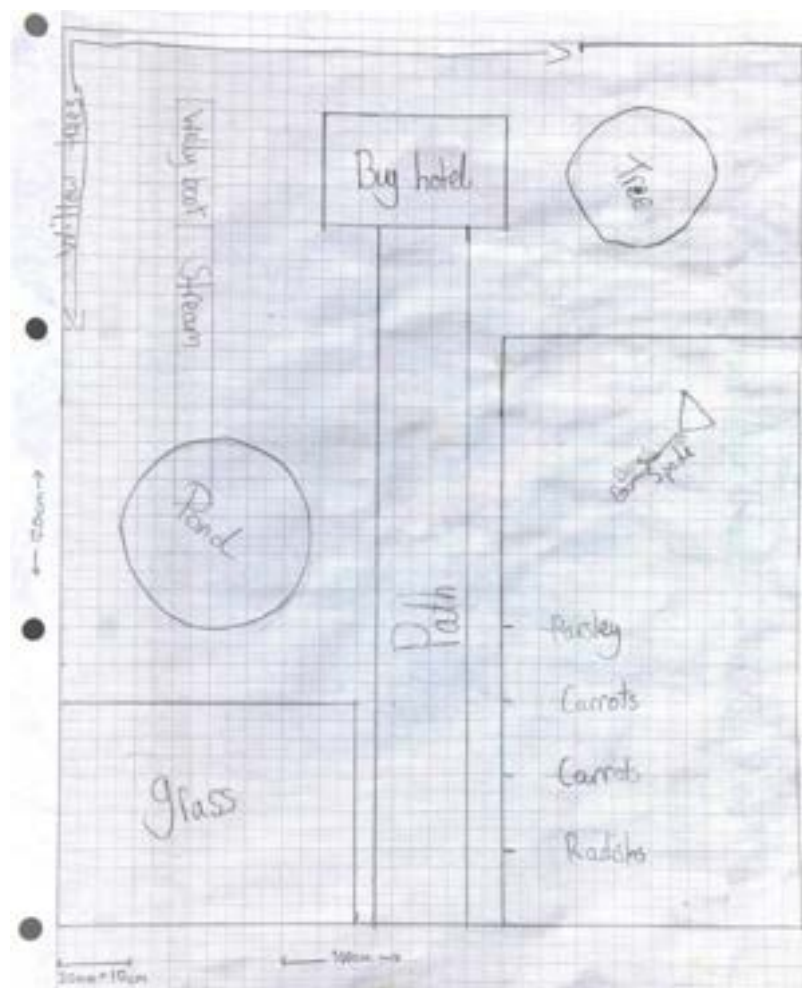


Stage 5 - Finishing Touches: "I have collected sea glass and pottery from a local beach and have used this to make a path to lead from the front, past the pond and veg patch and to the tree at the back. I have added a bug hotel at the back. It's made from an old bird box with bamboo rods for the bugs to crawl into.

Behind the tree I've made a little compost pile using bamboo and netting. There's also a stone for slugs. I have labelled the veg garden nicely and a sign for the garden. It's called Annabel's Allotment."

Conclusion - 6 Weeks Later: After 6 weeks, so many plants have grown! My radishes all got big and we picked them, the grass grew really well and I've had to cut it lots. The runner beans have little flowers, as does a marigold.

The carrots and parsley are growing well. The willow plants didn't survive, but the little holly trees are growing and I've trimmed my box tree. Lots of insects live on the plot.



Under the roof of the insect house, I found a big snail, slugs and spiders. Bees and butterflies visit the garden, and there are ants and other creatures crawling around in the soil.

Here is a scale drawing of my garden.

Rosneath Primary School

20
YEARS

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Lucy and Bobby from Rosneath Primary School made their Pop Up Pocket Gardens at home because of lockdown. In the video below, they give us a tour of their gardens and explain how they were built.



Grow tiny seedling!



Planters with funny faces



Violet and Bobby making a sign

St Michael's Primary School

20
YEARS

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This Pop Up Pocket Garden was built by pupils at St Michael's Primary School. They are growing herbs and vegetables in their garden decorated with bunting. Have a look at the clever reuse of yoghurt pots to hold small seedlings in the tiny house and the minibeasts made from painted stones.





Tiny plants in yoghurt pots



Snake made of painted rocks



Lots of herbs



Watering tiny plants



Using yoghurt pots to grow Cress





Garden design

Stanmore House School

20
YEARS

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Here are two Pop Up Gardens created at home during lockdown by two pupils from Stanmore House School. These gardens are truly tiny, each being built on a plate. Proof that you don't need a large outdoor space to make a Pop Up Garden!

The first garden in the round plate is by Clare. With colourful flowers for pollinators and a tiny house for small garden visitors! There is a thick layer of moss underneath the flowers making a cosy place for insects to hide.



The second garden in the square, white plate is by Robert. This garden is even smaller and takes the idea of an edible garden one step further as it's laid out like a meal!

Here we have dandelions which are good for both pollinators and for people to eat. There is also plenty of healthy soil and sticks for insects to hide in.





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