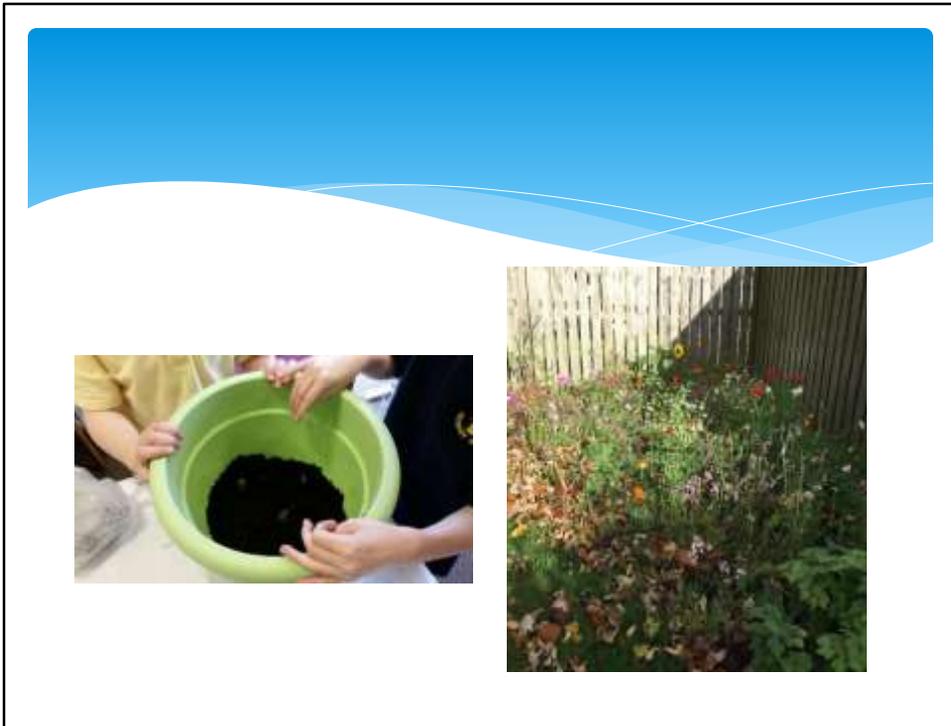


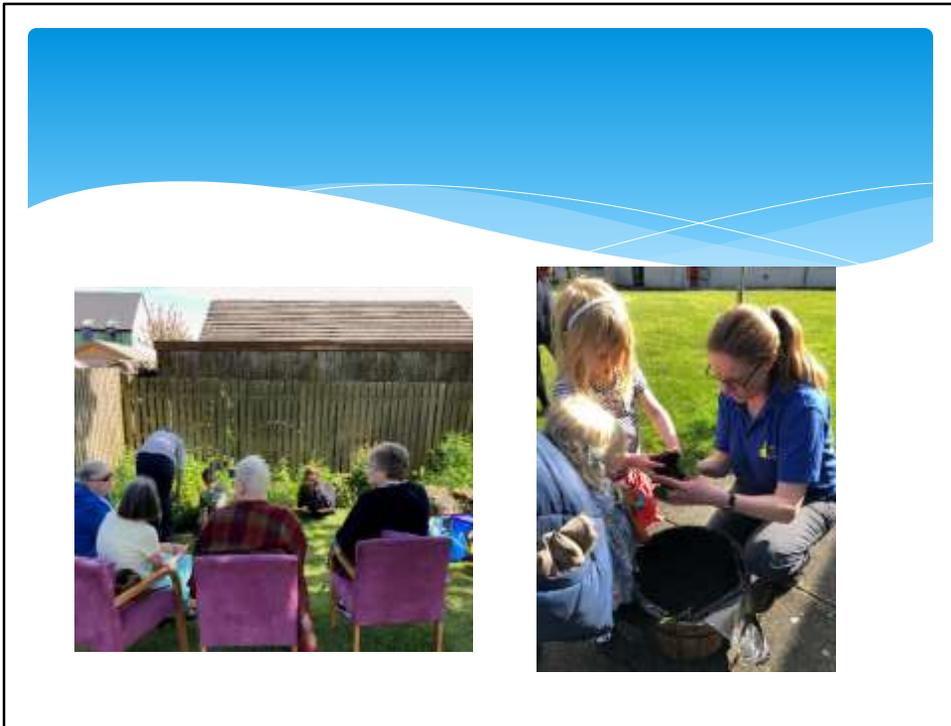
# Lauder in Bloom Juniors & Seniors Club



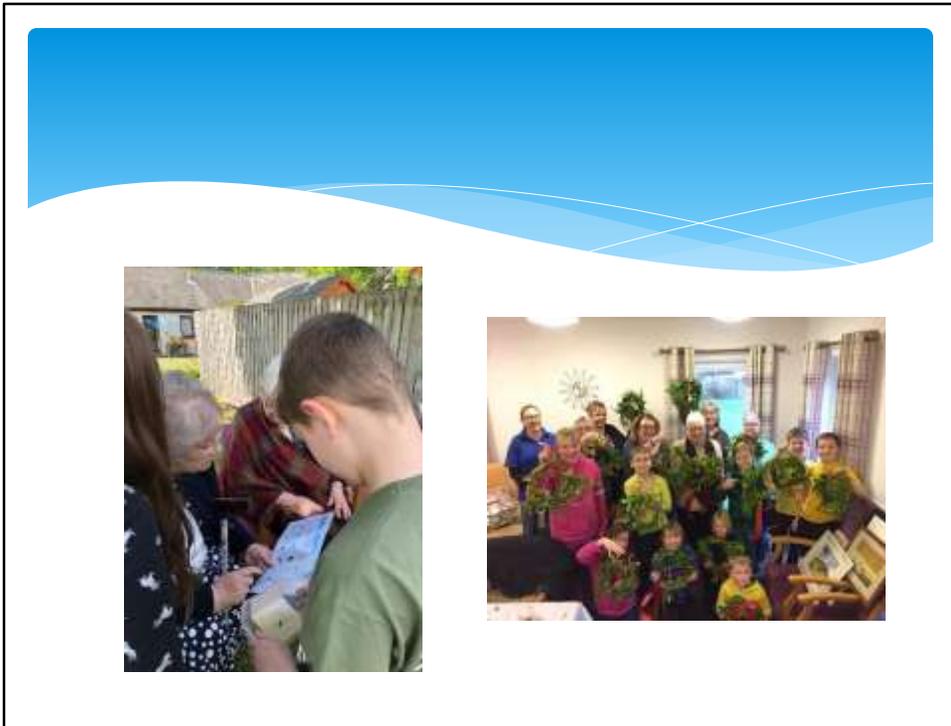


This time last year I was sat in the audience here, listening to the inter-generational presentation, scribbling notes and trying to think how we could do something back home in Lauder.

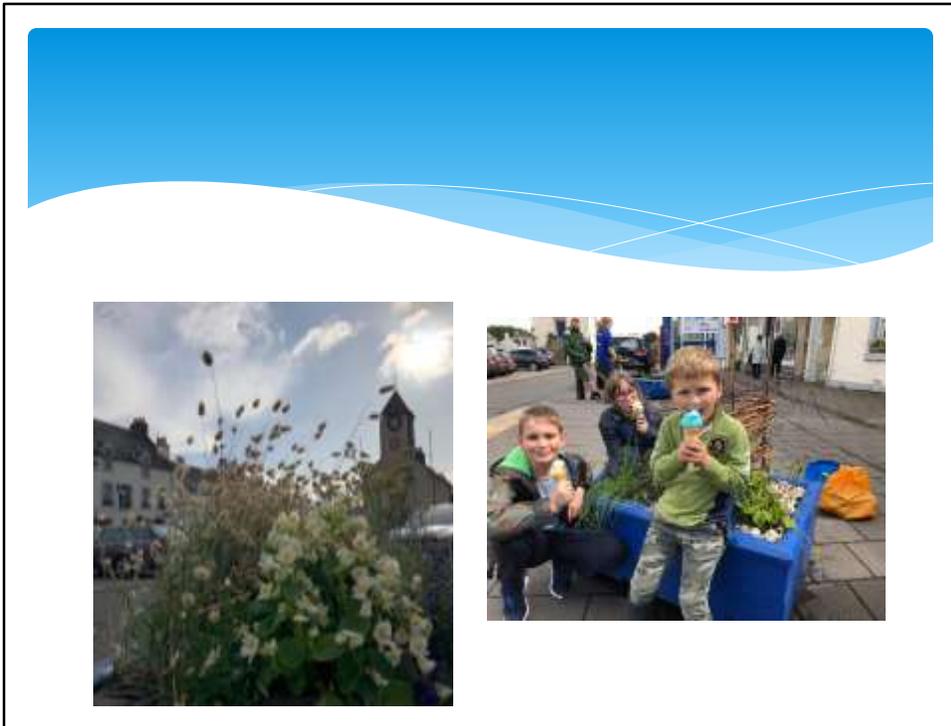
We had previously run sessions at our local sheltered housing complex taking the School Gardening Club along to create pots of bulb lasagne and a wildlife garden. The tenants at the sheltered housing had really enjoyed it and had asked for more.



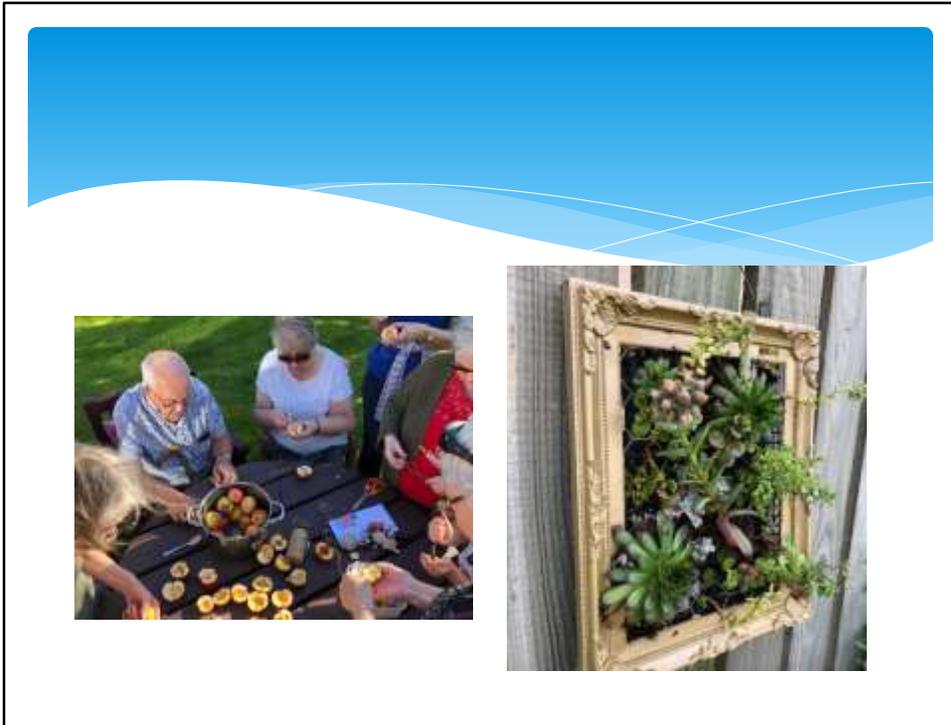
So, last autumn we launched our Juniors & Seniors Club. It's a drop-in hourly session roughly once a month which we hold in the lounge at the sheltered housing complex. This makes it easier for the older residents who live there to attend, provides an accessible location for the wider community and perhaps most importantly the tenants enjoy inviting the community into their communal spaces.



Our Juniors & Seniors is open to all senior citizens and all accompanied children are invited to attend. This means that we span 3 generations with ages ranging from 3 to 80. The sessions include gardening, crafting and planting projects for our community. Each session is followed by the essential cuppa, home-baking and a chat.



The community planting with the Club has included adding planters to bus stops where there had previously been none as well as creating themed planters in the centre of town. This year our theme was the seaside as members of the Club all had fond memories of trips there. They sowed ornamental grasses to represent the waves and they planted out chocolate peppermint, alpine strawberries and lemon balm to represent flavours of ice cream as well as a curry plant for the curry sauce with chips!



Some of our other sessions have included: charity-shop teacup bird feeders; Christmas wreaths with hoops made from our local willow; living pictures; a bug hotel; a potting-table made from a fly-tipped pallet; wind-fallen apple bird feeders; and a rock garden. We work with the housing co-ordinator to find out what on-site projects they would like us to do and we're very grateful that they provide us with access to their warm lounge. All of our activities are low budget so that the nominal fee we charge shouldn't be an obstacle.



We'd initially thought we'd run our Juniors & Seniors for a year but we've realised that both young and old really do benefit from it with the younger generation enjoying physically helping the older members who in turn enjoy passing on skills and knowledge to the youngsters. So we've decided to keep it running. We have been very pleasantly surprised by how much our Club members enjoy getting together for the sessions and we'd definitely encourage other groups to have a go at something similar.

People often talk about social isolation but until I'd actually sat down and chatted to some of our locals I hadn't appreciated just how devastatingly lonely many people in our communities really are so it doesn't really matter what activities you choose to run because anything which involves bringing people together to create something allows conversation to flow and for that brief window perhaps some of them feel a little less alone.

Thanks for listening.