Methilhill Community Children's Initiative, Fife

This project was supported by the CSGN Community Projects Fund 2013-14. The Fund is focused on projects undertaken for the benefit of, and/or involving children and young people under 16 years of age and is intended to support small-scale, community led projects that deliver green network improvements on the ground: increase community use of the green network and/or increase community involvement in the maintenance and enhancement of the green network locally.

Methilhill Community Children's Initiative, Fife, was awarded £1,500 to transform a piece of waste ground into an outdoor learning garden for children and young people. A community survey in 2012 identified the need for clubs and activities and once created the garden will provide a location for schemes to encourage appreciation of nature and promote physical activity and well-being.

“The best advice would be to do it as I feel we have created a valuable community resource and a source of ecological education for our local children and young people” says Shirley, the manager of the project, but plan thoroughly and make sure the community is invested in the project which means plenty of volunteers to complete the work. Allow extra time and extra money as nothing seems to run to either your timescale or budget!”

The challenges experienced by the group were mainly related to delay in completing legalities to allow the physical development of the space. The group report tells us that the delay was useful in some ways in that it allowed more time for planning, however, it also meant that once the development began it was spring so the weeds grew fast!

Local children and young people have been involved in choosing and purchasing plants, laying the bark pathways and in the wall restoration. The project has assisted Methilhill Community Children's Initiative in developing a green space which the local community can access.

The learning space will offer opportunity to study nature, be active outside and learn socially as a community. The stone wall restoration is on-going and provides a source of knowledge and skills development for young people.