

GOOD FOOD STORY

Name: Phoebe Marshall

Project: Link Park Community Garden

Location: Auchencairn

Describe your project

It's called link park cause it links the two halves of the village with the bridge and also, it's about a place where people can come together. The whole garden is not about food it's about community, I always say it's about people not plants.

The food growing area, which is under the principles of forest garden, was planted with local residents. Lusi Alderslowe worked with Naomi and a few others and helped us plant it. They were very careful about different plants having different purposes, and then you've also got your three layers, like your mint and your vegetables at the bottom, then you've got your fruit bushes and then your apples trees. And that's the principle. Lusi has used it to teach permaculture courses.

And this bit, the apple trees, we got a grant from Fife Diet and they came and did a workshop with the school children. They learnt about the trees and they came down from the school with their flutes and things and they wassailed the trees and planted them.

The best bit about the food garden is the soft fruit, it's a big hit. One, it looks after itself and two, everybody can just come down and help themselves, pick some fruit. It encourages people to eat healthy.



What does sustainability mean to you?

It means keeping your nettles! They actually have one of the highest nutritional values and are great for bees and butterflies. It's about changing attitudes, people are starting to recognise looser and wilder is better.

You can get different ideas about sustainability too. I wanted wooden furniture in the park and others wanted plastic cause it's recycled and better than chopping down trees. So you have to make sure everyone is heard and it opens the whole debate about what is actually more sustainable.



What are your plans for the future?

Make it a little bit more so it looks after itself, so it lends itself more to wildlife and wildflowers. And also try and find some more people who want to come and get involved.

We want to make a little cupboard that can be on the path for produce with a help yourself thing. It could be used by the allotments as well and anyone else who has surplus produce.

Also I've done this thing called Green Gym training, so people can be referred by their doctors to come and help out in the garden for their physical and mental health benefits.

What challenges do you face?

We don't have enough volunteers. For the first years we had regular funding and could just pay someone to cut the grass and the hedges and basic stuff. The volunteers we have, we just do what we can, but yeah, more manpower would be good.



What good food changes need to happen in D&G?

More people eating more local stuff. And if enough people do it then the price can become more affordable. The more we support it, the more producers can scale things up and the more it can work.

Also if you teach people a bit about growing vegetables and growing fruit and just feeling it in the heart that you love all that sort of thing. You can hear it all on the news and in theory but you've got to feel it to make it affect your life.

