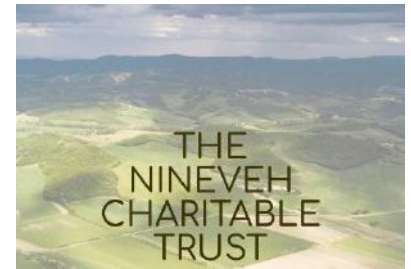




**Building
Self-Belief**

Building Self-Belief CIO Final Report





A Greener Future for Stanley - Environmental Youth Ambassadors Project'

The 'Stanley Environmental Youth Ambassadors' Project', worked across a six-month period that work towards the planning and delivery of 'green' based schemes, across the Stanley area, particularly focusing upon youth engagement.

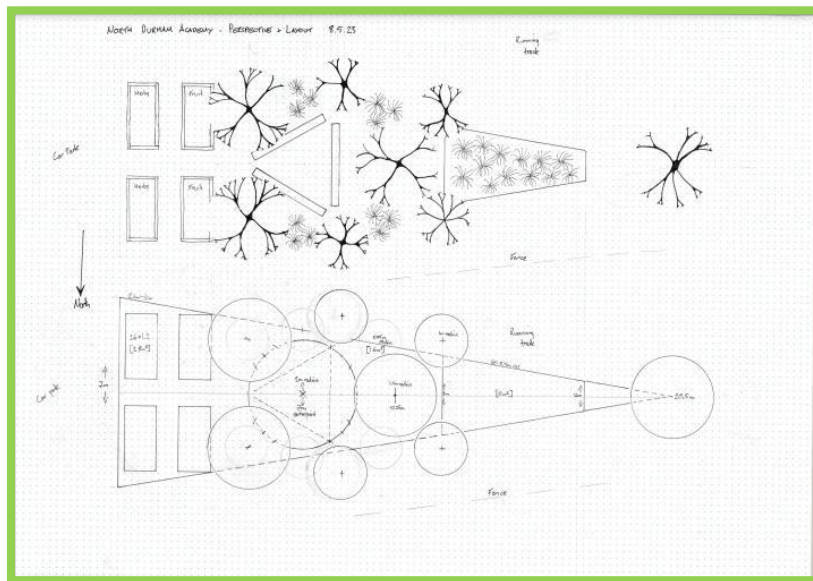
The young people themselves were the driving force behind the project and will engage with wider community and business groups to facilitate and lead environmental change. The young people chose to create a community garden for the benefit of the young people and the wider Stanley Community.

This was a challenging undertaking but they worked with numerous local organisations as well as putting in a huge amount of time themselves to create an amazing community space.

We trained 10 'youth Ambassadors' aged 13-15, who were young people who faced personal challenges around their mental health, poverty, recent bereavement, challenging domestic circumstances, disability or social isolation, one of them also had refugee status. None of the group had ever taken part in any youth social action activities before. They all lived in the Stanley area of County Durham, an area within the bottom 20% of socio-economic deprivation according to the National Index of Multiple Deprivation.

The Youth Ambassadors initially met on a bi-weekly basis but this increased to a weekly basis as their engagement with the project intensified.

Building Self-Belief CIO staff and local volunteers supported the young people in creating a beautiful Community Wellbeing Garden. The children's aim was to create a wellbeing space that is both accessible and welcoming to their peers and the wider Stanley community, as well as a space that will help to increase biodiversity in the local area. It inspired the young people to engage more with their environment, and wider community partners, as well as create a space they can be proud of.

[illegible]



Breaking soil



The first Apple Trees

'I enjoyed digging and planting. I learned how important water was when it came to planting trees.'





Upcycling local tyres

'I really enjoyed upcycling the tyres- I now feel more inspired to do gardening.'





'With the help of community volunteers, we spent a day planting trees, as well as creating the planters that will hold Mediterranean and English herbs, wild strawberries, to make the garden sustainable.'





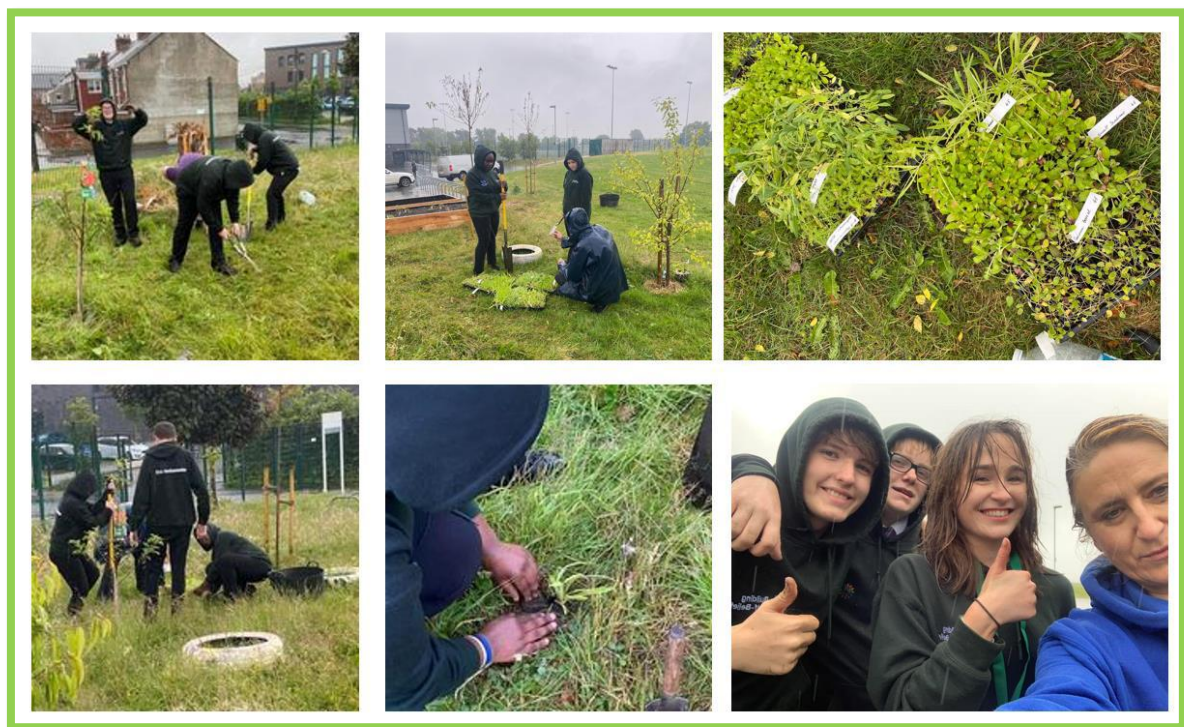
To help increase biodiversity in the local area, our eco ambassadors created bug hotels, providing a safe space for critters or even hedgehogs and frogs to live and thrive.



'I enjoyed making the bug hotels and painting the tyres because it is not something that you often get to do- it was a unique experience.'



We spent one particularly rainy-day planting wildflowers and digging out a flower bed at the top of the garden.
We are very proud of all the young people that came out to help in such horrible conditions.





'We finished off the garden with creating more flower beds and planted even more beautiful wildflowers, as well as lavender to invite bees to the garden.'





'I liked doing something outside our normal timetable- I enjoyed being together and having a laugh. It was great to get a chance to creative and the whole project made me feel much happier.'





Progress & achievements

As part of the programme we supported the young people to design the community garden and get them to decide what they would like to be included. They decided that they would like a garden that provided food, looked good and had a focus on sustainability. Therefore, they selected mix of fruit trees, apple, plum and cherry, and in the planters, they planted a mix of English and Mediterranean Herbs. As part of the plan to be more sustainable and upcycle, we used donated tyres which the children upcycled, to add decoration to the garden, we also made bug hotels by recycling Natural material. The children also worked with local businesses and volunteers to build new locally sourced natural oak planters.

In the final stage of this project, they built the seating area, planted perennials and added mixed wild flowers to the turfed areas - the plan for this is to create a meadow effect, where the garden will need minimal maintenance, as the perennials will return year after year and get stronger every year.

'I really enjoyed how interactive the programme was. The fact that we were all able to get stuck in and were really involved in the progress of the garden and decisions that were made.'

Challenges

The weather was a challenge. We began the outdoor aspect of the project in snow and worked through a heat wave in June! The key challenge from the hot weather was that we had to ensure the garden was well watered as we could not rely on the rain. We were delighted that the Eco-Ambassadors and local volunteers took responsibility for this.

Future plans

Our idea is to secure further funding in the future to both maintain and grow the community garden site. One of our new local volunteers, Maria Elsy has agreed to support us on keeping an eye on the garden with the children and make sure that it gets watered regularly, this is especially important for the new fruit trees.

There are a few elements that need to be completed - adding a water butt and planting fruit bushes in the autumn. We shall also be adding a plaque to commemorate the children's achievements.



This project also served as a model for other projects in the future, as we have learnt a great deal about the best ways to plan and develop such a space. We are delighted that as a charity we have just been notified by Durham County Council that we have been granted a 25-year lease on a further community garden space in the Consett area of Couth Durham.

Publicity

We regularly post on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram regarding the support of The Nineveh Charitable Trust and we have shared the film end of project film across all of our social media channels and more widely.

The link to the end of project film can be seen here, where The Nineveh Charitable Trust also thanked on the credits for their kind support.

A Greener Future for Stanley - Environmental Youth Ambassadors Project film [A Greener Future for Stanley - Environmental Youth Ambassadors Project | Building Self Belief](#)