

Newsletter

September 2021



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Project Update:

Since our last letter in June, we held a very successful Community Garden Open Morning in August, to which 40 + people attended. We have established six Log Piles, see pic above, increased planting in the Bog Garden and have managed to establish a water level - pic to the left. We also built a Deadwood Hedge around the Community Garden and are now in the process of building three hibernacula, a safe winter refuge for small reptiles and amphibians.



Future Plans:

Drainage to be completed at the end of September. Bulb Planting (5,000 native bluebells and 1,000 Tenby daffodils) to be planted in October. Mini ponds, the size of a large puddle, but kept full during the year, will be established throughout the Square. We will be consulting with Vale Council and our Ecology Advisor about installing wildlife cameras - probably in Spring of 2022. Late Spring early Summer 2022 we will train a number of volunteers to conduct nature trails throughout the Square.

These are just some of the ideas planned, but as time goes on and with the input from our enthusiastic volunteers and advisors, we have no doubt we will be advising you of additional ideas in the future.

Build a hibernaculum

Great for amphibians and reptiles!

wildlife watch



You will need:

- Spade



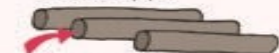
- Logs and branches



- Rocks and bricks



- 2-3 drainpipe off-cuts or cement pipes



If using plastic drainpipes, roughen the insides with sandpaper so that they are not too slippery for animals to climb.

- Turf or meadow flower seeds (optional)



- 1 In a sunny spot, dig a hole about 50cm deep and 1.5 metres across.



- 2 Fill with logs, branches, bricks and rocks, leaving plenty of gaps in between.



- 3 Insert entrance tubes (drainpipes) at ground level into the pile.



- 4 Cover the pile with soil (to about 50cm high).



- 5 You can plant meadow seeds or turf over the mound.



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When we started to build the first Hibernaculum, it created so much interest with our volunteers that we felt we should share the experience with you. Details of how to build one will also be on our Noticeboard.

Community Garden Plans

The Community Garden has been immensely popular with volunteers and people passing through the Square. Volunteers report that they are frequently being asked about the Community Garden and the improvements to the Square. We have received many kind comments about the garden and about the improvements being made to the ecology and biodiversity of the area.

The garden will soon be completely harvested and plans for the future are to clear and compost the beds, plant some winter vegetables, take cuttings and seeds to propagate for next year.

NEW MEMBERS

We are delighted to report that membership has now reached 97 (only three to go to reach our target of 100 by end of March 2022). Perhaps by the time this reaches you we will be there!

Five new members have joined our planning group. Sue Olley is coordinating Community Garden activities. Laura Rodwell, an Ecologist, is advising the group on ecology matters. Dan Brown is looking to improve our visibility on Social Media and Website and Clare Wright, Andrew O'Flaherty and Pauline Williams have strengthened our General Management Committee.

Engagement with Schools, Care Homes, and providing a Social Prescribing Facilities

Restrictions during the pandemic have meant that our aspirations for wider community connection and involvement have been limited. However, we are committed to exploring different ways as to how we can work with local schools, care homes and health services for their benefit and enjoyment of the Square. To help us with this element of our project we will be engaging a local charity "Grow Cardiff" who have experience in developing community gardens for "social prescribing", education and wellbeing. Do come along to our engagement event in October (date TBC) to learn more.

Future events..... A walk and talk about the trees in the Square with Ambler Tree experts Sat 30th OCT—full details to follow. A bramble scramble date TBC. An outdoor Carol Concert date TBC
Engagement event with Grow Cardiff in October.