

Name of project or group

Greener Greenhill. Case study by Lindy Stone, December 2022

What actions for nature did your group want to take and why?

This is a local, community-based group who came together to help tackle the climate and nature emergency through local action and events. We wanted to improve the locality in a practical sense (planting/woodland management) but also seeking to promote awareness of the need for action on nature recovery and carbon reduction.

**What resources or support did you use?**

Some of the key players in the 'start up group' were already active in community and climate organisations so we built on this experience. We felt that we wanted to be a 'network' rather than a group, making sure we linked in to already existing organisations which were working on issues in the same (wide) arena.

Consequently, our key resource was the people we knew and the motivation of the startup group to organise and coordinate activities. Our local community library was also very supportive in terms of giving space to accommodate meetings and promoting our events. Until we had a bank account (after 6 months) we didn't even collect any donations and all costs (mostly to do with publicity) were met by members of the group.

However, links with the S&RWT via NRS were very helpful and put us in contact with the council's Community Forestry and Parks and Countryside teams. Some of our first activities in winter 21/22, and then in the spring, were planting events and these proved very popular with the community.

How did you empower or involve others?

We have had stalls at lots of local events (6 in the first year) which gave us the opportunity to chat with people. Our mailing list grew to nearly 250 and our Facebook following to nearly 300 in just over a year. Many people are aware of the seriousness of the climate and nature emergency and relieved to know there are others in their area feeling the same and wanting to do something about it. Different people came to different events (not all nature related) which expanded our 'base.' Lots of talking seemed to be the key! Links to the churches, schools, scout and guide groups, TARAs, community hubs and nearby practical environment groups as well as the library were all – and continue to be - really helpful. Using our mailings and our social media posts to promote successes on the nature/climate issues, even if these were only small steps, has helped build our 'brand' and people are slowly coming to us with ideas of things they want to do/change.

How did it make you feel?

As a start-up group of 8 and now a steering group of 6, we are pleased with the progress we have made in a relatively short period. However, at times it can be a bit overwhelming since more people want to see things done than have the capacity to do something about it!

“Working as a community, becoming a known and valued part of the local scene is very rewarding”

What changes have there been as a result of your actions?

We have helped to improve four key green spaces locally, playing greater or smaller roles in each but three of these were unlikely to have happened without our group's involvement. The inspiration for all of these has come through being part of the Nature Recovery Sheffield network.

Have you had any memorable nature encounters while doing this?

One area in particular, Stone Cross Field on Hemper Lane, now has a 'scrape' which had mandarin ducks and badgers visiting it within the first few weeks which was exciting locally! To see the saplings and wildflowers we planted thriving has been very pleasing – the immediacy of the wildflowers was particularly delightful for people passing by.

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How have your actions been shared or inspired others?

We post regularly on Facebook which is often seen quite widely, beyond our key supporters and we have had contact from other groups interested in what we are doing as a community group. Locally, on the edge of our central area, two activities have been instigated to serve a slightly different group than might consider themselves 'Greenhill' but the instigators came to us for advice and we were able to support them in getting going. We have also offered to be the constituted group for them if they want to apply for funds

What's next?

We have a number of 'bubbling under' projects which will require lots of co-ordination (and luck!) to get going but we have made a good start. We have an email address greenergreenhill@gmail.com and post regularly on Facebook for anyone wanting to find out more about what we do. At some point soon we hope to have a website but at the moment some details can be found on the Greenhill Community Library website [Greener Greenhill](#).

