



### **Name of project or group**

Wilder Walkley

Group formed under the umbrella of Wilder Neighbourhoods , Sheffield.

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

Dr Kerry Dickinson was actively involved in setting up the Walkley Green Spaces Trail (as part of Walkley Festival ) in 2022 which she thought was a great way to get the local community involved and she saw an opportunity to do good things in unloved green spaces.

Wilder are aiming to coordinate efforts for the management of existing green spaces to

- Create Nature Corridors to connect green spaces and fragmented habitats (including gardens); thereby improving access for wildlife (and plants) to food, water and mates
- Design and demonstrate habitats that increase biodiversity,
- Promote wider community involvement
- Incorporate Edible Forest Gardens to - Provide access to healthy, FREE food for everyone
- Share skills & empower communities to create/maintain their own greenspaces
- Create a Walking Trail connecting the Green Spaces that incorporates inspirational artwork and promotes engagement with the natural world.

One such space is Philadelphia Gardens, Wilder Neighbourhoods and Kerry are keen to get this rather unloved and neglected space back to being a well loved resource for the local community and a haven for nature recovery.

### **What resources or support did you need/use?**

Wilder Walkley has taken advice from the Sheffield & Rotherham Wildlife Trust Community Nature Advisors who have written a set of recommendations for site improvements with wildflower planting, tree thinning to discourage antisocial behaviour and improvements to site entrances to improve visitor experiences.

We have worked with Sheffield City Council and the local Safer Neighbourhoods teams in the police to improve site lines and engage with the local community in improving the skate park area.

### **How did you empower or involve others?**

We have engaged with local people by setting up the Walkley Green spaces Trail and are hoping that this can lead to a large event - Phili Fest - to take place at the park which will engage with local people and consult them on future plans. We have set up regular work days at the gardens which have been running on the 3rd Sunday of the month.

Kerry has engaged with the local community through ZEST, a community hub in Upperthorpe and has engaged with local skater group and a Tiktok star Ashely Mercer who used social media to talk about the poor skate park facilities which has now encouraged SCC to revamp the skate park.

### **How many people have been involved?**

Around 25 people have had regular / repeat input (with a core team of around 10) plus at least 100 people have taken part in activities such as tree planting and planting sunflowers for them to take home with a group of Ukrainians to celebrate Earth Day and a Nature Walk with families from Hong Kong.



*Sunflower planting with the Ukrainian community*



*The group of Ukrainians that took part in tree planting at Philadelphia Gardens*



*Group from Hong Kong who came on a Nature Walk*

### **How did it make you feel?**

It was an absolute privilege to spend time with and share our green space with delightful, interested and appreciative people. All of whom have relocated to Sheffield to escape war or political oppression in their countries of birth.

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

Sheffield City Council have actively engaged with our group and have started implementing some of the plans and recommendations outlined by the Wildlife Trust. They have committed resources to the project, including Ranger Days, management regimes and one of their Community Development Officers is helping us with funding bids.

### **Have you had any memorable nature encounters while doing this?**

Finding a beautiful long tailed tits nest, listening to a cacophony of birdsong in Spring.

## **What is next?**

We are currently trying to gain funding to carry out the recommendations in the Wildlife Trust's report. There are many opportunities for increased community involvement through consultation, community events and environmental education but these are mostly dependent on gaining funding to pay for staff time and resources. We would like to engage with local school and community groups to increase engagement and sense of ownership with meadow sowing, tree planting and litter picking, We'd also like to increase interpretation and/or have QR codes around the site to engage people into checking out Wilder Walkley, our events and ways to get involved.