



Growing Up Green

Project Evaluation Report



Growing
up
Green



Acknowledgements

We would like to thank Our Bright Future and the National Lottery Community Fund for the opportunity to deliver Growing Up Green and make a difference to young people and the environment.

Thank you to all the young people involved in Growing Up Green and for helping us gather information to illustrate the project's impact.

Thanks to all the project staff at Hill Holt Wood involved in delivering the project and team members involved in collecting data and evaluating Growing Up Green.



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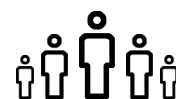
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Executive Summary

OVER
5000
PEOPLE
ENGAGED

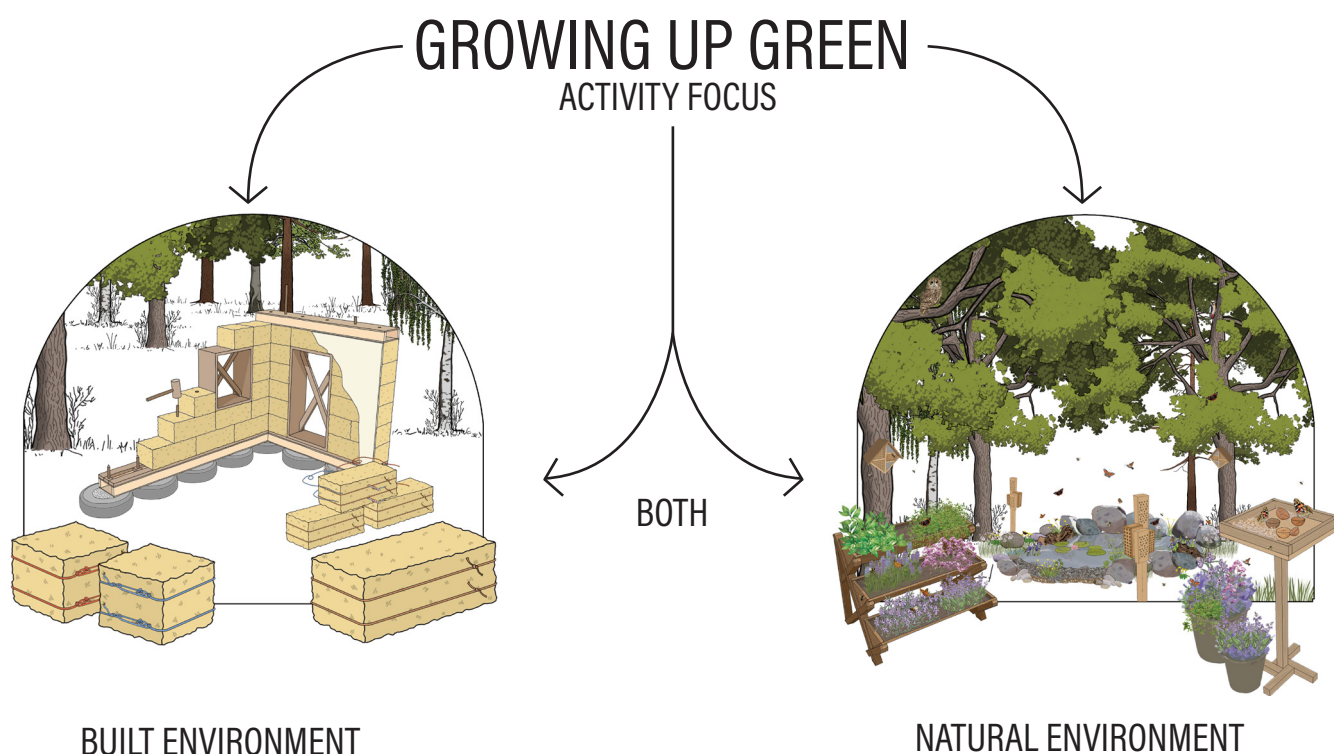


In 2015, Hill Holt Wood began their five-year Growing Up Green (GUG) project in aid of young people and the planet. Growing up Green, funded by the National Lottery Community Fund, forms part of the Our Bright Future programme. One of the 31 successful projects across the UK to receive funding, Hill Holt Wood has been bringing together both the youth and environmental sectors, aiding young people aged 11-24 to gain vital skills and experience while delivering change to local environments and communities.

Having worked with young people since 1997, the Our Bright Future programme was the catalyst to take Hill Holt Wood's youth work in the environmental sector to the next level, integrating, even further, young people into all environmental projects. Initial expectations were exceeded with over 5000 young people engaged and over 850 of those receiving qualifications. Growing Up Green's key aspiration was to nurture young people, engaging them with their environments, deliver change and make a positive impact on the world; Inspiring and nurturing the future generation of environmental leaders that can continue to spread the message and make a difference.

Growing up Green took a broad approach to the environment, focussing all engagement activities on either the **NATURAL ENVIRONMENT** or **BUILT ENVIRONMENT**. In a symbiotic relationship with one another and critical in driving a brighter, healthier future and planet, the project used live opportunities and projects to realise change.

Tackling issues around sustainability in the construction industry was core to the project. Young people saw first hand and were educated about how this will play a pivotal role in moving towards a 'greener future'; reducing waste, using natural materials (that breath and create healthy internal environments), and reducing energy use. Equally important are the issues being faced by the natural environment. Young people were able to complete conservation work and see the impact first-hand and as a result change attitudes, encourage positive interactions with the natural world, attract wider biodiversity, and create spaces for the community to appreciate and enjoy.



Growing Up Green aimed to work with 3800 young people over five years, a target that was overachieved, including all levels of engagement from one-off activities to short-term accredited courses and even long-term apprenticeship opportunities. All activities focused on achieving one or more of the aims as outlined below:

1. ENABLE YOUNG PEOPLE TO GAIN NEW SKILLS
2. ENGAGE YOUNG PEOPLE WITH THEIR ENVIRONMENT
3. INSPIRE AND INFORM YOUNG PEOPLE TO WORK TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES
4. UPSKILL YOUNG PEOPLE AND ENABLE ENTRY TO EMPLOYMENT
5. INCREASE AWARENESS OF SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES AND THE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS TO ADDRESS THEM

Activities were focused on a theme (Natural or Built Environment) and aligned with the aims above. Participants on the project varied from School Groups to volunteers and the wider community. Data used in this report was captured over the five years of delivery across various activities and all proposed aims. Combinations of both qualitative and quantitative methods of gathering information have been used to evaluate the project.

As well as the outcomes achieved as part of the project, the impact on young people's confidence and personal development has been incredibly inspiring. Such results can be seen through the quotes and statements written by participants included within this report.

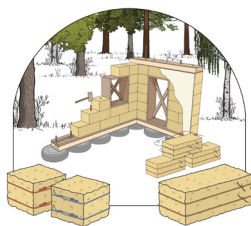
This report summarises the project, captures key highlights and lessons learned and showcases the impact of Growing up Green. As part of the project legacy the 'Guide to Growing Up Green' was created, continuing the work since the project began, demonstrating various ways to live a more sustainable life and encompassing all the objectives mentioned above. This guide is available here:



<https://www.hillholtwood.co.uk/growingupgreen>



GROWING UP GREEN ALUMNI VOICE



BUILT ENVIRONMENT QUOTES

" I WOULD LIKE TO, IN THE NEAR FUTURE BUILD A LOG CABIN AND I WILL HOPEFULLY BE ABLE TO EDUCATE ABOUT THE BENEFITS OF BUILDING AND LIVING IN A LOG CABIN"

" WORKED VERY WELL AS A TEAM BUILDING EXERCISE, REFLECTING THE COMMUNITY BASED ASPECT OF CONSTRUCTION "

"I HAVE GREATER KNOWLEDGE OF TOOLS AND CONSTRUCTION PROCESSES AND THE PRINCIPLES BEHIND ECO-BUILDING"

" WE ARE DEEPLY GRATIFIED THAT YOU GAVE US A TOUR OF YOUR WOOD AND BUILDINGS MADE FROM NATURAL, SUSTAINABLE RESOURCES. THE WAY THAT YOU CARE SO MUCH ABOUT NATURE AND BEING ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY WAS VERY MOTIVATIONAL FOR ALL OF US. I AM SURE THAT EVERYBODY THAT ATTENDED THE TRIP WILL NOW AT LEAST BEAR IN MIND THE ENVIRONMENT WHEN GOING ABOUT THEIR DAY TO DAY ACTIVITIES. WE WERE EXTREMELY IMPRESSED AT YOUR RESOURCEFULNESS IN YOUR BUILDING DESIGNS AND ALSO YOUR SAWDUST TOILET FACILITIES. WE ONLY WISH MORE COMPANIES AND HOUSEHOLDS HAS MINDSETS LIKE YOURS "



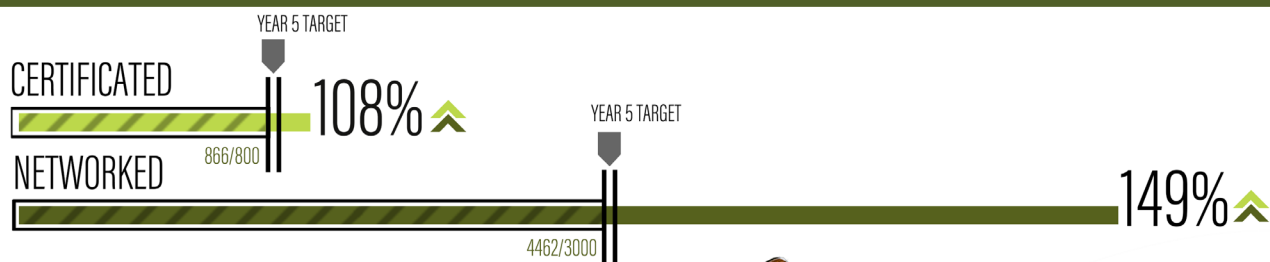
NATURAL ENVIRONMENT QUOTES

" I LOVED LEARNING ABOUT THE DIFFERENT TIMBER AND USES. IT'S INCREASED MY KNOWLEDGE AND APPRECIATION OF TREES "

" VERY ENGAGING ACTIVITY, STAFF WERE FANTASTIC WITH THE CHILDREN, PROMOTED INCLUSION AND CONNECTED THINKING"

" IT WAS FANTASTIC FOR THEM TO BE ABLE TO SEE HOW THOSE SKILLS CAN BE APPLIED TO CREATE SUCH BEAUTIFUL STRUCTURES"

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS



CONSTRUCTION OF THE ARTIST STUDIO



620

ACRES
OF LAND MANAGED

INCLUDING FORESTRY
MANAGEMENT OF LINCOLN CITY'S LARGEST WOODLAND



23

BUTTERFLY SPECIES
SEEN AT
HILL HOLT WOOD

58,670 KG OF LITTER PICKED



RECEIVED ACCREDITATION FOR THE
FOLLOWING COURSES THROUGH UKRS;



INTRODUCTION TO ECOLOGY: WOODLAND

CERTS. AWARDED

STRAWBALE BUILDING

85

RECIPROCAL FRAMING

102

170



866

QUALIFICATIONS
GAINED OVERALL



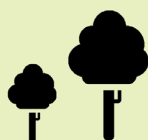
238

ACTIVITIES COMPLETED
IN THE NATURAL
AND BUILT ENVIRONMENTS



22

COMMUNITY SPACES IMPROVED



26

NEW COMMUNITY SPACES CREATED

11

BAT SPECIES RECORDED ON
HILL HOLT WOOD SITES



3428

YOUNG PEOPLE FROM
SCHOOLS OR FURTHER EDUCATION
ENGAGED



"I HONESTLY DON'T THINK I WOULD HAVE EVER GOT THEIR WITHOUT YOU HAVING FAITH IN ME, AND I CAN'T EXPRESS ENOUGH HOW GRATEFUL I AM FOR THAT BECAUSE IT HELPED ME GAIN THE CONFIDENCE TO PURSUE WHAT FEELS RIGHT FOR ME"

AMY CLARKE, GROWING UP GREEN PARTICIPANT

Logic Model

AIM 1

Enable young people to gain new skills

AIM 2

Engage young people with their Environment

AIM 3

Inspire young people about sustainable Communities

AIM 4

Up-skill young people to enable entry to employment

AIM 5

Increase awareness of sustainability issues

INPUTS

Funding
Project staff with knowledge of both the natural and built environments
Access to wildlife sites - South Witham Marsh, Hospital Plantation, Hill Holt Wood, Norton Big Wood etc
Relationship with partner organisations
Contacts with school, colleges, universities
Expertise in Natural Building- Materials/resources

ACTIVITIES

- Natural Building Workshops
- Junior Ranger Services
- Construction of wildlife boxes
- Land Management
- Eco-Construction projects - including Artist Studio

- Volunteering at South Witham Marsh
- Tree Planting
- Land management
- Habitat building
- Removal of invasive species
- Educational visits
- Bat walks

- Renovation projects
- Open day events
- Education events focused on sustainability
- Mentoring
- Work Experience opportunities
- Natural Building Workshops

- Opportunities for young people to achieve qualifications - Fire Safety/Eco Construction, First Aid, Strimmer, Chainsaw etc.
- Work experience opportunities
- Careers Events

- Experience days
- Open day events
- Educational events
- Mentoring
- Work experience opportunities
- Litter Picking
- Natural Building Workshops

OUTPUTS

Number of YP engaged in:

- Workshops
- Junior Ranger Services
- Land management activities
- Eco-construction projects

Number of:

- Wildlife boxes created
- Projects completed

Amount of:

- Land managed

Number of YP engaged in:

- Junior Ranger Services
- Educational Visits
- Volunteering

Number of:

- Trees planted
- Habitats created

Amount of:

- Land Managed
- Invasive Species removed

Number of YP engaged in:

- Mentoring
- Work experience placements
- Open days
- Educational events
- Eco-construction

Number of:

- Projects completed

Number of YP engaged in:

- Work experience placements
- Careers events

Number of:

- Qualifications achieved

Number of YP engaged in:

- Work experience placements
- Open days
- Educational events
- Mentoring
- Eco construction

Amount of:

- Litter picked

OUTCOMES

- Participants completed activity and gain new skills in eco-construction/land management
- Community spaces and wildlife sites improved
- Progress made on eco construction project - Including Artist Studio

- Participants complete activity and learn about the natural world.
- More trees planted
- South Witham Marsh improved
- Land well managed and important woodland structures restored
- Various habitats created for wildlife

- Participants complete activity learning about sustainable communities
- More people aware of sustainability issues

- Participants complete activity and achieve accredited qualification
- Participants up skilled and feel confident in their abilities

- Participants complete activity learning about sustainability
- More people aware of sustainability issues
- Environments improved with reduction of litter
- Participants inspire to make positive environmental changes to their lives

IMPACTS

- YP keep using new skills
- Community space improvement results in more people enjoying nature
- Wildlife sites improved - increasing biodiversity
- Artist Studio completion - new income stream to help continue Growing Up Green work

- Better woodland structure attracts wider variety of flora/fauna
- New habitats attract wildlife
- Young people create ongoing positive relationships with nature
- YP remain active volunteers

- Change in attitudes and increased care for the natural world and sustainability

- Qualifications achieved aiding young people in find employment and other opportunities
- YP experience increase confidence and well-being

- Change in attitudes and increased care for the natural world and sustainability

Evaluation Methodology

THE APPROACH

The Growing Up Green project was monitored and evaluated, focusing on three main principles:

1. The extent to which the project has enabled young people to gain new skills, through engagement activities or accredited courses, relevant to finding jobs, training, or other opportunities

Support to get into environmental jobs (Our Bright Future Ask 2)

2. The extent to which spending more time in nature and engaging with activities can inspire, raise awareness and inform young people how to live more sustainable lifestyles, helping to work towards a brighter, healthier future for our planet.

More time spent learning in and about nature (Our Bright Future Ask 1)

3. The extent to which engaging young people in the environment, making positive changes can impact the natural world improving habitats and fauna/flora.

METHODOLOGY

A mixed-method approach was adopted to gather information to assess the project's impact across these research questions and the five aims. The framework was designed to allocate appropriate methodologies across appropriate time scales dependant on the outcome/impact being assessed. See below the methodology used;

METHOD	USE TO EVALUATE WHICH AIM/S					NOTES
	1	2	3	4	5	
Interviews with participants/project staff	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Limited use. Young people selected and interviewed in person. Qualitative data/anecdotal evidence recorded.
Ecological surveying to monitor habitats	✓	✓				Ongoing. Plan to continue this post project completion to continue monitoring impact on habitats.
Observation of activities by Growing Up Green project staff	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Staff reflections recorded where appropriate on individuals progress.
Qualitative data collection feedback forms	✓	✓	✓		✓	Limited use. Recording a variety of impacts including well-being, changes in confidence/self esteem and attitude change.
Reflective accounts		✓		✓		Limited use. Junior Ranger Service and young people completing short term accredited courses.
Case studies		✓		✓	✓	Limited use - case studies in report.
Verbal and written feedback from schools/groups after activities	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Recorded on feedback forms or received emailed feedback.
Photographic evidence and attendance records	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Records for all activities and photographs where possible.

This mixed media approach and overlap of multiple methods available for each aim resulted in flexibility and therefore, the project's ability to remove any barriers identified for the groups. Working with hard-to-reach groups and potentially challenging young people having multiple evaluation methods available for each aim allowed the project team to allocate an evaluation method appropriate for that group/activity on an individual basis. For example, written reflective accounts and in-depth interviews were not always suitable for groups with high anxiety levels or limited English abilities. Therefore being able to be flexible meant the project was able to gather information effectively.

This evaluation report draws heavily on qualitative evidence collected from the young people themselves in the form of anecdotal evidence, alongside a limited amount of quantitative data (examples included within the report).

Particular areas of interest when collecting feedback from participants included:

- How the young people felt that being involved in the project contributed to their personal development and well-being
- How the young people planned on using skills/knowledge gained, as a result of the project, in the future
- What changes of attitudes happened as a result of being involved

REFLECTION ON EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

See below some key observations and lessons learnt:

- Observation by project staff and accounts by teachers/group leaders were invaluable. Collecting these and young people's views of engagement activities gave a well-rounded approach to the evaluation.
- Keeping the questionnaires and feedback forms interactive and young person friendly worked well. Using unconventional methods such as hatching/colouring aspects of an image to illustrate the 'extent' to which they felt they had achieved a particular skill, rather than a scaling 1-5 system, enhanced engagement with the activity. Although making it more challenging to analyse quantitatively, it still provided a clear indication of the young person's feelings. Having a fun interactive element meant the questionnaire/feedback form was less daunting and more engaging.
- The limited use of some evaluation methods could have been improved, increasing the sample to make more comparisons possible.
- Although overlapping methods across each aim increased flexibility, in hindsight it made it more difficult to draw direct comparisons when collecting different information from groups under the same aim. Due to this, the report draws on examples of data (event-specific) rather than looking at the overall figures/number of questionnaires completed. Also, due to the flexibility and less formal structure, this led to some inconsistencies when questionnaires/feedback forms, for example, were issued to participants as an element of staff discretion was acceptable. In reflection the evaluation framework generated should have considered, more closely, the impact of incorporating subjective aspects; creating additional guides for project staff in ways to still use particular methods with hard-to-reach groups and ways to prevent/remove barriers. In addition, different levels of scaling/detail available under each approach may have been possible.



Project Delivery - Aim 1

ENABLE YOUNG PEOPLE TO GAIN NEW SKILLS

(TARGET 780 PEOPLE)



KEY POINTS :

- YOUNG PEOPLE GAINED SKILLS IN NATURAL BUILDING, EITHER THROUGH WORKSHOPS (STRAWBALE/LOGHOUSE/RECIPROCAL) OR THROUGH ENGAGEMENT ON-SITE ON A LIVE CONSTRUCTION PROJECT. THESE YOUNG PEOPLE FELT INSPIRED TO USE THESE SKILLS IN THE FUTURE TO SPREAD THIS MESSAGE AND FELT PASSIONATE ABOUT SEEING SUSTAINABLE CONSTRUCTION AS A ROUTE TO A 'GREENER' FUTURE.
- YOUNG PEOPLE GAINED NOT ONLY PRACTICAL LAND MANAGEMENT SKILLS ON JUNIOR RANGER SERVICES BUT ALSO REPORTED IMPROVED CONFIDENCE, TEAMWORK AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS.
- PERMANENT INSTALLATIONS CREATED BY YOUNG PEOPLE, WHILE LEARNING SKILLS, IMPROVED COMMUNITY SPACES AND HAS RESULTED IN MORE PEOPLE ENJOYING NATURE.

WHO WAS ENGAGED?

- COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY STUDENTS - LINCOLNSHIRE AND NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
- SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS SCHOOLS
- SCOUT/BEAVER GROUPS - YOUTH GROUPS
- PRIMARY/SECONDARY SCHOOLS
- OTHER OUR BRIGHT FUTURE PROJECTS
- HILL HOLT WOOD STUDY PROGRAMME



Secondary School learning how to use a clinometer to survey trees



Junior Ranger Service - using hedge cutters

Aim 1 of the Growing Up Green project looked at enabling young people to gain new skills within both the built and natural environments. Engagement included workshops, Junior Ranger services, construction activities to benefit wildlife, land management and eco-construction projects. The variety of activities resulted in young people engaging in various environmental projects, learning multiple skills while aiding their personal development. These practical activities, undertaken during training and engagement sessions have also had subsequent impacts, improving wildlife sites and habitats, community spaces and thus increasing public engagement.

Firstly looking at the direct impact on young people it is clear from data collected and feedback received that all activities completed enabled young people to gain new skills, both hard and soft. Many activities resulted in accreditation as a result of engagement. Qualifications gained included brushcutter training and chainsaw certification (for the natural environment) and straw bale and reciprocal framing (for the built environment). More information regarding the qualifications gained can be seen on page 21. Young people successfully achieving these qualifications indicates the practical countryside management/natural building skills gained from Growing Up Green but doesn't clearly illustrate other impacts. Young people who completed accredited courses and non-accredited sessions reported improvements in their personal development, recorded through testimonials and feedback forms. One participant stated:

"TEAMWORK AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS HAVE IMPROVED AS A RESULT OF PARTICIPATING IN THIS COURSE. I WILL TAKE THESE SKILLS FORWARD FOR FUTURE JOB APPLICATIONS"

JUNIOR RANGER SERVICE PARTICIPANT

Such activities provided young people with both hard and soft skills, adding qualifications to their CVs while building their confidence through feedback from project staff. It has been evident from the data collected that in some cases, this resulted in young people going onto further education, employment and/or training, and the skills developed through the activities carried out on the Growing Up Green project have helped them on their journey:

"I COULDN'T HAVE GAINED THIS OFFER WITHOUT THE SUPPORT FROM HHW THROUGH MY QUALIFICATION AND WITH HELP ON MY PORTFOLIO. THIS WILL THEN ENABLE ME TO GO TO UNIVERSITY"

GROWING UP GREEN PARTICIPANT

More examples of young people's progression can be seen under Aim 4 on page 20. As part of delivery sessions, project staff built a good rapport with participants and provided regular constructive feedback. Participants felt that this feedback style, specifically during multiple-day training sessions, enabled them to improve continually. It was also the intention of project staff to ensure young people felt confident in the skills being taught, strengthening the likelihood of them continuing to use these skills in the future. As part of a reflective account, we asked participants how they felt about the feedback received to analyse this. One participant stated:

"THE FEEDBACK GIVES ME CONFIDENCE IN THE SKILLS I HAVE LEARNT THROUGHOUT THE COURSE AND SHOWS THAT MY USE OF TOOLS IS CAPABLE. HOPEFULLY I WILL BE ABLE TO TRANSFER MY SKILLS IN THE FUTURE"

PARTICIPANT ON LOG CABIN COURSE

Session structure and format also played an essential role in the success of skills sharing. Sessions focused on making a 'real' tangible difference, from physically maintaining pedestrian access to nature reserves to learning how to build a log cabin by constructing elements of a live build project. The hands-on and active sessions were received positively by participants. They felt that combining knowledge gained through accreditation and practically applying it on-site strengthened expertise and confidence in using the skill taught. An example of this can be seen in reflective feedback received after a young person completed a log cabin building course:

"I THOUGHT THE PRACTICAL EXERCISE WENT REALLY WELL AS IT WAS REALLY GOOD FOR CONSOLIDATING KNOWLEDGE AND THE PRACTICAL ELEMENT HELPED ME TO MAKE THE THEORY TOTALLY MAKE SENSE AND STICK IN MY MIND. THE WALL BUILDING WAS REALLY ENJOYABLE AND IT WAS VERY INTERESTING TO SEE HOW EFFICIENTLY THE CONSTRUCTION COULD BE PUT TOGETHER"

PARTICIPANT ON STRAWBALE COURSE

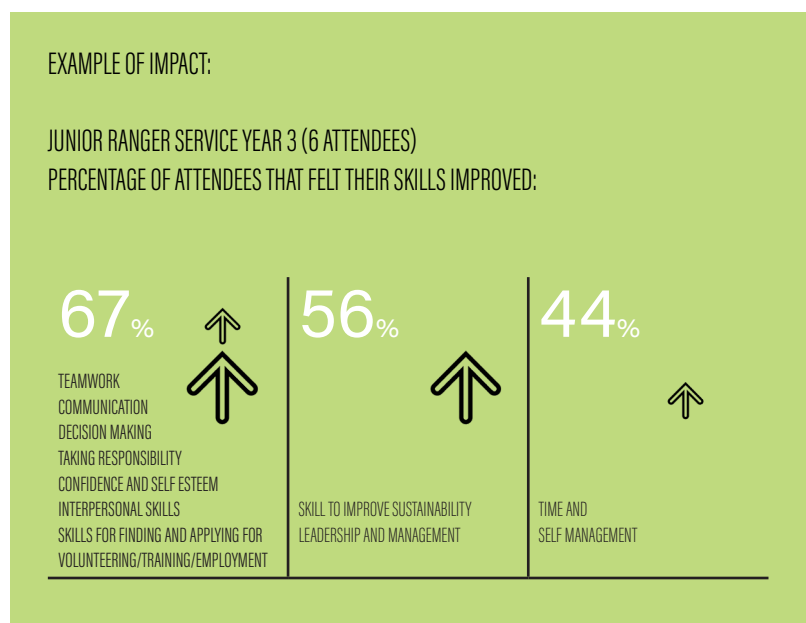
Many schools/universities and other educational establishments have been involved in the project, and through feedback received from teachers, we can demonstrate the skills young people have achieved. Testimonials from schools also gave insight into the extent to which young people gained skills. School tutors, having worked with the young people for a while, were able to identify within the young people the impact on their soft skills post-project engagement and back in the school environment. It was particularly inspiring to see the progression of one young person, part of the Growing Up Green steering group. After being involved in multiple workshops, gaining skills in surveying buildings, reciprocal framing, and sensory garden design, he illustrated his new skills and confidence within the school setting. See below quote from the tutor who worked with this young person:

"WOW!! WHAT A FANTASTIC WORKSHOP YOU LED AT SCHOOL YESTERDAY. THE STUDENTS WERE ALL ABLE TO PARTICIPATE AND ENGAGE WITH THE CONSTRUCTION TASK. THEY HAVE ALL BEEN CHATTING ABOUT IT TODAY... THEY WERE FASCINATED. 'STUDENT NAME' (PART OF THE GROWING UP GREEN STEERING GROUP) WAS ABLE TO BE A GREAT PEER MENTOR AND IT WAS A LOVELY EXPERIENCE FOR HIM TO STEP UP TO A LEADERSHIP ROLE. HE ENJOYED WORKING WITH THE LADS AND DISCOVERING MORE ABOUT THEM TOO. THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR INPUT AND SKILLS THAT YOU BROUGHT. WE REALLY DID APPRECIATE IT"

ST FRANCIS SCHOOL LINCOLN



Alongside stand-alone qualifications, Hill Holt Wood set up the Junior Ranger service programme. The programme focussed on teaching new environmental skills to young people and delivered, over multiple weeks, showcases the impact on young people developing soft skills. Young people got the opportunity to work alongside skilled countryside rangers, maintaining wildlife sites and enhancing the natural world by carrying out practical conservation tasks benefiting wildlife for everyone to enjoy. These works included grass cutting, strimming, maintenance of access points, wildflower meadow cutting, coppicing, path maintenance, hedge cutting and woodland management. Participants found sessions rewarding as, in addition to learning new skills, they felt they were contributing to a broader mission and the work they were completing contributed to a measurable change. As part of the Junior Ranger Service participants were asked to complete a questionnaire looking at personal development. See below example:



This data illustrates that alongside the practical skills achieved, evident in the physical management of the sites, young people felt that their involvement with the project saw increased feelings of communication, teamwork, and self-confidence alongside others.

In addition to the direct impact on young people, subsequent positive results have been evident. From the data we have collated, we know that user numbers on most of our sites have steadily increased over the last four years, showing that the works carried out by the young people have helped attract more visitors to these sites. In 2018/19 156,237 people were accessing these wildlife sites and it was recorded in 2019/20 this had increased to 228,183.

Activities that have been carried out at wildlife sites have also had a positive impact on biodiversity. It is essential to maintain healthy food webs in any ecosystem and the basis of any food web is its producers. One of our sites, South Witham Marsh, has been maintained by young people as part of the Growing Up Green project through workshops, accreditations and volunteers. The site is a neutral grassland classified as a Local Wildlife Site because of its grassland habitat and its particular value to wildlife. Maintaining producers within this habitat is vital to preserving the site's healthy ecosystem. Works carried out by the young people included maintenance of access on the site, cutting and raking the grass meadow and shrub clearance. The work helped to maximize the site's value for conservation, enhancing its natural beauty, allow public access, providing education, and increasing biodiversity. The hard work by the young people helped South Witham Marsh to retain its Local Wildlife Site status in January 2020, with species such as Sneezewort, Wild Angelica, Cock's-foot, Brown Argus, Lesser Whitethroat, Common Whitethroat, Bullfinch, and Common Buzzard being located on the site showing the health of the ecosystem.

In addition to work on wildlife sites, participants have been learning natural building skills and contributing to the live construction sites, which can be seen at Hill Holt Wood as a legacy demonstrating the skills learned. Participants were involved in various workshops including filling gabion cage foundations, installing hempcrete insulation, creating timber frames, and lime rendering.



Results of which can be seen in the adjacent photographs. Such activities provide participants with feelings of pride, ownership, and purpose and exist as a reminder to inspire others of what is possible.

Overall through Growing Up Green, young people have been improving natural and built environments while learning new skills. They can take these skills with them in the future and hopefully continue to make positive changes as the next generation of environmental leaders for our planet.

Project Delivery - Aim 2

ENGAGE YOUNG PEOPLE WITH THEIR ENVIRONMENT

(TARGET 780 PEOPLE)



KEY POINTS :

- YOUNG PEOPLE BECAME INSPIRED BY THE RESULTS/FINDINGS OF THEIR ENGAGEMENT THAT THEY FELT THEY COULD CONTINUE TO CREATE ONGOING POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE ENVIRONMENT.
- ENVIRONMENTAL WORK COMPLETED AND HABITATS CREATED RESULTED IN ATTRACTING RARE SPECIES.
- EDUCATING YOUNG PEOPLE, EVEN IF ONLY FOR A FEW HOURS IN THE NATURAL WORLD, CAN INSPIRE AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN ATTITUDES.

WHO WAS ENGAGED?

- VOLUNTEERS
- HHW STUDY PROGRAMME
- OTHER OUR BRIGHT FUTURE PROJECTS
- SCOUTS/GUIDES
- PRIMARY/SECONDARY SCHOOLS
- APPRENTICES



HHW students removing invasive species from an ancient woodland



Secondary School Willow Weaving

Aim 2 of the Growing Up Green project looked at engaging young people with their environment. This was achieved by immersing the young people in the natural world that surrounds them and engaging them in activities such as:

- volunteering on nature reserves
- tree planting
- practical conservation
- habitat creation
- removal of invasive species
- educational visits
- interactive nature walks

By partaking in these activities young people's eyes have been opened and the importance of why the natural world needs to be cared for has been emphasised. The impact of these engagement activities can be seen in relationships young people have fostered with the natural world and also in the flourishing habitats, attracting fauna.

Hill Holt Wood was able to successfully engage young people in the environment through educational visits to Hill Holt Wood and other wildlife sites. Hill Holt Wood showcases real applications of sustainability in its core ethos and structure (an off-grid ancient woodland) and exemplifies many environmental approaches that can be seen shown to young people and are replicable on another sites. One activity consisted of the project team building a willow dome with a school group, weaving living willow together and creating a living structure at Hill Holt Wood. Analysing feedback showed that students felt a great deal of pride knowing that the structure would be left in situ for many years to come, a living installation that can be (and has been) enjoyed by many members of the public since completion. Young children and families visiting the woodland daily see this structure as a key exciting attraction, thus showcasing how the project has engaged with the wider community.

Bug hunts, shelter building and pond dipping were great introductory sessions, breaking down any barriers young people may be experiencing as a simple method of showcasing the beautiful parts of the natural world they might not have seen before. Watching a young person see their first water scorpion or suddenly understanding that dragonflies spend most of their lives underwater as dragonfly nymphs were rewarding moments experienced by project staff. Using these live interactions to teach young people, not through 'textbook' style activities, resulted in some of the most poignant feedback. Young people/teachers reported a difference in learning outside in nature rather than in the classroom:

"THANK YOU FOR MAKING IT SO ACCESSIBLE AND INTERESTING FOR THE YOUNG PEOPLE. THEY ALL AGREED IT WAS MUCH BETTER AND HAS MORE IMPACT ON THEM LEARNING ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION WITH YOU THAN IN THE CLASSROOM. I KNOW THEY WILL BE TAKING FORWARD WAYS OF REDUCING, REUSING AND RECYCLING AND SPREADING THE WORD TO OTHERS, I OVERHEARD A COUPLE OF YOUNG PEOPLE TELLING THEIR PARENTS CHANGES THEY NEEDED TO MAKE AT HOME AS THEY LEFT "

BEREAVEMENT CENTRE NEWARK

" THANKS TO YOU AND YOUR TEAM FOR THE EXPERIENCE YOU PROVIDED FOR OUR STUDENTS. IT HAS MEANT THAT THE PUPILS FOUND IT MUCH EASIER TO APPLY KNOWLEDGE, UNDERSTANDING AND SKILLS THEY ACQUIRED FROM THE DAY INTO THEIR NOTES ONCE THEY RETURNED TO SCHOOL AND INDEED IN THEIR ANSWERS IN EXAMINATIONS "

WILLIAM FARR SCHOOL

" WE SPENT A VERY BUSY DAY OUTSIDE IN THE WOODS UNDERTAKING VARIOUS ACTIVITIES. ON THE WOODLAND WALK, WE LEARNT TO IDENTIFY DIFFERENT TYPES OF TREE, TALKED ABOUT VARIOUS ANIMALS WHICH LIVE IN THE WOODS AND EVEN STOOD ON TOP OF A BADGER SET . HUNTING FOR MINI BEASTS WAS GREAT FUN AND ARMED WITH NOTHING MORE THAN A SPADE AND POT THE CHILDREN MANAGED TO FIND A VARIETY OF WOODLAND CREATURES "

GONERBY HILL FOOT PRIMARY SCHOOL



As part of the engagement activities, Hill Holt Wood also organised significant scale events, an example of this being rhododendron clearing in the woodland. These sorts of activities require very little prior knowledge and involve using basic handheld tools, so it is easy and quick to pick up by all. In one day, young people managed to remove 64m² of Rhododendron from one compartment at Hill Holt Wood's Norton Big Wood site. Clearance of such invasive species is critical to the woodland ecosystem. Without management, it grows rapidly, producing a dense blanket of foliage preventing light from reaching the woodland floor. It also turns the soil acidic, meaning that not many other species can grow around it. As a result, you lose healthy woodland structure as the floral layers and shrub layers can't establish, understorey layers can't support as many invertebrates and the main canopy is all that is left. The impact of the young people's work can be seen on the site. Bluebells and Wood anemones blanket the woodland floor at the right time of year, woodland ferns and bramble making up the shrub layer, Hazel coppices flourishing (which can support over 350 invertebrate species) as an understorey and the mature Oaks standing tall above them all. Photographs illustrating this impact can be seen on the next page.



A great indicator of the success of the works is also the flourishing bat community on the site. Norton Bigwood supports 11 of the 18 UK bat species and even has one of the most northerly recorded breeding colonies of Barbastelle bats. An event run with the Nottinghamshire bat group allowed young people to see the processes used to monitor bat populations. Young people were enthused and inspired to see Whiskered bats up close, and it allowed them to understand the importance of maintaining a healthy woodland habitat. Feedback from one group about the event:

" I WOULD JUST LIKE TO SAY A HUGE THANK YOU TO YOU BOTH FOR ORGANISING THE DAY AT HILL HOLT WOOD FOR US. I HAD AN AMAZING DAY AND LEARNT A LOT AND KNOW ALL THE YOUNG PEOPLE WHO ATTENDED FELT THE SAME"

SCHOOL

Habitat creation activities, both natural in the form of dead hedges and habitat piles and manufactured habitat features such as bird/bat box installations contributed significantly to engagement activities. Young people reported that these activities increased their respect for the natural world and also saw a change in their behaviour. After completing a bug hotel installation at a local school, the tutor provided feedback to Growing Up Green project staff:

" WE FEEL THAT AT ST FRANCIS, WE HAVE SEEN A GROWTH IN STUDENT'S CONFIDENCE, TEAM WORKING, RESPECT FOR WILDLIFE, THE ENVIRONMENT AND THEIR BEHAVIOUR IN THE OUTDOORS "

TERESA DUNCAN, ST FRANCIS SCHOOL

Moreover, hibernacula's (areas where fauna can hibernate), bird boxes, and a giant bug hotel were constructed with groups to attract new species and provide more habitat for resident ones. Various hibernacula's were created from dead wood, log piles, log walls, dead hedges, brash piles, reptile pits and hedgehog houses. The success of these can be seen from the fauna inhabiting them from invertebrate species, amphibians, reptiles and small mammals. Significantly within a habitat wall created, project staff reported a newt inhabiting this environment, never previously recorded in this area of the site. See photograph overleaf.

One of the significant habitats constructed was that of a giant bug hotel. School pupils collected a wide variety of natural materials from the woodland environment and then used them to infill the spaces in the hotel. This collective effort was a great team-building activity and allowed them to interact with nature while creating new habitat. Moreover, it provided a visual connection between invertebrates living together in a community and the young people living together with nature. In a similar way to the living willow dome, this entity is in situ on a public access site (Hill Holt Wood) and can be enjoyed and explored by the wider community in future years, acting as a legacy for the project.



Giant Bug Hotel constructed with school pupils



Spotted Flycatcher chick being ringed by young person



Newt recorded in new habitat wall

Another impact of such habitat creation activities can be seen in the increased variety of bird species and nesting sites recorded. At Hill Holt Wood, the young people alongside rangers looked at maintaining and even increasing Spotted Flycatcher populations, a red-listed species and a priority species under the UK biodiversity framework. They took part in a ringing activity with a professional, then looked at creating spotted flycatcher nesting boxes which were subsequently put up around the site. Since installation, four breeding pairs have been reported using these sites for two consequential years. Monitoring of these boxes will continue year on year and expansion to these plans is underway.

Physical improvements to the environment are easy to record through surveying of flora and fauna. However, under this aim, it was also crucial for Growing Up Green to look at a change of attitude of the young people due to engaging with the environment. To demonstrate this impact, participants were asked to provide comparisons about their feelings due to being involved in the project. Significantly 85% of participants in the annual survey felt they could make more of a difference to the environment, and 40% cared more about the environment after being involved in activities. This illustrates a significant improvement in feelings towards the environment. It is hoped that this will encourage longer-term impacts, with young people demonstrating increased appreciation and showing more respect for their environment in the future. Attitude change can lead to behaviour change and the outcome of this is POSITIVE CHANGE.

EXAMPLE OF IMPACT:

ANNUAL QUESTIONNAIRE TO SAMPLE OF GROWING UP GREEN PARTICIPANTS (20 ATTENDEES)
HOW PARTICIPANTS FELT AFTER BEING INVOLVED IN THE PROJECT



Case Study - Billy Richardson



BEFORE ENGAGING:
A LEVEL STUDENT

INVOLVEMENT IN GUG:

- FORESTRY APPRENTICE LEVEL 2 + 3
- PROJECT EXCHANGE VISITS

LENGTH OF TIME ON GUG PROJECT:
5 YEARS

IMPACT OF PROJECT:
NOW FULL TIME FORESTRY RANGER AT
HILL HOLT WOOD

Billy completed his A-Levels at Lincoln Castle Sixth form Academy. After completing these, knowing he didn't want to go to University, he started to look for alternative opportunities. Seeing the opportunity for a Growing Up Green forestry apprentice Billy decided he liked the idea of it, with limited opportunities for forestry in the local area, he applied.

Being successful in the recruitment process Billy started at Hill Holt Wood as a Growing Up Green forestry apprentice when he was 18 years old. Over the last 5 years he has worked alongside Nigel and the Forestry team completing contract work and has also completed both his Level 2 and Level 3 apprenticeship in Forestry. ***"The project has turned me into a sustainable forester and I am going to keep that for the rest of my life"***

Billy developed a passion to sharing this knowledge and educating those around him. ***"Teaching forestry to the next generation of kids is very important, they need to know how to manage woodland like we do. The best way to do that is to get them out in the woodland, show them how trees grow, allow them to enjoy the environment and teach them the whole process of how we source timber, how we store it, how we process it and how we turn it into projects"***

"Timber is an amazing resource! It's a lot better to use timber for products and buildings than it is steel and brick - when its done right it can be brilliant for the environment, the worlds and us!"

Billy continued to develop his passion and knowledge, wanting everyone to understand the importance of their forestry work. ***"The benefit of thinning a woodland is that there is a lot more light on the ground, which was once shaded by the trees that are taken out. What this means is that the dormant seeds in the ground (flowers, shrubs or the next generation of trees) is given enough sunlight and warmth to grow and germinate. It is not just about the timber it also has a good impact and the wildlife and the ecology"***

As Billy's mentor Nigel commented ***"Through his time with me he has always shown great interest in learning, asking questions and taking notes, he excels in all he does. I am proud to have mentored Billy throughout, he should be proud of himself for achieving this"***

"Hill Holt Wood and myself will continue the ethos as we are passionate about getting young people into nature, the environment and conservation!"

BILLY COMPLETED HIS APPRENTICESHIPS AND WAS OFFERED A FULL TIME POSITION AS A FORESTRY RANGER AT HILL HOLT WOOD, WHICH HE ACCEPTED AND IS CURRENTLY STILL EMPLOYED. BILLY CONTINUES TO SHARE HIS PASSION FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND GIVES TALKS TO SCHOOL TRIPS ABOUT SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY.

"WHEN I WAS GROWING UP, I NEVER KNEW WHAT I WANTED TO DO. I SAW THIS OPPORTUNITY AND IT SOUNDED REALLY INTERESTING. WORKING IN NATURE AND WORKING WITH MY HANDS. I LOVE IT AND WILL NEVER LOOK BACK!"

Project Delivery - Aim 3

INSPIRE AND INFORM YOUNG PEOPLE ABOUT SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

(TARGET 780 PEOPLE)



KEY POINTS:

- YOUNG PEOPLE RESPONDED WELL TO PRACTICAL RENOVATION PROJECTS, PHYSICALLY MAKING CHANGES IN THE FAVOUR OF SUSTAINABILITY
- FEEDBACK FROM NATURAL BUILDING WORKSHOPS RESULTED IN THE MOST EVIDENT CHANGE IN ATTITUDE AND UNDERSTANDING ABOUT SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

WHO WAS ENGAGED?

- SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS SCHOOLS
- PRIMARY/SECONDARY SCHOOLS
- UNIVERSITY STUDENTS
- WORK EXPERIENCE STUDENTS
- HILL HOLT WOOD STUDY PROGRAMME



Work Experience Student



Natural Building Workshop

Aim 3 of the Growing Up Green project looked at inspiring and informing young people about sustainable communities (natural and built environment combined) and arranged to promote sustainable living. Engagement including activities such as natural building workshops (how to live sustainably), renovation projects (how to modify spaces to be more sustainable), work experience placements and educational visits (learning and getting inspired by existing sustainable communities to understand how to make positive changes).

Firstly participants responded positively to changes in attitude and beliefs after being involved in work placements and educational visits. Hill Holt Wood, an off-grid woodland community, exemplifies strategies such as rainwater harvesting, off-grid heating systems, natural building materials in all buildings, low energy solutions and low impact approaches to all work. This infrastructure being available at the core of project delivery provides participants with a chance to see first-hand a sustainable working community and get a well-rounded experience in both the built and natural environments. With young people providing reflective feedback such as:

"WE ARE DEEPLY GRATIFIED THAT YOU GAVE US A TOUR OF YOUR WOOD AND BUILDINGS MADE FROM NATURAL, SUSTAINABLE RESOURCES. THE WAY THAT YOU CARE SO MUCH ABOUT NATURE AND BEING ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY WAS VERY MOTIVATIONAL FOR ALL OF US. I AM SURE THAT EVERYBODY THAT ATTENDED THE TRIP WILL NOW AT LEAST BEAR IN MIND THE ENVIRONMENT WHEN GOING ABOUT THEIR DAY TO DAY ACTIVITIES. WE WERE EXTREMELY IMPRESSED AT YOUR RESOURCEFULNESS IN YOUR BUILDING DESIGNS AND ALSO YOUR SAWDUST TOILET FACILITIES. WE ONLY WISH MORE COMPANIES AND HOUSEHOLDS HAS MINDSETS LIKE YOURS "

YEAR 8, WILLIAM FARR SCHOOL

"YOUR WAYS TO BE ECO-FRIENDLY ARE VERY CREATIVE AND INVENTIVE. THE REST OF THE WORLD SHOULD FOLLOW YOUR LEAD TO MAKE THE WORLD A BETTER, HEALTHIER PLACE"

YEAR 8, WILLIAM FARR SCHOOL

It becomes clear that these sessions instilled in and informed young people about sustainable living approaches. Such attitudes in young people will help give way to change in the future when young people are at the helm of the sustainable agenda in the future.

Other significant achievements were reported through reflective feedback and quantitative data from young people involved in natural building workshops as part of their wider learning. Engaging young people who were already on their career-driven journey for example, architecture students, project staff, were able to harness an existing understanding of the built environment and add additional layers of knowledge around possible ways of integrating sustainability. Also, engaging young people already learning about architecture and the built environment helps instill a deeper level of expertise as prior knowledge was already present. Developing young architects of the future that understand how to incorporate aspects to help sustainable communities thrive was the vision. One student reported:

"I FEEL INSPIRED TO GET MY HEAD INTO A WOOD SCIENCE BOOK AND ARCHITECTURE BOOK AND GET TO KNOW EVERYTHING! THANK YOU FOR EMPOWERING ME AND MAKING ME FEEL I CAN DO IT"

PARTICIPANT ON NATURAL BUILDING COURSE

The project's mission was to empower young people, make them feel they could make a difference and cultivate their confidence. Effects of these efforts can be seen in questionnaires completed by participants, see some results below.

EXAMPLE OF IMPACT:

STRAWBALE BUILDING WORKSHOP YEAR 4 (9 ATTENDEES)
PERCENTAGE OF ATTENDEES THAT FELT THEIR SKILLS IMPROVED:



Significantly 100% of participants on one straw bale building workshop felt they had gained more skills to improve sustainability alongside other personal development reported. Minor improvements to sustainability by all contribute to more sustainable communities. Thus, even these small changes in attitude, project staff hope will extend into sustainable actions and thus contribute to sustainable communities.

A small number of participants also felt inspired by the sessions, providing feedback indicating an appreciation for sustainable communities by wanting to build their own eco-homes in the future.

"I'VE FOUND LEARNING ABOUT LOG HOUSE DESIGN AND PLANNING REALLY INSPIRING. THE WHOLE COURSE MADE ME WANT TO LOOK INTO A LOGHOUSE OF MY OWN. REALLY FANTASTIC COURSE!"

PARTICIPANT ON LOG CABIN COURSE

"I WOULD LIKE TO IN THE NEAR FUTURE BUILD A LOG CABIN, AND I'LL HOPEFULLY BE ABLE TO EDUCATE PEOPLE ABOUT THE BENEFITS OF BUILDING AND LIVING IN A LOG CABIN"

PARTICIPANT ON LOG CABIN COURSE

A strong sense of sustainable awareness came from young people's involvement in renovation projects. Young people were able to look at an area/community and find ways to make it more sustainable and then apply these ideas to physical changes and management. A particular example of this was the sensory garden area at St Francis School, completed as a successful application to Spaces4Change funding (another our Bright Future organisation). Young people were involved from the start through to completion. Young people completed the initial survey, the designs were completed as part of an engagement workshop with the school community, the project solely was managed by a young person, and all work completed involved both external young people and also the school community itself. Works resulted in a physical installation showcasing natural materials into a sensory garden for young people to enjoy, an innovative way to re-imagine underutilised space, 'greening' and bringing nature into a built environment setting. Showcasing recycling and up-cycling ideas in a hand-crafted water feature made from waste kitchen items to waste tyres being reused and planted with sensory plants.

These installations will be in place for many years, being seen by many in the future and inspiring others to adopt similar approaches. Growing Up Green hopes to have inspired the next generation with various activities to work towards sustainable communities and play a part in living more sustainably for the future.



Project Delivery - Aim 4

TO UP-SKILL YOUNG PEOPLE (PARTICULARLY THOSE IN NEED) AND ENABLE ENTRY TO EMPLOYMENT

(TARGET 800 PEOPLE)



KEY POINTS :

- UPSKILLING YOUNG PEOPLE WAS MOST SUCCESSFUL WHEN COMBINING QUALIFICATIONS/ACCREDITATION WITH SHORT TERM ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES OR WORK EXPERIENCE
- PARTICIPANTS APPRECIATED BEING ABLE TO COMPLETE 'LIVE WORK' AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE TO THEIR COMMUNITIES DURING LEARNING
- THE VARIATION OF COURSES/OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED SAW A WIDE RANGE OF YOUNG PEOPLE ENGAGED IN THE PROJECT

WHO WAS ENGAGED?

- HHW STUDY PROGRAMME
- VOLUNTEERS
- WORK EXPERIENCE STUDENTS
- APPRENTICES
- OTHER OUR BRIGHT FUTURE PROJECTS
- OTHER COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS
- SECONDARY SCHOOLS/COLLEGES



Safe Use of Strimmers and Brushcutter Training



Fire Prevention Training

Aim 4 of the Growing Up Green project looked at up-skilling young people to enable entry to employment. Primarily delivered through two main avenues:

- Providing young people the opportunity to gain qualifications/accreditations to assist them in securing employment within the environmental sector. Qualifications varied from 1-day courses through to 18-month apprenticeships. The qualifications for the young people fell into the following categories, Natural Environment, Built Environment and other qualifications (see qualification breakdown for more information).
- Provide work experience opportunities to young people in an environmental setting. Including shadowing and working with countryside rangers for experience within the natural environment and also workplace opportunities with the sustainable design team (for experience in the built environment).

Firstly looking in more detail at qualifications gained by young people and the impact of this. All qualifications achieved benefited young people's employability, adding to their CV's and aiding them in finding further education, volunteering, training, or employment. The courses were mainly environmentally based in either practical conservation, eco-construction, or helping develop essential general skills such as health and safety, first aid and fire awareness that can be used across all sectors. Certificated achievement due to the environment they were delivered within carried strong environmental messages while improving young peoples' skills, knowledge and confidence. At the end of the Growing Up Green project, 866 certificates were achieved by young people, all of which were aimed at helping them move forward in their lives.

A particular success was working with UK Rural Skills and Aim Awards to write the project's bespoke courses specific to the skills young people were learning, rather than using non-specific courses already available that weren't as appropriate. Through UK Rural skills, strawbale building, reciprocal framing, survival skills, and introduction to ecology were design and launched to give industry-specific recognition for the skills learned. In addition Hill Holt Wood worked with the Awarding Body, Aim Awards, to develop more in-depth 3-5 day qualifications in natural building. A progression from the UK Rural skills qualification and giving more in-depth session. These qualifications will still be used in the future by Hill Holt Wood to continue spreading the message of Growing Up Green, Our Bright Future and continue to engage young people in ways to works towards a sustainable future.

QUALIFICATIONS BREAKDOWN :

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

SAFE USE OF STRIMMER AND BRUSH CUTTER	41
CHAINSAW	3
INTRODUCTION TO FORESTRY	9
INTRODUCTION TO ECOLOGY: WOODLAND	170
ECOLOGICAL FIELD STUDIES	176
LEVEL 1 AWARD ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY	98
ROLO - HEALTH AND SAFETY AWARENESS	12
	509

BUILT ENVIRONMENT

CSCS	3
NATURAL BUILDING: STRAWBALE BUILDING	22
NATURAL BUILDING: LOGHOUSE BUILDING	8
MANUAL HANDLING AWARENESS AND SAFE LIFTING TECHNIQUES	16
UK RURAL SKILLS CERTIFICATE: INTRODUCTION TO STRAWBALE BUILDING	85
UK RURAL SKILLS CERTIFICATE: INTRODUCTION TO RECIPROCAL FRAMING	102
UK RURAL SKILLS CERTIFICATE: INTRODUCTION TO SURVIVAL SKILLS	6
	242

OTHER

LEVEL 1 AWARD IN FOOD SAFETY AND CATERING	6
FIRE SAFETY AWARENESS	99
EMERGENCY FIRST AID	10
	115

IMPACTS SEEN

YP GO ONTO APPRENTICESHIPS

YP GAIN CONFIDENCE IN THEIR ABILITIES

YP GAIN EXPERIENCE/QUALIFICATIONS
TO ADD TO THEIR CV'S TO AID IN FINDING
FURTHER VOLUNTEERING/TRAINING/
EMPLOYMENT

YP GAIN KEYS SKILLS FOR THE FUTURE
WHICH CAN BE USED IN THEIR DAY TO DAY
ACTIVITIES



Courses such as Environmental Sustainability not only helped young people gain qualifications but also provided an education on the importance of looking after the world we live in. Young people learnt about current sustainability issues, single use plastic waste, issue with waste in the fashion industry, creating posters/campaigns to raise awareness as part of the course.

Tracking young people after completion of their engagement helps illustrate the impact of this aim. **Three young people went onto employment.** Two of those young people become apprentices at Hill Holt Wood within the organization's land management and forestry sector. These apprentices were trained further in chainsaw operations and have become invaluable members of the team. One of the apprentices has now progressed as a full-time employed forestry ranger and is aspiring to be more involved in all operations (see Billy Case Study page 16). The project also saw **one young person go onto self-employment** as a result of engaging with the project. After achieving accreditation and work experience and having completed an apprenticeship, gave him the tools to explore and launch his forestry and maintenance business (see Charlie Case study page 24). In addition, **19 people engaged have gone onto other opportunities.** After completing sustainable building work, these young people have continued their journey with a local community organisation to continue training in a pathway to construction.



Apprentice completing forestry work

Although up-skilling through accreditation has helped young people progress onto 'next steps,' Growing Up Green emphasised the additional importance of work placement opportunities and Junior Ranger services. These placements, taking place over a longer-term than solely accreditation engagement, meant that project staff could work with young people on a 1-1 basis, identify development areas and work with them to progress their skills to aid employability, yet also work on their personal development.

33 YOUNG PEOPLE COMPLETED WEEK LONG WORK EXPERIENCE
PLACEMENTS WITH THE DESIGN TEAM ON ECO-CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

18 YOUNG PEOPLE COMPLETED LAND
MANAGEMENT WORK EXPERIENCE PLACEMENTS

Some participants were contacted post-project engagement to find out what progression routes were being explored. As part of this some significant feedback responses from parents and professionals working with the young people illustrates the impact of Growing Up Green work experience placements:

"I PROMISED TO UPDATE YOU WITH HOW MY SON (NAME) HAS BEEN PROGRESSING ON HIS QUEST TO BECOME A TREE SURGEON. . . YOU'LL BE PLEASED TO KNOW AFTER SENDING OFF CV'S A GUY PHONED . . WE CHATTED FOR A LONG TIME AS HE'D NOT HAD A HAPPY TIME AT SCHOOL EITHER. HE HAS HIS OWN BUSINESS BUT DIDN'T HAVE A VACANCY BUT PROMISED TO CALL SOME COLLEAGUES. 20 MINS LATER HE CALLED BACK WITH A NUMBER. (NAME) PLUCKED UP THE COURAGE AND CALLED HIM. HE WENT TO TRY IT OUT . . AND HAS BEEN THERE EVER SINCE. IT'S A SMALL OUTFIT AND HIS BOSS WANTS TO TRAIN HIM UP AND WILL PAY FOR THE COURSES HE NEEDS. . . HE IS VERY HAPPY, THE HAPPIEST I THINK I'VE EVER SEEN HIM, AND SO AM I! "

"SO IN 2 1/2 YEARS HE HAS MANAGED TO GET FROM NO QUALIFICATIONS TO BEING EMPLOYED IN THE JOB OF HIS DREAMS. THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO POINT US IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION AND ALL THE ADVICE YOU'VE BEEN GENEROUS ENOUGH TO GIVE. I'M NOT SURE WE'D HAVE GOT THIS FAR WITHOUT YOU. HIS LIFE AND EXPECTATIONS HAVE BEEN TRANSFORMED INTO SOMETHING SO POSITIVE, AT A TIME WHEN HE REALLY THOUGHT HE WOULD NEVER GET A JOB"

PARENT OF GROWING UP GREEN PARTICIPANT

"(NAME) HAS BEEN PARTICIPATING IN THE GROWING UP GREEN PROJECT AT HILL HOLT WOOD ONE FULL DAY A WEEK FOR THE LAST 5 WEEKS. THIS IS AN ONGOING WORK EXPERIENCE AND HAS MADE A HUGE DIFFERENCE TO (NAME)'S LIFE. HE HAS NO PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE OF WORK AND THIS OPPORTUNITY HAS ENABLED HIM TO IMPROVE HIS KNOWLEDGE OF VARIOUS CAREERS AND GROW IN CONFIDENCE, IN A SAFE ENVIRONMENT"

EMPLOYMENT, TRAINING AND EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR, BERNARDS



Lastly, as part of this aim, Hill Holt Wood placed particular emphasis and time on careers/skills events. Young people on the programme were encouraged to attend various careers events, helping guide them along their employment/educational path and also the project team attended careers events engaging with other young people within the county, demonstrating the project and how to get involved and why to get involved. Throughout the project, 718 young people were engaged at these style events.

Throughout the project, up-skilling young people has been seen across various areas. Watching young people gaining confidence in themselves and their abilities while partaking in the programme was very rewarding for staff. While gaining experience and qualifications for future employment participants gained valuable life skills, including; how to work appropriately in public areas, time management, people skills and work ethics, all of which are traits future employers will be looking for.

Case Study - Charlie Kennedy



BEFORE ENGAGING:
LEARNER - FULL TIME STUDENT

INVOLVEMENT IN GUG:
• PROJECT EXCHANGE VISITS
• FORESTRY APPRENTICE LEVEL 2

LENGTH OF TIME ON GUG PROJECT:
3 YEARS

IMPACT OF PROJECT:
NOW SELF EMPLOYED - OWN FORESTRY
BUSINESS

Charlie graduated from school with more than ten GCSE's including German, Psychology and the essential English and Maths. The next step for Charlie wasn't clear, he states ***"I'd always wanted to do something physical, so when my school were pushing for me to go to University to get a degree I felt I had to do something different"***. Desperate to avoid going to college he heard about Hill Holt Wood's study programme and called for a taster day. From day one he realised that he would be gaining practical skills and he signed up immediately, recommending his friends to join him. He chose Level 1 Construction ***"to learn practical skills for the construction industry to help me get a job"***. Charlie's excellent attendance and attitude as a learner, coupled with his good progress, meant he was selected for a Growing Up Green exchange trip to Scotland to visit the Falkland Centre For Stewardship, another Our Bright Future project. During the visit he became particularly impressed by the forestry operations at the site. ***"I'd seen (in Scotland and at Hill Holt Wood) forestry tasks during the year and knew it was something I wanted to do."***

Through Growing Up Green two Forestry apprenticeships became available. Rangers encouraged Charlie to apply and he was selected from dozens of applicants. Charlie gained employment as an apprentice at Hill Holt Wood in 2016 and undertook a Level 2 Work Based Diploma in Trees and Timber. During this time he became a fully trained chainsaw operative, certificated for use of strimmers and brush cutters and even passed a first aid course. More importantly to him; he has gained a wide variety of skills and experience during his work experience under the tutelage of experienced ranger Nigel. Charlie describes it as ***"working under a tough mentor is hard, he expects the very best from me and this pushes me every single day. It's hard to meet his high standards as he has been doing it for so long. But it's a good thing because it means I'm learning the right way to do things."***

Charlie worked closely with Nigel and the forestry department on jobs that are critical to the business. Hill Holt Wood relies on the results of thinning and conservation activity on a daily basis; in the construction of new eco-buildings, fire wood sales to the public, bespoke products and much more. ***"Nigel is an old school forester and he knows how to do things properly, low stumps are a must and he will inspect everything we do. In the future I hope to run a forestry course and teach young people the things I'm learning here."*** Charlie was also delighted to be part of the reciprocal project exchange visit by the Falkland team that had inspired him.

Described by his mentor as ***"Still a young lad with a lot to learn,"*** but ***"doing well and trying hard,"*** Charlie's ambition was to stay in Forestry for his future.

CHARLIE LEARNT TO DRIVE, AN ESSENTIAL SKILL FOR ANY YOUNG FORESTER AS WOODS ARE OFTEN AWAY FROM BUILT UP AREAS. AFTER COMPLETING HIS APPRENTICESHIP HE PROGRESSED TO SET UP HIS OWN FORESTRY BUSINESS WITH A FRIEND. HE IS NOW CURRENTLY RUNNING 'BROTHERWOOD TREES AND LANDSCAPING - GARDEN AND TREE MAINTENANCE SERVICE'.

"I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'D BE DOING IF I WASN'T DOING THIS, BUT I KNOW IT WOULDN'T BE AS GOOD."

Project Delivery - Aim 5

INCREASE AWARENESS OF SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES



KEY POINTS :

- PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF THE REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE MESSAGE HAD THE GREATEST IMPACT
- EVENTS SUCH AS LITTER PICKING, AS WELL AS MAKING A POSITIVE CHANGE TO THE ENVIRONMENT, HELPED SHAPE ATTITUDES

WHO WAS ENGAGED?

- COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY STUDENTS - LINCOLNSHIRE AND NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
- WORK EXPERIENCE STUDENTS
- PRIMARY/SECONDARY SCHOOLS
- HILL HOLT WOOD STUDY PROGRAMME



Reciprocal framing workshop



Strawbale building workshop

Overlapping heavily with many other aims, Aim 5 of the Growing Up Green project focuses on increasing awareness of sustainability issues and the knowledge and skills to address them. All activities delivered as part of the project could arguably be reported as increasing awareness of sustainability issues. However, to provide clarity to activities assigned to this aim, this report focuses on the reduce, reused recycle message and activities focused on increasing awareness of current sustainability issues through installations, art and demonstrations.

Increasing awareness of sustainability issues offers endless possibilities for engagement activities, but project staff felt that looking at issues such as plastic waste and litter, as current severe problems facing the world today would be a sufficient means to start questioning thinking and attitudes as they are relatable subjects easily changeable by anyone. An example of an activity completed was constructing two plastic bottle greenhouses with school students, a great example of recycling in action and holding about 1000 plastic bottles in each greenhouse. Project staff encouraged the school to collect the plastic bottles from waste produced at their sites, raising awareness of issues with waste. Once enough had been collected, project staff ran construction workshops to construct the greenhouses.



The impact of this activity can be seen in the physical greenhouses situated on the school sites. The greenhouses, now being used for growing vegetables, are permanent facilities used to teach young people about horticulture and act as a constant reminder of the importance of recycling. Another significant activity to highlight the importance of recycling and also highlight issues around single-use plastic involved the University of Lincoln Student's Union collecting waste bottles and single-use plastic on the University campus. The bottles then stuffed with the plastic (ECO bricks) were used by young people in construction, acting as reusable building blocks.



The Eco-Construction within the wall (illustrated above) is located in a public composting toilet. Eco-bricks are shown through truth windows accompanied by an information plaque, educating the public using the toilets about sustainability issues. Creating long-standing entities that the wider community can see broadens the reach of the project.

In a similar way to the other aims, natural building features as a vehicle to raise awareness. Natural building demonstrations raised awareness of the current issues with waste in the construction industry. Natural materials within buildings are compostable/reusable and act as a carbon sink, demonstrating important messages to young people. Some attendees who participated in a demonstration provided reflective feedback that demonstrates this impact:

" WE ARE WRITING TO YOU AND HILLHOLT WOOD TO SAY A HUGE THANK YOU FOR HELPING TO MAKE LINCOLN'S FIRST EVER COUNTRYSIDE SHOW IN THE CITY A GREAT SUCCESS BY PROVIDING A FANTASTIC AND EDUCATIONAL DEMONSTRATION OF BUILDING WITH STRAWBALES. THANK YOU FOR GIVING YOUR TIME, IT WAS WONDERFUL TO HAVE A FUN AND INTERACTIVE WAY TO SHOW AN EXAMPLE OF SUSTAINABLE BUILDING METHODS. YOU HELPED TO CREATE A REALLY FUN, FAMILY DAY WHICH BROUGHT THE WHOLE COMMUNITY TOGETHER, CONNECTING EVERYONE WITH THE COUNTRYSIDE, FOOD AND FARMING. THE EVENT ALSO HELPED CONTRIBUTE TO LINCOLN'S SUSTAINABLE FOOD PARTNERSHIP PROJECT AND PROVIDED PEOPLE WITH A GLIMPSE OF WHAT THEY CAN EXPECT TO SEE AS OUR CITY FARM DEVELOPS "

GREEN SYNERGY, LINCOLN

" THE STRAWBALE CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY FROM HILL HOLT WOOD OFFERED A FASCINATING OPPORTUNITY TO EXPLORE SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL BUILDING. I DIDN'T KNOW YOU COULD USE STRAW TO BUILD HOUSES. IT LASTS LONGER AND IT IS EASIER TO REPLACE! "

POACHER EVENT, LINCOLN

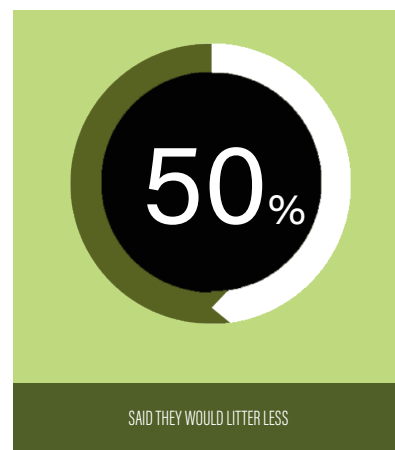




Larger-scale events/demonstrations also played a part in delivering this aim. A wide-scale litter picking event was hosted in a local ancient woodland, a notorious bad litter site. Thirty-four attendees help complete a clean-up day, removing litter from public access routes and improve the local environment. Over 50% of participants who completed the questionnaire post engagement (14 attendees) felt that they would litter less after being involved, and significantly 2/14 admitted to littering often. In addition, 60% said they would be willing to be involved in similar events in the future.

Attitude changes were evident from this feedback and also a subsequent impact was the positive impact this had on the local environment. 796kg of litter was picked during the clean-up day, equating to approximately 335-tonne p.a. co2 saving.

Growing Up Green plans to continue events such as this in the future and emphasise to young people that small changes, for example, not littering or reusing a plastic bottle rather than purchasing a new one can all make a difference towards a cleaner planet and healthier future.



TEAMS	WEIGHT
K+M	60.8 kg
RED	93.5 kg
YELLOW	22.3 kg
WHITE	98.65 kg
BROWN	42.2 kg
HHW STAFF	95.7 kg
YELLOW	144.3 kg
BROWN	172 kg
WHITE	61.8 kg

Case Study - Amy Clarke



BEFORE ENGAGING:
LEARNER - FULL TIME STUDENT

INVOLVEMENT IN GUG:
• NVQ LEVEL 3 IN DESIGN
• RECEIVED SPACES4CHANGE FUNDING
• YOUTH FORUM MEMBER
• PROJECT EXCHANGE VISITS

LENGTH OF TIME ON GUG PROJECT:
2 YEARS

IMPACT OF PROJECT:
PLACE AT LINCOLN COLLEGE AND NOW AT
UNIVERSITY - BUSINESS MANAGEMENT DEGREE

Amy always wanted to pursue a career in Architecture, yet having found sixth form too difficult she dropped out to spend a year on Hill Holt Wood's study programme learning Heritage Wood craft. ***"I was drawn to HHW due to my passion for the environment and conservation and I've always had an interest in alternative lifestyles and been inspired by wildlife from David Attenborough documentaries. It was my passion for the environment and love for creativity that helped me to decide I wanted to pursue a career in environmentally friendly architecture"***

Nearing the end of Amy's heritage woodcraft course, it was clear she had dedication and drive to reach her dreams, independently studying A-levels alongside her course. Hill Holt Wood and the Growing Up Green project team wanted to enable Amy to gain some experience and the qualification she needed to progress onto the next stage and so designed a bespoke Level 3 NVQ in design course, focused on sustainable architecture and design, to be delivered by the in-house design team, Design:HHW.

"The year started with re-designing HHW's reception which gave me the experience in using Architectural software which I otherwise wouldn't have learnt. I really enjoyed this because it was a live project that has now been completed to my design, which is incredibly fulfilling" She also enjoyed helping to run straw bale building workshops, completing marketing to potentially start her own business and finally completing the sensory garden project (funded by Spaces4Change) at St Francis School.

"The Sensory Garden project has given me a varied spectrum of experience and knowledge in the field I'm passionate about, while helping other students ... and giving back to a deserving community. It's difficult to express how grateful I am to HHW for opening the qualification, as beforehand it looked like I had to sacrifice my aspirations to do what I love and passion for the environment because mainstream education didn't suit me"

During her NVQ studies Amy applied to Lincoln College to study Foundation Art and Design and received a conditional offer. ***"I couldn't have gained this offer without the support from HHW through my qualification and with help on my portfolio. This will then enable me to go to University to study Architecture and I really hope to return as an Architectural intern in the future. Eventually I would like to help bridge the gap between mainstream construction methods and cheaper more cost effective option and most importantly environmentally friendly construction methods"***

AMY WENT TO LINCOLN COLLEGE AND COMPLETED HER COURSE. THE FOLLOWING YEAR SHE WAS ACCEPTED TO STUDY ARCHITECTURE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL BUT HAS SINCE DECIDED TO EXPLORE HER PASSION FOR BUSINESS AND IS CURRENTLY STUDYING A BUSINESS MANAGEMENT DEGREE WITH OPEN UNIVERSITY.

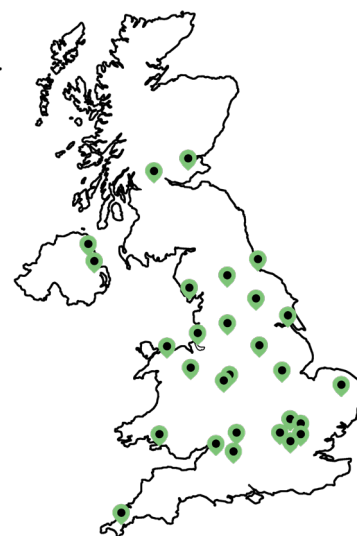
"I HONESTLY DON'T THINK I WOULD HAVE EVER GOT THERE WITHOUT YOU HAVING FAITH IN ME, AND I CAN'T EXPRESS ENOUGH HOW GRATEFUL I AM FOR THAT BECAUSE IT HELPED ME GAIN THE CONFIDENCE TO PURSUE WHAT FEELS RIGHT FOR ME."

Project Exchange Visits

Relationships and visits with the other Our Bright Future projects played a pivot role in the delivery of Growing Up Green. During project planning the Growing Up Green project staff committed to visiting as many other projects as possible during the project course. Very earlier on the team identified the benefits of such collaborations, sharing lessons learned with other projects while learning from others simultaneously. Growing Up Green visited other Our Bright Future project sites, met the project staff and young people, shared information with each other, learned from one another and improved their own practice.

SHARE - LEARN - IMPROVE

With Our Bright Future being a national movement, completing these visits and linking into this network enhanced the feeling of connection between projects driving the same vision for young people and the environment. This strengthened connections/relationships and increased partnership opportunities while enabling young people to meet and build connections with other like-minded individuals.



27/30 PROJECTS VISITED

57 YOUNG PEOPLE (44 MALE, 13 FEMALE) WENT ON THESE VISITS

All project exchange visits were unique, some day trips but primarily residential visits. Project staff and young people would shadow the Our Bright Future project, get involved in activities on-site, meet other young people and leave staff and young people with a sense of being part of a wider movement.

After each project exchange visit, a poster was created as part of the Growing Up Green social media campaign 'We Came Together...' You can see a selection of these posters on page 30. These were used to spread the Our Bright Future message but also showcase the core connection that brought the projects together, whether that be the love of nature, to be heard by the government or to explore the digital age.

Impacts of these visits can be seen by feedback received from young people who attended but also through the outcomes/modifications in project delivery that evolved as a result. See below some impacts:

"I REALLY ENJOYED MY TRIP TO LONDON BECAUSE I'M NOT NORMALLY A GARDENER AND I'M NOT ON THAT COURSE AT HILL HOLT WOOD AND IT WAS REALLY GOOD TO DO SOMETHING DIFFERENT. THEY SHOWED ME HOW TO USE A PICK-AXE TO BREAK UP SOIL, WHICH I'VE NEVER DONE BEFORE. IT WAS REALLY HARD GROUND... BUT I WAS DETERMINED TO DO IT. I WANT TO DO MORE PRACTICAL LIKE THIS AND WOULD LIKE TO GO ON MORE TRIPS TO LEARN NEW SKILLS"

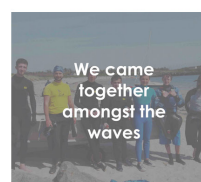
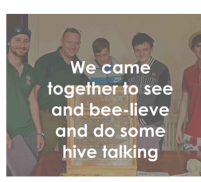
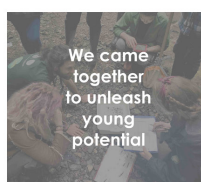
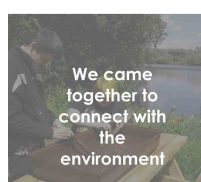
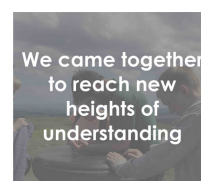
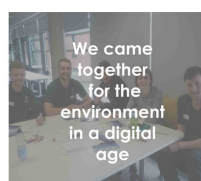
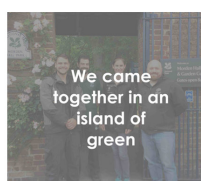
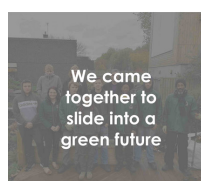
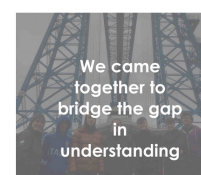
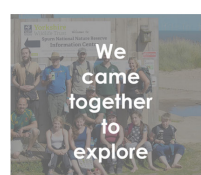
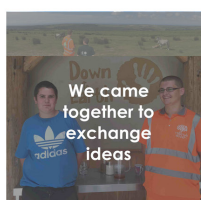
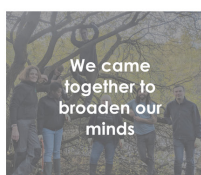
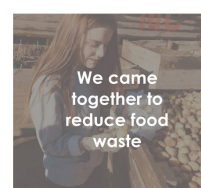
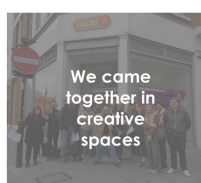
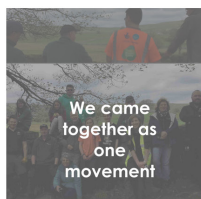
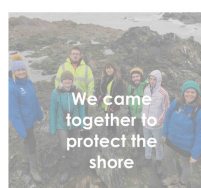
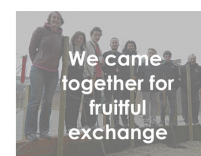
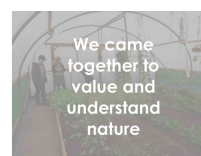
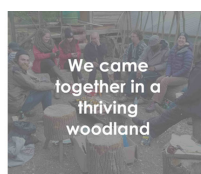
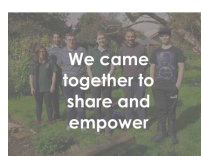
YOUNG PERSON WHO WENT ON PROJECT EXCHANGE VISIT

IMPACTS

- OPEN THE EYES OF YP TO OTHER PLACES, LIFESTYLES AND OPPORTUNITIES THAT THEY MAY HAVE NOT EXPERIENCED BEFORE - PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT
- GROWING UP GREEN INCORPORATED DIGITAL APPROACHES INSPIRED BY THE ENVIRONMENT NOW AND BELFAST HILLS
- ADOPTED NEW IDEAS OF HOW TO ENGAGE HARD TO REACH LEARNERS
- YOUNG PEOPLE LEARNT NEW SKILLS - BUILDING PLANTERS, BEE KEEPING ETC
- YOUNG PEOPLE FROM GROWING UP GREEN APPLIED AND SUCCESSFULLY RECEIVED FUNDING FOR OTHER PROJECTS - SPACES4CHANGE (FUNDED SENSORY GARDEN AT SPECIAL NEEDS SCHOOL), THE ENVIRONMENT NOW (FUNDED OPERATION SAWDUST - USING WASTE SAWDUST FOR HEATING)
- YOUNG PEOPLE FROM OTHER PROJECTS COMPLETED GROWING UP GREEN ACCREDITATIONS
- HELP OTHER OUR BRIGHT FUTURE PROJECTS BUILD CONNECTIONS FOR THE FUTURE - ULSTER WILDLIFE AND THE YOUTH SERVICE IN NORTHERN IRELAND

"THESE OPPORTUNITIES ARE WHAT WILL STIMULATE CHANGE FOR THE FUTURE AND ENCOURAGE YOUNG PEOPLE TO JOIN THE OUR BRIGHT FUTURE MOVEMENT. WE HOPE THAT GIVING YOUNG PEOPLE THE CHANCE TO TRAVEL AND SEE OTHER PROJECTS WILL HELP INSPIRE THE YOUNG ENVIRONMENTALISTS OF THE FUTURE"

GROWING UP GREEN PROJECT STAFF



Covid Impact

In March 2020, life changed for everyone globally due to the emergence of Covid-19. Unfortunately, Hill Holt Wood was no exception where the impact of Covid-19 was felt as well. The Growing Up Green project wasn't free from disruptions and adaptations needed to be made in order to still reach young people and allow them to interact with their environment. The pandemic may have changed some of the approaches and processes - but the strategic objectives remained the priority: people, skills, experience with positive lasting change.

Being an education provision, Hill Holt Wood remained open throughout the pandemic to vulnerable young people and young people of key workers. The site had to be closed to external parties to keep those young people and the Hill Holt Wood staff as safe as possible. This was a difficult decision as, since its emergence in 2002, Hill Holt Wood had always been open to the public seven days a week, but the safety of everyone using the site was paramount. Therefore, slight changes were made to keep reaching young people and allowing them to interact with the environment. Hill Holt Wood continued to engage with young people but on a smaller scale. Large groups could no longer access the site, but the same quality of delivery was provided to those that could. The young people accessing the site received a more personable experience as each individual received more time 1:1 time with our delivery staff. It was important that though large numbers of young people couldn't be reached, the young people who could gain more from the experience. Growing up Green enabled Hill Holt Wood to add more value to the young people's training courses through providing extra qualifications adding value to their experiences.

A large proportion of organisations were able to move to online learning programs to continue delivering. Growing Up Green struggled with this as a large proportion of Hill Holt Wood's young people became hard to reach through this platform due to a lack of access to the digital world (no internet, no computers etc). As a result, this made engaging young people difficult, and an unreliable means of achieving the aims set out in the Growing Up Green project. Instead, it was decided to target the young people who attended the site, adding more value to their vocational courses. Additional Pastoral support was also set up for those accessing the site and those unable to access the provision, allowing young people to contact the organisation with any issues they faced via teams. Regular contact was kept with all young people throughout the pandemic and support was provided to those in need through this difficult time.

Due to safety reasons and Covid-19 guidelines, the Hill Holt Wood site needed to be kept closed to the public to keep the young people and staff safe through the pandemic. During the pandemic, the importance of exercise was emphasised alongside people's wellbeing during this difficult time. As a result, the decision was made to keep our Norton Bigwood site open to the public. This site has been an integral part of the Growing Up Green project helping to engage young people in the environment as they, in return, have worked to enhance its ecosystem. Hill Holt Wood committed itself to maintain access points, walkways and litter bins on the site allowing individuals, couples and families to use the site to gain valuable exercise in an environmental setting, aiding their wellbeing and allowing them to keep in contact with the natural world.

As restrictions started to ease and as a nation things started to adapt to the 'new normal' it was decided that delivering face-to-face workshops to young people in a safe environmental setting was required to maximise engagement while keeping people safe. In response, a Tipi was purchased for the Growing Up Green project. Removable sides allowed workshops to be run, providing shelter where young people could still feel in touch with the natural world while following covid-19 guidelines and keeping everyone as safe as possible.

Like many organisations, the challenge during the COVID-19 pandemic changed how many programmes and interactions were delivered, and impacts of this will be seen in many years to come. Yet, notwithstanding these factors, through innovation, drive, and commitment across the business, Hill Holt Wood will continue to deliver successful education, development, and engagement for the future.

Project Legacy

From inception, the Growing Up Green project was centered around sustainability and legacy. Making sure that the work started as part of the project could be continued after the five-year delivery. Sustainability in both being able to continue the physical management and delivery, in the maintenance of previous work and in the messages being shared.

The live artist studio project on-site at Hill Holt Wood that formed the basis of most natural building workshops, also forms part of the longer-term sustainability plans. Once complete, the development will attract environmentally curious artists to hire this space to complete their work. While on-site, the artists will be asked to work with young people on-site to inspire environmental art and even potentially create installations for the woodland. It is hoped that in years to come, the artist studio business plan will form a new income stream for the organisation and help continue funding Growing Up Green legacy work in the future. Other physical installations will also mark an ongoing standing legacy, from sustainable buildings to raised beds, bee-friendly gardens and bug hotels. All of which will continue to be used, thrive with flora and fauna and act as a vehicle to open the eyes of young people in the future.

Another legacy is seen in the structure of the Growing Up Green evaluation. Alongside this report, the project staff created a 'Guide to Growing Up Green' accompanied by videos to truly illustrate the importance of the natural and built environments and what small changes and interactions can be made at home and be made in people lives easily. This book will be distributed physically to the other Our Bright Future projects, linking into the project exchange network and share, learn and improve relationships fostered over the years and also be available digitally on the Hill Holt Wood and Our Bright Future websites for all to access, use and be inspired by. This book will continue to inform and inspire after the Growing Up Green project and continue to spread the message of Our Bright Future in many years to come.

Guide to Growing Up Green is available here:



Hill Holt Wood has also successfully received funding for a new project, 'Network with Nature,' funded through the Government's £40 million second round of the Green Recovery Challenge Fund, a multi-million-pound boost for green jobs and nature recovery. This 21-month programme aims and engage the community in nature, and as part of this delivery framework, education and young people feature strongly in the delivery. With this fantastic opportunity, Hill Holt Wood can continue its works with young people and the environment. Moreover, Hill Holt Wood has been supporting the kick-start scheme, currently employing three countryside operatives. The organisation aspires to give these young people employment through the Network with Nature project and thus continue the legacy of Growing up Green and Our Bright Future by supporting young people into green sector jobs.

Monitoring of sites is planned to continue post-project completion to survey the flora and fauna attracted to the sites due to Growing up Green. This will help form future management plans and continue to increase biodiversity within the local community.

Conclusion

The Growing Up Green project has engaged thousands of young people in both the natural and built environments leaving structures, installations and change of attitudes in many communities. Whether young people have been involved through natural building workshops, pond dipping activities, or providing countryside services in the local area, they have gained practical skills and built confidence and self-esteem and seen much personal development. All activities aimed to change attitudes and increase understanding of how young people can lead change and action positive differences to the environment for a brighter future. Through studying the impact of each aim within this report, it is clear that the Growing up Green project has helped young people and the environment. Through quantitative data and reflective accounts, present in this report, the project has successfully set out what it planned to achieve. Allowing young people to:

- gain new skills
- engage with their environment
- become inspired to be more sustainable
- upskill to help employment routes
- increase awareness of sustainability issues

The project has demonstrated that young people become enthused and inspired when involved in environmental projects, especially when given a live brief to contribute to. They care about communities and wildlife and it is possible to open their eyes to small changes and ways they can help in all settings, be it school, home or in their purchases and use of the earth resources. Growing Up Green has changed young people's attitudes while improving the environment and they will now go on to make a difference for us all in the future.

LESSON LEARNT AND CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

- As the basis of activities, live projects motivate young people and give them a great sense of pride working towards a wider effort.
- Project variation from one-off through to long-term, from networked to accredited engagement, in both natural and built environments, offered a vast range of opportunities and thus saw a considerable variation of young people engaging with the project.
- Including more young people in the Growing Up Green steering group, at an earlier stage, would have been beneficial. The increased involvement from young people would have helped adjust, modify and develop new and innovative ways of engaging throughout the years. Having young people organise and plan activities may have increased engagement, with young people responding to their peer group.
- The evaluation framework for Growing Up Green provided some difficulties when analysing the findings. Still offering a flexible approach yet considering the impact of such flexibility and subjectivity allowances within the framework would have been preferred to compare data sets. Additional quantitative data questionnaires would have enabled further assessment of the project impact.
- The overall aims of Growing Up Green significantly overlap and therefore analysing them independently proved problematic in terms of success. Many activities would have contributed to more than one aim. Therefore, allocating these to one aim to avoid double counting activities meant that the activities allocated to the assessment criteria were more restricted. Looking at the project's overall impact and individual aims has been the approach due to this, yet in the future consideration should be taken when formulating aims to ensure they are clear, concise and assessed via a clear set of activities.

Appendix 1

Total Young People Engaged	5328
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Male	Female
3111	2217
58%	42%

11- 14 Yrs.	15 - 19 Yrs	20 - 24 Yrs
2779	2226	323
52%	42%	6%

One Off	Short Term	Long Term
4100	781	447
77%	15%	8%

Networked*	Certificated*
3000	800
4462	866
84%	16%

Target
Number Engaged
Percentage Split

Full-time Employed	Part-time employed	Part-time student	Full-time student	Apprentice or other vocational training	Volunteering Full/Part Time	Self-employed	Not in employment, education or training	Other
8	2	37	5166	62	2	0	35	16
0%	0%	1%	97%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%

Number Engaged
Percentage Split

White English/ Scottish/ Welsh/ Northern Ireland	Asian	Black/ African/ Caribbean/ Black UK	Other Ethnic Group	Prefer not to say
998	51	40	10	4229
19%	1%	1%	0%	79%

Number Engaged
Percentage Split

Disability	Not Disabled	Prefer not to say
273	920	4135
5%	17%	78%

Number Engaged
Percentage Split

No Religion	Christian	Buddhist	Hindu	Jewish	Muslim	Sikh	Other religion	Prefer Not to say
222	154	2	4	0	13	2	5	4926
4%	3%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	92%

Number Engaged
Percentage Split

*Networked Engagement that did not result in accreditation
*Certificated Engagement resulting in achieving a qualification

