



Breathing Places Communities Newsletter

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Edition 4

'Breathing Places' Grants Awarded

In June this year, The Big Lottery announced its third phase of funding with grants totalling £250,480 awarded to 28 projects across Northern Ireland. These grants will enable groups to transform local spaces into Breathing Places for the benefit of wildlife and people. The projects are already well underway and they include a new wildlife school for young people in Derry, a

community garden in the heart of West Belfast and the transformation of Daisyhill Wood into a community resource, to mention but a few. The Ulster Wildlife Trust is working in partnership with CVNI and BBC to provide advice and support for the Breathing Places community projects.



Breathing Places Projects

Friends of Ecos Park

Ballymena Borough Council used their Breathing Places grant to establish the 'Friends of Ecos Park'. The group was set up to help Ulster Wildlife Trust manage the nature park for wildlife. The group has been busy over the past few months carrying out a range of practical conservation tasks such as planting wildflower meadows, woodland management, pond clearance and providing homes for wildlife to mention but a few.



Drumduff & Drumnakilly

Drumduff & Drumnakilly Community Group at Sixmilecross in Omagh, have enlisted the help of Conservation Volunteers for their project. CVNI are building a boardwalk that will wind its way through a birch woodland and out onto a peat bog before returning to the Flax Mill Community Centre. Several viewing platforms and interpretive panels will also be installed which will allow local people and school children to learn about the rich heritage of the area and the unique fauna and flora of the threatened habitat.



Millford Cutting

Ulster Wildlife Trust used the Breathing Places grant to improve access and increase biodiversity and community involvement at Millford Cutting Nature Reserve in Armagh. A new fenced path and interpretation panels were installed, wildflower meadows planted and a new pond created.



SWATs — Springwatch Action Teams



Also in June, BBC Springwatch Action Teams were recruiting volunteers to roll up their sleeves and get their hands dirty. The volunteers had just one weekend to transform six unloved pieces of land into Breathing Places.

Omagh

In Omagh, a SWAT team led by CVNI worked with Omagh West Community Group to breathe new life into a railway memorial garden, which had become badly overgrown.

While the volunteers worked, a Breathing Places Festival organised by Omagh Council got underway just across the road. Organisations such as Ulster Wildlife Trust, CVNI, RSPB and Loughs Agency provided wildlife activities for all to enjoy, while Hugo Duncan played the tunes and pleased the crowd.



Castledawson

This SWAT site was at an area of waste ground beside Riverside Housing Estate, straddling the banks of the Moyola River. It was led by CVNI and supported by NIHE, Lough Neagh Wetlands Advisory Committee, Fire Service and the local Community Development Association. The site was cleared, pathways and raised beds put in, wildflower meadows planted and seating provided. Hundreds of local people embraced the challenge and also took part in the festival activities being delivered by Ulster Wildlife Trust, RSPB, BBC and Moyola Anglers.

Crumlin

On 6th June, local schools, Antrim Borough Council, Rivers Agency, DCAL and the local community joined forces with CVNI to create a unique Breathing Place at the centre of Crumlin Glen. Litter was removed from the river and glen and a butterfly garden was created. Children also enjoyed nature walks and activities led by Ruth Wilson, Biodiversity Officer with Antrim Borough Council and the RSPB.



Derry

The Breathing Places city had the huge task of two SWATs in just one day.

Strathfoyle—At Strathfoyle housing estate, CVNI were helped by NIHE, Londonderry Port, Derry City Council and the local community, to transform an area blighted by fly-tipping into a butterfly garden in just 4 hours. Local school children came en masse to lend a hand before making their way to Strathfoyle Library to take part in wildlife activities and workshops laid on by Ulster Wildlife Trust, RSPB and Loughs Agency.

Kilfennan— In the afternoon the team moved to Kilfennan Park and set to work transforming a plain grassed area at the entrance into a wagon wheel of plants and herbs, to attract birds and insects. A chestnut paling fence was also erected and the grass turf removed from the garden was used to design a raised face on the opposite side of the entrance. Derry City Council also organised a festival with lots of activities to coincide with the SWAT.

Northern Ireland Children's Hospice

Royal Mail volunteers held their SWAT to coincide with the Hospice 'Sibling Day' so that families could get involved. The volunteers put in new seating and planted a bog garden and mini wildflower meadows.

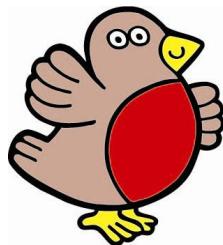
While they were busy at work Ulster Wildlife Trust delivered environmental activities and bird-box building sessions for the children. There were also art workshops and musicians and a party to end it all off, with pizza and goodies for the children.



For advice and information contact:

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We're on the Web!
bbc.co.uk/breathingplaces



The 2008 winter term 'Do One Thing' activity is '**Feeding Wildlife**'. This activity will help birds through the winter by providing them with food and water.

All that you need to get started can be downloaded from the BBC website:
bbc.co.uk/breathingplaces/schools.

The Teacher's notes will help you to plan the best way to feed birds and to create suitable food from waste and recycled materials. You will also find lots of interesting facts about feeding wildlife along with ideas for related activities in a range of curriculum areas.



Upcoming Events

Ulster Wildlife Trust

Nuts about Squirrels at Kilbroney Park—Rostrevor

Saturday 28th September: 2pm-4pm

Explore the red squirrels habitat and find out why they can still be found at Kilbroney Park. Run in conjunction with Newry & Mourne District Council.

Nuts about Squirrels at Gortin Glen Forest Park—Omagh

Saturday 28th September: 2pm-4pm

Celebrate Red Squirrel Week and discover more about this much loved native species with fun indoor and outdoor activities for all the family.



To book a place contact Ulster Wildlife Trust on: 028 4483 0282 or email: events@ulsterwildlifetrust.org

National Trust

Crom : Fungi Foray and Feast

Saturday 28th September: 11-5pm

Discover the fascinating world of fungi at Crom. A full day event with a morning collection session, lunch and an afternoon ramble. £10 adult and £5 child. To book tel: 6773 8118 or email: crom@nationaltrust.org.uk

Brent Bonanza : Strangford Lough

Saturday 4th October : 1.30-3.30pm

View the wonderful spectacle of the return of thousands of Brent Geese and other birds newly arrived on Strangford Lough after their epic journey from Arctic Canada, Greenland, Iceland and Russia. For more details contact Anna Stamp on: tel 028 4488 1411.

RSPB

Cormorants

Monday 13th October: 8pm at Greenmount College, Antrim

Join RSPB Antrim local group for a talk by Susie Brown of Quercus Institute, Queen's University. Susie's current research involves the sometimes controversial but interesting topic of the impact of cormorants on fisheries.

Red Kite Project

Monday 27 October: 7.30pm at Friends School, Lisburn

Join Lisburn RSPB local group for a talk by Robert Straughan, RSPB's Red Kite Project Officer on these magnificent birds of prey.

For more details tel: 028 2076 2373.