

Boston Big Local Report, January – March 2023

Lincolnshire Community & Voluntary Service – Environmental Volunteering

The Friendly Bench

Thanks to the funding from Boston Big Local, we have continued to hold regular events at the Friendly Bench outside Ancaster Court in Broadfield Lane, helping to connect local people and brighten up the area. On 16th January we invited local people to come along and learn more about the RSPB Great Garden Bird Watch. Participants made bird feeders and put together bird box kits made by the Men's Shed, and we had Bird ID sheets for them to look at. Due to it being very cold, we finished the event in Ancaster Court lounge. In March we planted at the bench and had a bring and buy sell. The Men's Shed kindly made us some raffle prizes: a bird table, a mini bug home and a wooden garden man, and we raised £58.50 for Marie Curie Cancer Care. With the funding given to us by BTAC we have bought wood oil so that we can apply preservative to the bench as soon as weather allows and stones so that the flowerbeds can be mulched.



Naturehood –

St. Boltoph's Community Garden

On 4th February we had a lovely morning in St. Boltoph's Community Garden. We were joined by Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust and participants helped build a bug hotel (pallets kindly donated by South Lincs Pallets), made bird feeders, made bug homes and made wildflower seed bombs. The Men's Shed made us a roof to the bug hotel so that we could plant in this and have a living roof. They came along on the day and have volunteered to help in the garden in the future, they have offered to lay the shed base ready for a shed and greenhouse to be built and they are going to build compost bins for the community garden.



The Shine funding for the Naturehood project has now come to an end. However, some of the funding has been allocated to pay for an interpretation board in Central Park (I will have help with the design and content of this from Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust and Transported), and some funding is allocated to pay for a willow weaving workshop in Central Park to create a living willow weave arch at the entrance to the naturehood area we have created in the corner of the park.

Central Park, Community Day with Transported

We received funding of £502 from ASDA to hold a naturehood event in Central Park and together with funding from Boston Big Local, we put on free activities in the park on Saturday 25th March 2023. We also created a mini wildflower meadow in the corner of the park and built a bug hotel.

We worked with Transported as their Town Jewels project ties in very well with the Naturehood project. Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust and RSPB Frampton Marsh also joined us. The bug hotel was designed and made on the day by expert woodcarver and Boston-born Peter Tree, with some wonderful input from the team and Boston residents. Residents could also make a bird feeder, wildflower seed bombs, wildlife habitats, plant wildflower plug plants and go on a bug hunt. We had in the region of 100 visitors on the day.

The Men's Shed made us some hedgehog homes kits for the wildlife area and also some tree trunk slices to be installed in the corner of the park – these can be lifted up (they have a handle on them) so that children can see the bugs that have found a home under them. The Men's Shed came along to help on the day.



We also invited Geoff Moulder Community Garden to join us as they are keen to attract new members. They had a stall and planted vegetable seeds with visitors to the park.

Age UK – 20th March 2023

I went into the Boston Friendship Group in March, and we made some wildlife habitats which will be installed in Central Park. The group also made some wildflower seed bombs, some to take home with them to plant wildflowers at home, and some for the wildlife area in the park. The group would like to look after one of the raised beds in the Park and I will be working with them to design a planting scheme, plant the bed and then maintain it.

A quote from the leader of the Boston Friendship Group (Age UK): A wonderful, hands-on morning that the whole group enjoyed. Something for everyone of all abilities, so everyone felt included and loved the fact that their work would be out in the community for all to see. A huge thank you from all of the Boston Friendship Group – they were still talking about it this week!



The Friendship Group at Age Uk – the group enjoying making wildflower seed bombs.

Litter pick along the Haven – January 2023

On Saturday 7th January we held a litter pick along the tidal Haven. We had 15 people help out on the morning, including Stephen Bromby from ASDA who brought along refreshments, and we collected 20 bags of litter plus lots of large items of rubbish including a mannequin. A report on the litter pick appeared in the Boston Standard.



Litter Pick in Broadfield Lane – February

In February a small group from Ancaster Court and the surrounding area joined in a litter pick to clean up the local area. We collected 6 bags of litter.



Sure Start Children's Centre

I held monthly sessions in Central Park during January, February and March, for Sure Start Children's Centre. The sessions were for the pre-school children and their parents/carers. The group got involved in making wildlife habitats, making bird feeders, going on a bug hunt and planting wildflower plug plants in the park.

Fydell House Mindful Gardening

In February I worked with the Activities Consultant for Fydell House: Gateway to Boston's Cultural Quarter project, a National Lottery funded project to restore this amazing Grade I listed building. We worked with members of Feathers Teens, an educational group for neurodivergent teens with mental health considerations. During the workshop the young people made a sensory planter, made wildlife habitats for Fydell House gardens, and made wildflower seed bombs and bird feeders to take home with them.



Litter Picking Equipment

With funding from Boston Big Local I was able to supply litter picking equipment to 12 volunteers so that they can litter pick their local areas.

Future Plans

Litter Picks

1st April – we will be holding another litter pick along the tidal Haven.

I am working with ASDA to organise a town litter pick in May to make Boston "Fit for a King" as part of the Coronation celebrations.

I am currently in conversation with Network Rail to address the litter along railway land. I have a site meeting with them in April to see if we can tackle this problem together.

Friendly Bench – We are working on a project to install painted pebbles in concrete around the bench. The pebbles are being painted by various groups around Boston representing all age groups including Age UK, Memory Lane Group, Carlton Road Primary School, Ancaster Court and Boston College. The pebble designs will be something connected to the coronation. We will then hold a celebration event at the Friendly Bench on Friday 5th May starting at 10.00 am. Carlton Road Primary School will bring a class of children to

the bench to sing for us and then join us for the morning, we will have activities for everyone in the community to take part in followed by refreshments.

Good News Story

As part of our Friendly Bench project, we have worked with Carlton Road Primary School, and they have expressed an interest in bringing the children into Ancaster Court to mix with the older residents – reading to them or singing to them. This is something that Ancaster Court is also keen to do. We have therefore invited a class of children to the Friendly Bench on Friday 5th May and this will be the first opportunity for the two groups to come together and hopefully from here it is something that both the Primary School and the older residents of Ancaster Court will gain benefits from for years to come.

Jackie Lane, 5th April 2023