

Speir's Old School grounds Beith



greenspace scotland
North Ayrshire Council
Youth Making Beith Better
Scottish Natural Heritage

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Executive Summary

The report provides an evaluation of the social return from investing in the reinstatement by volunteers of the Coronation Garden at Spier's Old School Grounds. Restoring the gardens to their original glory has provided the local community with a unique place of environmental and heritage significance in which they can take pride and can visit regularly to gain health and wellbeing benefits from being outdoors. Through taking part in restoration activities, the volunteers, who were mostly young people, gained new skills, improved their health and fitness levels, increased their confidence and self-esteem, enhanced their knowledge and awareness of the surrounding environment and of how to preserve their natural heritage.

This report forms part of a series of four Social Return on Investment (SROI) analyses of urban nature sites. The analysis was undertaken during 2010/11 by greenspace scotland supported by the North Ayrshire Council Ranger Service and Youth Making Beith Better.

Social Return on Investment (SROI) provides a principled approach that can be used to measure and account for a broad concept of value. It enables the social, environmental and economic benefits a project delivers to be calculated.

The analysis identified those most affected by the activity and recorded and valued some of the changes they experienced. These include:

- the community who use the gardens have a local place of special environmental interest in which they can experience the outdoors
- young volunteers have acquired new horticultural skills, feel better, are fitter, know more about the environment and are more likely to go outdoors
- students from John Watt College have improved their chances of gaining employment
- young people who are members of Youth Making Beith Better have achieved public respect and recognition
- pupils at local schools have been able to learn about the environment in a practical way in an outdoor classroom
- North Ayrshire Council Ranger Service has gained greater recognition within the authority, been able to attract new funds through partnership working and staff have improved their skills
- new approaches and partnership opportunities have been developed e.g. gardening support to a care home is now provided by Youth Making Beith Better

It was found that every £1 invested generated around £20 of benefits (applying a sensitivity analysis puts the benefits figure in a range from £14 to £21).

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1. Introduction

The report provides an evaluation of the social return from investing in the reinstatement by volunteers of the Coronation Garden at Spier's Old School Grounds. The report looks at the social value created by the project, from the perspective of those for whom the project made a difference.

The work carried out for this report was undertaken during 2010/11 by greenspace scotland supported by the North Ayrshire Council Ranger Service and Youth Making Beith Better.

1.1 Background to the SROI of urban nature sites programme

In 2010, Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) provided funding support to enable greenspace scotland to test the application of the Social Return on Investment (SROI) approach on four urban nature sites.

The aim of programme was to apply SROI at four urban nature sites and to inform the future application of SROI to urban nature sites. The programme objectives were to:

- test the SROI approach for urban nature sites (refining the methodology as required)
- develop a broader understanding of the wider social outcomes of urban nature sites
- establish a core set of indicators and proxies for valuing urban nature sites
- develop case studies and guidance material to support the wider application of the SROI approach at other sites
- build the skills and capacity of site managers, project partners and SNH to carry out SROI analysis of sites and to enable them to use this to support the case for continued (or new) investment

More information on how these objectives were fulfilled, learning and recommendations from the programme can be found in the programme overview report¹.

This analysis explores the value of a defined activity in Spier's Old School grounds. It is important to stress that this SROI report reflects and values only one of the many activities that take place on this site. The cumulative value of the myriad of activities that urban nature sites can offer would be likely to be significantly higher.

The SROI analyses in relation to urban nature sites are part of a more comprehensive body of evidence that has been produced by greenspace scotland on the potential of using an SROI approach to demonstrate the value of a wide range of greenspace activities in different settings. Further information on this, and other SROI developments, can be found at www.greenspacescotland.org.uk/SROI/

1.2 Spier's Old School Grounds

Spier's Woodlands are owned by Spier's Trust and maintained by North Ayrshire Council. They extend over 16.5 acres and contain a wide variety of flora and fauna. The area has been recognised as both a local biodiversity site and a Scottish Wildlife Trust Wildlife site. Only the school grounds remain as the buildings were demolished in 1984. The woodlands and gardens are open to the public. In recent years many community activities have taken place which were designed to improve the site and to promote use. These have included: a community clean up organised by the Beith Community Council, bulb and tree planting by

¹ The Programme Overview report and other project reports in the series can be downloaded at www.greenspacescotland.org.uk/urbannatureSROI/

Gateside Primary School and the construction of new paths by Ardrossan Academy pupils. Support has been provided through Friends of Spier's - a locally based membership group.

In 2010 funding from North Ayrshire Council and Forestry Commission Scotland enabled a network of paths to be provided and tree felling operations to take place. These developments have greatly enhanced the appearance, accessibility and safety of the site.

Due to its central location, and proximity to Eglinton Country Park, North Ayrshire Council considers Spier's Old School Grounds as a satellite hub for the Garnock Valley.

Comprehensive plans for the site based on significant levels of community participation and participation by volunteers have been drawn up. These include the following:

- provision of a picnic area
- BCTV health related activities
- geo-caching
- commemorative stone preservation
- provision of allotments
- signage and interpretation boards
- wildlife and plant surveys
- restoration of the Coronation Garden

There had been difficulties in the past with incidents of vandalism on the site which could be attributed to young people. As part of the Council ethos of early intervention and prevention it was decided to seek to involve young people wherever possible in the planned activities.

It was felt that given the predicted timescales for the various activities and the availability of resources the scope of the SROI analysis should be limited to one of the planned activities. The intention was that the learning from the analysis of a specific activity could be applied to future SROI analyses of all of the activities occurring within the Old School Grounds. Focussing on one aspect of a range of activities, whilst necessary given the level of resources, is challenging as great care has to be taken to ensure that all the changes claimed related to the activity that forms the scope and not to other activities that may be taking place concurrently. This is considered again in section 6 when the contribution made by others to the rate of return is assessed.

The chosen activity that formed the scope of this SROI analysis was the reinstatement of the Coronation Garden. The rationale for this decision was as follows:

- it was happening within a defined timescale that matched that of the urban nature sites programme
- it involved children and young people engaged in both formal and informal education
- it included the significant participation of adult volunteers.

After several meetings of a steering group comprising representatives of North Ayrshire Council (Countryside Ranger, Ground Maintenance and Planning Services) the scope was defined. Initially the individuals concerned were very much focussed on their own departmental priorities and working practices and sometimes struggled to consider issues from the perspective of their colleagues. This was initially very challenging and could have resulted in limited progress being made. However, these difficulties were overcome and the group developed a much better understanding of the demands placed on other services within the Council. A potential weakness of the group was transformed into one of its

greatest strengths. As one member commented *“we have managed to establish a good relationship which will last”*.

It should be emphasised that this analysis relates solely to that particular defined activity. Potentially all the other activities that are on-going or planned will also generate value.

1.2.1 The Coronation Garden

The Coronation Garden was created in 1953. Its central feature is the ‘Living Fossil’ tree, the slow growing Dawn Redwood. The tree was originally surrounded by a key shaped edged path network along with other ornamental plantings.

The restoration relied heavily on the involvement of local schools and youth groups. The ranger service has a good relationship with local schools and informal youth providers and has a commitment to working in partnership with the community.

1.3 Policy Context

The participation of local schools and youth groups in the restoration project has enabled the young participants to get new practical and social skills. For those pupils who participated the garden has acted as an ‘outdoor classroom’.

In 2010, the Minister for Skills and Lifelong Learning: *“Outdoor education can be a fantastic tool for bringing learning to life, stimulating young people’s interest in a way that compliments and enhances teaching in the classroom”*²

The initiative is in line with the Curriculum for Excellence and will help achieve the national outcome that young people are *“successful learners; confident individuals; effective contributors and responsible citizens”*.³

The project will provide volunteering opportunities for both adults and children that will deliver national strategies locally. In the European Year of Volunteering, the importance of volunteering to the Scottish Government is emphasised not only in the Volunteering Strategy⁴ but also in the publication *A Vision for the Voluntary Sector - The Next Phase of our Relationship*⁵.

As Cameron Sharp, Country Parks Manager, commented *“Volunteers will become an increasing source of support to the provision of a host of public services within North Ayrshire, including the furtherance of environmental awareness and conservation aims, through active conservation tasks developing skills and improving general fitness within the community”*.

North Ayrshire Council country parks section, community development and grounds maintenance (Street Scene) have identified the restoration of the Coronation Garden in their local Conservation Management Plan⁶. This plan seeks to deliver at a local level a number of key Government policies, most notably:

² [Great outdoors helps young Scots learn](#)

³ Delivered through various Scottish Government strategies: [Skills for Scotland: A Lifelong Skills Strategy](#), [More Choices, More Chances: A Strategy to Reduce the Proportion of Young People not in Education, Employment or Training in Scotland](#), [Determined to Succeed National Update - March 2011 - Publications - Publications](#)

⁴ [Volunteering Strategy](#)

⁵ [A VISION FOR THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR: THE NEXT PHASE OF OUR RELATIONSHIP](#)

⁶ North Ayrshire Council Educational Services : Council Plan Priority (Clean and Green)

- increased health and wellbeing through facilitating access to and promoting enjoyment and understanding of the outdoors through education and interpretation
- encouraging young and older people to be active citizens by helping to build stronger and safer communities and providing opportunities for volunteering
- tackling social inclusion by working with less advantaged groups and communities
- supporting sustainable economic development by maintaining, managing and promoting infrastructure for tourism
- enhancing the natural and historic environment for future generations, including designated sites and greenspace close to where people live

1.4 Social Return on Investment

Social Return on Investment (SROI) provides a principled approach that can be used to measure and account for a broad concept of value.

SROI measures social, environmental and economic change from the perspective of those who experience or contribute to it. It can be used to identify and apply a monetary value to represent each change that is measured. The resultant financial value is then adjusted to take account of contributions from others. In this way the overall impact of an activity can be calculated and the value generated compared to the investment in the activities. This enables a ratio of cost to benefits to be calculated. For example, a ratio of 1:3 indicates that an investment of £1 in the activities has delivered £3 of social value.⁷

Whilst an SROI analysis will provide a headline costs to benefits ratio, it will also deliver a detailed narrative that explains how change is created and evaluates the impact of the change through the evidence that is gathered. An SROI analysis is based on clear principles and progresses through set stages. SROI is much more than just a number. It is a story about change, on which to base decisions, and that story is told through case studies, qualitative, quantitative and financial information. The principles of the SROI approach are set out in Appendix 2.

There are two types of SROI analyses: a forecast SROI predicts the impact of a project or activity and an evaluative SROI measures the changes that it has delivered. This report is an evaluative SROI.

1.5 Purpose of the analysis

North Ayrshire Council country parks section, community development and environment and related services wanted to be able to demonstrate the value that occurs as a result of community-led environmental activities and volunteering. They felt that by doing this they would be better placed to attract future sources of funding, be able to demonstrate the benefits that their service delivers in both its strategic and enabling roles, and raise the profile of the service.

“It has always been difficult to clearly identify the financial benefits to local authorities of holistic, environmental land management and conservation. There are many things which we value, as societies and individuals, which cannot be easily captured in economic terms”. Cameron Sharp, Country Parks Manager North Ayrshire Council

⁷ In SROI, ‘social’ is taken as a shorthand for social, economic and environmental value

2. Scope and stakeholders

2.1 Project activity

The project sought to restore the Coronation Garden to the way it was when first established in 1953. This was achieved by providing assistance from the ranger service to support volunteers, both young and old, to carry out the necessary activities which included reinstating borders and paths, clearing areas and planting.

2.2 Scope

This is an evaluation of the social return on investing in the reinstatement of the Coronation Garden which forms part of Spier's Old School Grounds. It covers the period 1 April 2010 to 30 March 2011. It focuses on the work that was undertaken by adult volunteers and young people, from local schools and youth clubs, to reinstate the gardens to their original condition.

2.3 Stakeholder identification and consultation

A steering group, led by the Ranger Service, comprising representatives from all of the participating council services and Youth Making Beith Better was established to oversee the project and assist the SROI analysis. The group identified all those who were likely to experience change as a result of the project (the stakeholders), considered the nature of any changes that might be experienced and explored how such changes might be measured. At the end of the discussions a list of those organisations or individuals for whom it had been possible to identify significant impacts for was drawn up (the 'included' stakeholders). Details about the rationale for including these stakeholders is provided in Appendix 1.1. More detail about these stakeholders can be found in Appendix 1.2.

A list of those whom it was thought would not experience significant change, and hence it was not considered appropriate to contact for further discussion, was also identified (the 'excluded' stakeholders). More details on this group and the reason for their exclusion can be found in Appendix 1.1.

The steering group was committed to the process of inclusion and engagement; they recognised that as well as being essential elements of the SROI process such an approach also offered organisational benefits:

"Most importantly from our perspective, if North Ayrshire Council's involvement is more sustainable, then understanding and explaining these impacts and then responding to them is critical. SROI analysis can help clarify impacts and focus the response. Responding to stakeholders means that they can influence the organisation; so the organisation's governance will be better related to stakeholders' requirements." Cameron Sharp, Country Parks Manager North Ayrshire Council

A consultation plan was established for each of the identified stakeholders using methodologies that best suited the individual needs of each stakeholder. Consultation was carried out by staff from greenspace scotland, the Countryside Ranger Service and Youth Making Beith Better. Appendix 1.3 sets out the engagement method for each stakeholder.

Stakeholders were consulted initially to confirm the identified outcomes and to explore additional outcomes, which could be either positive or negative. This was done through discussion and structured questionnaires. Stakeholders were consulted at all stages of the process and were sent draft findings for comment and review.

3. Theory of change from the perspective of stakeholders

The aim of the activity was to restore the Coronation Garden, which are a focal point of Spier's Old School Grounds, to its original state. By doing this the unique flora of the gardens would be preserved, local people would be more likely to visit the grounds and would enjoy the health and wellbeing benefits of being outdoors. The gardens would encourage a sense of community pride by providing local people with a unique visitor attraction of environmental and heritage significance in their area.

It was envisaged that as a result of the taking part in restoration activities young people and adults would gain new skills, improve their health and fitness levels, increase their confidence and self esteem and have increased knowledge and awareness of their surrounding environment and of how to preserve their natural heritage.

3.1 Youth Making Beith Better (YMBB)

Ten members of the YMBB group of young people decided to enter the John Muir Award. In their proposal they indicated that each member would spend a total of 80 hours in undertaking the four challenges required. Three of these related to activities at the Coronation Garden. These were identified by the group as identifying, tagging and recording the unusual trees and plants in the garden, planting new species and improving and creating paths. As a result of carrying out these tasks the participants reported new skills in using tools and increased knowledge of plants and how to care for them. Their wider knowledge of the surrounding environment, its heritage and the need to preserve it had also improved. The group spent many hours together outdoors and established new friendships. All stated that being outdoors made them feel happier, more confident and relaxed. Many members of the group indicated that they felt healthier and physically fitter.

The group took part in regular questionnaires, surveys and group discussions as part of both the SROI analysis and John Muir Award.

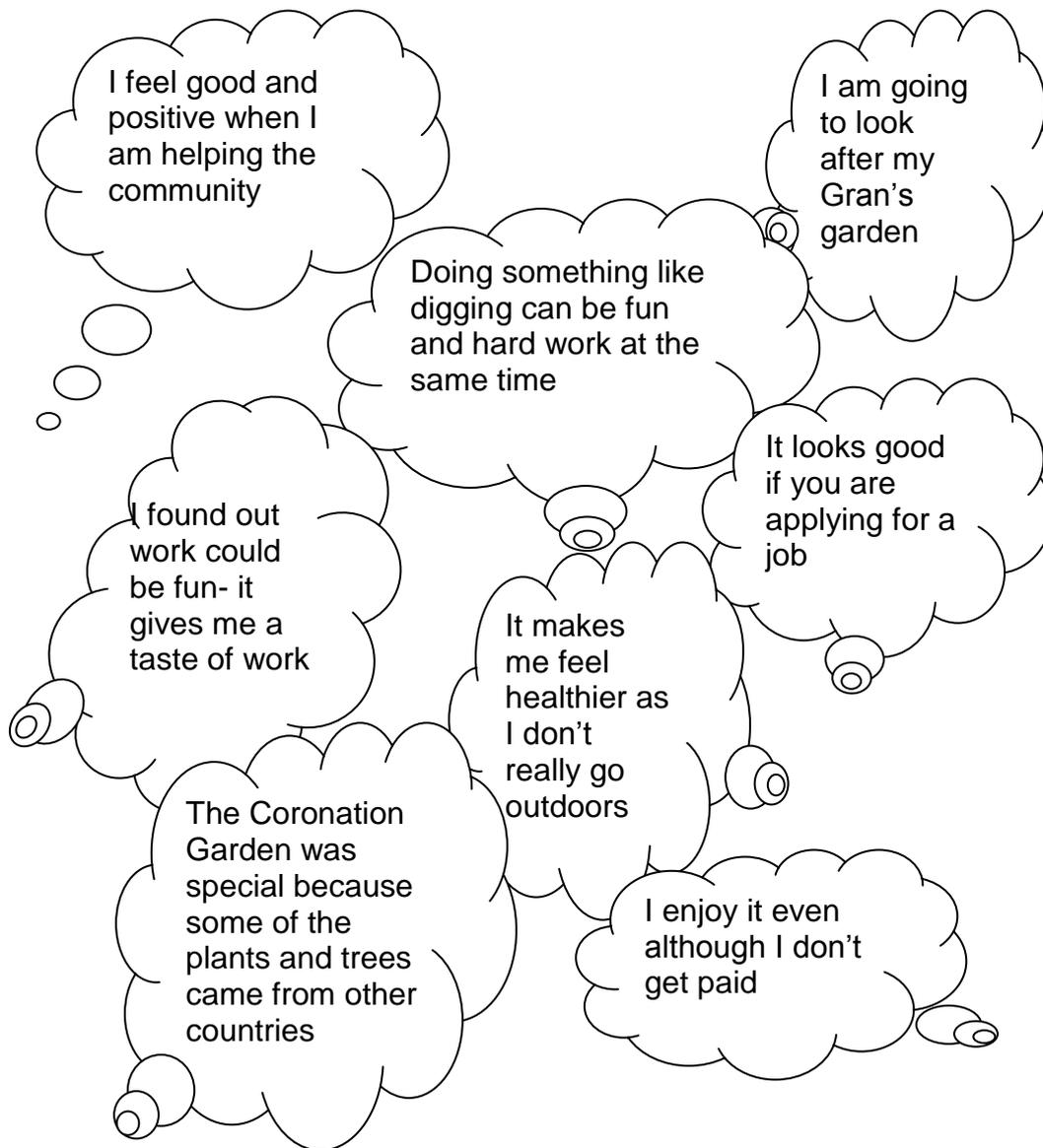
The group were supported by youth workers and the countryside ranger. This allowed them the opportunity to interact with adults in an informal way and to benefit from the ethos and social values of these adults. In this way new role models were available to the young participants.

Some members of the group are now involved in gardening activities in the grounds of a nearby care home; this is providing opportunities for intergenerational learning. The young people participating have stated that taking part in the Coronation Garden development project gave them the skills and confidence to progress to this project.

As part of the award challenge the group were required to share their experiences with others. They have done this by relating their experiences to their peers and the wider community using written and oral approaches. As a result of this they have come into contact with groups and individuals with whom they had never previously engaged. Their work has received public recognition and the group have won several awards. As result the group have a very strong sense of pride and achievement and feel valued.

Figure 1 (overleaf) captures some of the views from members of YMBB.

**Figure 1: Helping restore the Coronation Garden has made all the difference to me
.....some views from Youth Making Beith Better**



3.2 James Watt College students

Sixteen students with special needs took part in horticultural and building activities. The changes pupils experienced were very similar to those already reported for the Youth Making Beith Better group. Students learned how to use tools safely and acquired basic horticultural skills. The time spent together outdoors has resulted in more social contact and new friendships. Individuals stated that being outdoors made them feel happier, more confident and relaxed. Some members of the group reported improved fitness levels and said that they felt healthier as a result of the manual labour. All felt their employment prospects had been enhanced. The students can now demonstrate that they have some of the recognised key employability skills, particularly in relation to understanding the workplace and their responsibilities as employees. This will assist their chances of gaining future employment. Figure 2 (overleaf) captures some of the views from students at James Watt College.

“I did not know what I wanted to do or why I was at college! The Environmental project that I did was an eye opener to me. First of all they treated me as an adult, this I never had when I was at school. Also the lecturer allowed the class as a group or individuals to make decisions for ourselves, instead of being told what to do all the time. The lecturer and person, who drive the bus and is part of the team, have had quiet words with me to guide me when working at the Coronation Garden. How to deal with my problems. Working by myself, working with others who sometimes didn't want to do any work and sometimes wasted everybody's time. They have changed my whole attitude to work, I love working with my hands and was taught how to use gardening tools safely. I have not missed a single lesson. We did a great job on clearing the garden and finding the original pathways as a group, even those who were frightened of work. I have been given the opportunity to be a man and to have a good feeling about what I do.” Student

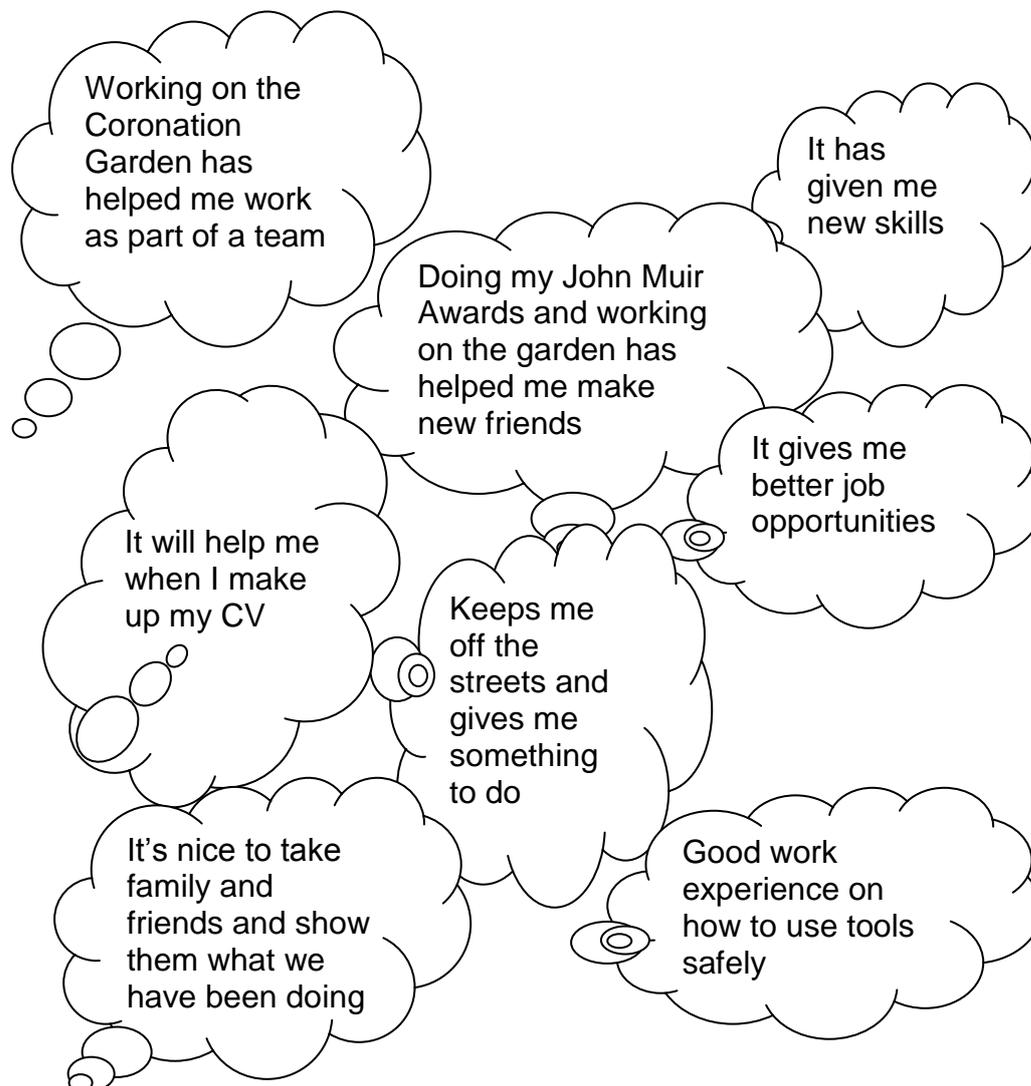


Figure 2: Helping restore the Coronation Garden has made all the difference to mesome views from James Watt College Students

3.3 Adult volunteers

Five volunteers, from diverse backgrounds, took part in the project alongside other activities at Spier's. The motivation for participation varied. One of the volunteers had recently retired, whilst another was seeking employment. All of the volunteers reported increased levels of confidence, improved fitness levels, the acquisition of new skills and increased understanding of the environment.

“Acting as a volunteer has allowed me to develop new skills and make use of existing ones. I have improved my network of social contacts and established links that may increase my opportunities for gaining paid employment. I have the satisfaction of seeing my achievements and knowing that my work is appreciated. The Ranger Service has involved me with the production of risk assessments for work that has been undertaken and I have experienced the procedures for enrolling volunteers. Working with the Ranger Service has allowed me to show my commitment to work situations by exhibiting good timekeeping and team work, showing a high standard of work, following health and safety guidelines, etc. The physical exercise involved has been beneficial and I have enjoyed the opportunities for meeting and working with other people. Volunteering with the Ranger Service has resulted in my establishing other contacts, such as with the BTCV Green Gym” Volunteer

3.4 Geilsland School

The project offered pupils the opportunity to take part in outdoor activities and to get a perception of the wider environment. Many boarders were completely unaware that they lived in close proximity to a woodland area. The pupils gained practical skills in relation to conservation, horticulture, path laying and using tools safely. Equally importantly they were able to engage better with other young people who were on site, each other and supervising adults. All of the participating youngsters had severe emotional problems and found socialising with others extremely difficult; this manifested itself in individuals exhibiting challenging behaviour. Supervising staff were able to identify and apply creative ways of managing challenging behaviour using an outdoor setting. As a result of this staff learned new approaches and techniques which can be replicated.

The project provided new partnership opportunities which will endure and will form the basis of further joint working between the ranger service and the school.

The school has increased its profile in the local community and pupils are now perceived as making a positive contribution to sustaining and improving the local environment for the benefit of others.

3.5 Forestry Commission Scotland

Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS) provided Woodlands In and Around Towns (WIAT) funding to North Ayrshire Council to enable them to fell trees and build paths. This opened up the school grounds for safe public access by the whole community. The funding allowed FCS to achieve its strategic objectives of working with local people to support them to access their local woodland in order to promote physical activity, improve health and wellbeing, and increase community ownership and respect for woodland. Evidence shows that visiting woodland on a regular basis can improve health, both physically and mentally, by providing opportunities to take exercise and experience nature.⁸

⁸[http://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/pdf/SERG_Valuation_of_F4P_in_Scotland.pdf/\\$FILE/SERG_Valuation_of_F4P_in_Scotland.pdf](http://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/pdf/SERG_Valuation_of_F4P_in_Scotland.pdf/$FILE/SERG_Valuation_of_F4P_in_Scotland.pdf)

The total funding for all of the activities at Spier's Old School Ground was £70,000. Taking into account the amount spent on tree felling and paths on a pro rata basis, which takes such factors as accessibility and geographical area into account, it was agreed to allocate £25,000 of this spend to works associated with the Coronation Garden. This is an extremely conservative estimate.

3.6 North Ayrshire Council

North Ayrshire Council Ranger Service provided support and guidance to the volunteers and young people. This allowed them to demonstrate the wider benefits of practical conservation and habitat preservation to young people with whom they would normally have worked.

Having a resource such as the Coronation Garden and the living fossil tree on their doorstep encourages members of the local community to visit Spier's Old School Ground and to learn more about their environmental heritage. It also encourages people of all ages to access the area and get the health and wellbeing benefits that result from outdoor recreational activities.

The project offered engagement opportunities and the chance to share learning and experience at different levels – internally within the Council service departments and externally with adults and young people in the community. As a result it was an excellent example of good practice and has allowed the ranger service to raise its profile within the Council as a leader of innovation and to promote new ways of partnership working. By being able to work externally with new client groups, staff gained new skills in relation to community engagement and evaluation.

3.7 Friends of Spiers (FoS)

The group undertakes many activities on the Spier's Ground site and found it challenging to differentiate between those changes that had occurred as a result of general site activities and those that resulted through work at the Coronation Garden. The raised profile of the conservation programme and YMBB has had a knock-on effect on the profile of the Friends' group and the work that they undertake. Potentially the group may be able to recruit new members but there is no evidence of this yet. Early indications are that having a successful project completed, that lies within their ambit, will enable the group to secure funding for other initiatives.

3.8 John Muir Trust

As a result of participating in the John Muir Conservation Award Scheme the young people have a much better awareness and understanding of the value of wild places and of the need to conserve them for future generations. This will benefit both the local environment and the people who live there. The John Muir Trust enabled the young people to increase their understanding of their relationship with nature and helped to create individuals who wish to maintain the environment. Whilst this will have an impact on the individuals concerned, and the area in which they live, it will have limited impact on the Trust as an organisation. It is possible that the publicity the young people gained will influence public awareness of the Trust locally and may result in increased membership and possibly future donations - but it has not been possible to evidence this. The Trust's contributions to the awards scheme are materials and a record book. The costs of these are negligible and have not been included in calculating the social return on investment.

Staff from the Ranger service had already a training course on the John Muir Awards.

3.9 Gateside Primary School

The project offered opportunities to involve children in outdoor activities as part of a range of activities at Spier's Old School Grounds. Pupils increased their understanding of the environment in an outdoor classroom setting and learnt about horticulture, plants and wildlife. The eco-school was able to increase its levels of wider community involvement.

3.10 Local community

The project offered members of the local community access to a place of environmental interest and significance in which they could gain the health and wellbeing benefits associated with outdoor exercise. It was anticipated that civic pride would increase from living in close proximity to a unique environmental attraction. Prior to the general restoration works the grounds and gardens had been inaccessible.

4. Inputs and outputs

4.1 Investment (inputs)

The main source of funding for the project was capital investment from WIAT funding. It was used to fell trees and establish a paths network which permitted safe access to the Coronation Garden. Other contributions relate to costings which reflect the time committed by staff and volunteers.

Other contributions have not been valued as the cost of any materials was minimal and tools were already available for general use. The costs of teaching staff who supported pupils and students taking part has also not been valued as this was provided from their contracted hours and would have been available regardless of location. The funding was provided as follows:

Stakeholder	Description	Amount
Forestry Commission Scotland	Tree felling and creation of paths through WIAT fund, depreciated over 10 years to find input for one year calculated on a pro rata basis to reflect contribution to area associated with Coronation Garden	£2,500
Volunteers	Time	£912
Youth Making Beith Better	Staff time (19 hours)	£200
North Ayrshire Council (Street Scene)	Cost savings in reduced maintenance	-£750
North Ayrshire Council (Ranger Service)	Staff time (35 hours)	£420
Total inputs for the year 2009/10 under study		£3,282

4.2 Outputs

The outputs describe, in numerical terms, the activities that took place as a result of the inputs. These activities or outputs will lead to change (or outcomes) for each of the identified stakeholders. The outputs identified are:

Stakeholder	Relevant outputs
Local community	500 visits take place on an annual basis The projection was based on a day's sample count and adjusted to take account of seasonal variations based on data from other local sites
Youth Making Beith Better	10 participants each spent an average of 60 hours restoring the gardens
James Watt College students	16 participants each spent an average of 48 hours restoring the gardens
Geilsland School	4 pupils each spent an average of 16 hours restoring the gardens
Gateside School	20 pupils each spent an average of 6 hours planting and related activities in the garden
Volunteers	5 volunteers spent in total 912 hours restoring the gardens
North Ayrshire Council	Staff spent 5 days attending meetings, preparing committee reports and delivering presentations

5. Outcomes and valuation

Detailed results from the stakeholder engagement and information collection are represented in the impact map information in Appendix 1.

5.1 Outcomes evidence

The changes (or outcomes) which were identified, following consultation with each stakeholder, are detailed below along with information on how the outcome was measured (indicators). All of the outcomes reported were positive. The outcomes which had to be excluded as it was impossible to measure them are listed in Appendix 1.4.

Stakeholder	Outcome	Outcome Indicator	Source of quantities or data
YMBB Participants (age 14-15)	participants gained horticulture skills and can apply them safely (planting, path clearing, using tools)	number of participants reporting new skills	stakeholder interviews
	young people have spent additional time outdoors undertaking physical tasks and feel fitter	number of participants reporting additional time spent on physical activity outdoors and improved fitness	stakeholder interviews
	young people have the opportunity to engage with adults in an informal supportive environment	number of young people reporting increased contact with adults	stakeholder interviews number of visits to residential homes
	community recognition of activities undertaken by young people results in pride and sense of achievement	number of awards (Young Citizen of Year) and mentions in local press	reports, press stories and feedback to project workers
	young people more aware of the environment and role they can play in conservation and going outdoors more	number of participants gained John Muir Awards	number of awards presented and time recorded outdoors
	participants have an increased sense of wellbeing	number of participants reporting feeling happier	stakeholder interviews
James Watt College participants	participants gained horticulture skills and can apply them safely (planting, path clearing, using tools)	number of participants reporting new skills	stakeholder interviews
	young people have spent additional time outdoors undertaking physical tasks and feel fitter	number of participants reporting additional time spent outdoors and improved fitness	stakeholder interviews

Stakeholder	Outcome	Outcome Indicator	Source of quantities or data
James Watt College participants (continued)	participants have an increased sense of wellbeing	number of participants reporting feeling happier	stakeholder interviews
	have learned what it is like to work and have experience that can be included in CV/referees	number of participants reporting improved employability skills	stakeholder interviews
	young people more aware of the environment and role they can play in conservation and going outdoors more	number of participants reporting increased awareness of environment number of additional hours spent outdoors	stakeholder interviews
Volunteers	volunteers have an increased sense of wellbeing, confidence and feel fitter	number of volunteers reporting feeling better and improved fitness	stakeholder interviews
	volunteers gained horticulture skills and can apply them safely (planting, path clearing, using tools)	number of volunteers reporting new skills	stakeholder interviews
	volunteers are more aware of the environment and conservation role they can play and go outdoors more	number of volunteers reporting increased awareness of environment number of additional hours spent outdoors	stakeholder interviews
	additional skills, experience and confidence gained have enhanced chances of employment	number of volunteers reporting applying for jobs and using skills acquired from activity in application process	stakeholder interviews
Participating schools (Geilsland and Gateside)	increased participation in environmental activities	number of participants taking part in outdoor sessions	stakeholder interviews
	provision of outdoor learning context for core skills	number of teaching sessions delivered outdoors	stakeholder interviews
	increased awareness of school within the community	number of public events attended	Geilsland and Gateside School statistics

Stakeholder	Outcome	Outcome Indicator	Source of quantities or data
Geilsland School	opportunity to address behavioural issues in a creative way	number of individual behaviour targets met	Geilsland School statistics
North Ayrshire Council Ranger Service	staff have acquired new skills in relation to joint working resulting in personal and professional development	number of joint meetings with others, new initiatives and reported skills	Council reports and individual performance appraisals
	improved relationships externally and internally	amount awarded in new LEADER funding initiative	funding application
	greater recognition for Ranger service within the Council for piloting a new approach	mentions in Committee reports and minutes level of increased staff awareness in other departments/	Council reports
Local Community	place to go for a walk and feel better	number of participants reporting walking and feeling better	stakeholder interviews
	place to experience nature and learn more about the environment	number of participants reporting increased awareness of environment number of additional hours spent outdoors	stakeholder interviews

5.2 Valuation

Financial proxies have been identified which allow a monetary value to be placed on the changes experienced by individual stakeholders. Wherever possible, stakeholders have been consulted on the appropriateness of these measures. In identifying the value given to a financial proxy an attempt has been made to link the financial amount to the level of importance placed on the change by individual stakeholders. In cases, where a very wide range of values are possible, for example in the case of young people's sense of pride and achievement as a result of community recognition, a choice of proxies was given.

The valuation methods for each outcome are detailed in Appendix 1.5.

6. Social return calculation and sensitivity analysis

6.1 Duration and drop off

Before the calculation can be finalised a decision has to be made as to how long the changes produced by the restoration of the Coronation Garden will last. In an SROI analysis the length of time changes endure is considered so that their future value can be assessed. The question to be answered is *'if the activity stopped tomorrow, how much of the value would still be there?'*

Many of the benefits gained by stakeholders have been the acquisition of new skills and it is expected that these will last three years. This is in line with several certified practical skills assessments (e.g. first aid) in which competency levels are expected to last for a defined period. Other benefits have been considered to endure for a year as there is little supporting evidence that they will last longer.

The gardens and supporting paths network will be available for the community to use and benefit from for at least five years and perhaps longer. This is also an assumption and has been considered in the sensitivity analysis.

Outcomes which will continue to have a value in future years cannot be expected to maintain the same level of value for each of these years. This has been dealt with by assuming that the value will reduce or 'drop off' each year. Given the lack of research to provide an accurate figure for drop off it has been assumed to be 30%. This is a reasonably high percentage and means that at the end of the three year period only 10% of the identified changes will remain. As this is an assumption it was tested in the sensitivity analysis.

Appendix 1.7 sets out the duration and drop off assumptions.

6.2 Reductions in value to avoid overclaiming

As well as considering how long changes will last, it is necessary to take account of other factors that may impact on them. The recorded change might have happened regardless of the activity, something else may have made a contribution to it or the activity may have displaced changes taking place elsewhere. In considering the influence these factors exert a realistic approach should be adopted. The aim is to be pragmatic about the benefits actually provided by the Coronation Garden and to recognise that the value it creates is influenced by other factors. The SROI methodology does this by reducing the value calculated for each outcome on a percentage basis.

6.2.1 Deadweight

A reduction for deadweight reflects the fact that a proportion of an outcome might have happened without any intervention. In this case some young people from Youth Making Beith Better indicated that they would have taken part in outdoor physical activities regardless of the restoration project. The detailed assumptions about deadweight are contained in Appendix 1.6.

6.2.2 Attribution

Attribution recognises that external factors, or the contribution of others, may have a part to play in the changes that are identified. There are many on-going activities in Spier's Old School Grounds of which the restoration of the Coronation Garden is only one. Accordingly some of the benefits that have accrued will have arisen from taking part in another activity at Spier's Old School Ground. In relation to the John Muir Award only 75% of the activities related to work at the Coronation Garden and so the appropriate level of deduction has to be made. The detailed assumptions about attribution are contained in Appendix 1.6.

6.2.3 Displacement

Displacement applies when one outcome is achieved but at the expense of another outcome, or another stakeholder is adversely affected. In the restoration of the Coronation Garden displacement was identified for only two stakeholders: Youth Making Beith Better and the community. YMBB staff acknowledged that the concentration of activities in the Coronation Garden resulted in fewer activities being provided in other areas; to reflect this, displacement has been set at 50%. This is an estimate and so was tested in the sensitivity analysis. In relation to the community, 33% of respondents to the survey reported that they would visit the Coronation Garden instead of going to another area.

6.3 Calculation of social return

Appendix 1.8 details the values for each outcome for each stakeholder and takes into account deductions to avoid over-claiming. These individual values have been added together then compared with the investment in the restoration of the Coronation Garden provided at section 4.1 above.

The results show a social return on investment of around £20 for every £1 invested based on the assumptions set out above.

6.4 Sensitivity analysis

The evaluation was able to utilise data that had been collected in the course of the activity and so this limited the number of assumptions that had to be made. The most significant assumptions that were made were tested in the sensitivity analysis as detailed below:

Factor	Assumption	Variation	Result
Displacement for Youth Making Beith Better	50%	25%	£16.69
		75%	£16.45
Length of time path lasts	5 years	10 years	£16.23
Drop off levels for outcomes lasting three or more years	30%	40%	£14.81
		10%	£20.57
Number of members of the community using the gardens	500	250	£15.86
		100	50
Discount rate for activities lasting more than 3 years	3.5%	10%	£13.95
		5%	£15.65

The sensitivity analysis indicates that the figure used for drop off has a relatively large effect on the SROI ratio. This is not unexpected as the impact of any change will vary in proportion to the length of time it lasts. The longer the change lasts, the greater its impact will be.

In this analysis it has been predicted that the drop off rate will be 30%. That means that at the end of each year the amount of change that remains has been reduced by 30%. For example, average fitness levels of participants in Youth Making Beith Better will be 30% lower. This will arise for a variety of reasons: some young people will no longer be members and others are likely to reduce the amount of time spent outdoors. In contrast it is possible that others may spend more time outdoors and take up additional activities. In the absence of relevant research the only way to get an accurate picture is to question the participants in three years time and track the changes they have experienced.

Applying sensitivity adjustments to key assumptions produces a range for the SROI ratio of between £14 and £21 for every £1 invested.

7. Conclusion and recommendations

This SROI analysis clearly demonstrates the many benefits that an environmental restoration project involving youth volunteers delivers. It has satisfied the purposes North Ayrshire Council had for embarking on the analysis and will be used to raise the profile of the ranger service and to attract investment.

“It has always been difficult to clearly identify the financial benefits to local authorities of holistic, environmental land management and conservation. There are many things which we value, as societies and individuals, which cannot be easily captured in economic terms.

The Country Parks Section, Community Development and Environment and Related Services can see that the Social Return on Investment tool allows for measuring and accounting using a much broader concept of value integrating performance management and citizen engagement. It incorporates social, environmental and economic costs and benefits into decision making, providing a fuller picture of how value is created or destroyed. In short, SROI allows us to assign a financial proxy to social involvement/volunteering, environmental conservation, reducing inequality, preventing environmental degradation and improving wellbeing”

Cameron Sharp, Country Parks Manager, North Ayrshire Council

Recommendations

R1. Evaluate on an on-going basis

Consideration should be given to contacting key stakeholders at annual intervals over the next three years to establish the changes they are still experiencing as a result of the activity and any new ones that have arisen.

R2. Establish ways of measuring all identified outcomes

If this analysis is to be used as a framework to plan or evaluate projects of a similar nature then mechanisms should be set up to measure those outcomes which were identified but which it proved impossible to measure (see Appendix 1.4).

R3. Take time to agree the scope

The initial task of agreeing the scope proved particularly challenging as the steering group contained representatives from different sections of one organisation. Different priorities meant that it was hard to find consensus on the appropriate scope. Although this meant that defining the scope took longer and required more detailed discussion it did ensure that it resulted in a shared understanding and strong commitment to the process. It is worth taking the additional time required to achieve consensus.

R4. Use existing contacts and networks

The restoration activities at the Coronation Garden drew on volunteers from the Ranger Service’s existing networks and contacts. This made the process much easier as good relationships existed which enabled robust data to be collected and facilitated dialogue throughout the process.

R5. Install a people counter in the Coronation Garden

The numbers of people using the facility are estimates based on a consultation exercise that took place over one day. A people counter would provide a cheap and reasonably reliable way of measuring the numbers visiting the gardens. This could be supplemented by biannual user surveys to gather more detailed information.

Appendix 1: Audit trail and impact map information

1.1 Stakeholders identified who were included or excluded

Stakeholder	Included/ excluded	Rationale
YMBB Participants (age 11-17)	Included	The main beneficiaries of the activity. Expected to gain new practical and 'soft' skills by taking part in the restoration activities. As a result of outdoor physical activities it was believed that participants would have a better sense of wellbeing and improved fitness levels. Anticipated that levels of environmental awareness would rise.
James Watt College participants	Included	Expected to gain new practical and 'soft' skills by taking part in the restoration activities. As a result of outdoor physical activities it was believed that participants would have a better sense of wellbeing and improved fitness levels. Anticipated that levels of environmental awareness would rise. The acquisition of enhanced employability skills was also anticipated.
Adult volunteers	Included	Expected to gain new practical and 'soft' skills by taking part in the restoration activities. As a result of outdoor physical activities it was believed that participants would have a better sense of wellbeing and improved fitness levels. Anticipated that levels of environmental awareness would rise. The acquisition of enhanced employability skills was also anticipated.
Participating Schools (Geilsland and Gateside)	Included	Expected to learn more about the environment and gain basic horticultural skills through taking part in the project.
Forestry Commission Scotland	Included	Major funder with policy objectives.
North Ayrshire Council (youth services, street scene and rangers)	Included	Expected to generate and sustain new partnerships. Staff were likely to develop new skills.
Friends of Spiers	Included	Expected to be able to generate additional funds by demonstrating the success of the project and recruit new members.
John Muir Awards Scheme	Included	Expected to have a raised profile locally and possibly recruit new members
Community	Included	Expected to experience health and wellbeing benefits from being able to access greenspace. Increased civic pride arising from a unique environmental attraction.

Stakeholder	Included/ excluded	Rationale
Other schools in the area	Excluded	Did not participate in Coronation Garden restoration. Activities related to other areas of Spier's Old School Grounds.
Anchor Boys Brigade	Excluded	Did not participate in Coronation Garden restoration. Activities related to other areas of Spier's Old School Grounds.
Participants in Duke of Edinburgh Awards Scheme	Excluded	Did not participate in Coronation Garden restoration. Activities related to other areas of Spier's Old School Grounds.
Spier's Old School Pupils	Excluded	Part of Friends group and will experience separate outcomes.
Barrmill and District Community Futures	Excluded	Interest related to tourism potential and so limited impact.
Barrmill Community Projects Initiative Group	Excluded	Oversee a wide range of community projects so limited impact.
Beith Community Centre	Excluded	Anticipated use as a meeting point or base did not materialise.
Local Councillor	Excluded	Limited impact. Thought might be some benefit in relation to increased opportunities for engaging with constituents and wider community.

1.2 About the ‘included’ stakeholders

Youth Making Beith Better

Youth Making Beith Better (YMBB) was set up by members of the local community to give the youth of Beith an opportunity to get involved in improving Beith and its surrounding areas. YMBB meet in the Beith Community Centre twice a week. Ten members of the group decided to undertake a John Muir award which included activities to restore the Coronation Garden.

James Watt College students

James Watt College has four campuses with the locally based one at Kilwinning providing facilities for over 6,000 students. Courses tend to be 'vocational' or work-related, with a strong practical element. Students gain hands-on experience that they are able to transfer into the workplace and so enhance their employment prospects. Students come from wide ranging and diverse backgrounds, including people who have been away from education for many years, people who have been working and are looking to change the direction of their careers, people with disabilities or learning difficulties and school leavers. The students taking part in the Coronation Garden were part of a special needs group.

Adult volunteers

The volunteers come from a range of backgrounds and experiences. These range from an individual who is retired to one who is actively seeking employment.

Geilsland School

Geilsland School is set on the outskirts of Beith in a countryside location. It is operated by Crossreach Children's Services⁹. The residential school caters for young men aged 14 - 18 years who are experiencing difficulties in their lives and has a strong Christian ethos. Support is offered to young people by working closely with parents, carers and partner agencies. The school is an SQA accredited centre offering a range of courses. Geilsland Links is an onsite work experience and leavers' programme, offering SQA Skills for Work, and Gardening and Landscaping experiences and accreditation.

Gateside Primary School

The school, which includes nursery provision, has fewer than 100 pupils and is located in Beith. The ethos is to *“endeavour to create a relaxed caring and safe environment in which modern teaching methods encourage children to become independent learners and assist them in developing into mature, responsible citizens”*.

Forestry Commission Scotland

Established in 2003 Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS) serves as the forestry directorate of the Scottish Government and is responsible to Scottish Ministers, advising on and implementing forestry policies. Through Forest Enterprise Scotland, it also manages the forest estate to deliver public benefits. FCS offers sources of grant funding, including the Woods In and Around Towns (WIAT) programme which seeks to support initiatives designed to improve quality of life in towns and cities. An £8million per year grant programme from April 2008 to March 2011 sought to create new woodland, bring neglected woodland into active management and to work with people to help them use their local woodland.

North Ayrshire Council

North Ayrshire Council Ranger Service provides expert knowledge, information and assistance to visitors to Eglinton Country Park and other areas of countryside within North Ayrshire. The purpose of the service is *“to connect people with places”*. The remit covers

⁹ <http://www.crossreachchildrensservices.org.uk/> Crossreach is a non profit-making organisation funded by the Social Care Council of the Church of Scotland.

three key areas of activity: education; conservation and recreation. In relation to education a full programme of environmental education based on the curriculum for excellence is available. The service has responsibility for ensuring visitors are welcome, mediating in land use disputes between public and other users, promoting awareness and understanding, and caring and enhancing of natural and cultural heritage. Grounds Maintenance (Street Scene) have responsibility for maintenance of the 'green elements' of public open space totalling some 2,410 hectares, 14 town centre parks, water courses, sports pitches, trees and woodlands and the provision of seasonal bedding and hanging baskets.

Friends of Spiers (FoS)

The Garnock Valley based membership support group is affiliated to the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV). FoS work with the Spier's Trust, North Ayrshire Council Ranger Service and others to develop and maintain Spier's Parkland. The group carries out conservation projects, biodiversity enhancement initiatives, photographic and other surveys and arranges events.

John Muir Trust

The John Muir Trust was established in 1983 to conserve and protect wild places with their indigenous animals, plants and soils for the benefit of present and future generations. The Trust is a membership organisation with over ten thousand members. It describes itself as "*United Kingdom's strongest voice for wild land and the wilderness experience*". It believes that sustainable conservation can only be achieved by recognising the special qualities of wild places and understanding the human factors which contribute to the landscape. The Trust seeks to increase awareness and understanding of the value of wild places through the John Muir Award, part of the Trust's education programme. The John Muir Award is a national (UK) environmental award scheme that encourages people to connect with, enjoy, and care for wild places. It offers a progressive structure for learning outdoors.

Local community

Set in the Garnock Valley in North Ayrshire, Beith has a population of around 6,500 and is classified a regeneration area. Other towns in close proximity include Dalry, Kilbirnie and some smaller villages such as Gateside, Barmill, Longbar and Glengarnock.

1.3 Engagement methods for 'included' stakeholders

Stakeholder	Method of Engagement	Date	Number
Youth Making Beith Better	questionnaires individual discussions	August 2010 January 2011	10
James Watt College participants	questionnaires individual discussions	August 2010 January 2011	16
adult volunteers	questionnaires individual discussions	August 2010 January 2011	5
participating schools: • Geilsland School • Gateside PS	discussions with staff discussions with staff	November 2010	2 1
Forestry Commission Scotland	individual interview	November 2010	1
North Ayrshire Council: Ranger service Street scene	individual Interviews with key staff	November 2010	3 2
Friends of Spier's	individual questionnaires	November 2010	10
John Muir awards scheme	individual interview	November 2010	1
Community ¹	individual questionnaires	May 2011	32

¹ Although initially identified as a stakeholder who would experience significant benefits, the community were subsequently excluded as no realistic means of contacting them to explore potential outcomes could be identified. Before reinstatement the gardens had been inaccessible due to large numbers of dangerous trees and the absence of a paths network and so were rarely used. After the gardens were open it was agreed to carry out a one day survey to identify the number of members of the community using the gardens and their reasons why. These findings are reflected in the SROI calculation.

1.4 Outcomes identified but not measured

During the study, some outcomes were identified which were not included in the final impact map:

Stakeholder	Outcome	Indicator and proposed method of measurement	Rational for exclusion
Geilsland School	Benefits pupils gained from improved social contacts and expanded social networks	Number of new contacts Before and after questionnaires	Although the teacher indicated increased social contact and pupils reported that they had met new people there was no evidence to support this.
Geilsland School	New horticultural and building skills	Number and type of new skills reported Before and after assessments	Although the school reported that pupils had acquired new skills, no baseline data was available against which they could be measured. Furthermore work had been undertaken in all areas of the grounds and so it was impossible to identify that relating specifically to the Coronation Garden.
Geilsland School	Increased sense of wellbeing, higher confidence levels and improved physical fitness	Number reporting increased sense of wellbeing, higher confidence levels and improved physical fitness Before and after questionnaires	Although the school reported that pupils were happier, interacted better and has acquired new skills, no baseline data was available against which this could be measured. Furthermore as work had been undertaken in all areas of the grounds and it was impossible to identify that relating specifically to the Coronation Garden.
Gateside Primary School	Improved relationships with community resulting in increased public support for the school	Numbers attending community events	Although the head teacher indicated that taking part in the project had raised the profile of the school and increased public support this could not be evidenced.
Community	Increased civic pride as a result of having a local public attraction of environmental significance	Numbers attending community events	No evidence from community survey
John Muir Trust	Increase in local membership recruitment and donations	Value of local donations Increase in number of local members	No data available

1.5 Financial proxies

All of the outcomes that were included had a financial proxy assigned to them.

Stakeholder	Outcome	Description of financial proxy	Value	Source
YMBB Participants	young people have spent additional time outdoors undertaking physical tasks	a visit to local sports centre	£3.75	cost of day child activity ticket to local sports centre KA:Leisure
	participants gained horticulture skills and can apply them safely (planting, path clearing, using tools)	training course	£100	average cost of a two day introductory course to horticulture
	young people have the opportunity to engage with adults in an informal supportive environment	cost of an adult and child ticket to an inspiring activity	£28	http://www.edenproject.com/
	community recognition of activities undertaken by young people results in pride and sense of achievement	cost of a treat that provides positive feelings /award	£10	individual trophy http://www.bruneltrrophies.co.uk/categories/corporate-awards
	young people more aware of environment and role they can play and go outdoors more	one day environmental discovery course	£95	http://www.wilderNESScentre.co.uk
	participants have an increased sense of wellbeing	one day course on self esteem and confidence	£500	http://www.centreforconfidence.co.uk/index.php
James Watt College Participants	participants gained horticulture skills and can apply them safely (planting, path clearing, using tools)	training course	£100	average cost of a two day introductory course to horticulture
	young people have spent additional time outdoors undertaking physical tasks	cost of a visit to local sports centre	£5.00	cost of day adult activity ticket to local sports centre KA:Leisure
	participants have an increased sense of wellbeing	one day course on self-esteem and confidence	£1,400	http://www.neweconomics.org/publications/improving-services-for-young-people

Stakeholder	Outcome	Description of financial proxy	Value	Source
James Watt College Participants (continued)	have learned what it is like to work/ experience can be included in CV/ referees	The payment an employer would have received for the same number of hours provided to each student in a Future Jobs Fund scheme in which similar skills were provided. This figure is reduced to take account of payments to trainees.	£827	http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Employment/Employees/TheNationalMinimumWage/DG_10027201 http://campaigns.dwp.gov.uk/campaigns/futurejobsfund/pdf/fjf-guide.pdf
	young people more aware of environment and role they can play and go outdoors more	one day environmental discovery course	£95	http://www.wildernesscentre.co.uk
Volunteers	volunteers have an increased sense of wellbeing, confidence and are fitter	one day course on self esteem and confidence	£500	http://www.centreforconfidence.co.uk/index.php
	volunteers gained horticulture skills and can apply them safely (planting, path clearing, using tools)	training course	£100	average cost of a two day introductory course to horticulture
	volunteers are more aware of environment and role they can play and go outdoors more	one day environmental discovery course	£95	http://www.wildernesscentre.co.uk
	additional skills, experience and confidence gained have enhanced volunteers' chances of employment	one day employability skills course	£195	http://www.sbskills.com/prices.html
Participating Schools (Geilsland and Gateside)	increased participation in environmental activities	cost of a club	£16	http://www.rspb.org.uk/supporting/join/youth.aspx
	provision of outdoor learning context for core skills	cost of visit to similar establishment	£6.50 child/ £13.00 adult	http://www.gsc.org.uk/visiting.aspx

Stakeholder	Outcome	Description of financial proxy	Value	Source
Participating Schools Geilsland	opportunity to address behavioural issues in a creative way	managing challenging behaviour course	£600	http://www.icktraining.co.uk/content/content-courses/challen
	increased awareness of school within the community	advert in local papers	£400	http://www.irvineherald.co.uk/
North Ayrshire Council Rangers Service	staff have acquired new skills in relation to joint working resulting in personal and professional development	team working/building course	£451	various internet sites
Community	local place to go for a walk and feel better	cost of a visit to local sports centre	£5	cost of day adult activity ticket to local sports centre KA:Leisure
	place to experience nature and learn more about the environment	one day environmental discovery course	£95	http://www.wildernesscentre.co.uk

1.6 Deductions to avoid over-claiming

Stakeholder	Outcome	Rationale for deadweight	Rationale for attribution
YMBB Participants (age 14-15)	participants gained horticulture skills and can apply them safely (planting, path clearing, using tools)	33% Approximately 33 % of young people take part in volunteering (Young Scot Statistics)	25% 25% of the activities related to the award did not involve the Coronation Garden
	young people have spent additional time outdoors undertaking physical tasks	68% of young people take part in regular physical activities outdoors (Scottish Health Survey 2003)	25% 25% of the activities related to the award did not involve the Coronation Garden
	young people have the opportunity to engage with adults in an informal supportive environment	20% This is an estimate	25% 25% of the activities related to the award did not involve the Coronation Garden
	community recognition of activities undertaken by young people results in pride and sense of achievement	0% All publicity and awards taken into account related to work on the Coronation Garden	0% All publicity and awards taken into account related to work on the Coronation Garden
	young people more aware of environment and role they can play and go outdoors more	4% % of young people volunteering on environmental projects	25%
	participants have an increased sense of wellbeing	33% Approximately 33 % of young people take part in volunteering (Young Scot Statistics)	25% 25% of the activities related to the award did not involve the Coronation Garden
James Watt College Participants	participants gained horticulture skills and can apply them safely (planting, path clearing, using tools)	0% No other opportunities available	50% 50% of the activities related to work in other areas of the school grounds
	young people have spent additional time outdoors undertaking physical tasks	68% 68% of young people take part in regular physical activities outdoors (Scottish Health Survey 2003)	50% 50% of the activities related to work in other areas of the school grounds

Stakeholder	Outcome	Rationale for deadweight	Rationale for attribution
James Watt College Participants (continued)	participants have an increased sense of wellbeing	33% Approximately 33 % of young people take part in volunteering (Young Scot Statistics)	50% 50% of the activities related to work in other areas of the school grounds
	have learned what it is like to work/ experience can be included in CV/ referees	80% These are skills that would have formed a large part of any planned activity.	50% 50% of the activities related to work in other areas of the school grounds
	young people more aware of environment and role they can play and go outdoors more	8%	50% 50% of the activities related to work in other areas of the school grounds
Volunteers	participants have an increased sense of wellbeing, confidence and are fitter	31% 31% of adults in Scotland volunteer through an organisation or group (Scottish Household Survey, 2007/8).	75% 75% of the activities related to work in other areas of the school grounds
	participants gained horticulture skills and can apply them safely (planting, path clearing, using tools)	31% 31% of adults in Scotland volunteer through an organisation or group (Scottish Household Survey, 2007/8).	75% 75% of the activities related to work in other areas of the school grounds
	volunteers are more aware of environment and conservation role they can play and go outdoors more	8%	75% 75% of the activities related to work in other areas of the school grounds
North Ayrshire Council Rangers Service	staff have acquired new skills in relation to joint working resulting in personal and professional development	50% Other areas of joint working/ training opportunities	0%

Stakeholder	Outcome	Rationale for deadweight	Rationale for attribution
North Ayrshire Council Rangers Service (continued)	improved relationships externally and internally	0% Occurs as a direct result of Coronation Garden	0% Occurs as a direct result of Coronation Garden
	greater recognition for Ranger service within the Council for piloting a new idea	0% Occurs as a direct result of Coronation Garden	0% Occurs as a direct result of Coronation Garden
Community	local place to go for a walk and feel better	42% Scottish Household Survey 2007/08 found that 42% of adults in Scotland use parks or greenspace at least once a week	90% based on community responses about areas of grounds visited
	place to experience nature and learn more about the environment	42% Scottish Household Survey 2007/08 found that 42% of adults in Scotland use parks or greenspace at least once a week	70% based on community responses about areas of grounds visited

1.7 Duration and drop off assumptions

Stakeholder	Outcome	Duration	Drop off	Rationale
YMBB Participants (age 14-15)	participants gained horticulture skills and can apply them safely (planting, path clearing, using tools)	3 years	30%	Skills will endure in line with several certified practical skills assessments. Drop is assumed to be % moving onto something else.
	young people more aware of environment and role they can play and go outdoors more	3 year	30%	Skills will endure in line with several certified practical skills assessments. Drop is assumed to be % moving onto something else.
	participants have an increased sense of wellbeing	3 years	30%	Levels likely to last beyond activity. Drop is assumed to be % moving onto something else.
James Watt College Participants	participants gained horticulture skills and can apply them safely (planting, path clearing, using tools)	3 years	30%	Skills will endure in line with several certified practical skills assessments. Drop is assumed to be % moving onto something else.
	participants have an increased sense of wellbeing	3 years	30%	Levels likely to last beyond activity. Drop is assumed to be % moving onto something else.
	have learned what it is like to work/ experience can be included in CV/ referees	3 years	30%	Levels likely to last beyond activity. Drop is assumed to be % moving onto something else.
	young people more aware of environment and role they can play and go outdoors more	3 years	30%	Levels likely to last beyond activity. Drop is assumed to be % moving onto something else.
Volunteers	participants have an increased sense of wellbeing, confidence and are fitter	3 years	30%	Levels likely to last beyond activity. Drop is assumed to be % moving onto something else.

Stakeholder	Outcome	Duration	Drop off	Rationale
Volunteers (continued)	participants gained horticulture skills and can apply them safely (planting, path clearing, using tools)	3 years	30%	Levels likely to last beyond activity. Drop is assumed to be % moving onto something else
	volunteers are more aware of environment and conservation role they can play and go outdoors more	3 years	30%	Levels likely to last beyond activity. Drop is assumed to be % moving onto something else.
	additional skills, experience and confidence gained have enhanced chances of employment	3 years	30%	Levels likely to last beyond activity. Drop is assumed to be % moving onto something else.
North Ayrshire Council Rangers Service	staff have acquired new skills in relation to joint working resulting in personal and professional development	2 years	0%	Skills and partnerships will last beyond activity and are not likely to diminish as will be applied regularly.
	improved relationships externally and internally	2 years	0%	Skills and partnerships will last beyond activity and are not likely to diminish as will be applied regularly.
	greater recognition for Ranger service within the Council for piloting a new idea	2 years	0%	Ongoing reports will be delivered and so recognition levels will remain high.
Community	local place to go for a walk and feel better	5 years	30%	Levels likely to last beyond activity. Drop is assumed to be % moving onto something else.
	place to experience nature and learn more about the environment	5 years	30%	Levels likely to last beyond activity. Drop is assumed to be % moving onto something else.

Note: In relation to all of the outcomes for Geilsland and Gateside Schools, as both stakeholders confirmed that nothing would have happened without the activity taking place, deadweight is assumed to be 0%. As it is impossible to isolate those activities that relate only to the Coronation Garden, attribution of 75% has been assumed.

1.8 Calculation

Stakeholder	Outcome	Quantity	Value	Less Deadweight	Less Attribution	Impact
YMBB Participants (age 14-15)	participants gained horticulture skills and can apply them safely (planting, path clearing, using tools)	10	£100	33%	25%	£251.25
	young people have spent additional time outdoors undertaking physical tasks	10	£3.75	68%	25%	£4.50
	young people have the opportunity to engage with adults in an informal supportive environment	10	£28	33%	25%	£69.09
	community recognition of activities undertaken by young people results in pride and sense of achievement	10	£30	0%	0%	£300.00
	young people more aware of environment and role they can play and go outdoors more	10	£95	4%	25%	£342.00
	participants have an increased sense of wellbeing	10	£500	33%	25%	£2,512.50
James Watt College Participants	participants gained horticulture skills and can apply them safely (planting, path clearing, using tools)	16	£100	0%	50%	£800.00
	young people have spent additional time outdoors undertaking physical tasks	16	£5	68%	50%	£12.80
	participants have an increased sense of wellbeing	16	£1,400	33%	50%	£7,504.00
	have learned what it is like to work/ experience can be included in CV/ referees	16	£826.8	80%	50%	£1,322.88

Stakeholder	Outcome	Quantity	Value	Less Deadweight	Less Attribution	Impact
James Watt College Participants (continued)	young people more aware of environment and role they can play and go outdoors more	16	£95	8%	50%	£699.20
Volunteers	participants have an increased sense of wellbeing, confidence and are fitter	5	£500	31%	75%	£431.25
	participants gained horticulture skills and can apply them safely (planting, path clearing, using tools)	5	£100	31%	75%	£86.25
	volunteers are more aware of environment and conservation role they can play and go outdoors more	5	£95	8%	75%	£109.25
	additional skills, experience and confidence gained have enhanced chances of employment	4	£195	31%	75%	£134.55
Participating Schools (Geilsland and Gateside)	young people more aware of environment and role they can play and go outdoors more	5	£16	0%	75%	£20.00
Participating Schools (Geilsland)	provision of outdoor learning context for core skills	4	£13	0%	75%	£13.00
Participating Schools (Gateside)	provision of outdoor learning context for core skills	20	£6.50	0%	75%	£32.50
Geilsland School	increased awareness of school within the community	2	£400	0%	75%	£200.00
Geilsland School	opportunity to address behavioural issues in a creative way	1	£600	0%	75%	£150.00
North Ayrshire Council Ranger Service	staff have acquired new skills in relation to joint working resulting in personal and professional development	5	£451	50%	0%	£1,127.50

Stakeholder	Outcome	Quantity	Value	Less Deadweight	Less Attribution	Impact
NAC Ranger Service (continued)	improved relationships externally and internally	1	£3,300	0%	0%	£3,300.00
	greater recognition for Ranger service within the Council for piloting a new idea	1	£750	0%	0%	£750.00
Community	local place to go for a walk and feel better	500	£5	44%	90%	£93.80
	place to experience nature and learn more about the environment	100	£95	44%	70%	£1,069.32

Totals

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total Social Return	Total Present Value (PV)
Impact Value	£21,002.22	£16,484.33	£13,321.81	£11,108.05	£9,558.41	£71,474.83	£65,423.77

The Social Return Calculation is expressed as a ratio of return. It is derived from dividing the impact value by the total cost of the investment. The impact value is adjusted to reflect its Present Value (PV); this process is called discounting and reflects the present day value of benefits projected into the future. PV is applied to those values that have been projected for longer than 1 year. The interest rate used to discount the value of future benefits in this case is 3.5% as determined in the Government Green Book¹⁰ recommended discount rate for public funds. This gives the impact over 5 years arising from the restoration of the Coronation Garden as £65,424.

In the account that has been created for this SROI, the total impact calculation is as follows:

- the total impact (PV) calculated from the impact map for Coronation Garden is £65,424
- the total investment figure in the same period to generate this value was £3,282

The SROI index is a result of dividing the PV impact by the investment. This gives an SROI ratio of 1:19.93. Thus the social return on investment, based on the estimates in the evaluation, was in the region of £20 for every £1 invested.

¹⁰ HM Treasury. The Green Book, Appraisal and Evaluation in Central Government
<http://www.nhstayside.scot.nhs.uk/chp/pkchp/focus/6.pdf>

Appendix 2: The Principles of SROI

Principle	Description
Involve stakeholders	Inform what gets measured and how this is measured and valued by involving stakeholders
Understand what changes	Articulate how change is created and evaluate this through evidence gathered, recognising positive and negative changes as well as those that are intended or unintended
Value the things that matter	Use financial proxies in order that the value of the outcomes can be recognised. Many outcomes are not traded in markets and as a result their value is not recognised
Only include what is material	Determine what information and evidence must be included in the accounts to give a true and fair picture, such that stakeholders can draw reasonable conclusions about impact
Do not over-claim	Only claim the value that organisations are responsible for creating
Be transparent	Demonstrate the basis on which the analysis may be considered accurate and honest, and show that it will be reported to and discussed with stakeholders
Verify the result	Ensure independent appropriate assurance

The SROI Network has published a comprehensive guide to SROI. This can be downloaded at www.sroinetwork.org.uk

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