

Improving Access to Green Spaces: Increasing the number of community run green spaces



What are we trying to achieve?

We are aiming to build on the existing good partnership work and further expand the number of community run green spaces by a minimum of 8 that are organised and self-managed for both people and nature.

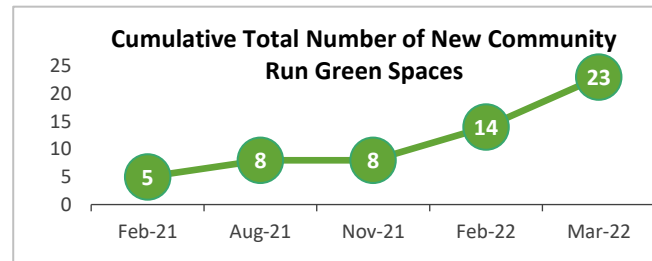
How are we doing this?

Through our multi agency project we are testing the following improvements:

- Built a green spaces network of communities and partnerships that empowers communities to establish; take responsibility and run their local green spaces leading to more local engagement and an increase in volunteering and community pride.
- Introduced and supported visible community champions to raise awareness and change thinking about wider sustainability issues in communities.
- Developed information packs and support tools to help the groups get started and work together to steer the groups / space in the right direction.
- Publicised availability of community green space through all available platforms; how to get started; and ways for communities to identify potential unused land.
- Promoted the benefits of successes of current community run spaces, as well as the wider community benefits such as health and wellbeing.

What have we achieved?

- **Achieved our aim** with **23** new community run green spaces established as at March 2022, an increase of **18** since Feb 2021, of the 18, **4** are in North, **6** in South & **8** in Central Localities.



- **1550** people volunteering across green spaces across the city in 21/22.
- **6** Community Champions in the Central Locality with videos produced & promoted by champions.
- **64.5%** of city voice panellists were satisfied or fairly satisfied with the quality of overall green/open spaces in the City.
- **33** community partnerships registered as Its Your Neighbourhood groups with Keep Scotland Beautiful (City wide) in 2021. Aberdeen has significantly more registered groups than anywhere else in Scotland.
- National recognition and awards for our community partnership work ie Aberdeen Gold Medal winner in 2021 Keep Scotland Beautiful.

What impact have we had?

Feedback from a volunteer at one of our green spaces:

“Spending time in the garden opens my eyes to how much is going on all around me, with insects flying around me constantly. Every sunny day I hear crickets chirping, see butterflies fluttering around, and of course watching the bees busily finding the flowers.”

Sharon Gardener, Springhill Community Garden chairperson



What are our next steps?

- Continue to embed our improvements to ensure the increase is **sustained**.
- Evaluate existing groups activity per month to run a change idea looking at whether community run green space volunteers would be willing to volunteer in other areas during months of reduced activity in green spaces.
- Continue to encourage new groups and partnerships to register with Keep Scotland Beautiful and their Its Your Neighbourhood initiative.

For more information on our projects focused on protecting/ managing Aberdeen’s area for nature visit

<https://communityplanningaberdeen.org.uk/stretch-outcome-15/>