

The
Delius
Community
Gardening
Project



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ArtworksBD1



Artworks Creative Communities

About Artworks

Artworks Creative Communities is a participatory arts charity based at our venue the Delius Arts & Cultural Centre, in Bradford. Our main purpose is to enrich the lives of those experiencing significant disadvantage. Artworks is different to other community charities in the way that we use participatory arts as a tool to inspire, connect and engage, and we believe passionately in the power of arts and creativity to develop communities.

We believe that arts and creativity have many forms and our environment shapes this. The more we are aware of (and connected to) our natural environment, the more resilient we will become.

Our 'Green-spiration'

We never truly appreciated how important our outside space was until we were complimented on it one day by a community worker who described it as the most 'virulent patch of green on an otherwise concrete strewn road'. After that, when we looked at the unkempt flowerbeds we started to ask the question 'if these plants can grow here what else can we plant?' Now, together with our users, we want to take up the challenge of finding every opportunity to grow from our venue, with 'green-terventions' springing from every wall, lamp post and dark corner possible.

Our biggest challenge to date has been finding ways to grow in a space that has very little shade and ensuring that we can provide water to the plants that need it most often. Other challenges include changing the perceptions of passers-by; their littering and lack of noticing their surroundings.



Autumn 2017 saw us harvest our first crop of vegetables ever grown at the centre; potatoes and onions, which were planted and harvested by members of our Creative Stroke Recovery Group.

Making space and time to engage with the natural environment at our centre has made our users and our staff feel happier and has inspired us to extend this area in to our other projects.

The Delius Community Gardening Project



A Project by Artworks Creative Communities

FOCUS: Environment | Health and Wellbeing

BACKGROUND

Artworks Creative Communities received funding from the Postcode Local Trust to deliver The Delius Community Garden Project, a 12-month community engagement project that included sessions with volunteers at Horton Community Farm, an LGBTQ+ wellbeing group, the Creative Stroke Recovery Group, a Home Education group and people attending a series of public open days at the Delius Centre.

The complementary programme of public open sessions and specialist workshops saw us utilise our venue's outdoor space as a community garden and activity area. These events were suitable for all ages and provided the opportunity for individuals and families to connect with nature and remember the ways in which being outside does us good by trying out an array of environmental activities.

OPEN EVENTS INCLUDED SUCH ACTIVITIES AS:



- Seed-bombing with helium balloons
- Making indoor planters from repurposed containers
- Inspiring films with a gardening / nature theme
- Recycling plastic bottles to make bird feeders
- Making decorations from foraged nature finds
- Sharing a communal meal in the garden.

TOP TIPS

Give nature a hand – Make your own seed-bombs with biodegradable balloons and native wildflower seeds – when they pop the seeds drop!

CASE STUDY:

HCF Volunteer Sessions

The longest running sessions took place at Horton Community Farm and supported a group of refugee and asylum seeker volunteers who attended a regular weekly session with HCF worker, Charlie.

These sessions served the dual purpose of teaching and sharing skills on how to grow healthy food from seed and also serve as a regular meeting place for people who are often vulnerable to feelings of social isolation.

Sessions were themed around Grow, Cook and Eat and were responsive to the seasons and the gardening jobs that come with each month. At each session participants came together to eat hot, fresh, food and share how their day/week was going.



SESSIONS INCLUDED:

Growing from seed

Preparing grow beds

Identifying crops for each season

Techniques for Permaculture

Maintaining a Garden

Eating freshly prepared food together

Knowing when and how to harvest.

TOP TIPS

Keep whatever you are doing in the garden creative. Decorate planters, up-cycle old furniture and household items. The possibilities are endless!

CASE STUDY:

Home Education Group

Home Educating families joined us for eight weeks of sessions at the Delius Centre and they benefitted from being able to have most of those sessions outside in the garden.

The programme was designed to incorporate science in a way that was fun and informative for children and parents alike.

Additionally the activities gave parents the opportunity to either socialise with other parents or focus their attention on another child whilst the facilitator led the activity.

“We had a fantastic time. Would never have thought of making / planting pots this way.”

Farhana (mum)

“I liked picking flowers and learning about which flowers the bees like.”

Zara (8 years old)



TOP TIPS

Don't throw away – repurpose! Empty plastic bottles and other everyday household objects can make decorative planters or bird feeders.

ACTIVITY:

Make a Birdfeeder

MATERIALS:

- A plastic 2-litre milk bottle (rinsed and dried with labels removed)
- 30cm of string / twine
- Two 20cm pieces of dowel / twig
- Scissors
- Craft knife
- Sharpie pen
- Spoon
- Bird seed

STEPS:

(with an adult)

(1) Use the knife to cut a hole through the lid, push through looped string, knot under lid and screw back on.

(2) Draw a 'door' (with the Sharpie) on each side of the bottle 2.5cm above the base.

(3) Cut the doors out carefully with the knife.

(4) Pierce a hole 1cm below the middle of each door and push through the dowel to form a cross inside.

(5) Decorate your feeder. Ensure all paint / glue is dry before Step 7. If you are using tissue paper to decorate it, seal it with watered down PVA glue to ensure that your design is waterproof.

(6) Use the spoon to fill the bottom of the feeder with bird seed.

(7) Tie the bird feeder to the branch of a tree (or washing line) and discover what birds visit your garden.



TO DECORATE:

- Stickers
- Sharpie pens
- Acrylic paint
- Coloured tissue
- PVA glue

What are Microgreens?

This is a name given to a wide variety of immature edible greens that can be harvested and eaten between 10-14 days of growing from seed in soil.

EXAMPLES OF PLANTS THAT CAN BE GROWN AS MICROGREENS INCLUDE:

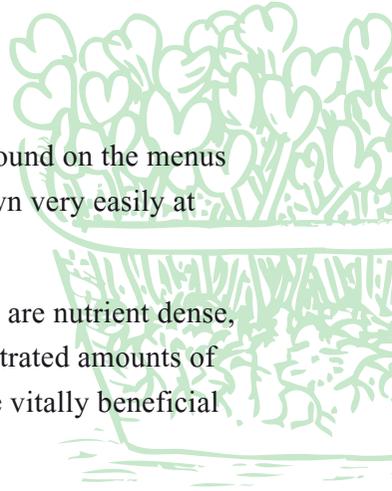
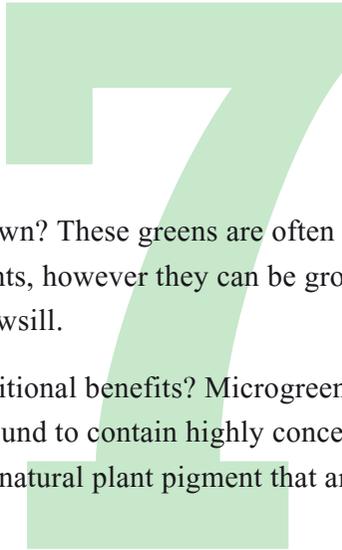
- Broad beans
- Mustard
- Peas
- Many more!

How are they grown? These greens are often found on the menus of fancy restaurants, however they can be grown very easily at home on a windowsill.

What are the nutritional benefits? Microgreens are nutrient dense, they have been found to contain highly concentrated amounts of phytonutrients, a natural plant pigment that are vitally beneficial to our health.

Why choose to do this? This is an additional way of looking after ourselves and others. You do not need a garden and this nutrient rich food that can be grown for next to nothing.

This is a small way to take charge of how your food is grown and manage where it comes from.



ACTIVITY:

Growing at Home

EASY-PEASY GROWING INSTRUCTIONS:

- [1] Select the seeds of what you would like to grow... organic, if possible, is best*
- [2] Find a shallow container (e.g. takeaway box)*
- [3] Make a couple of holes underneath for excess water to escape*
- [4] Add 2-3cm of compost*
- [5] Sprinkle on and press in the seeds... not too thickly*
- [6] Cover sparingly with compost*
- [7] Water well*
- [8] Put a saucer underneath and place in a bag... this creates a greenhouse effect*
- [9] Put on a sunny windowsill*
- [10] Keep the soil moist*
- [11] Remove the bag once you notice green shoots*
- [12] In 10-14 days when the shoots are about two inches tall, snip off what you need with scissors and eat*

The Importance of Light

'Turn off the big light!' Support your body's natural circadian rhythm by creating an environment of lower light to aid your body to rest on an evening. Mobile phones and tablets can have their settings adjusted for night mode to reduce 'blue light' (the light that stimulates wakefulness).

LIGHT AS A MODERN SLEEP PROBLEM

“For most of history, humans did not need to seek out darkness. The advent of electricity in the 20th century fundamentally changed our relationship to light and dark, and posed serious new challenges to sleep. Artificial light, inexpensive and ever-present, wreaks frequent havoc on sleep without many people even being aware of its detrimental effects. The widespread use of digital technology – and the light emitted from all those screens – has introduced another highly disruptive challenge to sleep.”

(From article 'Darkness Matters – How Light Affects Sleep' by ResMed)

USING LIGHT FOR RELAXATION

Relax with low wattage and gentle lighting that simulates the 'magic hour', the warm light after sunrise and before sunset, to de-stress from your day. Soothing pools of light can be achieved at home with strategically placed lamps, warm-tones, fairy lights and candles.

So why not give it a go? Move around your lamps, try changing the light bulbs to a lower wattage and treat yourself to some candles.

CASE STUDY: The Creative Stroke Recovery Group

The Creative Stroke Recovery Group (CSRG) has been based at the Delius Centre for over four years and its members have always loved the idea of making the outside area a much more attractive space to spend time in to grow plants and flowers.

Having been a part of a previous gardening and wellbeing focused projects with Artworks, the CSRG were well prepared with ideas and plans from the Delius Community Garden when it came time to start digging.



THE CSRG SESSIONS INCLUDED:

- Garden care
- Pizza making and cooking
- Planting bulbs and planters
- Planter decoration
- Tomato and herb growing



Additional funding for building work meant that the garden could be made more accessible with lowered walls for seating and a ramped path with raised planters for wheelchair users.

TOP TIPS

You don't need to spend lots of money to make your garden look colourful and interesting. Re-use unwanted items such as old mop buckets and tins to make interesting planters.

CASE STUDY:

Live Well, Be Well Group

A WEEKLY MIXED LGBTQ+ GROUP, FOCUSED ON IMPROVING AND MAINTAINING MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING.

This rewarding programme of sessions encouraged group members to try new things whilst improving skills, sharing ideas and exploring sustainable / environmental activities to maintain and enhance wellbeing.

Sessions ran in the run up to and over winter at the Equity Centre with activities including: growing microgreens, recycling for growing, whittling, fire building, caring for wildlife over winter, candle making, an allotment visit and making slippers out of repurposed blankets.

To make sure that we were still getting out during the coldest part of winter we had trips out to see the bird sanctuary at Lotherton Hall, the rare breeds farm at Home Farm in Temple Newsam and we warmed up in the hot houses at Tropical World, Leeds.

FEEDBACK FROM THE GROUP:

- *“I felt more inspired to get out of bed on a Tuesday.”*
- *“Finally got my sewing machine out again, it has inspired me to start sewing again.”*
- *“Being part of sessions on a regular basis has given the week some structure and with feeling less isolated.”*



TOP TIPS

Not all birdboxes are the same. Check out who your garden residents are before investing/making as each bird prefers a different type of door.

ACTIVITY:

Recycled Insect Hotel

MATERIALS:

- Two plastic 2-litre milk bottles (rinsed and dried with labels removed)
- String or twine
- Scissors
- Craft knife
- Sharpie pen

STEPS:

(with an adult)

(1) Use the Sharpie to mark halfway on the bottles and with the knife cut in half. Keep one top (with lid) and two bottoms.

(2) Stack the pieces on top of each other, the lidded piece on top, with opening facing you. Mark two dots where each two sections meet on the inside of the bottles with the Sharpie.

(3) Pierce holes through the marked dots and tie the pieces together with string and double knot to secure.

(4) Use a further piece of string to tie a loop to the top piece threading through the handle.

(5) Tightly pack each section with different materials and use dried grass to fill gaps. Ensure nothing sticks out, as it will get wet and rot.

(6) Hang outside, facing southwards, from a branch or hook.

WILL ATTRACT:

Woodlice, solitary bees, ladybirds and bumblebees



*Natural materials such as; dry grass, seed heads, pine cones and hollow plant stems can be found on walks or in the garden.

A-Z of Environmental & Community Action Groups in Bradford

Artworks Creative Communities

Participatory arts charity working with communities throughout Bradford.
www.artworkscreative.org.uk | 01274 256 919

BCEP

Community project engaging Bradford communities in the environment.
www.bcep.org.uk | 01274 397641

BEES

City of Bradford YMCA environmental education department.
www.bees-ymca.org.uk | 01274 371303

Bradford Bikery

Community bike project offering training, workshop space, refurbished bikes and volunteering opportunities.
www.bradfordbikery.org | 07541 093660

Bradford Community RePaint

A reuse project that protects the environment and improve the wellbeing of people, and the appearance of places.
www.communityrepaint.org.uk

Bradford Environmental Action Trust

BEAT is a local environmental trust working to make positive environmental change in Bradford and the region.
www.beat.org.uk | 01274 487270

Bradford Forest Schools Network

A group of individuals and organisations who wish to develop Forest Schools in Bradford district.
www.bradfordforestschools.co.uk

Café West

A healthy living centre, in the heart of Allerton and Lower Grange, focusing on promoting health and wellbeing in a warm and friendly environment.
www.cafewest.org.uk | 01274 488499

Cycle-Re-cycle

Making cycling affordable through selling recycled bicycles and low cost servicing and repairs.
www.cycle-re-cycle.org.uk | 07835 840989

Get Out More

Helping people engage better with nature to feel better in mind and body.
www.getoutmorecic.co.uk | 07974 935105

Grow Bradford

A participatory growing project to promote and increase food growing.
www.growbradford.org.uk

Horton Community Farm

Permaculture project for local food, environmental education and therapy.
www.hcf.org.uk

Let's Grow Keighley

Environmental initiative in Keighley.
Facebook: Lets Grow Keighley

NEET

Growing project for people with learning disabilities. Products and plants to buy.
www.northcliffpeopleandplants.co.uk

Prism City Farm

A community environmental & educational project for young people.
www.prismyouthproject.org | 01274 543 500

Scrap Magic

Low cost and scrap materials and resources to hire for craft and play.
www.scrapmagic.org.uk | 07974 196113

The Cellar Trust

Support for people when they face mental health challenges.
www.thecellartrust.org | 01274 586 474

The Storehouse and Café

Community waste food project with PAYF market and café.
www.storehousecafe.org.uk | 07375 427543

West End Community Centre and Café

A range of groups and projects to that promote social inclusion.
www.thewestendcentrebradford.org

Veg on The Edge

Community food growing in Saltaire & Shipley with a variety of open events.
www.vegontheedge.org

Learning Resources

INSECTS:

Do Bee Hotels Really Work? (MyBeeLine)

www.mybeeline.co/en/p/bee-hotels-really-work

How to Make a Bee Home that Really Works (Vertical Veg)

www.verticalveg.org.uk/how-to-make-a-bee-hotel-that-really-works

Make a Bee Hotel (This article has pretty much all the info you'll ever need about bees, range of materials and more ambitious projects)

www.foxleas.com/make-a-bee-hotel.asp

LIGHT:

How does your body know what time it is? (Video by M. Sotomayor)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y8ZXOfWUbm8

What is Hygge? (Video)

www.independent.co.uk/news/long_reads/dark-sad-mental-health-scandinavia-winter-norway-science-rjukan-biology-a7622241.html

Darkness Matters (How Light Affects Sleep)

sleep.mysplus.com/library/category2/article1.html

Is the Dark Really Making me Sad? (Article)

www.independent.co.uk/news/long_reads/dark-sad-mental-health-scandinavia-winter-norway-science-rjukan-biology-a7622241.html

MICROGREENS:

Eat Shoots and Small Leaves: How to Grow Microgreens in Winter (Article)

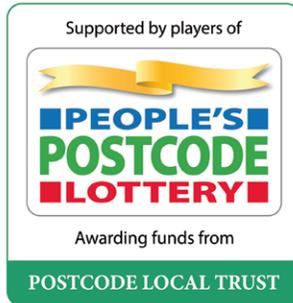
www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2014/sep/26/eat-shoots-and-small-leaves-how-to-grow-microgreens-in-winter

Microgreens: Assessment of Nutrient Concentrations (Research paper)

www.researchgate.net/publication/267354000_Microgreens_Assessment_of_Nutrient_Concentrations



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