

Grow Wild project progressing in Pilrig Park



Pilrig Park Grow Wild wild flower haven begins to take shape

Balfour's Botany project reaps the benefit

Three months after receiving a £4,900 cash injection from the Grow Wild community projects fund for Scotland for its Balfour's Botany project, Citizen Curator – an arts organisation which focuses on the history and identity of Leith and North Edinburgh – reports tremendous progress.

The project taking shape near a disused railway line in Pilrig Park is in homage to the city's inspirational Balfour family, famous among fellow Scots for promoting an understanding of botany.

The site near Leith is part of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, **Let's Grow Wild** campaign, which aims to inspire people across the UK to get together to transform unloved spaces with native wild flowers, creating new habitats for wildlife in the process.

Grow Wild is a £10.5m programme bringing people together to sow, grow and enjoy UK native wild flowers. 97% of wild flower meadows have disappeared since the 1930s.

Supported by the Big Lottery Fund and led by the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, Grow Wild is also a response to studies that have shown that communities across the UK are now more fragmented than ever before and young people in particular do not often have the freedom to connect with nature.

The Scottish Grow Wild campaign is partnering with Greenspace Scotland and Youth Scotland.

Since receiving their award, Citizen Curator has held workshops in the local allotments, horticulturalist-led walks round the park and workshops in the woods with the local Gaelic school. Working with local residents, young people, artists and horticulturalists, the project examines the botanical history of the area to jointly create a new planting scheme and installations for the park.

The project is a collaboration between Citizen Curator and the Friends of Pilrig Park group with local youth and community organisations who use the park heavily involved in its development.

Duncan Bremner at Citizen Curator, said: "It has been very exciting to be involved in the project so far. It's great to see you younger people getting their hands dirty and we have had several local residents come forward with historical information about the area and the Balfour family. Next month we will be making a push to clear some of the undergrowth so we can plant out in September."

There are 13 community projects across Scotland, which have been awarded a total of £41,070 including sites in Edinburgh and the Lothians, Glasgow, Fife, Argyll and Bute, Stirling, Falkirk, Lanarkshire, Ayrshire, the Scottish Borders and Shetland.



Over the life of the programme (which runs until 2017), Grow Wild wants to inspire three million people to sow and grow wild flower seeds and share their results through social media. Over the last three months, 31,000 groups have already signed up to receive special Grow Wild seed kits, including through residents' associations, wildlife trusts, Girlguiding UK, UK Youth, the Prince's Trust, Youth Scotland and the RSPB.

Let's Grow Wild is set to create hundreds of beautiful, creative and inspirational wild flower patches, blooming across the UK this summer for everyone to enjoy.

The Grow Wild Scottish flagship, the Water Works, opened in Barrhead last month with local dignitaries, school pupils and community groups turning out to celebrate the first stage of the former sewage works transformation into a 10,000 square metre park and gardens. The Water Works attracted £120,000 from the Big Lottery Fund.

Further details about Grow Wild can be found on growwilduk.com/ or via social media:

- [Twitter](https://twitter.com/growwilduk) – twitter.com/growwilduk
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