

Edinburgh Garden Partners presented with award during Global Intergenerational Week

In a corner of Craigleith an important award was presented on Thursday morning in the back garden where Mrs Violet Hogg lives.

Violet is the owner of the garden where [Edinburgh Garden Partners](#) (EGP) have stepped in to help tend to her vegetable patch. Her volunteer gardener is Debs Hahn who is also Project Coordinator at [EGP](#), and one of the one and a half people who work for the organisation.

On Thursday Alison Clyde visited the garden to present both Violet and Debs with an Excellence award for the work accomplished in the garden in helping to tackle climate change. Alison is the Chief Executive Officer of Generations Working Together (GWT), the national centre for Scotland – an organisation which supports intergenerational work.

Alison said: “This is a fantastic example of a project which connects younger and older generations, all the more so because people often think that intergenerational work involves early years or people in care homes, but this is young people involved with older people who still live in the community.

“The award recognises their work to tackle climate change and is an opportunity to recognise intergenerational spaces. This gardening project really shows how we can bring people together outside in the environment and helping to build

relationships and friendships.”

It is significant that this and four other awards are being presented by GWT this week as it is Global Intergenerational Week 2022. This was highlighted in The Scottish Parliament by Jackie Dunbar MSP for Aberdeen Donside on Thursday who raised a motion for a business members’ debate on the importance of and further development of intergenerational work in Scotland.

Ms Dunbar said during the debate: “It is crucial that no one in any community in Scotland feels isolated or lonely. The fantastic work that Generations Working Together is doing across Scotland will help to ensure that Scotland becomes a nation where the generations seamlessly work in collaboration. The incredible work that the charity does will help to ensure that folk who feel isolated or lonely are aware of the opportunities available to them in their local communities and can access such opportunities.”



Edinburgh Garden Partners received an award from Generations Working Together during Global Intergenerational Week Photo

shows L-R Rory Collier and Debs Hahn of Edinburgh Garden Partners with Violet Hogg and Alison Clyde CEO of Generations Working Together ©2022 The Edinburgh Reporter

Violet Hogg has lived in her house since 1973 and the vegetable patch was the work of her late husband who sadly died in 2004. She found a flier for Edinburgh Garden Partners at a coffee morning and after getting in touch with the charitable organisation she was paired up, first with volunteer Maggie and then with Lizzie.

Violet said: “Both were excellent but Lizzie grew herbs, peas, beans and all sorts of things which we shared. The strawberries have blossomed in the last year. I am quite an outgoing person, but I really feel I have become friends with Lizzie particularly – and I am sure I will be friends with Deb as well.

“I do enjoy meeting younger people because obviously in my age group I am meeting more people who are ages with me. I think having people of all age groups in your own group is a good thing – and you don’t have to meet every day.

“It is a fantastic feeling I can’t emphasise too much how good it has been for me and hopefully the volunteers. It keeps my garden tidy and I have a new friend. I could get quite emotional, but this keeps my life in great shape. I have wonderful family, the most marvellous nieces and nephews but these volunteers look after me too. Everyone says ‘Look after Violet!’”

Debs Hahn is Project Coordinator who explained that her title means she does most things along with an assistant who works part time supporting the 40 volunteers who work with EGP.

She said that she is also a volunteer helping Violet to grow vegetables, and has only been working in the garden for around three months, but Violet has had volunteers helping her for about seven or eight years. Debs explained that this is an amazing opportunity for her to have space to grow things.

She said: "I have never had a garden of my own, and for a lot of younger people in Edinburgh it is just not affordable to live in a house with a garden. So to have a growing space where I can try things out and learn about growing, and hopefully see some veg on the table at harvest time is amazing. It is also great to meet someone who I would never otherwise have met. My family is 500 miles away so it is lovely to have a connection with someone from an older generation, and who has lived in Edinburgh all her life to share that with me. I hope I bring some good chat with me as well as some energy to the garden.

"If Violet didn't have someone working here in the veg plot she wouldn't have any vegetables. We will share whatever I can grow at the end of the season. But also I think it is company, someone who is checking in regularly and sharing a bit of gossip about what is going on in the world."

Edinburgh Garden Partners has many volunteers who also help care for gardens which have perhaps become a bit too much for their owners, but they are always looking for more new volunteers. Anyone who wants to have a growing space or anyone who has a garden they would like someone to help them care for

may contact Debs Hahn by email.
info@edinburghgardenpartners.org.uk

The organisation is one way to match up people who want a space to grow and those who have garden space to share and connects people of different ages, abilities, and backgrounds to build a shared gardening movement through the exchange of skills, knowledge, and life experience.





