

# MP visits local community garden

Owen Thompson MP visited the Newtongrange Community Garden on Tuesday and learned about how they view sustainability. He also saw for himself the transformation from an abandoned wasteland into an award-winning garden and haven for wildlife.

Mr Thompson toured the garden and chatted with volunteers who explained they have been supported by locals in Newtongrange and beyond. As well as gardens to weed and plant, the volunteers have bees to look after, but still found time to provide coffee and home-baking in the greenhouse. The Easter event in the garden last weekend was a sell-out success.

Volunteer Paddy Carstairs said: "We were delighted that Owen Thompson MP could visit and it was great to hear him express how much he shared our view that spaces such as the Newtongrange Community Garden are vital for building a sense of community and for reducing isolation and loneliness. It was also really positive to hear him speak about the environmental, health, and social benefits of community gardens, and how they far exceed any economic value."

Volunteer Nynke Halbesma said: "It was fantastic to hear Owen Thompson MP recognise how important it is to encourage children to connect with nature from a young age. He was

certainly able to witness that at the garden today.'

Finally, Garden Lead Laura Joyce said: "It was a really positive and productive visit. We were able to show Owen Thompson MP just how much our community garden is valued, not just by the volunteers who get a real sense of achievement by working here week after week, but also by the residents of Newtongrange who pop in to enjoy the space and support our events."

- Newtongrange Community Garden is located on Main Street, Newtongrange, beside the Leisure Centre.
- Newtongrange Community Garden is open every Tuesday 9:30-11:30am, Wednesday 12-2pm, and Saturday 9:30-11:30am.
- For further information, follow the Newtongrange Guerrilla Gardeners on Facebook.



Owen Thompson MP and the gardeners at Newtongrange