

Site

Yorks and The Humber NPS

Name of project / initiative

Community Payback Garden Project

Overview

Community Payback projects should be of clear benefit to the community and not directly replace paid work. When the owner of Thirsk Hall asked for help to transform his once impressive private Edwardian walled garden, it was not immediately clear that would qualify. However, our Community Payback Placement Co-ordinator had a vision and, since 2021, successive teams of unpaid workers have transformed the neglected land into a thriving kitchen garden, complete with poly-tunnels, which produces 25 different types of vegetables. These are donated, in recycled boxes which have in turn been donated by local greengrocers, to the local foodbank; and the site now its first hive of bees which produce honey to add to the foodbank boxes.

Longevity

The project started in 2021 and is ongoing.

Benefits

This project is of clear benefit to the local community, has transformed a once neglected parcel of land into a productive and valuable local resource, and has helped transform the lives of many of the unpaid workers themselves, who clearly value and respond to the opportunity to contribute to such a meaningful initiative.

Uniqueness

What's special about this initiative is how different it is from most unpaid work projects, and shows what can be done with a bit of creativity and a large amount of dedication, to take the concept of unpaid work beyond its normal boundaries and transform a piece of unloved private land into a thriving and sustainable resource for the local community.

Applicability

While this particular project may not be replicable elsewhere, the creative approach taken here could be adopted more widely, again pushing the boundaries of what Community Payback can be.

Requirements

Such an approach does require a good deal of creativity and dedication but the principles could be applied right across the country.

For more information:

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See also: [KnowX.uk/YaTH-KBT22.pdf](#) [Images]

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