



CLEAR ANNUAL REPORT

(August 20-July 21)

CLEAR is a local charity (SCIO 43573) since 2012, initially a voluntary group formed July 2007 open to all residents. Originally CLEAR Buckhaven, we extended work into neighbouring in 2018 (Buckhaven & Methil used to be a joint burgh). Our aims are: to improve the local environment; and to build pride and engagement in a deprived community. We strive to improve the appearance of public areas and greenspaces around town, and create more sustainable environments in the adjoining countryside.

Main actions and achievements during the last year (August 20-July 21).

A. GROWING

1. Trees (Native & Fruit):

- Community woodlands extended: approx 1,700 native tree saplings planted at Savoy Park, Braes (donated sapling – Woodland Trust, Ovo/TCV, E-forestry, Carbon Footprint Ltd), Starkies Wood, Braes (mainly donated saplings -Woodld Trust, Ovo/TCV, Eforestry)
- Orchards: approx. 360 fruit trees planted (Foreshore/Rising Sun, Braes, Savoy Park,Kirkland Drive) + 30 standards (Foreshore, Methil Garden). Mostly purchased
- Large native trees (extra-heavy standards): 25 mainly rowan, s birch (Foreshore)
- Maintenance: ongoing across 10 major sites, and smaller sites is now a major challenge exacerbated by extended drought periods

2. Flowers, bulbs, shrubs

- Spring bulbs: 60,000 bulbs planted (40,000 purple crocus, 15,000 daffs, some tulip etc) mainly Percival/Methilhaven Rd, Kirkland Drive).
- Floral: >250 trays bedding plants (summer, some winter) planted (Bank Corner, Percival Rd town orchards)+ lamppost planters/hanging baskets at College St.
- Wildflowers: Savoy Park rewilding also involving other groups using 1,200+ wildflower plugs propagated from seed.
- Shrubs: ca 60 flowering shrubs planted, mainly gapfilling in earlier planted shrub-beds College St Gardens, Viewforth) shrub-bed maintenance is a major challenge

3. Community Growing

- Development of Methil Community Garden nearing completion and neighbourhood (polytunnel, comm. cabin installed etc); continuing maintenance at Buckhaven Community Growing Space. Regular volunteer events held two days weekly offering year-round therapeutic gardening, work placements, producing plants for our use and sale. Planting in adjoining gardens.
- Food production (estimate): Significant volume of fruit + veg (apples, plums, pears, berries/currants, rhubarb, tomatoes, peas, beans, courgettes, potatoes, broccoli, onions, salad, etc but local demand limited. Some home growing promoted (sunflower, potato/tomato/herb planters) including collaborations with school (Aberhill) and nursery (Woodlands) and MCCI. RTAS Bed in College St Garden maintained by Wobbly Women.

- Events: Open Days (June, Aug, Sept) held plus additional Venue for 6 monthly Open Days July-Oct 17, April-June 18 latterly alternating between Methil and Buckhaven. Other events (plant propagation, grafting workshops, wassailing etc) with expanded activities.

B. ENHANCEMENT, PRACTICAL PROJECTS

1. **Litter clearing & recycling:** Only one community cleanups (coast) organised. Buckhaven and Methil Street Champion scheme– 10-12 picking litter regularly
2. **Community art and interpretation: three pairs** archways, and 4 totems installed along Foreshore. Other ceramic works (Welcome to Buckhaven, second phase dinosaur mural, College ST garden ceramic repair) all held up. Heritage panels for Foreshore are in development
3. **Recycled wood** (tools, paint, nails): Wood workshop intermittently busy producing planters
4. **Bike Project:** recycling donated bikes (ca 75 this past year) and weekly repair clinics, organising regular bike runs, preparing local cycle route map. Electric bikes. Repair scheme has been subsidized by Scottish Govt scheme
5. **Food Processing Unit:** now up and running at Sandwell St, more efficient production though cramped.
6. **Site development;** Methil Community Garden improvements are ongoing (train station, hobbit house). Randolph St planters produced awaiting community involvement. Sandwell improvements include reroofing, solar panel installation, e-van charger, electrical work and kitchen fitting etc
- 7.

C. VOLUNTEERING, WORKING WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS

1. **Schools and other groups:** regular weekly programme (outdoor growing/environmental education) has been severely disrupted, Levenmouth Academy groups have resumed; summer kids programme with MCCI at Methil Garden. Robert Gough group has not resumed, 16+ Group also
2. **Individual Volunteers:** Open to all local residents, some come farther. Numbers have fallen during successive lockdowns so we are short of people for the tasks required. While staff were on furlough, capable individual volunteers have kept things ticking over.

D. EVENTS, EDUCATION, ADVOCACY & PARTICIPATION

1. **Regular activity sessions:** Severely disrupted. Volunteer sessions run every Wed and Thurs except during lockdown. Bike repair classes, clinics.
2. **Information:** Regular updates via local media (weekly plus features), e-bulletin, websites, facebook, twitter and updating local noticeboards. Quarterly Newsletter delivered door-to-door.
3. **Advocacy and Participation.**
 - Initiators/drivers of the LevenMouth Rail Campaign, host the office – BREAKTHROUGH
 - Participate in Levenmouth Reconnected and River Leven programmes primarily zoom. Other involvements have dropped off over this past year especially Council-led
 - Participate in Buckhaven & Denbeath Community Council meeting monthly
 - Inputs to consultations and planning events, raising issues.
 - Members of SF&G, CWA, DTAS, SCVO/FVA, SMSA, SURF, CyclingUK, Age Scotland, etc.

4. **Recognition:** No Beautiful Fife running in 20,21. It's Your Neighbourhood entry – high marks (previously Outstanding/Certif of Distinction 9 years' running). as FVA Fife Super Start-Up Project 2019 - Methil Community Garden; Young Volunteer of the Year 2019. presumably we retain BF Best Small Town, and Gold (Buckhaven)

E. RESOURCES

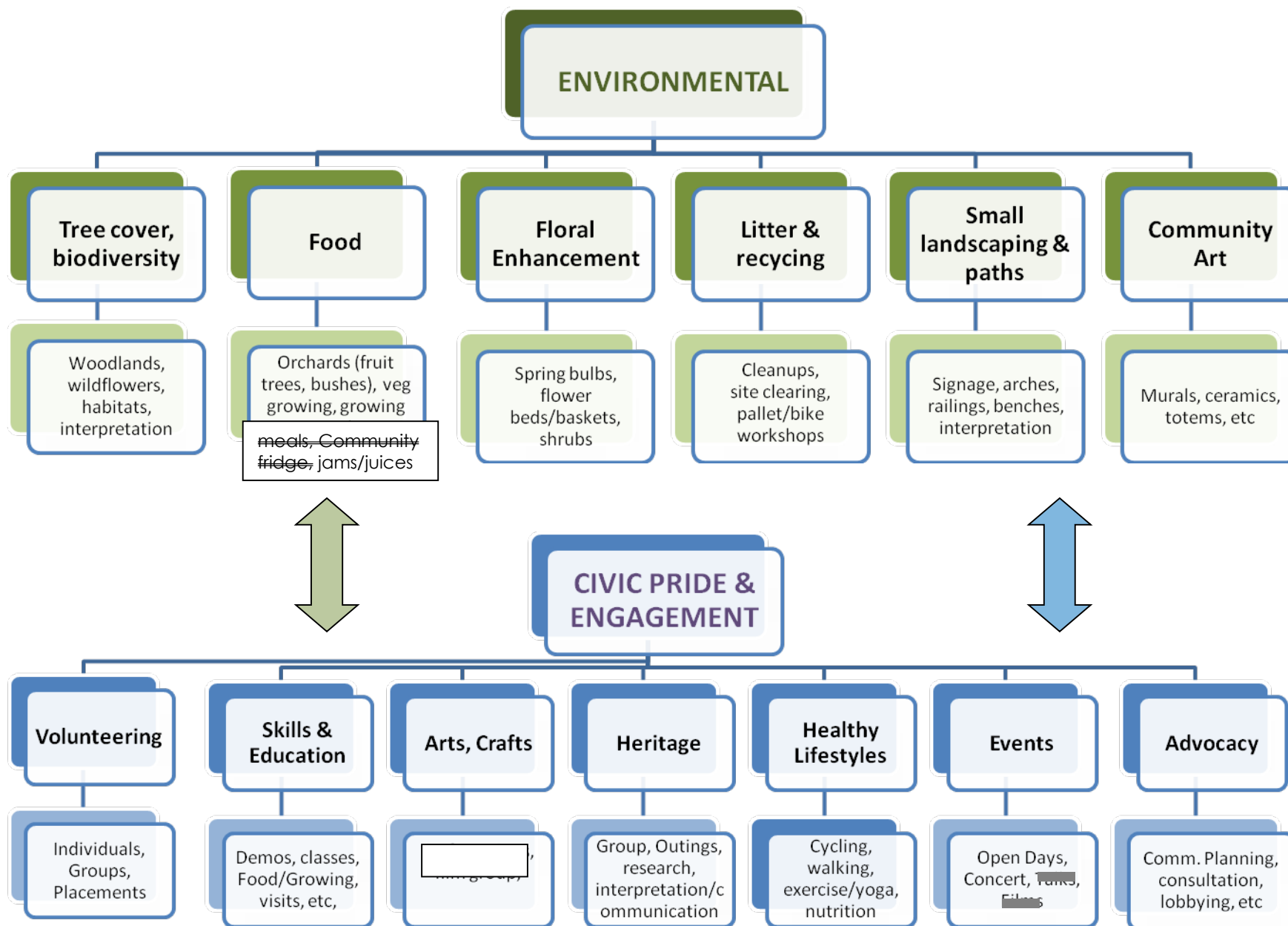
1. **Hub Office-shop, and others.** Closed during lockdown. Community Fridge stopped in mid April 2020, along with volunteer meals. Workshop at Sandwell St, community gardens in Methil & Buckhaven, 5 lockups
2. **Human:** CLEAR has a core group of around 35-40 volunteers active to varying degrees. Currently 6 p-t staff, generally project most furloughed for several months. We also receive placements and rely on collaboration with other groups.
3. **Financial:** Annual financial report being finalised. Turnover for financial year ending March 2019 is £329,985 (exceptionally high due to larger projects now ended). Funders include: Big Lottery, Aspiring Communities, Scottish Govt (People & Communities, Strengthening Communities, Community Choices), Fife Environment Trust, and Fairer Fife, Fife Council. Some 12 smaller funders also contribute (from 30+ applications per year).

Grants are supplemented by our own ongoing fundraising efforts through sales of food and produce, donations in money and kind. (£9,797)

G. SOME CHALLENGES

1. ***Sustaining the programme and maintaining the assets***, especially community gardens, will be very challenging. Ongoing maintenance and sustenance of established sites (weeding, maintaining trees, watering etc.) is already problematic. Some new sites/projects, generally planned with minimal maintenance in mind
2. ***Volunteer numbers and capacities:*** Mobilising new volunteers for civic activities, especially outdoors, remains very challenging in deprived Buckhaven & Methil. Co-ordination of activities among part-time staff, volunteers with limited time. The capacity of a proportion of volunteers is very limited due to their own personal challenges; some need heavy supervision. Succession, especially of Trustees, Management Committee and attracting appropriate skills, professional experience and motivation is needed. Fewer staff means fewer volunteer sessions and less time to plan new actions, engage with others and so on, though we can be in heavy demand
3. ***Grant funding dependence and funding environment:*** Generating funds in a competitive environment, meeting increasing demands, to maintain and add to the programme. Need for more own-income generation. Nevertheless, furlough scheme was useful and some investment in facilities has been possible (Methil water connection awaited) and some reserve enhanced for inevitable leaner periods.
4. ***Logistics/Inefficiency:*** operating around several scattered main sites and many smaller sites and limited storage capacity (yet seasonally changing needs), means greater inefficiencies, costs (time, budget). A new e-van (90% grant funded) assists
5. ***Harm:*** vandalism (damage, fire, theft of stakes/trees/bowser/bikes, weedkillers, etc). Natural threats and pressures (drought, deer + rabbits, bindweed, coastal erosion, sawfly, bent banana disease) + certain Council actions (spraying weedkiller, strimming).

Many thanks to our volunteers, our staff, our local supporters and event participants and our funders. We'd like many more to join in



CLEAR – RANGE OF ACTIVITIES