**Heritage Grant final report: The Bridge Camphill Community October 2019**

We are pleased to be able to submit this final report relating to the generous grant from KCC. This follows on from our interim report which is attached at Appendix A (an electronic copy of which was submitted in July with photographs.)

We are pleased to confirm that we have completed the project. We intend to keep the momentum going and to continue with activities relating to the project over the coming months (eg building and fitting more bird boxes, planting bulbs and seeds, taking cuttings and generally enhancing the environment around the nature trail for wildlife, visitors and residents of Kilcullen and above all the people who live, volunteer and work in the community.) Some activities such as the birdbox building, decorating plant pots, making and decorating signs, or planting seeds are excellent activities for teams to work on during cold, wet winter afternoons.

Finance: here summary of income and expenditure against the grant and enclose original and copy receipts. We confirm that the entire grant has been spent on the activities outlined in our grant application. We actually overspent by a few euros but this was covered by donations.

Income from KCC: 1250 Total expenditure: 1250

(NB Supporting receipts are being sent with the printed copy of this report.)

As a result of being able to upcycle, recycle and repurpose discarded or broken items we were able to make some savings on purchases such as new plant pots and new timber. This has meant that we were able to increase the number of shrubs, bulbs and plants purchased. Examples include the use of a broken wheelbarrow to create a herb garden, upcycled and decorated by members of a house community and some of our transitional training students, and the use of scraps of timber to create some of the bird boxes. Old plant pots have been painted and decorated – all of these activities have been examples of how waste can be reduced or recycled and the environmental and economic benefits of doing this.

We have also gradually built up our stock of baby plants by dividing and taking cuttings from established plants, particularly pollinator friendly plants. This will enable us to fill gaps between the larger plants while they establish themselves. We are particularly keen to try to create beautiful borders that require less maintenance as we have a reduced number of people able to work in the garden, and at the same time we need to concentrate our efforts on producing plenty of organic fruit and vegetables for our residential community. This is a balancing act, but the creation of pollinator friendly borders, which also provide scent, colour and texture for those who visit them, is a win-win combination. We are also trying to mulch the refurbished flowerbeds in an attempt to keep weeds at bay and reduce maintenace – always a challenge especially as we do not use chemicals in our garden.

We are pleased to confirm that a number of events were held during Heritage Week. The nature trail was open as usual so that visitors could explore the garden and see the borders that had already been renovated in their full glory. We also set up a butterfly trail which has been kept going into the autumn using weather proof clues for people to follow. The buddleias which were planted a few years ago are now well established and on sunny afternoons were covered in butterflies – the ‘butterfly boulevard’ that we had envisaged. We have also kept plenty of patches of nettles to create habitats for the caterpillars.

In addition to activities relating to the nature trail our weavery was open to the public. Our transitional training group were also involved in an exploration of the industry that used to take place in Stratford on Slaney.

After careful review of the sites available for tree planting we have slightly reduced the number of trees planted. As this project has taken place during the year in which Kilcullen has been marking 700 years of a crossing over the Liffey, we have planted a small circle of trees to mark the anniversary at a place in the garden that can been seen from the approach to the bridge. A specimen red hawthorn tree has been planted near the path to the gazebo by the river, and an unusual black mulberry has been planted in our fruit garden – in many years to come this should develop into an interesting and productive tree. It was lovely to hear that passers by commented about how pleased they were to see that more trees were being planted.

We would like to thank Kildare County Council for their support, as well as everyone who has been involved in the project. Photographs showing key aspects of the project and its progress are being submitted with the printed copy of this report.

 



