

# COMMUNITY SERVICE

*Providing a service to your community*



2008

## Community Justice

By John Muir: Convener

Lothian & Borders CJA covers the five local authority areas of City of Edinburgh, Midlothian, East Lothian, West Lothian and Scottish Borders.

Established in 2007, the CJA brings together the wide range of agencies involved in criminal justice to build a safer, stronger Scotland, improve the management of offenders and reduce re-offending.

Recent studies such as 'Reforming & Revitalising' produced by the Scottish Government have highlighted the need to raise the profile of the excellent work that is being carried out in our Community Service teams and redress the negative press that some few cases occasionally receive.

Community Service work offers a real alternative to short term prison sentences and it has reparation to the community at its heart. Community safety is paramount and all work is supervised and managed by the trained Community Service teams in each local authority.

## Providing a service to your Community

By Chris Hawkes: Chief Officer

In Lothian & Borders in 2007-2008 there were 1280 Community Service Orders providing a total of 180,544 hours of unpaid work in the community.

This is the equivalent of 99 people working a 35hr week for the full 52 weeks of the year, which is a huge investment of time and effort.

Over two thirds of all Community Service Orders in Scotland from 2004-2007 were completed successfully.

### Inside This Issue

<b>Edinburgh</b>	<b>2 &amp; 3</b>
<b>East Lothian</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Midlothian</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>West Lothian</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Scottish Borders</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Contact Details</b>	<b>8</b>

This newsletter highlights the current range of excellent projects from across our area and demonstrates both the level of ongoing reparation to the community and the quality of work that is being carried out in our communities.

Your feedback on this newsletter is welcome. A copy can be downloaded from our website [www.cjalb.co.uk](http://www.cjalb.co.uk). Please send your comments to our mailbox: [cjalb@scotborders.gov.uk](mailto:cjalb@scotborders.gov.uk)



See page 2 for the full story

## Project 1 – Community City Farm

Community Service teams carry out ongoing maintenance work at Edinburgh's Community City Farm.

This includes painting & decorating, fencing, sign making and repairing the stables and animal enclosures.



## Project 2 – Landscaping work

Edinburgh's Community Service teams are involved in developing the grounds of a Community Arts Centre which is located in a large 2 acre site.

The land started out as wasteland and was of no use to the community except as a dumping ground.

Over several years, Community Service workers have invested time and energy to help create a useable area in partnership with the Centre staff, volunteers and the local community.



## Project 3 – Furniture Refurbishment

Unwanted and damaged furniture is recycled at the Community Service Workshop, where it is repaired, stripped, sanded and finished.

This not only saves unnecessary landfill but the refurbished furniture is sold to raise money for children's charities.



## Project 4 – Charity Book Recycling

Another project which helps to reduce landfill is the charity book recycling project. Working in partnership with two 'not for profit' organisations, unsold books are collected from charity shops, sorted into categories, boxed and then sold on the internet – with the profits being returned to the charity shops.

This project offers a range of different jobs which can be matched to the ability of the worker. The jobs range from collecting the books, preparing the pallets of boxed books to boxing & sorting the books.

This project not only helps the charities to raise funds but reduces their landfill charges significantly as every month 20 tonnes of books are processed in Edinburgh alone.



## Project 5 – Children's Centre – maintenance & building work

For several years Community Service has supported a city based children's centre for children with additional support needs.

Work includes the building and maintenance of play structures, sand pits, water play area, walk ways and a sensory garden.

The children get great enjoyment from the work that is done by the community service teams, during the hours the centre is closed.



## Project 1 – Grants Brae

Working with the Grants Brae Burns Club, the Community Service workgroups have created a safe walkway through an area of native woodland.

This is no ordinary walkway as it now safely links the site of Robert Burn's mothers (Agnes Broun) cottage and the drinking well she used.

The workgroups were involved in the measurement, estimating and installation of the new pathway and steps and excavated the foundations of the cottage which is now on view to the public for the very first time.



In 2009, the workgroups will erect Interpretation Boards detailing the history of the sites along with seating and the planting of woodland flowers.

## Project 2 – Stepping Out – The Healing Garden

Gardening is known to have therapeutic value and Stepping Out, an East Lothian mental health project, has developed The Healing Garden in Musselburgh. With land provided by East Lothian Council Community Education the project team was faced with a large unkempt garden that needed landscaping and building work.

Community Service took on the job of measuring, pricing and sourcing the materials for the project and then the workgroups cleared the ground, built flower & vegetable beds, improved paths and driveways for wheelchair users and assembled a fantastic new summerhouse.

Stepping Out not only enjoys the garden on a day to day basis, but has successfully grown & harvested their first crop of vegetables from the Healing Garden.



## Project 1 – United Free Church, Gorebridge

The Minister of the United Free Church of Scotland (Gorebridge) faced with lack of funds and volunteers, contacted the Midlothian Community Service Team to ask for their help in painting the outside of the church.

Midlothian Community Service Team carried out and completed this project, providing both the labour and materials. The Team received positive feedback from the Minister and staff of the church on a daily basis which was encouraging for the clients and Community Service staff.

The external walls and downpipes of the church were painted white with the footing and gutters painted black. Materials were provided at cost price which allowed the project to be carried out within the church's budget.

Health and Safety must be considered at all times and due to the height constraints the apex work was carried out by a member of the church.



## Project 2 – Helping a member of the community

The Community Service team undertakes mostly environmental work within Midlothian but also help individuals with projects similar to the following one.

The team were contacted by a member of the public who suffers from ill-health and has to use a mobility car. Whilst the council had agreed to lower the kerb so he could park his car off-street, he didn't have a suitable drive-in.

After a site visit it was agreed that the work could be carried out. The team first removed the turf and topsoil, replacing it with hardcore. Then two rows of paving stones were laid and filled in with washed gravel as requested.

The project was completed by the making two wooden gates in the Community Service workshop.



## Project 1 – Linlithgow Union Canal

Community Service has supported the work of the Linlithgow Union Canal Society for many years.

The work ranges from maintenance of the building & boats to clearing reeds and debris from the canal, cutting back trees and collecting litter – this all helps to make the canal towpath one of the most popular routes for walkers in Linlithgow.



## Project 2 – Housing Project

Working in partnership with West Lothian Council Housing, the Community Service Work Teams clear houses that have been abandoned by tenants. The furniture is stored securely with unclaimed or unwanted items redistributed or converted to woodchip with 9 tonnes recycled in the past year.

## Project 3 – Polbeth Market Garden

This exciting new project aims to provide produce for the community. There are three poly-tunnels under construction which will supply a range of salad and root vegetables which will be available for sale through local food cooperatives. This part of the project links to West Lothian Council's diet and health initiatives as the cooperatives operate from hospitals and health & community centres across West Lothian.

In addition to food production the project will also provide the community service workers with work skills that will be recognised by employers. The workshop will act as an education centre for carrying out repairs to on-site machinery and making garden ornaments such as bird feeders and garden troughs.



## Project 1 – Gordon Community Woodland

Community Service Supervisors Kevin Farrell and Danny Kelly together with their project teams have just completed the second phase of work at Gordon Community Woodland.

In 2007 Scottish Borders Community Service Team installed more than 110 meters of boardwalk over a very boggy pathway to enable the people of Gordon to access this community woodland.



The Gordon Community Woodland Committee was so pleased with the workmanship and the cost of the initial project that they raised funds to finance another 80 meters of pathway and 120 meters of boardwalk.

This second phase of work included creating a new entrance to the woodland with wheelchair and pram access so that everyone can now enjoy this stunning part of the Scottish Borders countryside.

## Project 2 – The Solway Woodland Trail, Tweedbank



This pathway in Tweedbank was initially a short cut used by dog walkers and children to avoid the busy Melrose bypass.

The Community Service Team was asked to provide an informal path through the woods to the sports centre with safe access at both ends. This work involved laying over 70 tonnes of gravel. In addition, on completion of the path, the project team removed dead trees, cleared all the litter then constructed and erected signposts.

This pathway was officially opened in 2007 by Ms Jill Solway in recognition of her work with local animal welfare. As a new housing development has now been built close to the walkway it is very well used and the Community Service Team has now been asked by Councillor David Parker to extend the path. Work on the extension is due to commence at the beginning of 2009.



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