



An Excellence Gateway case study

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North Warwickshire & Hinckley College: Bringing E&D alive through a World Peace Garden

Contact person

Jon Cartmell – email: jon.cartmell@nwhc.ac.uk

Outline the aim

The aim of this project is to bring Equality & Diversity alive within every part of the curriculum, through the development of a former Horticulture area into a “World Peace Garden”, an open air classroom and an organic market garden managed through a partnership between the College and Nuneaton Transition Town. The garden and associated outbuildings will be used to promote the links between Global Citizenship, Environmental Sustainability and Equality & Diversity.

The challenge

The project was aiming to embed Equality and Diversity through the curriculum following the Executive Management Team vision for every learner at the College to realise their role and responsibilities as a “Global Citizen”. This learner-centred project involves developing an area of the College grounds as a “World Peace Garden” where the whole College community (learners and staff alike) can reflect on the “**interdependence**” between Equality & Diversity, Global Citizenship and Environmental Sustainability. It will directly or indirectly involve all students and staff as well as impacting positively on the local community. As well as producing organic food for the College restaurant, for sale or for donation to good causes, the garden will be a peaceful “spiritual” haven for all learners to feel welcome, accepted, valued and empowered to realise their full potential and to make the world a better place.



Partnership organisations

Nuneaton Transition Town (NTT), a voluntary group who promote environmental sustainability, signed a memorandum of understanding with the College, which involved them having direct access to the site during evenings and weekends to tend the organic market garden. The produce will be jointly shared between the College and NTT.

HASCON, a local groundwork contractor, carried out work on site with labour free of charge, after the proprietor read about the project in a local newspaper.

Business in the Community arranged for 10 volunteer workers from a local factory to help work on the project as part of international Give and Gain day on Fri 19th June 2012.

Groundworks volunteers helped carry out the planting in the World Peace Garden.

The outputs

There are three main outcomes to the project: a) a peaceful World Peace Garden (with a pagoda, a pond and covered seating areas), b) an open air classroom and c) an organic market garden managed by Nuneaton Transition Town using the principles of permaculture.

The College now provides free accommodation for monthly Nuneaton Transition Town meetings, which are attended by the College Sustainability Officer. Nuneaton Transition Town have their own key to the organic market garden which they access at evenings and weekends. They are also planning a series of awareness raising sessions for staff and students during 2012-13 regarding permaculture and sustainability issues.

About 450 curriculum staff were trained in how to embed E&D into the curriculum at the beginning of the project in line with the attached guidelines.

The impacts and outcomes

As part of this project, all College staff were trained in how to embed E&D into the curriculum and this has been endorsed by OFSTED. These are quotes from the OFSTED Inspection report (March 2012):

The promotion of equality and diversity is good. Students report that the college is a tolerant and friendly environment in which to learn. Teachers promote equality and diversity well in the majority of lessons, and use relevant examples to develop learners' knowledge and understanding further. Learner run groups, such as the recent 'Gays are OK' group, promote equality and diversity further.

Equality and diversity are promoted well. All staff give equality issues a high priority in their lesson planning. Teachers incorporate equality and diversity themes regularly in their theory lessons.

All staff have been trained to ensure that they are up to date with current equality practice. Teachers give equality issues a high priority in their lesson planning so that learners develop a good understanding of equality and diversity and demonstrate respect for their peers. In lessons, stereotypes are discussed and challenged well.

Therefore, the project has been a success in bringing E&D alive in the short term. However, its full impact will be realised during 2012-13 when the Open Air classroom, the Organic Market Garden and the World Peace Garden are fully operational and used by both the College and Nuneaton Transition Town to promote aspects of E&D, sustainable development and global citizenship.

Student feedback will be gained via Student Perception surveys during 2012-13. The annual Staff Survey will enable staff to give their written views whilst the wider community will be asked to complete an engagement questionnaire.

The main impact will be realised during 2012-13, when the organic market garden has produced its first crop and curriculum teams become more aware of the potential of using the area as a teaching/learning resource. The intended beneficiaries are all learners and staff within the College as well as the local community.

The project will have a profound impact on learners of all ages, (14-16, 16-18 and 19+) and all types of provision (FE, HE, WBL, full cost and adult learning) in that it will help address both physical and "spiritual" needs, as well as addressing awareness of Equality & Diversity, Global Citizenship (including Safeguarding) and Environmental Sustainability.

In the future, the benefits of the project will be measured in terms of numbers of students and staff using the garden for a) relaxation and reflection, b) as a learning resource, c) feedback from learners and staff in terms of perception

surveys, d) income from products sold, energy generated and sponsorship, e) reduced gaps in success rates between different types of learners.

The Open Air classroom will become available to staff from 1st September 2012, when it can be booked for teaching/learning or student support. It will be available for staff relaxation every day between 12.30pm-1.30pm.

Every learner at the College was invited to take part in a design competition for the World Peace Garden during the Autumn Term.

The intended beneficiaries are all learners and staff within the College as well as the local community. The proportion of the intended learner beneficiaries, aged 14-16 is 10%, aged 16 - 18 is 56% and aged 19+ is 25%. The project is also specifically aimed at adult learners and potential learners (19+). The main impact will be felt during 2012-13, when the World Peace Garden, the Open Air Classroom and the Organic Market Garden become fully operational.

All equality groups will benefit either directly or indirectly from the World Peace Garden.



Aspects from the five winning and highly commended designs were aggregated into a single plan, which was developed by BTEC ED Interior Design students as one of their assignments.

Time Capsule

The World Peace Garden includes a time capsule buried in the ground, being waterproof and made out of rustproof galvanised steel. There was a competition for all Foundation Learning students, five of which were chosen as winners. Students were asked to write on no more than two sides of A4 paper, a paragraph or two about their lives and how we are looking after the

planet; and suggest an object to put into the time capsule which symbolises life in 2012.

Level 1 Fab and Welding students made the time capsule out of galvanised steel. The five winning Foundation learners' objects and information sheets were welded inside the capsule with argon gas (which will prevent decomposition). The time capsule was placed in a recycled Belfast sink and buried under a concrete paving slab, 1m below ground level.

It is intended that this time capsule will be opened in the year 2312, enabling people in the future to learn about our lives and the way we live.

Working relationship with LSIS

LSIS enabled the College to realise its vision for every learner to realise their role and responsibilities as a "Global Citizen". The College has been successful in achieving World Peace Garden status, joining 17 other World Peace Gardens throughout the world in countries including the UK, Ireland, USA, India, Portugal, Cyprus and Uzbekistan. (<http://www.worldpeacegardensnet.org/>).

Good value for money

Partnership working between the College and Nuneaton Transition Town resulted in efficiencies in terms of sharing the produce grown and promoting common themes of sustainability. The project included collecting rain water from the barn, for use in irrigation.

The funding enabled the College to develop a little used area of the College into a multi-functional teaching/learning resource designed to promote Equality & Diversity, Global Citizenship and Environmental Sustainability.

The College teaching staff will benefit from this resource as it will act as a dynamic resource base for ideas to embed E&D into the curriculum for many years into the future.

The Project included developing a sustainable open air classroom which will be used to promote Equality & Diversity, Global Citizenship and Environmental Sustainability, including five wheelchair-friendly recycled plastic picnic tables. This resource will also be used by Nuneaton Transition to promote permaculture and other aspects of sustainability. It is intended that the Open Air Classroom will be used to develop community cohesion in the future by the sharing of best practice in organic market gardening.

The local community will benefit from local voluntary groups, such as the Friends of the Earth/Nuneaton Transition Town group, developing the garden at weekends to share a common interest in growing organic food intensively and reducing our impact on the environment.



The project has resulted in a multi-purpose resource, being, at times a) a beautiful, tranquil haven for all and staff learners to unwind, relax and reflect, with the sound of running water, b) an open air classroom for groups to carry out curriculum-related projects and c) a resource for encouraging social cohesion at weekends through the work of local voluntary bodies such as Nuneaton and District Friends of the Earth. The area, with its existing greenhouses, outhouses and polytunnel, will be used to produce large amounts of organic food (vegetables, fruit and herbs) for use in the College Glebegate Restaurant next door.

Senior managers involvement

The Executive Management Team originally inspired the concept of every learner becoming a world citizen. The project manager was a senior manager who gave regular updates to staff through the monthly Staff Bulletin. The Director of Built environment was very involved in the World Peace Garden Project as Horticulture falls under his area of responsibility. The Principal planted an ornamental tree at the opening ceremony and, Laurel Penrose, the Vice Principal (Curriculum and Quality) was present at the Opening Ceremony on Fri 22nd June 2012, when she buried an ornamental tree in the presence of Jeffrey Gale, founder of the World Peace Garden Network.



Stakeholder involvement

Jeffrey Gale, the founder of the World Peace Garden network provided two plaques to acknowledge that this is joining a network of other such World Peace Gardens throughout the world. He attended the Opening Ceremony on Fri 22nd June 2012, where he gave a brief presentation.

- Nuneaton Transition Town took on responsibility for managing the organic market garden
- Business in the Community set up a Give and Gain day with Nationwide Platforms, Lutterworth
- Nationwide Platforms, Lutterworth sent ten workers to carry out work on the World Peace Garden for a day
- HASCON Groundworks Ltd carried out the main part of the groundwork
- GROUNDWORK Leicester completed the planting of the area
- Warwickshire County Council supported in terms of composting bins

Learner involvement

There were 12 submissions which were shortlisted in the World Peace Garden design competition, with two joint first prizes, a third prize and two highly commended, chosen by a panel of three judges led by the College Chaplain. The ideas from each of these five submissions were used in a final plan. There were 12 BTED ED Interior Design students who developed the concept further in design assignments.

All 513 FTE Foundation Learners were involved in the competition to write about themselves and to suggest an artefact for the Time Capsule, which will be opened in the year 2312. 6 Level 1 Fab and Weld students were involved in making the time capsule itself. There were 8 Level 1 Horticulture students who helped prepare the area for the World Peace Garden and who worked in conjunction with Nuneaton Transition Town and HASCON Groundworks. They also made the World Peace Garden pond.

Raising awareness

There were several local press releases plus the College was involved in the LSIS/SFA dissemination event in Birmingham on Tues 26th June 2012.

The World Peace Garden will be advertised on the World Peace Garden Network website (<http://www.worldpeacegardensnet.org/>).



The College will develop a website during 2012-13 devoted to promoting the World Peace Garden.

Continuity of project, after LSIS funding

The partnership with Nuneaton Transition Town is on-going, with the memorandum of understanding being reviewed annually. Proceeds from the sales of produce from the organic market garden will be used to buy consumables such as seed.

The Open Air classroom will involve zero cost to the College and will be bookable for curriculum staff. The College would welcome visitors to the World Peace Garden, especially at the end of the Summer Term.

Did you experience any difficulties in implementing the project and how did you overcome these?

There were delays in appointing two NEETS as a Junior and Senior Horticultural Assistant as a result of requiring CRB checks. The Senior Horticultural Assistant left the project midway through the project as he gained employment. This was overcome by engaging HASCON to complete the groundwork.

The memorandum of understanding between the College and Nuneaton Transition Town needed to be carefully checked and rechecked by both parties before signing, with all the legal implications of CRB checks, public liability insurance, site access, contact details, roles and responsibilities.

We had originally planned for the Horticultural Assistants to complete a short Apprenticeship, but this was not possible as no suitable assessors were available.

The student design competition in November was originally going to be decided by student a vote on Moodle. However, this proved difficult technically as the design brief meant that a single vote would not cover all the aspects. Therefore, a panel of three judges, led by the College Chaplain was convened.

OFSTED decided to inspect the College during March 2012, which held up progress somewhat. Although, they were very impressed by the involvement of learners in the project.

There is still more work to engage the majority of delivery staff to realise the potential of the area in promoting Equality and Diversity.

The lessons learned

In retrospect, it proved challenging using NEETs to carry out the groundwork, even though one of them was a former Horticulture student at the College. They needed a high level of supervision. It would have been better to give all the work to a contractor from the outset.

The project was well planned, but poor weather seriously hampered progress during February/March.

Some staff promised support during the project, but later failed to meet those promises when other work commitments.

We had hoped to have a webcam to show progress on the College website, but this would have involved upgrading the College CCTV network, which was too costly.

In order to prevent intruder access into the area from an adjacent footpath, a metal perimeter fence was erected.

Additional comments

These are applications of the World Peace Garden to curriculum areas:

- ✓ Beauty therapies – relaxation (Indian head massage, Reiki etc.)
- ✓ Business Management – Business models and Entrepreneurship, administration and accounts
- ✓ Carpentry/woodworking – design and production of social seating from sustainable wooden species
- ✓ Catering – Identification of herbs, use of produce in restaurant kitchens
- ✓ Chaplaincy – multi faith (multicultural) awareness raising, prayer garden
- ✓ Computing – Website design and maintenance
- ✓ Construction – landscaping and building of solid structures including secure site features, site clearance (NEET)
- ✓ Graphic Design/Multimedia – Marketing
- ✓ HE – Health and the power of wellbeing
- ✓ Horticulture – Growing/maintenance of flowers, shrubs and vegetables, production of items for sale e.g. filled planters, hanging baskets, flower arrangements etc.



- ✓ Technology (Electrical/Engineering) – Installation of wind turbine (either made or bought), installation of solar panels – both products to sustain the energy requirements of the World Peace Garden.
- ✓ Sports – Tai Chi, yoga

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