

GROUNDWORK IMPACT REPORT 2011



AN INSPIRATIONAL CHARITY

Groundwork is the community charity with a green heart. We want places to look better, streets to be safer and outside areas to be green and beautiful. We want people of all ages to be able to do stuff together to make the best of where they live. We want to improve job prospects by offering training and employment opportunities. We want to show people how they can make their homes and workplaces better for the environment and cheaper to run.

For thirty years now, Groundwork has been helping people gain confidence and skills to get involved in what's going on around them, to ensure they have a say in decisions made by the local council, the housing association, the business community or even the government. More often than not, our work revolves around the creation or improvement of a local patch of land; turning it into a garden, allotment, park or play area that benefits everyone living nearby. Last year we worked in 98% of the most deprived areas of England, Wales and Northern Ireland, completing over 6,300 community projects.

It's amazing how many people want to help us in our endeavours. From big name companies like United Utilities, Southern Water, Cadbury and Marks & Spencer through to huge organisations like the Big Lottery Fund or government departments like the Department for Communities and Local Government, the Department for Work and Pensions or the Department for Education. There's the Welsh and Northern Irish Assemblies too and we've contracts all over the country with local authorities who see us as a crucial part of their outreach to communities that need support.

We're looking forward to celebrating all this in the year ahead, as we think back to our humble beginnings in a little office in St Helens which began in the autumn of 1981. Three decades on we are a national charity which has, over the past year, organised almost 850,000 days of community volunteering, improved or maintained over 52 million m² of green space for public use, helped more than 7,600 people find work and 13,500 people achieve qualifications.

IMPACT

IMPROVING OPEN SPACES

Through our activities we made sure

14.8 million m²

of public land was improved,

37.8 million m²

of public land was maintained and

83,250

trees were planted.

75%

of people we worked with said they felt the quality of public space in their neighbourhood had improved since Groundwork's involvement.



IMPROVING OPEN SPACES

It's well known that greener streets are healthier streets and for 30 years now Groundwork has helped communities create their own gardens, play areas, allotments and parks. People will gather together around gardening – and with food miles adding more to the price of fruit and vegetables in the shops, more and more communities are banding together to grow their own. We work with community groups, housing associations and local authorities to improve all sorts of green spaces for people to use for exercise, or to sit in, kids to play and people of all ages to enjoy being outdoors.

Our landscape architects want places to look cleaner, streets to be safer and outside areas to be green and beautiful so everyone has quality green spaces nearby no matter where they live. Some examples of our work include:

Community Spaces

Big Lottery's Community Spaces programme, managed by Groundwork, has approved funding for over 900 new or improved public areas of land with more than a third of these now finished and being looked after by local communities.

Greener Living Spaces

Marks & Spencer's Greener Living programme has created or revamped 100 public green spaces to improve the quality of neighbourhoods throughout the UK.

Urban Oasis

Championing quality open spaces for the nation, Groundwork created a digital map directing people to hundreds of great green places uploaded by users of Orange's 'Do Some Good' mobile phone app.



IMPACT GREENER LIVING AND WORKING

Through our activities we ensured

291,500

tonnes of CO₂ emissions were saved through our activities and

240,860

tonnes of waste were diverted from landfill.

70%

of people we worked with said they had positively changed their attitudes or behaviours with regard to the environment.

GREENER LIVING AND WORKING

Most of us want to spend less on our bills and figure out how we can help the environment but there's sometimes too much information out there making it hard to know how to get started. Our Green Doctors help people save money on their water, electricity and gas bills; show how to recycle more and waste less together with installing simple measures in homes that will make heat, electricity and water go that bit further. For corporates, factories and offices we offer a bespoke Environmental Business Service that walks staff through the necessary procedures to make sure organisations are on the right side of the law - as well as doing the right thing - when it comes to looking after the planet.

Our energy and horticultural teams want homes and businesses to use fewer resources, to grow their own food and even generate their own green energy for the whole community. Some examples of our work include:

Green Doctor

Green Doctors give people an environmental check up in their homes, prescribing energy saving devices such as radiator reflector panels and showing them how to use less water, gas and electricity to save money on bills and reduce CO₂ emissions.

Bee Buddies

Community bee keeping in the heart of Sheffield to encourage pollination and boost the declining bee population.

Housing Retrofit

Fitting out a whole council house in Rochdale with alternative energy products as a local example of which methods save the most money and carbon.



IMPACT YOUNG PEOPLE'S DEVELOPMENT

Through our activities we organised

296,400

days of community involvement by young people and got

2,400

schools involved in environmental and sustainable education programmes.

79%

of people we worked with said they felt more likely to return to education or training.



YOUNG PEOPLE'S DEVELOPMENT

Groundwork gets young people doing interesting stuff that puts them in direct contact with their neighbours, with local shops and businesses and sometimes the local council to make positive changes to where they live. Britain's young people have certainly got talent – many of them make podcasts, songs or films about their neighbourhoods or galvanise their neighbours to take part in community clean ups. Some are so proactive that local businesses give them genuine work experience or offer them practical advice on how to be entrepreneurial. And those of our team who work with young people in schools find the appetite amongst youngsters for educating their elders in greener living is voracious.

Our youth workers want young people to be part of things, to have stuff to do and use their boundless energy to educate those older and younger than themselves in issues affecting their neighbourhoods. Some examples of our work include:

Youth Ambassadors

100 Climate Change Youth Ambassadors across London, aged between 16 and 25, made films to promote green living, ran workshops, planted trees and showed local community members how to grow their own, save energy and preserve and encourage biodiversity in the city.

Switch on to Turning Off

Groundwork helped young people in Luton understand how to save carbon and water in their schools and taught them how to encourage green behaviour among staff and pupils alike.

Jam in the Hood

Run in conjunction with Corby and Kettering Police, this award winning two-way project enables teenagers to understand how crime and anti social behaviour is policed as well as helping the authorities to understand young people's needs.



IMPACT SKILLS, TRAINING & EMPLOYMENT

Through our activities we helped

7,600

people get into work and provided

85,550

weeks of training and enabled

13,560

people to gain qualifications.

SKILLS, TRAINING & EMPLOYMENT

At Groundwork we believe that the single most useful thing we can do for someone who is out of work is help them to find a job. Our teams get to know people, find out what they are good at, get them into training or help them develop their skills. Very often we can use our years of experience in looking after public parks and pieces of land around housing estates to give people the skills they need to work on a council or housing association parks team. We also specialise in offering construction skills training. Sometimes we can help people go to college to get a much needed qualification, other times we can give them enough advice on their CV and interviewing skills so they can land a job. Last year thousands of people got into work because of Groundwork.

Our skills and employment teams want to help people out of poverty by fostering social enterprise and embracing every opportunity to offer training, apprenticeships or jobs. Some examples of our work include:

Future Jobs Fund

The practical work experience that Groundwork has given 6,300 local people over 18 months through the Future Jobs Fund has offered them new confidence, encouraged them to undertake further training and, in some cases, has led directly to getting full time paid work.

Community Task Force

We have helped 2,700 young people improve their chances of getting a job by volunteering in workplaces through the Community Task Force programme in South West Wales and the South Wales Valleys.

Blue Sky

Giving people a chance of doing a proper job when they have served time in prison is one of the most effective ways to stop them from re-offending. Blue Sky does just that and was named England's Social Enterprise of the Year and No 10 Downing Street's Social Action Partner for 2011.



IMPACT COMMUNITY WORK

Through our activities we organised

551,100

days of community involvement
by adults and worked with

1,920

private, public and voluntary sector
partners to bring about positive
changes in communities.

79%

of people we worked with felt their
neighbourhood had improved since
the involvement of Groundwork.



COMMUNITY WORK

How can you set about trying to make things better where you live? Groundwork helps local people bring about positive changes on their streets. Maybe some neighbours have been making a nuisance of themselves, perhaps a series of derelict buildings have attracted vandalism or it could be that an alleyway has become a rat run for joy riders. Groundwork is expert at working with the community to solve problems like these. Or it might be that people want to get to know others better and so they volunteer with Groundwork to start a gardening or a walking club, forming the personal links and friendships that make neighbourhoods stronger.

Our community teams want to help neighbours get to know each other and people to feel they can voice their concerns to those in charge of where they live. Some examples of our work include:

Re-imaging Tyndale

Groundwork strengthened community cohesion and local pride among the Tyndale residents by removing the last remaining UDA mural in north Belfast and replacing it with a community garden and sculpture in conjunction with the community's wishes.

Green Exercise

'Fit Mamas' is one of several groups set up by the Green Exercise North East team that has helped over 1,000 people struggling with mental or physical health problems to take exercise and enjoy the outdoors across Tyne & Wear and the Tees Valley.

Growing Paradise

Groundwork's award winning social cohesion project in Coventry, run in conjunction with a myriad of local partners, empowers people to grow their own food, meet each other and work together to tackle local issues.





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