



# GARFORTH COMMUNITY

## WILDLIFE AREA

### IMPACT REPORT

2024 - 2025



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# INTRODUCTION

## And what this is all about

This is our third impact report and these past twelve months tell a slightly different story of the Garforth Community Wildlife Area.

Incredible Edible have developed the space over the past three years so that it can be used by the community to get closer to nature. The area is made up of a range of habitats including grassland, woodland, a pond and wetland. It is home to a variety of wildlife including birds and hedgehogs and there are also many invertebrates and plants.

This past year, the focus of our volunteers has been to strengthen and maintain the existing facilities, the result of which has seen the Wildlife Area hold more events over the past twelve months than ever before.

The volunteers who give up their time - in all weathers! - to maintain this space are the lifeblood of the organisation and the wildlife area would not exist were it not for them.

The Wildlife Area remains open to the public at certain times of the week and is free to visit. As we move into the next year, we'll see the return of popular events as well as more opportunities for the community to learn new skills through workshops and activities.



# WE ARE ALL CONNECTED

## The story of how many hands make light work



*I love going to the community garden in Garforth. My 12-year-old comes too so it's a chance to do something together with no screens or devices in sight. It's such a peaceful time in the garden and it's changed so much over the last year, and it's been wonderful to know I've contributed a small bit towards that.*



The Garforth Community Wildlife Area has become a shining example of community-led environmental action. Over a decade ago, Garforth in Bloom collaborated with the council and local councillors to secure the site for nature.

Previously neglected and plagued by fly-tipping, the area was an unloved patch of land until the first seeds of change were planted—literally. Apple trees were planted, and beehives placed on-site. Yet for several years, the space remained dormant until nature began to reclaim it.

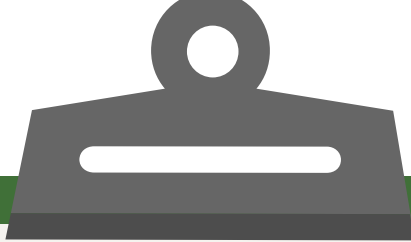
When Incredible Edible took on custodianship of the wildlife area, we envisioned a dynamic transformation. We began by removing self-seeded trees and reclaiming overgrown areas that had been consumed by brambles. With funding from Grow Wild (Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew) and Localgiving's Magic Little Grants, our plans took root flourished.

The space is now a thriving hub of biodiversity and community connection, inspiring other groups in Garforth and beyond to embark on their own wildlife-focused initiatives. From community gardens to urban rewilding projects, the ripple effects of this transformation are felt across the area.

In 2025, amid growing urgency to address climate change and biodiversity loss, the Garforth Community Wildlife Area stands as a beacon of hope and a blueprint for action.

It demonstrates how communities can work in partnership with local authorities to reclaim and reimagine spaces for nature. This project embodies the principles of the right to grow, the right to act, and the right to thrive — offering a model for positive change far beyond Garforth.





# WILDLIFE AREA PROGRESS

A flavour of what we've been up to across the year

A list of jobs completed across the year:

- ✓ Log piles created for wildlife habitats
- ✓ Additional hedgehog feeding stations installed
- ✓ Enhanced pathways, edged with fallen branches
- ✓ Base installed for wildlife observation platforms
- ✓ Pathways widened for accessibility
- ✓ Additional willow rods installed to create a tunnel
- ✓ Enhanced composting with three open bays
- ✓ Additional compost tumblers
- ✓ Tool storage system installed
- ✓ Herb spiral created
- ✓ Additional wildflower strips planted
- ✓ No-mow zones added to grass areas for biodiversity
- ✓ Additional raised beds installed outside the area
- ✓ Eco-Committee visits from local primary schools
- ✓ Local junior football team volunteering day held
- ✓ Corporate volunteering day held
- ✓ Duke of Edinburgh Award volunteers attended
- ✓ Yoga and Mindfulness sessions held
- ✓ Third annual Apple Juicing Day
- ✓ Our very first Halloween Scavenger Hunt
- ✓ Wildlife Winter Wonderland held for the first time



2

tonnes of  
compost created!



49

activities and  
events held for the  
community



4+

School and Scout  
Community Visits

**BEFORE**



**WORK IN PROGRESS!**





**WORK IN PROGRESS!**



**BEFORE**



**WORK IN PROGRESS!**

**BEFORE**



**AFTER**





**COMPOSTING**



**COMPOSTING**



# HALLOWEEN TRAIL



# WINTER WONDERLAND







# CASE STUDY

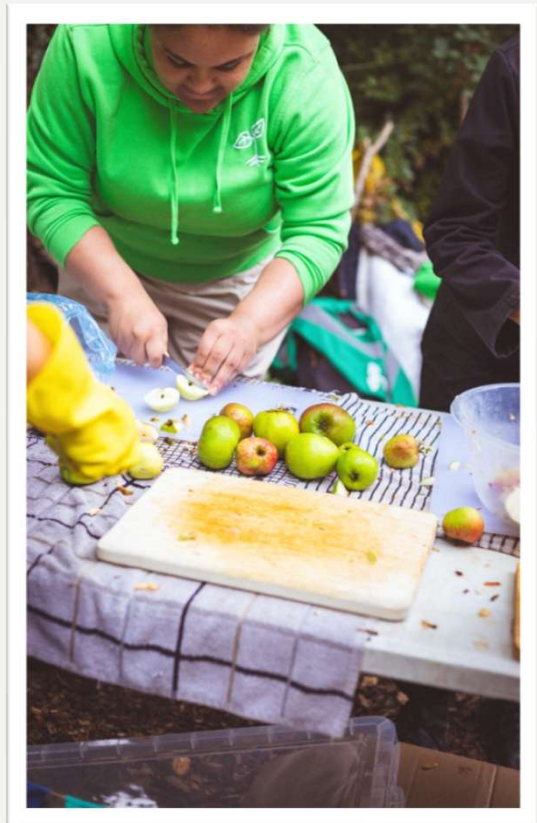
## Ellie's Story

**Ellie lives close to the Wildlife Area and got involved with Incredible Edible Garforth, thanks to her Nan.**

### What I've been up to

I joined Incredible Edible because of my nan, who was already a member. I'd been helping her with little tasks here and there, and I found myself really enjoying it. It also felt like the perfect opportunity to push myself out of my comfort zone since I struggle with social anxiety. Plus, it gave me a refreshing break from the hours I spend in front of a screen at university — it's nice to have a reason to get outside and connect with nature.

Since becoming part of the group, I've discovered how much I love the behind-the-scenes work, like organizing seed packets, designing posters, and helping create props for events. The Halloween scavenger hunt was such a fun project! I've also enjoyed setting up events, planting seeds, and watching them grow. One highlight was contributing to the Yorkshire Sustainability Festival showcase, which felt like a real accomplishment for the group.



### What's next

Looking ahead, I'm excited for my first full year with my own adopted bed. I can't wait to grow my own vegetables from seeds! I'm also eager to see our treehouse project finished, especially because I came up with the idea to set up a fairytale storytelling area around it. It'll be a wonderful way to inspire people, share stories about plants, and even teach others how to sow seeds.



# CASE STUDY

## Gemma's Story

After joining Incredible Edible as a volunteer, Gemma project-managed the transformation of the Community Wildlife Area.

### What we've been up to

In May 2022 I went along to an Incredible Edible pop-up stall, as I'd heard about their food growing project and the work they were doing in the community. I was actually looking for a career change, and I thought I would do more of what I enjoyed and see where it might lead.

Jenny told me about the plan to develop a community wildlife area on some housing land, and I thought this sounded like the perfect project to get involved with. I have spent my Sundays since then sowing wildflower seeds, planting bulbs, laying paths, constructing, pruning, weeding and drinking endless mugs of tea. It has been wonderful be part of turning unused land into a beautiful space for people to engage with nature, right in the heart of the community. I've met and become friends with lots of lovely volunteers, and I've seen up close nature doing its therapeutic stuff on us all, giving us peace and rejuvenation in the midst of our busy lives.



### What I've learnt

I've learnt lots of new skills whilst developing the area, from constructing with willow and planting up a wildlife pond, to writing funding bids. In terms of my career, I've moved from working in education to working in community food growing projects, spending a year as project coordinator for Incredible Edible Leeds.

I love to see the reaction of visitors to the space, and their surprise at the tranquil, green space on their doorstep. I'm looking forward to seeing the wildlife area grow and flourish further, and I'm looking forward to welcoming more visitors (both human and wildlife) in the coming year, as we plan more activities and events in the Wildlife area.

**WITH THANKS TO ALL OUR  
PARTNERS & FUNDERS**



Want to get involved with our work?  
Email [grow@edibleleeds.org.uk](mailto:grow@edibleleeds.org.uk)

