



# Alyth in Bloom

## Renovation of Alyth Burn Side

CASE  
STUDY

## Background

The Burn of Alyth winds through the heart of the town and flows past historical structures of cultural importance including the 16th century Packhorse Bridge and the ruins of a 13th century church.

The previous planting scheme along the Burn Side had evolved following the introduction of bamboo into the planting beds in front of the Burn Side wall. These beds gradually became overgrown and there was the potential for the roots to encroach on the structural integrity of the wall. As an invasive, non-native species, the bamboo detracted from the surrounding built heritage and did little to encourage wildlife.

Working closely with the local community and Perth and Kinross Council Greenspace, and in partnership with the Take a Pride in Perth and Kinross Association, Alyth in Bloom devised a plan to revitalise the Burn Side through a phased programme of works to include hard and soft landscaping, installation of interpretation points, street furniture and public artwork.

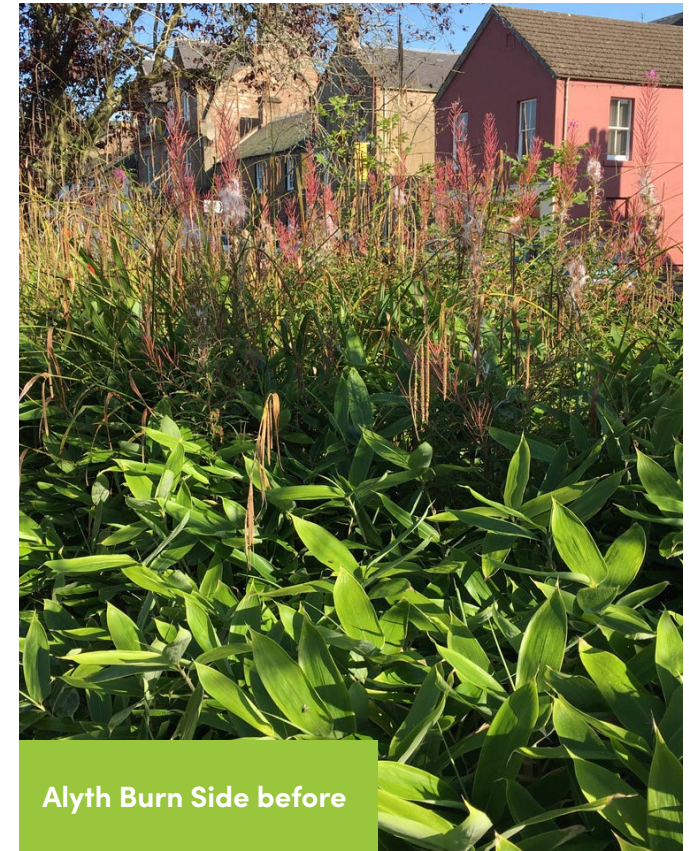
## Preparatory Work

Prior to beginning work on the project a thorough consultation exercise was undertaken to assess public opinion and gather feedback. This included:

1. Initial informal discussions with local businesses and Alyth residents.
2. Liaising with the Alyth Development Trust and Community Council to ensure the Burn Side project would link seamlessly into the Market Square which was currently being redeveloped.
3. Holding two public consultation events to ensure the proposed plans met the needs of the community.

Additional support for the project was gathered from local organisations including Alyth Community Council, Alyth Development Trust, Alyth Museum, Alyth Arts & Crafts Guild and Alyth Youth Partnership.

Written support was also received from local Councillors including the Provost of Perth and Kinross, Dennis Melloy.



Alyth Burn Side before

## Project Timeline



## Project Activity

The following activities carried out over three phases contributed to the successful delivery of this ambitious and exciting project which improved the appearance, access and biodiversity of the Burn Side in Alyth for the benefit of the local community and visitors.

### Phase 1 (April 2019)

#### Removal of Vegetation and Structures

The existing beds of bamboo, self-seeded saplings and overhanging branches from mature trees were removed. This revealed the poor state of the burn wall which required remedial work, and sadly necessitated the removal of the old cherry trees which were contributing to the damage. The old metal railings were also removed and new hardcore laid, with a duct laid for Christmas lights.

### Phase 2 (April 2021)

#### Installation of Sett Paving and New Railings

New sett paving was laid which matched the recently redeveloped Market Square. This provided a safe, Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) compliant pedestrian route along the Burn Side. Additionally a series of bronze plaques designed by members of the Alyth Youth Partnership and created using a mobile smelting forge was laid along the walkway.

New metal safety railings were installed along the water's edge which complemented those on the recently installed footbridges, and ten *Pyrus calleryana* "Chanticleer" trees were planted along the length of the Burn Side.

#### Seating and Lighting

Three metal benches were installed along the walkway which provided people an opportunity to rest and enjoy the view of the waterside and historic buildings beyond. A contemporary circular bench was installed around a mature Willow tree at one end of the Burn Side.

Previously there was no street lighting along the length of the project area - three new lighting columns were installed to improve visibility at night.

### Phase 3 (October 2021)

#### Planting

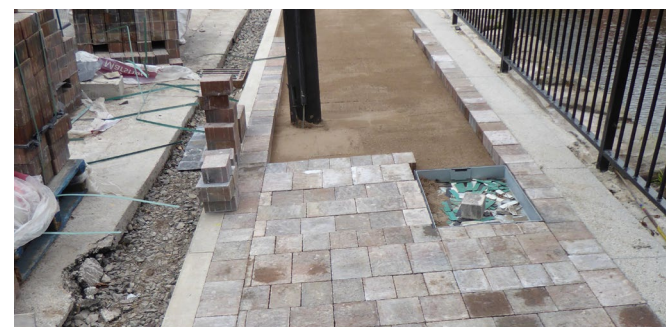
Three large planters containing a variety of low maintenance species chosen to increase biodiversity and add year-round colour and contrast were installed along the new sett paving.

Sixteen saddle planters have been fixed to the top of the railings to provide even more colour.

#### Creative Elements

An interpretation board describing the history of the adjacent ancient buildings and the town's wider heritage was installed. Content was provided by local historians and young people who were encouraged to carry out their research at the Alyth Museum, church and library.

In addition a solar powered listening post which was scripted and recorded by members of the Alyth Youth Partnership was installed. A unique stained glass and timber sculpture by local artist Lesley Garside completed the project.





The finished product



Interpretation board



The timber and stained glass sculpture



Official opening



View from the bridge



One of the bronze plaques

## Lessons Learned

Over the last four years Alyth in Bloom learned that patience and persistence are essential requirements for projects like this, as well as the ability to deal with difficult decisions head on.

The group also understood the importance of communication throughout the project - they made use of as many opportunities as they could to share news about their project - including press releases, social media, events and word of mouth.

Finally they found in order to work well as a team, it helped for everyone to have well-defined roles. This was facilitated by the Take a Pride in Perth & Kinross Association who provided project management and fundraising support throughout the life of the project.

## Project Benefits

The Alyth Burn Side project realised a whole host of benefits for both the local community and visitors to the area:

- By using identical materials the community now has a very picturesque extension to its town square, which merges seamlessly with the new Burn Side walkway.
- The creation of a safe, wheel chair accessible path along the side of the burn allows clear views of the town's built heritage.

For further information about the **Alyth Burn Side project** or the **Take a Pride in Perth and Kinross Association** please email [info@prideinperthshire.co.uk](mailto:info@prideinperthshire.co.uk)



Alyth Burn Side

## Funders and Stakeholders

The Alyth Burn Side project could not have been realised without the generous support of the following funders:

- Scottish Landfill Community Trust
- SSE Drumderg
- Community Environment Challenge Fund
- Perth & Kinross Council (Community Investment Fund and Greenspace)
- Alyth Development Trust
- Alyth Community Council
- Local Fundraising
- Tesco Bags of Help
- Thomson Charitable Trust
- Alyth in Bloom
- Airlie Estates
- Take A Pride in Perth & Kinross Association

Alyth in Bloom would also like to thank the landowner Airlie Estates who granted permission for the project to take place, as well as the following Perth & Kinross Council departments who provided technical support and expertise throughout the project:

- Community Greenspace
- Planning
- Roads
- Street Lighting
- Structures & Flooding

Thanks also to the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) who provided guidance in relation to working next to a watercourse and dealing with the non-native bamboo.