

Auchterarder Bloom Association Garrie's Corner

Auchterarder Bloom Association (ABA) has fulfilled a long-held vision to develop Garrie's Corner from an unremarkable grassy mound into an attractive public greenspace. Garrie's Corner is now a popular focal point at one of the busiest hubs on the "Langtoons" main street and provides residents with a fully accessible meeting and seating area, incorporating varied planting schemes and information about the heritage of the site. The much-anticipated project has been warmly welcomed by the community and is well used by all ages.



www.prideinperthshire.co.uk/communities/auchterarder.html



Project Background

There was known to be dissatisfaction within the community of the overall appearance of the site. Being a corner plot, it had become cluttered with utility service boxes, street furniture and signage, and unsightly wheelie bins. The wall at the rear of the site was in disrepair with views to a fenced-off building plot and the only features of the site - two mature trees - had dense overcrowded canopies which blocked out much of the natural light.

ABA took the initiative to make change and as a member of Take a Pride in Perth & Kinross Association (TPPKA), the group were eligible and encouraged to apply to TPPKA for project management and fundraising support. In consultation with the community, a final design for the site was soon agreed and funding was secured from a number of sources to allow work to start.



Project Details

Perth & Kinross Council (PKC) replaced the old lighting column, and authorised the removal of the 2 trees.

BT removed the decommissioned phone box; the large Community Notice board was relocated and following lengthy negotiations with the neighbouring landowner, the stone wall at the rear was completely rebuilt and heightened.

The front half of the site was stripped back and excavated to allow a raised, walled seating area to be constructed that is now fully accessible by means of steps and a gently sloping path that are illuminated at night.

A 1.5m high decorative metal fence was erected to screen the wheelie bins from sight and add interest. An interpretation board describing the history of the site and links to the Garrie Family has been installed.

Newly created plant beds are now stocked with a mix of bulbs and low maintenance, wildlife friendly herbaceous plants to ensure year-long colour, variety and interest.



Project Outcomes

ABA has worked in partnership with PKC, local organisations and the community to breathe new life into Garrie's Corner.

They have achieved this by:

- Creating a sense of place in the heart of the town, enhancing its local character and quality of life for residents, businesses and visitors.
- Enriching the natural and built environment through horticultural and landscape improvements.
- Sharing information with the community and promoting opportunities to be involved in the project at all stages.

ABA overcame unavoidable delays to timescales and incurred unforeseen additional costs, however a robust project plan and the Group's determination meant the project was completed in time for the arrival of the Solheim Cup in September 2019.

The completion of the project was featured in the local press and an official opening involving the wider community is being planned.

Stakeholders

Auchterarder Bloom Association

Auchterarder Community Council

Perth & Kinross Council

Take a Pride in Perth & Kinross Association

Funders

Auchterarder Swimming Pool Fund
£35,000

Community Environment Challenge Fund
£18,130

Auchterarder & District Community Trust
£7,460

Mushroom Trust £6,000

Garrie Estate £5,000

Auchterarder Common Good Fund
£2,500

Contingency £2,300

ABA/TPPKA/PKC Bloom £1620

Total Project Cost:

£78,000



Lessons Learned

Judy Pirie of ABA said “The project had a lot more ups and downs along the way than we thought it would. There was a long pause when negotiating with the neighbouring landowner about the party wall and this held everything up. Once work was finally underway we had to find additional funding due to unexpected costs to do with the foundations for the new walls. I would say to be flexible and go with the flow where ever possible.

Having the back-up and support of TPPKA to help with the landscaping design, deal with the contractor, help with fundraising and give us sound advice gave us the confidence to see it through to completion how ever long it took.

We are over the moon with the finished look of Garrie’s Corner and still receive complements about the difference it has made - that makes it all worthwhile.”

Timeline

Feb 2018: Final design & costs agreed

April 2018: Planning permission approved

Mar 2019: Heads of Terms agreed

July 2019: Work commences on site

Jan 2020: Additional funding secured

Mar 2018: Fundraising commences

July 18 – Feb 19: Project paused - negotiations with neighbouring landowner

April/May 2019: Tendering process

September 2019: Work completed