

LOVE Northumberland awards 2012



Feedback from successful applicants

Thropton Village First School

"We have the photo of the LOVE award displayed proudly in our entrance along with the award, it was a lovely experience.

We put the prize money towards our allotment project, we now have a lovely all-weather polytunnel where we are growing figs, olives, grapes, squashes and all kinds of exotic plants that you would not associate with a cold, windy and bleak spot in rural Northumberland. We also have enough money to keep the project running year on year for the foreseeable future.

We are proud to have been part of the LOVE Northumberland project through the project we have been able to develop closer relationships between our pupils, staff, parents, members of our local community and become more aware of the wider community, all through our allotment project.

Whatever your project, have a go at Love Northumberland. It helps to flag up your work and gives great satisfaction to the team. It helps the project, helps you and helps Northumberland."

Longbenton Squadron Air cadets

"We would encourage others to enter because it is important that groups recognise and celebrate, along with their communities, the difference that they make to people's lives. Whether that be taking pride in how communities look or the life skills people gain and learn from taking part in such activities. The evening itself was one of our highlights from last year."

The Monday Club

"Winning the award gave us a special boost as total strangers have started to congratulate us when they have seen the certificate which is on display in the Post Office window. Receiving the award has given us encouragement to continue to keep the riverside and the churchyard attractive and has also prompted other organisations to give us donations to cover our running costs.

It was a great honour to be asked to Alwick Castle and to meet the Duchess of Northumberland"

The Friends of Wooler Common

Michael Aitchison (chairman) said: "Being commended in the LOVE Northumberland awards has been of huge benefit to our group. It has helped us to promote our activities and highlight the fantastic features of the Common."

The Remembering Flodden Project

"We said we would put any prize money towards improving the step up to the Flodden Monument.

After the awful wet summer and winter of last year, the Battlefield trail was left in a dreadful state and we decided to put the prize towards an additional information board along the Trail which explains why the land becomes so waterlogged and how this affected the outcome of the Battle of Flodden. It also explains why the path was in such a state last year!"

Rewarding community achievement

LOVE Northumberland launched a set of awards to mark out projects that are enriching our wonderful county.

Entries are invited for projects that would fit into one or more of the following categories:

- Best **new project** (projects that are less than one year old)
- Best **ongoing project** (projects where you can show year on year improvements)
- Best **'urban' project** (projects or work that happens in places where people live)
- Best **coast or countryside project** (projects that happen in more rural areas, where less people live)
- Best **young people's project** (where most of the participants are aged 12 -25)
- Best **children's project** (where most of the participants are aged 11 and under)

All entries were considered and a shortlist of projects was invited along to, the Alnwick Garden on Wednesday July 4, to be presented with prizes presented by Her Grace the Duchess of Northumberland.

LOVE Northumberland has run the second year of a set of awards to mark out projects that are enriching our wonderful county. All entries were considered and a shortlist of projects was invited along at The Alnwick Garden on July 4, with presentations made by the Duchess of Northumberland.

[Find out more now](#)

Winning entries, received a £250 prize and runner-up projects a £100 prize, with the money to spend on something that will benefit the project or work. Highly commended finalists received a £25 prize.



Main sponsors of the awards were the Banks Group and Co-operative Community Fund in the North East.



[Love Northumberland Awards 2012 Video](#)

[You can download the full list of awards here](#)

Click on the links below to see the winners and runners up.

[Best new project](#)

Winner: Coppergate Allotment Association

Communal Garden within Coppergate Allotments Site, Holywell:



A group of 10 volunteers who have been together for 8 months ages ranging from 30 – 79.

This new committee has signed up to give their site a facelift whilst considering the well-being of the plot holders and their families, They believe the sense of being valued by a community can have a positive impact on people who feel they will never progress and gain a greater sense of community acceptance.

The project is involving people of all ages and helping to develop a sense of community within the village.

Runner up: Holywell Ponds Voluntary Wardens

Holywell Ponds



This group has been together for 3 years, the voluntary wardens work on a weekly basis to look after the pond and its environs. This entails tree planting, recording wildlife, maintenance of the hides and fences and general duties including litter picking and weeding.

As the wardens group has developed they are starting to take on larger projects that will enhance both wildlife and visitor enjoyment. Their next projects will involve youngsters from Holywell First School as part of their “Help Holywell” project.

Highly commended in this category was the Glendale Crossing Places Trust for Wooler Community Food Garden

[Best ongoing project](#)

Winner: Friends of Ashington Community Woods

Ashington Community Woods



This group of 40 volunteers have been together for two years and range from 16 years upwards.

Their aim is to open up the woods to encourage more people to use the amenity by improving access. They have set up squirrel feeders and bird feeders and keep the area tidy and promote environmental conservation work. They run a Forest School in the woods for children from 6 – 16 years and regularly organise and run events to maintain the funding of this project.

Runner up: Friends of Gallagher Park

Enhancing the 'Pit Heap'



This small group of people aged between 50 and 67, dedicate their time to enhance an area that was previously a pit heap. It now has football fields, cycling tracks, a BMX track, children's playground and a baseball court - all free of charge to the public. They are now in the process of clearing branches, and cutting back foliage and saplings to make access to the tracks easier and to enhance the views.

Their ultimate aim is to build changing and washing facilities and to continue to create public awareness of the project.

[Best urban project](#)

Winner: North Hirst Tenants & Residents Group

Hirst Pride



These are a large group of volunteers ranging from 18-86 years involving young, old and disabled people and they work on a day to day basis in cleaning up their local environment. They strive to

help everyone in their neighbourhood whether they are owners or tenants. They repair gates/fences, paint, remove graffiti and organise clean ups in collaboration with Northumberland County Council.

They hope to open a “Drop “in” centre this year to offer extended services to the area and have raised money for a Community Engagement Programme.

Runner up: Friends of Choppington Community Woods

Choppington Community Woods



This group have been together for 8 years, the number of volunteers can be up to 20 at a time ranging from 14 – 80 years of age.

The project aims to encourage the use of the local nature reserve by as wide a range of groups in the Community by making access as easy as possible. They have created new footpaths, permissive bridle paths, placed seats and picnic benches, planted wildflowers, cleared little and repaired footpaths.

They have produced an educational leaflet which has been sent to all local schools and school visits are a regular occurrence to the woods.

Highly commended in this category was the Buffalo Community Centre for its Buffalo Junior Wardens.

[Best coast or countryside project](#)

Winner: The Monday Club

Enhancing Wark Village



These are a group of retired men from the village of Wark who meet every Sunday night to discuss which project they will carry out on Monday morning. Their initial aim was to tidy up Wark Bridge to improve the impression on visitors, but since then they have cleared weeds from the roadside, removed trees, repaired a footbridge, strimmed paths and cut back overhanging branches. They have erected benches and garden seats and undertaken the planting of over 10,000 bulbs. And in the heavy snows of 2010 they cleared paths to help the villagers get out and about in their village.

Runner up: The Remembering Flodden Project

Improving and Promoting Flodden Battlefield



This group of volunteers have worked together since 2003 to promote the site of the Battle of Flodden as a heritage and tourist attraction. A new Battlefield Trail has been constructed across the ground where the Battle was fought interpretation boards have been designed and placed at strategic points and descriptive and explanatory leaflets are available, free of charge.

The group give talks to local groups and even further afield such as northern France! and offer conducted walks.

Thanks to the efforts of this group the numbers of visitors to this site have risen considerably, next year is the 500th anniversary of Flodden and they hope numbers will soar even more.

Highly commended in this category were Friends of Little Shore at Amble, Lowick in Bloom, Friends of Wooler Common and Hexham Ramblers Path Workers.

[Best young people's project](#)

Winner: Corbridge Youth Initiative

Corbridge Youth Initiative Allotment



This group of 15 volunteers are aged 11 – 18 and have been together 3 years.

The CYI works closely with Northumberland Youth Service and the Tynedale Youth Forum to develop activities and opportunities for young people in the local area.

The project has been developed to encourage young people to get involved in the creation of their own allotment to promote healthy eating, outdoor activity and education.

A vegetable plot, fruit orchard, greenhouse and lawned “chill out” area has been developed and a shed has been erected which will be used as an educational base.

Runner up: Special Needs – John Muir Award

Chirdon Head – Kielder

10 young people aged between 18 – 25 with a range of disabilities, undertaking their Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award, kick started a long term project at Chirdon head in Kielder. Working with the Forestry Commission and the Ministry of Defence they have learned the art of stone walling, cleared overgrown walkways through forests and built and erected bird boxes and an observation hide.

The group worked well together supporting each other to overcome many fears, barriers and challenges on their way. They took pride in all their tasks showing enthusiasm and consideration of the environment.

In taking part in this project they all achieved their John Muir Discovery award and have an opportunity to progress on to the Explorer Award and to educate other young people.

[Best children’s project](#)

Winner: Prior Wallaz 4214 Crew

Gardening Project



This group was set up by Prior Park Residents Association. The group consists of 30 volunteers aged 4 – 14 years and the children wanted to make their own choices on what happens in their community so they decided to give it a clean and some colour.

They spend two days of their free time each month cleaning, weeding, cutting grass, taking care of elderly, disabled and people with ill-health's gardens

They are the only children's residents group in Berwick and encourage more children to join them to make their estate one they take great pride in.

Runner up: Thropton Village First School

Thropton Village Allotment Project



The school children, parents and staff have designed an allotment area which is being used by the local community to create a beautiful environment whereby people can plant and potter and take in the views. They have a polytunnel and a shed with outdoor seating, raised beds, an orchard area, wildflower meadow and a shelter so no matter what the weather the area can still be visited.

They are about to install a beehive and have placed bee and butterfly friendly plants.

There are also 3 areas which are given free to local people in return for help with watering and tending of plants.

The allotment has brought together members of the community who would not normally have had the chance to interact.