

GREEN SKILLS PROJECT

CASE STUDY 2: HUNTINGDON SPRING COMMON

21st June - 16th August 2023

WHAT DID THE PROJECT INVOLVE?

The project was made up of two primary tasks:

Rejuvenating ancient pond

This involved clearing away varying scrub to expose waterflow and opening up the edges of the pond.

Litter picking

The waterway throughout Spring Common was heavily polluted with litter therefore followed the edges litter picking.

Habitat piles

The green waste from the surrounding pond areas accumulated fast, filling between 30-40 bags over the 8 weeks. This was then used to create log-based habitat piles.

Stag beetle habitat

Across Spring Common, thin logs were dug vertically into the ground with drilled holes in the tops of each log allowing for heavier saturation.

OUTCOMES:



INCREASED BIODIVERSITY

The pond area before this project was a very limited habitat. The scrub was too thick for most bird species to utilise and the pond area was too crowded allowing for minimal activity. In the short-term, the project has opened up the area allowing for more access and letting in more light producing a wider variety of biodiversity. In the long-term, the dredging of excess silt has increased aquatic biodiversity across Spring Common extensively. The habitat piles were a secondary habitat created from this project. This is an invaluable habitat for a variety of different invertebrates and because of the different layers and rate of decomposition, the piles will cater to wide variety of biodiversity.



BEFORE



AFTER



STAG BEETLE HABITATS





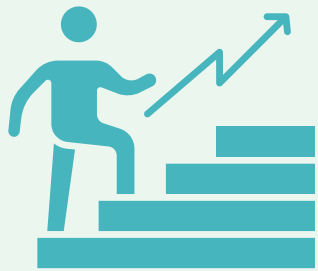
EDUCATION & GREEN SKILLS

The project recruited five unemployed individuals aged between 19 and 65. All five volunteers stayed till the end of the project with a definite increase in passion for the community and the natural areas surrounding Spring Common. The main task the participants took part in was scrub clearnace alongside the edge of the pond using loppers and shears. They also created the habitat piles using the green waste from the pond learning why creating these habitat piles are good habitats and why the pond needs light. The participants also learned about how to make stag beetle homes and the benefits of these.

The volunteers have all developed soft and hard skills while working on this project. The volunteers have learned a lot about the conservation/landscaping sector gaining a wider array of knowledge. This includes being able to competently use a variety of hand tools and some power tools. The group also developed skills while attending the indoor sessions centered around topics such as communication, conflict and self-esteem. The combination of this and the practical work as a group resulted in the group becoming a cohesive work force, all improving in terms of teamworking, communication and problem solving.



PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT



New- found knowledge from the project helped one individual in particular with developing his business to also cater to landscaping jobs, which he has already received work for. Another participant also managed to get employment working in hotel maintenance.

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All of the volunteers stated that the project had helped them both in terms of experience for work, mental health and general wellbeing.

“boosted my self-confidence.”

“It’s amazing fun, makes you feel good.”

“a good experience.”