

LET'S GROW CONTINUES TO FLOURISH



LANARK

In January our Let's Grow groups returned to Castlebank Park and the David Livingstone Birthplace to complete their placements following their winter break.

In Lanark, the focus was on helping Stuart complete his final gift to the park, the new labyrinth, in time for him leaving for a new role. This task was labour intensive and required the group to work hard as a team to ensure it was completed to the required standard. Once the digging had been completed, the group helped Stuart fill the trench with gravel and stamped it down so that the bricks could be laid on top to complete the labyrinth.

The group also participated in trimming the bottom layer of branches from the redwood trees around the car park to allow sunlight and ventilation to reach the ground around them.

At the beginning of February, the group attended their final day at Castlebank to receive their certificates and say goodbye to Stuart, who is moving on to an exciting new chapter in his life and emigrating to New Zealand with his family. Skills Exchange would like to thank Stuart for his time, patience and knowledge when working with our young people. He made an immeasurable difference to the Let's Grow project, contributing greatly to its success in its first two years. We wish him all the best for the future.

We look forward now to working with Walter McArthur, the new Educational Gardener at Castlebank Park and welcome him to his new post. Walter has already started working with our current group at Castlebank who just joined Let's Grow in March. In their first couple of sessions they've already been doing various tasks – potting / repotting plants for sale; clearing flower beds; composting; digging; moving materials to the waste area. Walter has also given them an introductory session about the bees whose hive is just behind the Horticultural Centre. Let's Grow is now being fully delivered from Castlebank Park as we are making use of the Community Classroom at the Horticultural Centre so there are plenty more opportunities now for learning.



Presentation time at Castlebank Park - Stuart with group



Girls pleased with their planting



Labyrinth Completed

Soil on the move



Presentation time at David Livingstone Birthplace

East Kilbride

In East Kilbride, the group returned to the David Livingstone Birthplace to continue to assist with preparations for full reopening. This primarily involved upcycling old benches by sanding and painting them, with the eventual aim of using them in the museum and café as additional seating for younger visitors to the park. The group completed this task to a high standard and the staff at DLB commented on how much their efforts had helped as they prepared to fully open to the public again.

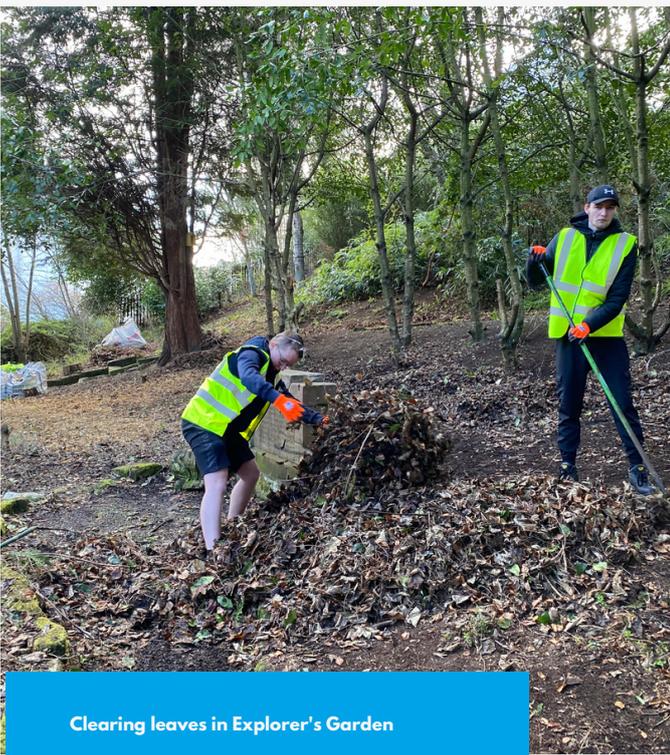
The East Kilbride group also ended their time at the park with a presentation, and the David Livingstone Birthplace kindly provided the group with lunch to thank them for their efforts, where we were joined by Ronnie, Sandra and the David Livingstone Birthplace's newest staff member (although a familiar face), Elliot.

A new group started in March here too and they have been working in the Explorer's Garden, cleaning leaves and paths, weeding and planting flowers in new planters ready for spring.

We'd like to thank some employers who gave up their time to come and speak to our groups – Darran Lightbody, a self-employed personal trainer and Mike Smith, head of SafeDeposit Scotland. They spoke about their work and gave the young people valuable insight into self-employment and working life in general.



Getting ready for opening up to public at David Livingstone Birthplace



Clearing leaves in Explorer's Garden

Thanks as always to our funders and partners who continue to support Let's Grow. We are now in Year 3 and have some exciting plans for expanding into new areas of South Lanarkshire and establishing a community garden in East Kilbride. Watch this space....