

Funding for 'Bees, Butterflies and Cubs' wildlife project at Westerfield train station

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Residents of Westerfield, Suffolk, have won funding to turn a large area of wasteland at their local rail station into a wildlife garden.

The East Suffolk Lines Community Rail Partnership, Westerfield Parish Council and the Community Rail Network offered grants towards the project – devised by the rail station's volunteer adopter, Sandy Burn – which is aimed at improving the wellbeing of local people and providing a haven for wildlife.

Sandy and a small team of volunteers will work with 1st Westerfield Cubs to transform 72 square metres of land adjacent to the Ipswich-bound platform by planting over 200 native plants including perennials, grasses and wildflower seed.

Informational lecterns will also be installed in the garden in partnership with the Suffolk Butterfly Conservation Trust and Friends of the Earth to help people identify the bees and butterflies they spot.

The Cubs will also contribute to the space, planting herbs in a specially made planter which will be installed on the Lowestoft bound platform for local people to help themselves. This will also help the

children to develop an understanding of the role of bees and pollination, along with the different uses of herbs in cooking.

In addition, Sandy is working with Network Rail on the project who are helping to provide access to water at the site.

She said: "Creating a station garden with a diverse variety of pollinating plants with different flowering times will provide a visual and memorable experience for local people and commuters, bringing benefits to the well-being of all who visit the station.

"People in the village are very interested in the project. Residents from the nearby Fairways care home for adults with learning disabilities go to the station on a regular basis to look at the trains and the station with their carers so I hope that the new planting will also help to improve their sensory input and well-being when they visit.

"The plants will also help capture pollutants, store carbon and reduce the emissions in the atmosphere."

Greater Anglia's Customer and Community Engagement Manager, Alan Neville, said: "We are very grateful to Sandy and her fellow volunteers, Laura and Yvonne, for the amazing work they are doing at Westerfield and to the Community Rail Network for providing funding for this project.

"It's great to support a project that is involving so much of the community with their local railway station.

"Wildlife friendly projects at stations like this are helping the railway in East Anglia to lead the green revolution by being a much greener way to travel – and our new fleet of trains will contribute even more thanks to their more environmentally friendly features which reduce CO2 and particulate emissions in the region further still."

Photo credit: Greater Anglia

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