Case Study

Dunblane Primary

What are the local current and projected climate risks, how were they identified?

Climate change is causing widespread damage to ecosystems and has been identified as one of the main drivers of biodiversity loss. Due to increasing building in Dunblane, we are losing green space which supports biodiversity. There are less areas now which provide food sources for pollinators. Due to this, bees are being threatened and there are also threats to our food systems as a result. We have planters in which we grow vegetables, so having the Pollinator Patches will support bees and other pollinators as well as pollinate the vegetables we grow.

How have the school grounds been adapted to address those risks?

We have created Pollinator Patches within the school grounds to provide a food source for pollinators, to pollinate the vegetables we grow in our planters and to support biodiversity. We have a large field area within our school grounds which provided a great opportunity for us to use this space.

What barriers did you have to overcome?

We required support to clear and prepare the Pollinator Patch sites, including seeking permission from the Council and ensuring the areas were removed from the mowing regime. Unpaid Volunteer cleared the grass area before the pupils spread seeds and made information signs to inform visitors. We were supported by a local charity called On the Verge. On the Verge work with community groups in and around Stirling and Clackmannanshire to establish and develop areas of native wildflowers, both annual and perennial.

How did the wider school/wider community participate in the project?

The pupil led biodiversity team within the Sustainability Squad (there is also a waste team and an energy team) were involved in designing and preparing the patches and sowing the seeds for the Pollinator Patches. They also saved seeds at the end of the season and have shared these seeds with our wider community through their Seeds for Sustainability initiative in which we are encouraging our families and local communities to grow wildflowers for pollinators and grow their own veg.

What has been the impact of the adaptation? What was the biggest success?

Seeing lots of bees and butterflies on our pollinator patches and involving and educating the wider community of the importance of providing wildflower for pollinators. We have also encouraged our wider school community to grow flowers and veg at home through our Seeds for Sustainability Initiative.

Any unintended opportunities/consequences?

We have developed lots of learning opportunities which have naturally linked from this project. As a school we are continuing to embed Learning for Sustainability and this project has been great at helping our learners see the connections between the Sustainable Development Goals and how they are interlinked. Our young people have also developed their understanding of nature and the impact climate change is having on nature.

What barriers to change have you experienced?

Many people perceive wildflower patches as being untidy and prefer grass to be cut. However, educating others through, for example, through school assemblies and through our school twitter feed, about the importance of wildflower patches to support pollinators has helped to transform this perception.

Have you any advice for those wish to start making change?

Think about what is unique to your context and school grounds and how your setting can best play a role in adapting to climate change. Provide your young people with the opportunity to lead and bring about change!