



## **Proposal to sustain The Conservation Volunteers on Belfast City Council Community Gardens**

The Conservation Volunteers currently manage three Community Garden and Allotment Projects on behalf of Belfast City Council; Ballysillan, Glenbank and Musgrave, supporting local people in taking ownership of their local green space. In addition to the environmental improvements The Conservation Volunteers deliver health and social wellbeing, active citizenship and accredited training across these project sites.

### **Immediate need**

Funding to sustain The Conservation Volunteers support at each of these Projects to maintain current levels of community involvement, practical skill developments and health and social benefits. Working in the short-term to the end of the current growing season, October 2012, the following funding is requested;

Glenbank - one half day per week plus one Saturday per month

Ballysillan - one day per week

Musgrave - One half day per week plus one Saturday per month **TOTAL £8,100**

### **Rationale**

Ballysillan Community Garden - one day per week.

This will sustain and develop the site during the summer and autumn months.

The Conservation Volunteers will match the number of days with additional funding from external sources to deliver a total of two sessions per week, helping to provide more opportunities for individuals and groups to be involved in the project.

The site will remain open during the winter period and The Conservation Volunteers will sustain one session per week November – February through match funding.

At this level of delivery we can match the demand for opportunities on the site to involve a wide range of groups and individuals including – youth and school groups, long term unemployed, family volunteering, disability groups, as well as providing accredited training through our Training Unit.

Glenbank - one half day per week plus one Saturday per month

This is a smaller site which is in need of further development. The Conservation Volunteers currently deliver one session per week and the profile of the project would benefit from delivering an additional session at weekends. This would involve an open session to attract interested parties and the delivery of a week day session tailored for disadvantaged groups, to increase the opportunities for individuals to take part as part of therapy.

Musgrave - one day per week plus one weekend session per month

This is a newly constructed site involving local groups and individuals. This level of support would allow the project to develop over the growing season, maintaining support for the groups who have an area within the community allotments. The project has attracted an overwhelming demand for local involvement from individuals as well as a number of groups who would benefit from the health opportunities of being involved in this project. TCV currently provides support for three local community groups working on this project and is currently providing a system of support structures for individuals to get involved on both a formal and informal capacity



This costing includes the provision of a fully trained experienced member of TCV Staff and Volunteer Officer delivering regular practical support, on-going skill development, monitoring of community engagement, insurance, Health & Safety Risk Assessments, monitoring and evaluation of health and social benefits to individuals and community.

Throughout the season sessions will include:

- Volunteer registration
- Delivery of quality Grow Your Own training
- Site maintenance and development
- Healthy cooking demonstrations delivered by trained Cook it! Tutors
- Promotion of volunteering, the health and social benefits of taking part
- Hosting events to raise the profile of the site, partnership with BCC and volunteering
- The involvement of groups from schools,
- Monitoring and evaluation of all activities and community input.

Above costing is for The Conservation Volunteers time, does not include project materials as these sites are established and will not require any additional resources this growing season.

### **The Conservation Volunteers Big Green Weekend – FORMAL REQUEST**

The Conservation Volunteers would like to formally request permission from BCC for the use of Ormeau Park for our Big Green Weekend public event on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> October 2012.

Big Green Weekend is about all conservation volunteering and demonstrating the impact that local people can have through reclaiming their green places. There are events taking place across UK and Europe to showcase The Conservation Volunteers work, get people involved in the great outdoors and raise funds. Building on the success of the BGW pilot last year, volunteers in ten key UK towns and cities will take part in volunteering sessions at the same time as volunteers in nine European countries including France, Iceland, Italy, Estonia, Greece and Holland.

The Conservation Volunteers proposal is to use Ormeau Park on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> October as one of the ten flagship UK events, forming part of our rebrand campaign and Belfast Green Hub development. The event will be a family fun day with environmental volunteering, healthy lifestyle demonstrations and various stalls.

Our annual Green Hero Awards will kick off our Big Green Weekend with an award ceremony to celebrate the best in conservation volunteering. Our volunteers are an inspiration, they deserve to have their stories told, and by creating visibility around our Green Hero's, we can help to bring all of the Conservation Volunteers into the limelight, and rally public support for our cause.

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