

**CASE STUDY:****CULLOVILLE  
BLUES,  
CO. ARMAGH****The challenge we faced:**

Our club had purchased additional land to extend our original pitch and we wanted to link this to our second pitch, which at the time was detached from the main club grounds by a piece of land c.150m long.

When we were developing our plans for council approval, we sought advice on making the works as biodiverse as possible. Our ideas were met with enthusiasm and so we began our Green Journey.

**The solution we identified:**

We had an existing walkway on our second pitch and our plans to join this up with the new linkway between the two pitches provided a number of biodiversity opportunities as well as the chance to create an additional safe environment for our community to walk and exercise.

We put our ideas for an extended biodiversity walkway into our planning application and began to seek advice and build partnerships to put our plans into action.

**The impact our project had:**

The impact has been enormous! Our grounds are developing well with biodiversity actions. The linkway path is used daily providing nearly 1.8km of safe walkway on our grounds for community use.

We have created 50m of native hedging on the boundary of the linkway, planted nearly 1000 mixed-variety native trees on club land, installed raised planters containing pollinator plants, installed recycled benches as well as educational signage. We needed to stabilise a 75m by 20m bank on club grounds and chose to stabilise it naturally by hydroseeding it with a wildflower mix rather than installing a concrete wall.

**The costs involved and funding we received:**

A lot of groundworks had to be done initially, including the clearing and preparation of the ground, putting in place a new base layer and stoning to connect the linkway between the two grounds, and installing drainage and fencing.

For the initial steps we had kind donations from our members through a "Sponsor a metre/step of works" initiative and had support from local businesses who helped sponsor some of the work costs.

After the initial groundworks, we were fortunate to receive part-funding for our biodiversity projects from a local council biodiversity grant, a Live Here Love Here biodiversity grant and from a DAERA NI grant. This allowed us to add in the community features and biodiversity actions.







## Who we partnered with:

We sought and received advice from our local Council Biodiversity Officer, EcoSeeds, DAERA NI, Live Here Love Here, Bugs Bees & Native Trees, Trees on the Land & Friends of Callan.

## Other Green Projects we've been involved in:

We've run pride-of-place and litter-picking initiatives alongside our biodiversity actions. Live Here Love Here run a Big Spring Clean to promote litter-picking, which we've been involved with, as well as an initiative called Adopt a Spot where you carry out four clean-ups a year of a particular area in your locality.

We've adopted a spot between our village and the pitch. We're committed to fostering a culture of pride and identity in the club, the village and the environment we live in and one of the simplest but most effective ways to show pride in where you live is to not litter and to pick up the litter left by others who might have been passing through.

## What are the next steps for the club?

Some of our other plans include a potting shed/ greenhouse for community use to grow food and plants. This will be linked with initiatives to educate community members and kids to grow at home. We aim to plant more native trees around our club boundary. We are learning all the time.

We are delighted to be part of the GAA Green Club Programme and hope that we can continue on our learning journey to improve our environmental engagement including through energy conservation and recycling.



**Read more about Green Club projects in Culloville Blues at:**  
<https://www.gaa.ie/news/culloville-blues-are-going-green/>