

Kemerton Conservation Trust

Kemerton Court
Kemerton
Tewkesbury
Gloucestershire
GL20 7HY

Tel: 01386 725 254

www.kemerton.org

Registered Charity No. 702488

**GOVERNORS**

ADRIAN DARBY, OBE (Chairman)

MATTHEW DARBY

PETER DOBLE

LORD HOWICK, VMH

PETER MARREN

ROSEMARY WINNALL, MBE

ROGER UMPELBY

ROGER WORKMAN

Welcoming Visitors & Supporting Volunteers at Daffurn's Community Orchard Project Report 20th May 2024

Project Background

Daffurn's Orchard is a traditional orchard in the heart of Kemerton village, owned by Kemerton Conservation Trust (KCT) but managed as a community orchard with public access, including a bench for visitors. It is a valued village asset, with a band of enthusiastic local volunteers helping to maintain it all year round, and an annual Apple Day which attracts hundreds of attendees from the local area. However, the existing signage had become tired and needed replacing, and KCT felt more could be done to encourage younger visitors from within the village, especially families. We also needed some equipment to support the volunteer work parties.

The Trust therefore applied to the Dent-Brocklehurst Family Charitable Trust for a grant for new signage for the entrance gate, an A3 information poster for our existing noticeboard, materials to create a new nature trail for children, and for two incinerator bins for the volunteers. We successfully applied for £300.00, which covered 100% of the total project cost. The project began in October 2023 and was completed in April 2024.

Project Aims

The aim of the project was to complete a package of improvements to the orchard aimed at increasing visitors and supporting our volunteer group. To increase visitors, we wanted to install improved signage for the orchard gate, a new information poster about the orchard and its wildlife, an interactive nature trail for young children (using small models of animals such as a Blue Tit or a Frog to spot as they wander the orchard) and create a new circular path through the orchard for visitors to improve access. To support our volunteers, we wanted to purchase 2 incinerator bins to aid in disposing of pruned vegetation (lots of pruned wood is reused in the orchard as wildlife habitat but the annual habitat management generates more than can be used onsite and the incinerator bins would help us to clear excess brash)

As part of the project, our volunteers would update the orchard's page on our website, increase the orchard's profile locally by encouraging residents to visit to use the new path and try out the nature trail. They would also publicise when the blossom is looking good, and confirm picnicking is allowed onsite, through both our Facebook page and Kemerton Village WhatsApp.

Overview of Works

Project works commenced in October 2023 as soon as our grant was awarded, and the final works were completed in April 2024 (see Appendix A – Project Photo Montage).

In October, Project Manager Kate Aubury ordered the new incinerator bins and began collating images and text for the new interpretation board. The project was publicised on KCT's Facebook page, in Kemerton Village Newsletter and at the annual Kemerton Apple Day.

In November, Project Manager Kate Aubury liaised with our graphic designer to design the new A3 poster, designed and order the new gate sign, and ordered the animal models for the new nature trail.

In December, we held a work party at Daffurn's Orchard, where the new incinerator bins were used to begin clearing the large amount of unwanted brash on site, and various other tasks such as cutting back bramble along the fence line were completed. The bins were very effective whilst keeping the fires contained and safe for volunteers and neighbouring properties. Our warden John Threadingham installed the new gate sign.

In January, an article about the project was included in KCT's Kemerton Clippings newsletter.

In March, Warden John Threadingham brush cut the new circular path through the orchard. The new A3 poster was installed in the existing noticeboard and the website page about Daffurn's Orchard was updated. The nature trail animals were installed in the orchard by Project Manager Kate Aubury, and laminated nature trail handouts were designed, printed and put in the orchard for children to use. The new nature trail was advertised on our Facebook page and on Kemerton Village's WhatsApp group.

In April, after the lawn area was first mown, the orchard was publicised on Kemerton Village's WhatsApp group and on our Facebook page, highlighting the beautiful blossom and confirming picnics are allowed onsite.

Project Results

Our project was completed on time. It went slightly over budget (£17.59) but the extra cost was covered from the Trust's annual budget.

The new incinerator bins have already proved useful in helping us manage the orchard. The nature trail has been very well received by local families; kids were enjoying it at a Bioblitz we held at the orchard in April. Village residents have given us very positive feedback on the circular path, regular visitors are delighted to have increased access to the orchard and as spring has sprung, the path has become a beautiful tranquil route through wildflowers nodding in the breeze. A volunteer from the village has agreed to mow the lawn area and circular trail every few weeks and has done a great job so far. The new gate signage and A3 information poster look welcoming and match signage on our other local reserves. Project publicity, including regular Facebook and WhatsApp posts, has increased the profile of the orchard in Kemerton and to a wider audience.

The Future

The new incinerator bins will continue to be used at our regular work parties in the orchard. The nature trail and circular path will be maintained by our volunteers, and if any of the nature trail models get damaged or lost, they will be replaced. We plan to continue to post regularly about the orchard throughout the year so village residents and members learn more about the site and will be encouraged to visit and become involved in looking after it. In July, a final article on the project will be included in our Kemerton Clippings newsletter.

Acknowledgements

Kemerton Conservation Trust would like to thank our funder for generously supporting this project and making it possible.

We would also like to thank all those who assisted in the delivery of the project, particularly our Project Manager Kate Aubury, our Warden John Threadingham, members of Kemerton Orchard Workers, and our work party volunteers.

Appendix A Photo Montage

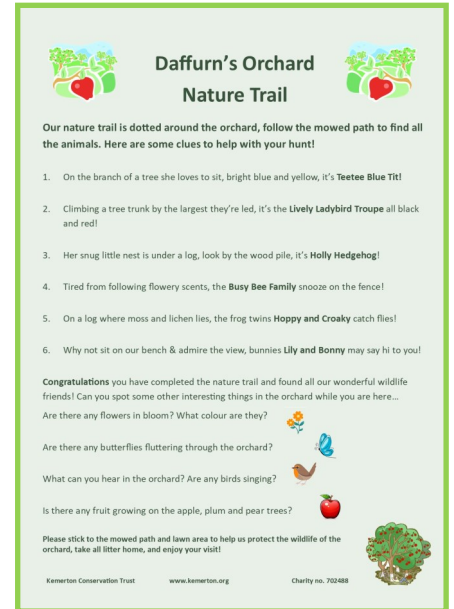
All photos copyright Kate Aubury



The new incinerator bins in action,
December 2023



Volunteers cutting back vegetation
on the boundary, December 2023



New kids' nature trail handout -
laminated copies are onsite



The new A3 information board for Daffurn's Orchard,
January 2024



The new circular path through the orchard, April 2024



Project Manager Kate Aubury's daughter testing out the
nature trail, March 2024



Teetee the Blue Tit in position as part of the nature trail,
March 2024