Mayor's Awards 2027

Environmental Education and Awareness Award

Jigsaw

JIGSAW Thornbury and Woodland Makery work in partnership to bring children and young people with additional needs and disabilities, along with their families, together in a natural woodland setting. Together, they run a monthly group in a micro-woodland that is open to all JIGSAW members. Each session offers a range of woodland crafts and activities, including exploring the mud kitchen, enjoying time around the fire, free play and supervised tool use. The families also learn about foraged foods and how to cook on the fire together safely. The sessions provide valuable opportunities for participants to connect with nature while supporting their wellbeing and personal development. Within the last 12 months, these popular woodland sessions were attended by 30 JIGSAW families, providing support for 37 adults and 48 children and young people. Over the years, many of the young people have developed new skills, increased their confidence and built a strong connection with the woodland. This has led to them taking an active role in shaping the space to enhance both its accessibility and its value for nature. They have helped to build seating areas and care for different parts of the woodland, ensuring that both people and wildlife can thrive. JIGSAW members also helped construct a Hygge Hut, purchased through crowd funding, which has further enhanced the inclusivity of the woodland and provided a quiet, dry crafting space.
One parent commented:
"It's helped me to relax and unmask because it's so supportive. The children engage in things they wouldn't have otherwise; it's a safe space for us all." JIGSAW and Woodland Makery make considerable efforts to ensure that the sessions are inclusive and accessible. From providing visual information before events to reduce anxiety, to creating spaces and activities that meet a wide range of sensory needs, accessibility is carefully considered throughout. This is a truly inspiring partnership that demonstrates how the natural environment can be made welcoming, accessible and beneficial for everyone.

Mayor's Awards 2027

Environmental Education and Awareness Award
Manorbrook Allotment Group

I would like to nominate a group of children who have shown exceptional commitment to our school allotment. The allotment was established by a former Headteacher and has been sustained through the dedication of several local families. For the past few years, these children have regularly volunteered their time to maintain and develop the space. Whatever the weather, they willingly take part in planting seeds, weeding, composting, watering and harvesting crops.

Through their efforts, they have gained a practical understanding of sustainable food production, nutrient recycling through composting, and the importance of caring for the natural environment. More importantly, they have demonstrated that young people can make a meaningful contribution to their community when given the opportunity and support to do so. They have also shared surplus produce with the local food bank.

The children take genuine pride in their allotment and understand that growing food requires patience, commitment, teamwork and responsibility. Their involvement has enabled families to spend time together at the allotment and helped ensure the continuation of this valuable project, where participants can learn practical skills in a hands-on and engaging outdoor environment.

This nomination recognises not only the work they have already undertaken but also the positive example they set for other young people. Their dedication over the last few years demonstrates a remarkable commitment to sustainability, community involvement and environmental stewardship.

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Environmental Education and Awareness Award

Grow Your Own Food

A local group that meets in members' homes each month to share knowledge and experience about growing food. The group has been running for 18 years. It also has an active WhatsApp group where members exchange advice, discuss gardening challenges and recommend seeds and plant varieties to grow.

The group operates a seed bank, allowing members to donate and share seeds for planting. Advice and recommendations are regularly sought when growing problems arise, enabling members to learn from one another's experience and identify effective solutions. Environmental sustainability is at the heart of the group's activities, with members promoting alternatives to using pesticides and learning how to use homemade compost.

The group is affiliated with Sustainable Thornbury, whose aim is to promote sustainability and environmental awareness amongst the residents of Thornbury.

Members of the group also contribute to the South Gloucestershire Food Network Steering Group, established by South Gloucestershire Council to help connect local food producers with local consumers. As food security becomes an increasingly important issue in the face of climate change, the group's knowledge, experience and practical contribution are highly valuable.

Through sharing skills, encouraging sustainable food production and fostering community connections, the group makes a significant contribution to both environmental sustainability and community resilience within Thornbury.

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Environmental Education and Awareness Award

The Hatch Community

The Hatch Community provides a range of workshop activities and supported living opportunities for people with learning disabilities and autism. Since its establishment in Thornbury, one of its core activities has been caring for and engaging with the environment through sustainable horticultural and agricultural practices.

Adrian and Alex lead a team of enthusiastic gardeners comprising both Hatch residents and individuals attending day placements from further afield. Together, they grow seasonal chemical-free produce and care for the Hatch estate all year around. Their produce is supplied to residents living within the Hatch Community and to supporters who value locally grown food. This has been achieved through a vegetable box scheme that has been running for more than 20 years. The scheme has grown largely through word of mouth, with its primary purpose being to provide meaningful activities and opportunities through sustainable food production. In doing so, it has helped raise awareness of the benefits of local, ethically grown produce whilst also promoting the important work of the Hatch Community.

Their work enables people of all abilities to participate in the seasonal cycle of the year and to develop an appreciation for the natural environment and the food it provides. Although not designed specifically as a therapeutic programme, the activities are both enjoyable and beneficial, ranging from planting early potatoes in the spring to caring for the Hatch's woodlands during the winter months.

Adrian, Alex and their team are a highly valued part of the Hatch Community. Their dedication to sustainable food production, environmental stewardship and inclusive community involvement has made a lasting and positive impact. It would be fantastic for their hard work and commitment to be recognised through this award.

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Environmental Education and Awareness Award

Christ the King Gardening Club

Sarah Lewis and Sarah Hussey have led the Christ the King Gardening Club for many years, inspiring generations of children to develop an interest in gardening, food growing and the natural environment. Through their dedication, enthusiasm and commitment, they have created opportunities for children to learn practical skills while developing a greater understanding of where food comes from and how caring for the environment benefits everyone.

Under Sarah Lewis and Sarah Hussey's leadership, the Gardening Club has been involved in a wide range of projects. One of the most popular has been the annual potato-growing initiative, which gives every year group the opportunity to take part in planting, nurturing and harvesting their own crop. The club also grows a variety of vegetables, flowers and bulbs throughout the year, helping children experience the full cycle of growing and caring for plants.

Together, Sarah and Sarah have worked tirelessly to foster a genuine growing culture within the school community. They encourage children to get their hands dirty, learn through practical experience and take pride in seeing the results of their efforts. Their passion is infectious, and they have inspired many children and families to become more interested in gardening and the natural world.

The Gardening Club provides valuable opportunities for children to learn about sustainability, biodiversity, healthy eating and environmental responsibility. Through activities such as planting, watering, composting and caring for wildlife-friendly areas, pupils gain a better understanding of the importance of protecting and nurturing the environment.

Beyond the educational benefits, the club has created a welcoming outdoor space where children can work together, develop confidence, build friendships and experience the wellbeing benefits of spending time outdoors. Sarah Lewis and Sarah Hussey's boundless enthusiasm, encouragement and willingness to give their own time have been central to the success of the project, making a lasting difference to the school community and the many children who have participated over the years.

Through her leadership of the Gardening Club, Sarah has made a significant and lasting contribution to the school community. She has inspired countless children to connect with nature, develop new skills and take an active interest in the environment. Her dedication and passion make her a thoroughly deserving nominee for this award.