



IT'S YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD - MARKING SHEET

Name of group: Riverside Naturally	Assessment date: 12th July 2021
Name of assessor: Colin Ainsworth	
Introduction: Riverside Naturally evolved from the original planting, in 2012, of a community orchard on a piece of ground in Riverside Park. It gained charitable status in 2019. The group has close relations with the local community council and Stirling Council. They have taken legal ownership of more greenspace adjacent to the original orchard, and also assumed responsibility for council shrub beds and greenspace to the west of the Riverside Park.	
Section A - Community Participation	
Riverside Naturally are a fully constituted charity who have close links with the local community, as individuals, and through the local council (Stirling) and community council. The group operate principally in Riverside Park but have moved out into the wider Riverside community with initiatives which helped the local community during Covid lock-downs. To name just a couple of initiatives, local window dressing where householders decorated their individual windows to cheer the neighborhood up; and community growing where locals grew some plants either for themselves and/or gifting surplus plants to neighbors and also to Riverside Park.	
Section B - Environmental Responsibility	
Riverside Naturally is involved in a number of schemes to help the local environment as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Composting, especially the composting of arisings from the management of meadows and orchard grass.• Establishing meadow areas in the areas the group have direct responsibility for.• Experimenting with temporary fenced off areas, with different seed mixes for meadow establishment.• Correct management of meadows.• The ongoing success of the orchard area.• Adoption of council shrub beds (at an early stage).• Assisting in the control of invasive species (Himalayan Balsam).• Encouraging bee and insect friendly planting.• Ongoing learning for all who participate.	



Section C - Gardening Achievement

See above. All the gardening work carried out by the group is aimed at improving the local environment long term. Very little traditional bedding is used, and, while evidence of some container planting with begonias etc. can be seen, these are carried out by another group and it is hoped that these planting schemes can become more sustainable.

OVERALL LEVEL ACHIEVED

Level 5 - Outstanding

Areas of achievement:

- The excellence and maintenance of the community orchard.
- The establishment of the meadow areas, especially around the orchard plants, including a spotted orchid. The experimental meadows and bee and insect friendly planting, and the correct management of the meadows.
- The recent taking on of council shrub beds and the ownership of adjacent land to the orchard.
- The interaction with local residents as well as the close ties to local official bodies.

Recommendations/suggestions from your assessor:

Look to thickening up the shrub bed plantings with wildlife friendly, but decorative plants. Herbaceous plantings will help bridge the gap. Do not be down hearted if everything does not thrive.

As a group, Riverside Naturally are making a difference to the local community by improving the local environment whilst not being afraid to experiment and to find out what grows best.

RESULTS

Level	Description
Level 1	Establishing
Level 2	Improving
Level 3	Advancing
Level 4	Thriving
Level 5	Outstanding

