



# Seedbed intervention



Fig. 40 Illustration based on canvas input by the participants/ picture credit: Ruth Graham



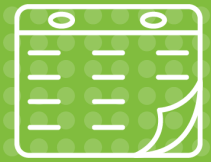
# Limerick



Fig. 41 Public nature walk along the greenway/ photo credit: City of Limerick



# Limerick



9<sup>th</sup> of July, 2022  
2 pm - 5 pm  
Castletroy greenway



35 people attended the workshops



24 people completed the survey



Fig. 42-Natural play area/ photo credit: Julia Gäckle

In one of our Cultivating Cities, in Limerick, the Seedbed Intervention took place on the Castletroy greenway, which is the target area for the GoGreenRoutes project as it provides connectivity between Castletroy College secondary school (students 12-18 years of age) and Castletroy Gaelscoil (children 4-12 years of age). The greenway consists of a 3.5m wide cycleway alongside a 2.5m wide footpath with 1m wide grass edges.

Various activities took place on the day of the intervention. At the beginning, the temporary nature playground was opened. Afterwards, visitors could inform themselves about the contents of GoGreenRoutes at several tents as well as participate in 2 actions that were carried out during the entire duration of the Seedbed Intervention: The Photovoice Method and the Canvas Method. More info on these at page 7 and 8.

The highlight of the intervention, especially for the local children, was the workshop to build their own bug hotels, which was run by the City of Limerick in cooperation with colleagues of RWTH and CtD.

Prior to the intervention, a flyer was sent out to register for the workshop and to take part in a survey developed for the Seedbed interventions. More information about the survey can be found from page 9 onwards.



Scan me to find more pictures from the event!



Fig. 43 Coffee station/ photo credit: City of Limerick





Fig. 44 Collage of seedbed interventions/ photo credit: City of Limerick/ Julia Gäckle



A landscape architect drew a design for the greenway that incorporated the use of felled trees and participants recommendations from March 5<sup>th</sup> when 25 visitors participated on a public nature walk along the greenway. Construction of the natural play area began in mid-May 2022. It was officially opened for the seedbed intervention on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2022.



Pavilions were set up as a hub to connect, create, build, draw and meet. There were activities for all walks of life and thus intergenerational. The coffee bar was especially appreciated and proved to be a good place to meet for discussions about the future of the greenway.



The bug hotels as takeaway elements were made from gathered material we collected as we took a walk along the greenway. Insights and knowledge were shared about what habitats and shelter small insects need and how everyone can do actions in their own gardens/ balconies and public spaces.

The greenway should be decorated! That's attracting attention.

There are so many possibilities to make this area more vibrant!

A key outcome of the seedbed intervention is an appreciation of time management! Residents, local stakeholders and community interest groups were informed about the purpose and the preparation months before the Seedbed Intervention took place. The coffee station was important for people to chat, connect and resume refreshed the event of the day.





# Pictures of the day



Fig. 45 Invitation to build bug homes/ photo credit: City of Limerick

Under the guidance of landscape architect Esther Gerrad, the workshop she planned on building insect hotels was very well received and motivated and inspired people to take their built objects home and participate in such actions more often.



Fig. 46 Help and knowledge was provided at the workshop/ photo credit: City of Limerick

All participants crafted and drank homemade lemonade together. The communal activity also inspired further conversations about the role of insects and nature experience in general.

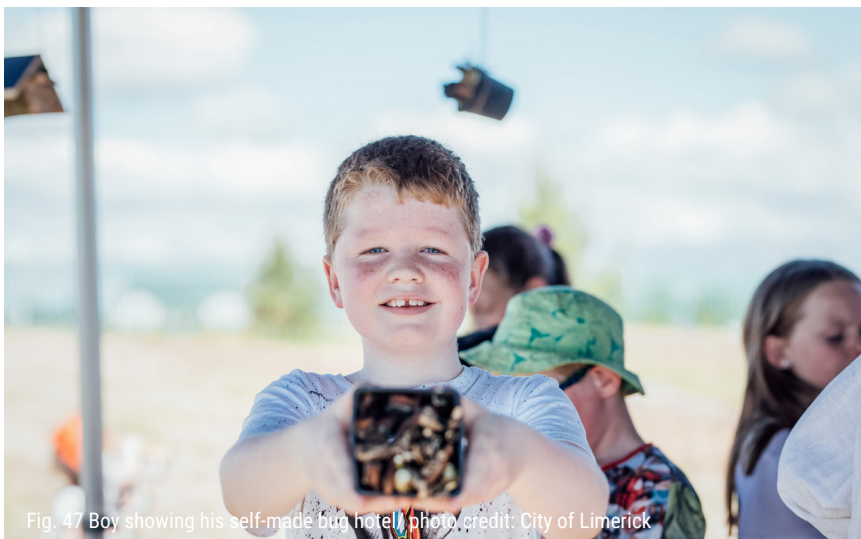


Fig. 47 Boy showing his self-made bug hotel/ photo credit: City of Limerick

Especially the children had great fun and asked many questions about insect diversity and would like to participate in such activities more often.



# Preparation by the city

The Limerick Seedbed Intervention was prepared collectively by Limerick City and County Council, landscape architect Esther Gerrard (Elements of Action), Ruth Graham (Graphic Recorder), GoGreenRoutes partner Connect the Dots and other GoGreenRoutes partners. In parallel, the team in Limerick (Sarah O' Malley) attended various meetings with WP3 in particular and WP5 and WP7.

The Seedbed intervention was promoted in different ways. A flyer was created based on a template from WP9 and distributed in the area around the greenway, as well as in shops and playgrounds. The flyer contained information about the project and how to register for the event. The flyer also contained a QR code to access the survey for this seedbed intervention. Registration and participation in the survey was also possible via the website eventbrite.ie and via social media.

Prior to the Seedbed Intervention a public nature walk along the greenway was organised on the 5<sup>th</sup> March 2022, led by landscape architect Esther Gerrard.

## In groups, participants explored:

- **Factors such as sunlight / Weather / Views / Wind / Safety**
- **Features on the route that allow for places to pause/rest/sit**
- **Opportunity areas for planting, ground cover**

After the exploration the participants gathered ideas for the Seedbed Intervention. Please see the map at page 6. The city of Limerick decided that a natural play area would incorporate many of these ideas by using natural materials onsite. The space could be developed overtime for play, gathering in community, biodiversity, and greening. The location of the natural play area is marked by the three little trees in the drawing (halfway point).

Following the nature walk on 5<sup>th</sup> March, Limerick City and County Council sought advice from Féidhlim Harty of FH Wetland Systems Ltd in relation to designing and planting constructed wetland systems along the greenway. Additionally, there are a number of ash trees along the greenway that have a disease called ash dieback. This invasive tree disease was detected in Ireland in 2012, and likely introduced by imported ash planting stock from continental Europe (Teagasc, 2017). The disease will affect all ash trees in Ireland, causing the majority of them to die over the next two decades. To reuse or repurpose the trees once felled also aligns with participant's calls for seating, shelters, steppingstones, carved stumps, nature inspired sculptures, encourage habitats for wildlife and insects.

Based on this information a landscape architect employed by Limerick City and County Council drew a design for the greenway that incorporated Féidhlim's design, use of felled trees and participants recommendations from March 5<sup>th</sup>. Please see the final draft design of the natural play area below (Figure 2). Construction of the natural play area began in mid-May 2022. It was officially opened for the Seedbed Intervention on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2022.

Good time management is important! Preparation of the site and purpose of the Seedbed Intervention was informed by residents, local stakeholders and community interest groups months before the Seedbed Intervention took place.

Furthermore, it was very helpful to create the flyer for the information about the project and with the link to the survey well in advance. It was made available to the interested people, so that many participants already knew what it was about when they visited the seedbed intervention. Also other visitors who do not live in the area were informed via social media or other channels.



Fig. 48 Public nature walk along the greenway/ photo credit: City of Limerick

# Day of intervention

Preparations for the seedbed intervention began in the morning and were led by Sarah O`Malley. The day was exceptionally hot for the Irish climate and a lot of water was organised on short notice, in preparation for the organisers and implementers of the Seedbed Intervention. A mobile coffee station was set up for everyone, which was a real highlight. Many of the visitors gathered next to the coffee station under the tent (protection from too much sun). In total, four tents were erected, which were absolutely necessary to protect from the sun and the high temperatures. Besides the tent of the mobile coffee station, there was another tent for everyone to stay in, another one for the construction of a stand on which white paper sheets were attached. This stand was used as a canvas within the framework of the Canvas method.



Fig. 49 Some requirements regarding the protection of insects/ photo credit: City of Limerick

A banner was hung above the stand with the question: "Close your eyes, it's a sunny day, what do you, see, smell, feel? Participants of the intervention were asked to share their answers on the canvas.

The last tent was where the Bug Hotel workshop was held, and comfortable seating was set up.

## Timeline

- 2:00pm  
Co Design Workshop-  
Introduction and  
explanation of the bug  
hotel workshop
- 2:20 - 4:45pm  
Bug hotels were built as a  
takeaway element
- 2:00 - 4:00pm  
Pictures by a professional  
photographer were taken
- 2:00 - 5:00pm  
Implementation of the  
Canvas method

There were small bags with information about biodiversity and the project as well as a shirt with the Limerick City logo - this was a real highlight especially for the children among the visitors and was well received.





Fig. 50 Girls visiting the workshop/ photo credit: City of Limerick

The purpose of the workshop was to introduce the group to insect/wildlife habitats and the importance of biodiversity in our local landscapes. Participatory, experiential and intergenerational in approach, the group gathered natural materials along the greenway to make shelters for wildlife to take home or to leave along the greenway. The workshop was an opportunity for ecological education, to develop an educational space for children, parents and visitors and to get to know one another. Especially the graphic illustration by Ruth Graham (next page) shows many valuable parts of the conversation that took place informally during the day.

Building small insect hotels for the little animals was a very valuable experience for all. The hotels were later taken home.

At the beginning, the canvas was just a white sheet of paper for many people, and no one wanted to start. After a question was added to the canvas and a lot of drawing was done at the beginning, more and more participants joined in and participated. Especially intensive discussions about their wishes helped to enrich the process.

At the event, the researchers from GoGreenRoutes collected preliminary data and tested a particular research method which was also a part of the seedbed intervention (e.g. canvas method). From Limerick City and County Council's perspective, this was a great opportunity to host research or 'action research'. For future events, an agreement between the city and researcher(s) would be desirable to manage expectations of what can be achieved (from a research perspective) during the intervention. After the intervention, a city may benefit from researcher feedback (in writing/online call), and the sharing of literature relevant to a city's context/intervention. The latter is particularly useful for informing relevant strategic policy documents 'in house'.

# Canvas

Together with three GGR PhD researchers and two other partners from GGR preliminary data were collected. In Limerick, the Canvas method was tried out for the first time during a seedbed intervention by asking a question in advance and collecting participants answers on a canvas visible to all. The question was developed at short notice, as it was not planned to ask a concrete question, but to give the participants the opportunity to associate freely. However, when it became clear that participants found it hard to engage this way, the development of a question was a quick, proactive solution. As a result, valuable local knowledge could be gained. For example, some local residents would like to see the land used for growing food there. The wish for a lot more wildflowers was also expressed several times.

By nature of being the first seedbed intervention, data collection and documentation of the event were a little more experimental. Nevertheless, the seedbed intervention enjoyed great participation, spirited discussions and served as an excellent opener for the seedbed intervention phase. The experience in Limerick helped fine tune the other upcoming interventions and led to optimized approaches there.



Fig. 51 Girls drawing/ photo credit: City of Limerick

**“Close your eyes, it’s a sunny day, What do you, see, smell, feel?”**  
(Question on canvas)

**“This area is of great potential and should be used permanently as a kid’s playground, even as such a experimental one which citizens can develop together”**  
(Anonymous participant)



Fig. 52 Pictures drawn by children from Castletroy Gaelscoil/ photo credit: Julia Gäckle

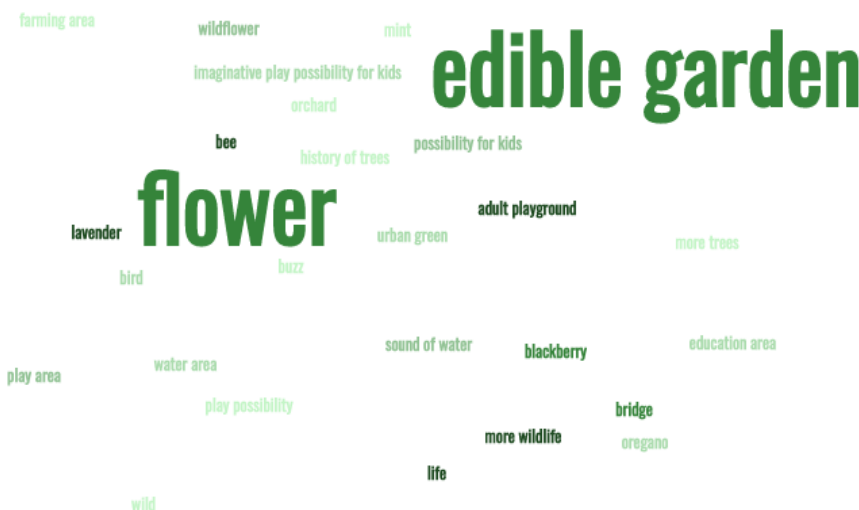


Fig. 53 Word cloud based on canvas input by the participants/ picture credit: Julia Gäckle

It was a hot, sunny summer day, perhaps the warmest all year, and all participants gathered under the tents to get some shade. The temporary coffee bar was much appreciated, and the constellation of gathering under the tents next to the coffee bar sparked many interesting conversations.



# Photovoice

The seedbed intervention was the first in-person-event in Limerick, where GoGreenRoutes partners and researchers were on-site. The methods to be implemented were the Canvas Method, the Photovoice Method and the Burano Method, a method of observing use of space. Of these methods, only one method, the Canvas method, could be carried out in the end. The whole approach was still quite experimental and needed to be optimised. The Photovoice method could not be carried out fully, as hardly any participants wanted to use the camera, this was attributed to lack of clear guidance (in later seedbed interventions participants were asked to match a photo to a specific feeling from a pre-prepared list, followed up by one evaluating question. The Burano method was categorised as too time-consuming on site, as at least one more person would be needed on site and much of the insight was already covered within the notes taken by Illustrator and GoGreenRoutes partners. The Photovoice method was still considered valuable and was modified in approach for the next seedbed intervention.



Fig. 54 Exploring the new natural play area/ photo credit: City of Limerick

# Survey results

## Main findings in Limerick

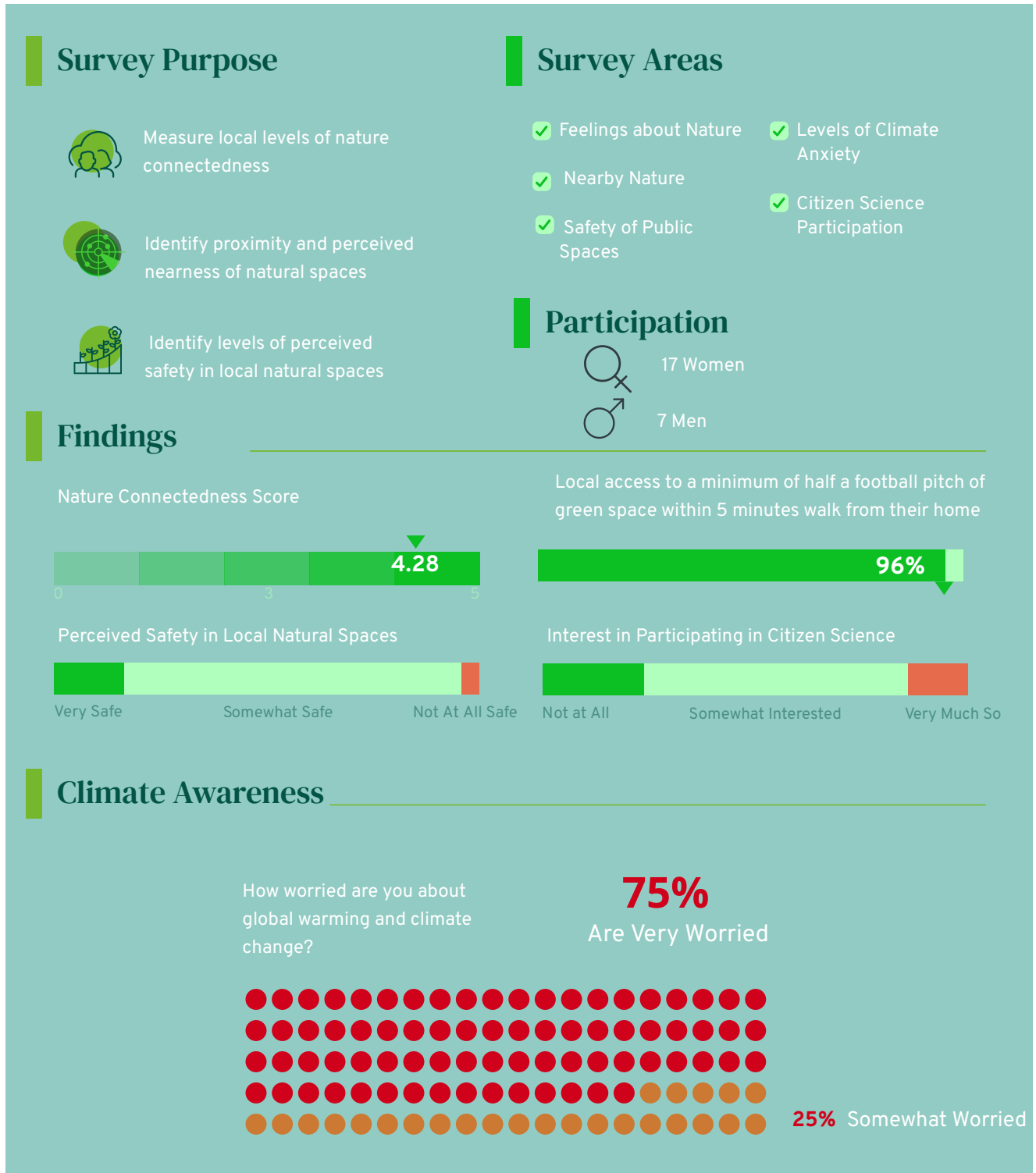


Fig. 55 Main findings of the survey/ credit: Tadhg Macintyre



# Survey results

## Main findings in Limerick

The total number of collected survey responses that can be used for the analysis is 24. This includes online and paper questionnaires. There were 16 woman and 8 men who filled out the survey.

Every participant answered that they take (at least a little) notice of wildlife wherever they are, and the majority (71%) stated that their relationship to nature is an important part of their personality.

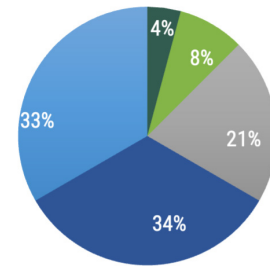
Every respondent is at least somewhat worried about the climate change.

In this context 75% of the people believe that Nature Based Solutions can promote to cope with climate change and 84% believe that NBS can promote their own sustainable actions. Even more participants (96%) see NBS also help nature and biodiversity- just one respondent does not see the influence by NBS that big on nature. Also the promotion of NBS related to the participant's own health is considered as high.

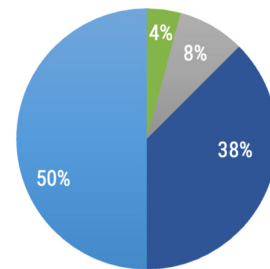
Regarding to the question about their favourite natural space nearby 71% chose the forest, mountainous or coastal area, while 25% considered the private or public garden/ park to be their favourite. 84% of the participants are able to reach natural spaces by the size of at least 0.5 hectares within 5 minutes.

It can be seen that most of the people (92%) see the main benefits of natural features in their neighbourhood in experiencing a connection with natural environment followed by a reduction of stress levels (71%). Least of the citizens, 42%, believe in a learning aspect triggered by natural features.

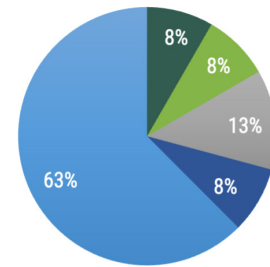
„My ideal vacation spot would be a remote, wilderness area“



„I always think about how my actions affect the environment“



„My connection to nature and the environment is a part of my spirituality“



- 1. Disagree strongly
- 3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
- 5. Agree Strongly
- 2. Disagree a little
- 4. Agree a little

Fig. 56 Survey results/ credit: Jannis Meul