

Seeds of Hope Report 13.10.2020

Our volunteers worked hard to make the Open Day a success on many levels.

Seeds and Seedlings:

- About 250 people came.
- Close to 800 seedlings were given away.
- About 100 packets of seeds were given away, including Southern Harvest seeds and packets from Tina, Deirdre and Nell.
- About 90 seeds were planted in containers, including those in cardboard tubes. Both children and adults enjoyed this tube origami activity.
- Children also enjoyed Deirdre's fairy garden activity. They were clearly proud of their gardens.

Community plant education:

- It seemed that the majority of visitors who took seeds and seedlings were not experienced gardeners. They asked questions and listened to advice. Many asked what plants would be the easiest to grow.
- Attendance was good at Tina's compost workshop, and the reports back were that the participants had learned a lot.
- Visitors also learned about planting cuttings at Deirdre's cuttings table.

Food:

- Peter sold all of his sausages and vegetable kebabs.
- Many delicious cakes were made and sold, together with drinks.
- Sitting in the sun in groups, eating, drinking and chatting added to the pleasant atmosphere of the day.

Financial:

- The food and drinks made a profit of over \$700, and while there was no charge for seeds or seedlings, there were good donations.
- Sales of Chris's planter boxes also made a contribution

Community Cohesion

- The day brought members of the community together, to meet and get to know each other.
- it was a relaxed spring day, with a carnival atmosphere helping people to emerge from a worrying winter. Such an experience may have helped to reduce isolation and improve mental health.

Give Away Shelves

- The day helped to draw attention to the give-away shelves, so the community will be aware of a location to share produce.

Warm Feelings toward the TNG

- I think the day raised the profile of the TNG and generated warm feelings toward it.

- The event showed councillors and politicians that we could run a successful project.

The Greenhouse

All of this was made possible by the upgrading of the greenhouse.

The experience of propagating seedlings in the greenhouse has shown that:

- The top shelf of the greenhouse gets quite hot on sunny days. Plants there in particular have to be watered twice daily. An automatic watering system and/or perhaps some light shading might be considerations in future.
- Watering tends to lead to extra boggy soil on the lower side of the greenhouse. A drainage solution might need to be considered.

Tomatoes

- There are currently about 270 tomatoes of 18 varieties available for members to take at the Working Bee on the 18th. While the tomatoes could be planted at that time, it might be better for members to keep them at home until early November. There will also be some pumpkins, chillis, capsicums, zucchinis, cucumbers and a few herbs.

St Luke's Spring Festival.

- We will have some left over brassicas, lettuces, pumpkins, zucchinis, and miscellaneous seedlings, together with seeds, and 'plant your own' facilities available. These will be given away under the Seeds of Hope/TNG banner.

Judy Keen