

## *The Wee Apple: A Fruitful Enterprise*



*Photo © J Hancox*

An exciting project is changing Glasgow into the Wee Apple, by getting enterprising pupils to plant one thousand fruit trees in school grounds, parks, allotments and gardens, and just about anywhere else across the city. The idea came when it was realised that there are almost no fruit trees in the city. John Hancox, Director of the Children's Orchard project said, "When I asked why there are so few fruit trees, and the answer was funny: People might eat the fruit! Since there's nothing better than picking your own, I thought we better get planting right away."

The project started to blossom last year when Dowanhill Primary school, in Glasgow ran an Apple Fair as their enterprise project and used money raised to buy fruit trees, which were planted in other local schools. This involved everyone from secondary pupils, primaries, right down to nursery school age children. And whatever the age, everyone loves planting the trees and indeed eating the apples. The project was so successful that dozens of Glasgow schools, have joined up with the Orchard project, helped by Enterprise Education officers, across Glasgow.

John Hancox said, "The project is great in lots of ways. It's a great form of enterprise – because it not only involves fundraising, event management and publicity, giving essential life skills for employability to young people - It is also good for the planet, and good for the whole community as well. Quite a few schools have used the project towards their Eco-School awards, because planting trees is good for wildlife. Birds, and butterflies all enjoy windfall apples. It is also good for children's health, because eating fruit is good for you, and there is no better free fruit initiative, than having trees grow it for you. Why fly apples from Brazil, when they grow beautifully here in Scotland, and taste fantastically fresh too."

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But the best part of the project has been the inspiring way in which it's brought people together. "We have had Kings Park primary school, helping Hampden School which is a special needs school, to plant their orchard. We have had Catholic, and non-denominational schools working together planting trees in each others grounds, and we have had whole groups (Learning Communities) of schools coming together planting trees, and for the Apple Day celebrations when we had an exhibition of 200 Scottish grown apple varieties." said John Hancox.

But this is only the beginning! If you would like to get involved in planting more fruit trees in Glasgow - or if you'd like to start your own branch of the Children's orchard in other parts of Scotland - contact John Hancox on [john@childrensorchar.d.co.uk](mailto:john@childrensorchar.d.co.uk) 0778 606 3918. [www.weegarden.co.uk](http://www.weegarden.co.uk)

### How it works

- *Autumn / Winter – Healthy eating fruit fair: raising money to buy trees/ pay for training and tools / or to get sponsorship.*
- *Oct – Apple Day*
- *Winter - plant trees/ training.*
- *May – Blossom Festival, when everyone celebrates their tree flowering.*



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