

## Projects to make local graveyards greener

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A project to encourage biodiversity in the churchyards and graveyards of Perth and Kinross has been launched by Perth and Kinross Countryside Ranger Service.

Two graveyard biodiversity projects are already underway in Muthill and in Braco graveyards, under the Tayside Biodiversity Partnerships Green Graveyard Initiative.

This initiative will review burial grounds and kirkyards to see how they can be enhanced for biodiversity.

The project will be run over a two-year period, with the first year looking at what species are in the graveyards.

In the second year members of the public and community groups will be encouraged to play a part in improving biodiversity.

Richard Armstrong from the Countryside Ranger Service visited the children at Muthill and Braco primary schools and led activities to help the children survey the plants and gave a talk about lichens

During these visits the children took part in Plantlife's (charity for wildflowers in the UK) Wildflowers count surveys where they looked at the different wildflowers growing in the graveyard. The results gathered by these children are used by Plantlife to help assess how healthy our countryside is.

The Ranger Service is organizing three more activities in each graveyard to encourage local people to learn more about biodiversity in their local graveyards. The ranger service will be giving a talk about lichens, bat surveying and moth identification.

The dates for these activities are:

- At Ardoch Churchyard in Braco the dates are for the moth activity are Thursday 12 August, 8:45 – 9:45 pm. Bat surveying will be discussed on Thursday 19 August, 8:45pm – 9:45pm. The lichen talk will be on the Thursday 26 August, 7pm – 7:45pm.
- At Muthill, the moth activity is on the Wednesday 11 August, 8:45 – 9:45 pm. The bat activity is on the Wednesday 18 August, 8:45pm – 9:45pm. The lichen talk will be on the Wednesday 25 August, 7pm – 7:45pm.

The bat activity involves a walk around the graveyard area with a bat detector surveying to see what species of bats are present. The moth project involves walking around the graveyard checking baits to see if any moths are present on them.

The Lichen talk is an informal talking about the lives of lichens, what they are, how they survive why graveyards are great places to see them and some of their previous uses. Many people don't realize that lichens are living organisms after the talk it is hoped people will have a better understanding of them.

To book a place on any of these activities please call  01738 475349 .