

Bentley Pinfold Restoration Project



The History

Bentley Pinfold is a Grade II listed structure located on Finkle Street, Bentley, North Doncaster. It dates back to 1832, and was used to enclose stray animals found wandering the village. The animal's owner would have to pay a fee to the "Pinder" to retrieve this wayward member of the herd.

In recent years, the Pinfold became disused and overgrown, and was used as a dumping ground for garden refuse and other unwanted items.



Efforts to Improve the Neighbourhood

In late 2011, the Neighbourhood Alliance project began holding meetings and seeking suggestions for ways to improve the look and feel of the area. It was here that the suggestion was put forward of turning the Pinfold into a garden. Glynn Smith, Doncaster Council's Area Supervisor, suggested the Pinfold could be cleared out by the Community Payback team. Growing a Greater Bentley (GGB) could then develop a garden. Advice was sought from the Conservation Officer, Richenda Codling, on a development suited to the Pinfold's historic status.



A Design for Local Needs

Several nearby residents initially expressed concern that the development of a garden where people could congregate was likely to attract "youth nuisance" – already felt to be a problem near the Pinfold. A public meeting was held where these concerns were explored. The idea emerged of a Wildflower garden, rather than a traditional or vegetable garden with seats. This was agreed to be a "win-win" solution for people and wildlife, and the meeting ended on a very positive note.

Work Commences and Local Funding is Secured

In spring 2012 the Payback Team came and did a sterling job, removing over 10 tonnes of undergrowth and assorted rubbish from the Pinfold.

GGB put together an application for funds from the Community First Neighbourhood Matched Fund. The cash funding of £1,950 was matched with volunteer time and donations of plants, and Doncaster Council's contribution of bark chippings and other materials. This funding was approved by the *Bentley Together* Panel in August 2012.



The Garden Develops

In spring 2013, development of the garden itself began. This has included:

- ✚ Sourcing wildflower seeds from Green Estate, a social enterprise based on the Manor Estate, Sheffield – who provided wildflower seeds for the Olympics.
- ✚ A return visit by the Community Payback team, who constructed a path of bark chippings.
- ✚ Several Volunteer work sessions clearing weeds and buried debris from the soil, followed by sowing wildflower seeds and other insect-friendly plants.
- ✚ Engagement of a contractor with experience of lime mortaring work, to restore damaged areas of the walls.



- ✚ Three visits by children from the nearby Our Lady of Perpetual Help Primary School. The children helped prepare and sow an area with wildflower seeds, and later returned to weed round and tend the new growth.

A Vote of Thanks

Growing a Greater Bentley would like to express thanks to all the people and organisations who have made this project possible. As we write in July 2013, the first flowers are beginning to appear.

People and Organisations	Contribution
Community First Neighbourhood Matched Fund	Funding of £1,950 which has paid for equipment, seeds, soil and compost, publicity, cost of public meetings and contractors' work on the Pinfold.
Growing a Greater Bentley Volunteers	Layout and design work; many happy hours of weeding(!) and planting; donations of plants; supervision of children's work; publicising and organising the project.
Bentley Neighbourhood Alliance – and especially Glynn Smith, Chris, Alan, Ben and Colin.	Arranging Community Payback Team visits, sourcing and contributing essential materials, getting stuck in with barrow-loads of wood chippings.
Doncaster Community Payback Team	Removing 10 tonnes of rubbish and undergrowth; building a bark chipping path with wooden edging and weed control fabric beneath.
Children, Teachers and Assistants of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Primary School, Bentley – ably overseen by Alan Bryan-Peach	Preparing the ground, sewing wildflower seeds, watering and weeding – and sharing the joy of learning.
John Bergan	Professional advice on weed control; many visits to help vanquish bindweed & other perennial weeds.
Dave, Thomas and Ray from Castle Masonry	Loving attention to the aging Pinfold wall.
Richenda Codling, Doncaster Conservation Officer	Advice and support on how to restore the Pinfold in keeping with historical traditions of the area.
Bentley with Arksey Heritage Society	Information and advice on historical aspects of Bentley Pinfold.



Early March 2012



**Late
March 2012**

July 2013

