



# HMP & YOI Deerbolt

HMP & YOI Deerbolt is passionate about the importance of green spaces and their connection to mental wellbeing. The prison is formally committed to improving its environmental impact across all areas, with the overarching project called 'Greenest Prison Vision'. It aims to improve biodiversity, decrease energy consumption, reduce waste and find more sustainable ways of working, plus develop educational outcomes for both staff and the young men. This, in turn, will have a significant and positive impact on mental health.

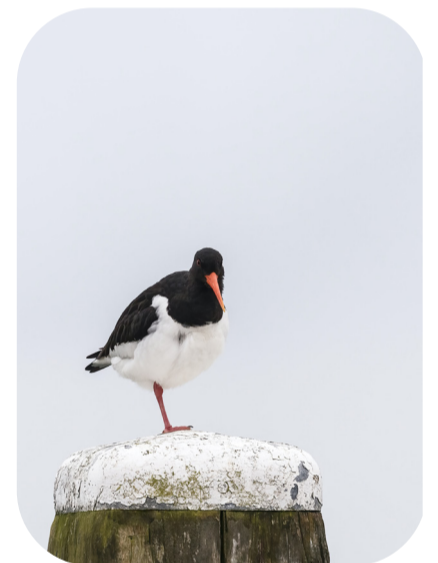
**Pond refurbishment project:** A neglected pond at the back of the administration department had a new pump fitted (purchased by the Ecology team), new liner installed, excessive trees and foliage removed, and new seating area (including the laying of new flags) refurbished. There are plans to further improve the area by creating a reed bed and also a gravel filtration system, which will increase habitat areas for biodiversity.

**External garden area clean-up:** The aim of this was to create a micro wildlife habitat by planting small trees and wildflowers, whilst using red metal cages to transform into bug hotels.

**Micro-habitat areas:** In order to give the native oyster catchers (part of Royal Society for the

Protection of Birds' amber watch list) a helping hand to roost, an area was cordoned off, rocks added and small hedges/trees planted to provide additional cover. The area was used as a nesting site by the oyster catchers rearing three chicks in the summer.

Other areas across the prison will be identified for the installation of nesting boxes, to provide additional nesting options. The nesting boxes were manufactured by the prisoners, using recycled materials where possible.



## Barnard Castle floral display:

The prison has secured the contract to provide planted floral displays within Barnard Castle. Teaming up with Barnard Castle Town Council, the prisoners have worked hard to provide the floral displays for the town centre, including all the beds and planters. The blooms are grown as plug plants in the prison's greenhouses and polytunnels, and then planted out by staff when they are big enough. The floral partnership first began in 2019 when prison officials approached the town council with the idea. After being judged a success, the inmates were told to carry on planting. There's been a significant amount of compliments from the local community and council for Deerbolt's work, including a letter from town mayor Cllr John Blissett, praising the quality of the displays.



Peter North (left) with Deerbolt governor Andy Hudson.  
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Deerbolt's Farms & Gardens Manager Peter North said "Pictures of the beds and planters are shown to the young men, as it is important they see the results of their efforts. Those assigned to the gardens department undertake formal training for a City and Guilds certificate in horticulture practice, to enhance their job prospects on release."

The hard work undertaken by the prisoners involved with GOOP is all part of a concerted effort by officials at Deerbolt to make it the greenest prison in the country, bolstering nature's impact on mental health and the drive to reduce re-offending.