

AN green project is giving people the chance to get involved in their environment.

The Wild Green Spaces in Hartlepool project, which aims to involve local people in work to develop and improve the town's parks and Local Nature Reserves (LNRs), is operating a Wild Wednesdays scheme.

Assistant project officer Becky Stanley said: "The scheme gives people an opportunity to come and work with us as volunteers whenever they are free on a Wednesday and, on occasions, at weekends. They don't have to turn up every week and they can do as much or as little work as they want."

A number of people have already volunteered their services, and a series of environmental improvement projects has already been carried out.

But there's a busy programme of future works planned and it is hoped that more people will come forward and get involved.

The programme is as follows:

Wednesday, July 6: Family Wood Day. This is an opportunity to help keep the Burn Valley Family Wood looking good by clearing litter and removing overhanging branches and vegetation from paths;

Wednesday, July 13: Nature's World Fun Day Out. As a treat for their hard work, volunteers are being offered the chance of a fun group visit to Nature's World, the pioneering eco-experience in Middlesbrough. There will also be a surprise afternoon visit to another site;

Saturday, July 16: Waterway Clearance (booking essential): The parks' becks and lakes often become clogged up with vegetation and debris. Get kitted out in wellies and waders and help

make the waterways cleaner;

Wednesday, July 20: Rockery Planting: Following the weeding of the rockery in Burn Valley Gardens, help make it look even better by planting some new fresh, colourful plants;

Sunday, July 24: Litter Pick and Coach House Nursery Development (booking essential): Help make a visible difference to the town's parks by picking up litter. Then make a started on a developing a nursery area around the Coach House in Burn Valley Gardens for growing new plants for our parks;

Wednesday, July 27: Weeding in Ward Jackson: Help dig out those weeds that are really just plants growing in the wrong place at the wrong time.

The Wild Green Spaces in Hartlepool project was launched earlier this year after being awarded a National Lottery grant of more than £350,000.

This followed a successful bid by Hartlepool Borough Council in partnership with the Environment Agency and the Burn Valley Project Steering Group.

The project is being funded by Natural England through its Access to Nature initiative which, in turn, is part of the Big Lottery Fund's Changing Spaces programme.

For more information or to receive a full programme of volunteer activities and events contact project officer Jo Haskett or Ms Stanley on (01429) 853325 or 07795 453389 or email wildgreenspaces@hartlepool.gov.uk