



nedral, The Yard is now an over-subscribed outdoor activity centre  
upwards.

The project has its origins during Covid restrictions when young people from the Cathedral began clearing the space.

It has since been transformed from a wilderness into an environmentally-friendly walled garden with a firepit and rain shelter made with a 'green' sedum roof. There is also an outdoor chess table built by young participants from pallet wood.

Activities include scrap-woodworking, eco crafts and firepit cooking. The garden grows a range of fruit and vegetables from strawberries to tomatoes and potatoes and there are plans to introduce a gardening course that would lead to a formal qualification.

A holiday club is meeting there during the summer for young people eligible for free school meals. The Yard's weekday and weekend activities include work with children with identified needs and mentoring for children who are not attending school for any reason.

Increasing numbers of young people are in touch with the project, according to Jane Dow, The Yard project lead, who says that its work with children not in school is over-subscribed.

"It is a joy to work with the children," she said.

"We have so many coming through, taking part in simple crafts and activities and enjoying the benefits of being outdoors in nature and away from screens. They lead the sessions and I see them growing in self-confidence. It is lovely to see them coming back to us, time and time again."

The Dean of St Edmundsbury Joe Hawes said: "The Yard is one of our inspiring social action projects and something we're very proud of here at St Edmundsbury Cathedral.

"The work that Jane does with young people is so very needed. The Yard also specialises in upcycling and is mindful of sustainability and being eco-friendly, which are great things for young people to be thinking about while also spending time outdoors and in nature."



*The Yard receives funding from a range of different donors and works in collaboration with youth charities including Innov8 Workshops.*

**Source URL:** <https://www.churchofengland.org/media/stories-and-features/how-cathedral-builders-yard-was-transformed-outdoor-activity-centre>