

DPLR4\1014

Darwin Plus Local - Final Report (1)

Officer: Linzi Ogden

Section 1 - Darwin Plus Local Project Information (Essential)

Project Reference Number

DPL00111

Project Title

No Response

Overseas Territory(ies)

☒ Montserrat

Lead Organisation or Individual

Tropical Mansion Suites

Partner Organisation(s)

Department of Environment and Agriculture, Montserrat National Trust

Value of Darwin Plus Local Grant Award

£49,500.00

Project Start Date

01 October 2024

Project End Date

15 April 2025

Project Leader Name

Merle Tracey Galloway

Project Website/Twitter/Blog etc.

No Response

Report Author(s)

Report Date

12 July 2025

Project Summary

No Response

Project Outcomes

Checked	Biodiversity: improving and conserving biodiversity, and slowing or reversing biodiversity loss and degradation;
Unchecked	Climate Change: responding to, mitigating and adapting to climate change and its effects on the natural environment and local communities;
Checked	Environmental quality: improving the condition and protection of the natural environment;
Checked	Capability and capacity building: enhancing the capacity within OTs, including through community engagement and awareness, to support the environment in the short- and long-term.

Section 2 - Project Outcomes (Essential)

On a scale of 1 (high – outcome substantially exceeded) to 5 (low – outcome substantially did not meet expectation), how successful do you think your project has been?

Ⓐ 2 - Outcome moderately exceeded

Project outcomes and justification for rating above

As a result of this project, measurable and meaningful change has been achieved across environmental, educational, and community dimensions.

The site, formerly a small, cluttered, dilapidated greenhouse that had aged over time and become overgrown with weeds and invasive wild tamarind, has been transformed into a vibrant, spacious, and well-organized environment. It is now intentionally designed to foster community engagement, hands-on learning, and the structured propagation of native and medicinal plants. The renewed space serves as a welcoming hub for biodiversity, cultural preservation, wellness education, and youth participation.

i) What has changed:
A once small, cluttered, and deteriorated greenhouse has been transformed into a welcoming, functional, and eco-conscious space. It now offers improved flow, greater visibility, and structured zones for propagation, learning, and community gatherings. Over 20 native and medicinal plant species have been cultivated, directly

contributing to biodiversity restoration and the revitalization of traditional plant knowledge. The return of birds, bees, and butterflies signals growing ecological health. The renewed space now actively supports wellness workshops, school visits, and youth engagement, fostering ongoing community interaction and environmental stewardship.

ii) Achievement of original objectives and outcomes:

All core objectives were met or moderately exceeded:

Biodiversity:

Cultivation of native and medicinal plants has contributed significantly to species conservation and reversing biodiversity loss.

Environmental Quality:

The removal of invasive species and introduction of organic gardening practices have enhanced soil health and overall site ecology.

Capacity Building:

- o Youth Engagement: Four underemployed young people received practical training in gardening and plant care.
- o Education: Special sessions were delivered to 3 Nursery Schools - Lookout Brades and Salem.
- o Wellness Education: Community classes were hosted to teach the use of local herbs for healing and disease prevention.
- o Community Outreach: Local church groups participated in training sessions on using locally grown plants and preparing natural remedies.

In addition, a pilot culinary experience using locally grown superfoods was introduced, highlighting the economic potential of the site and laying the groundwork for future eco-tourism and farm-to-table initiatives.

iii) Consideration of feedback and improvements:

Initial feedback recommended more structured training on using plants for specific conditions such as diabetes and hypertension. In response, wellness sessions are being developed to include condition-specific applications, sample meal plans, and basic herbal protocols.

Feedback also emphasized the need for clearer care instructions and sustainable practices for seedlings and cuttings. Simple guides are currently being created to support future trainees and community gardeners.


Concerns around consistent access to herbs were also noted, as quantities are not yet sufficient for large-scale distribution. The project team is addressing this by planning a small-scale, subscription-based herb box service while steadily increasing propagation capacity.


Conclusion:


The transformation of a damaged greenhouse into a thriving center for propagation, education, and community wellness reflects the depth and spirit of this initiative. The project has moderately exceeded expectations by delivering tangible environmental renewal, meaningful community impact, and a replicable model for sustainable development in Montserrat.

Supporting Evidence - file(s) upload


 [Original Structure](#)


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 [building.progress 2](#)


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
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 [propagated plants](#)


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 [training sessions](#)


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 [building.progress](#)


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
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 [food created by participants](#)


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 [community awareness session](#)


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 [propagating plants](#)

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Supporting Evidence - links to published document/online materials

The following images serve as visual documentation of project activities, progress, and outcomes:

Original Greenhouse Structure: [Original Structure.JPG]

Construction Phase: [Building progress.JPG], [Building progress 2.JPG], [Building progress 3.JPG], [Building progress 4.JPG]

Propagation & Gardening Activities: [Propagating plants.jpg], [Local herbs.jpg]

Training & Community Engagement:

[Training sessions.jpg]

[Community awareness session.jpg]

Wellness & Culinary Outcomes:

[Food created by participants.jpg]

These images highlight the transformation of the greenhouse site, active engagement of community members, educational sessions with youth and adults, and the integration of local herbs and produce into wellness-focused culinary experiences.

Additional media or documentation available upon request.

Project Challenges

The project encountered a few key challenges, which required adaptive strategies and creative problem-solving

Limited Availability of Native and Medicinal Plant Stock

Some traditional medicinal plants were not readily available at the National Trust and Ministry of Agriculture in sufficient quantity for propagation.

Action Taken: We partnered with home gardeners to source cuttings and seeds, and documented traditional planting and care methods to guide future propagation efforts

1. Difficulty Identifying Trainees Initially

One of the early challenges was finding underemployed youth who were available, interested, and committed to participating in the hands-on training programme.

2. Action Taken: We expanded outreach through church networks, community leaders, and informal word-of-mouth campaigns. Personal invitations and one-on-one conversations proved most effective

Lessons Learned

Hands-on training was one of the most successful aspects of the project. It met a clear and pressing need within the community. Participants especially valued learning how to identify and use local herbs, as well as preparing healthy, delicious meals using organically grown produce.

This approach led to high engagement, better retention of information, and meaningful personal connection to the material

Impact:

Increased self-sufficiency: Participants began incorporating more locally grown herbs, fruits and vegetables into their food prep

Demand for more training: Requests poured in for advanced session

Section 3 - Project Finance (Essential)

Project Expenditure

Project Spend (indicative)	Total Grant (£)	Total actual Darwin Plus Costs (£)	Variance %	Comments (please explain significant variances)
Staff Costs				
Consultancy Costs				
Overhead Costs				
Travel and Subsistence				

Operating Costs

Capital Items

Others			
Total	49,950.00	73,619.00	48.7%

Please provide a short narrative summary on project finances.

Project Finances – Narrative Summary

The original project budget was \$49,500, while the actual expenditure totaled \$73,619, resulting in a variance of \$24,119. This difference was primarily due to essential upgrades and scope adjustments made during implementation to ensure long-term impact, safety, and sustainability.

Two key areas accounted for the majority of the increased costs:

1. Capital Equipment:

The original estimate for infrastructure was based on minimal, basic structures. However, once implementation began, it became clear that stronger, more permanent materials and expanded infrastructure were necessary to withstand weather conditions and meet the needs of community use, safety standards, and educational programming.

2. Operating Costs:

Site preparation involved more intensive work than originally anticipated. This included additional labor, extended machinery use, and upgraded materials for foundations, and access points, ensuring the site was safe, accessible, and optimized for community engagement and tourism.

These strategic adjustments were made to future-proof the project, maximize its educational and ecological value, and create a lasting community asset. The additional investment has directly enhanced the quality, safety, and long-term sustainability of the garden and its offerings.

Section 4 - Contribution of Project to Darwin Plus Programme Objectives

Please select up to **one** indicator that applies within **each group/indicator list (A, B, C, D)** and report your results for that indicator in the text box underneath. If you do not have relevant results to report for any of the indicators in a particular group, you can leave them blank.

Please also submit some form of evidence (above) to demonstrate any results you list below, where possible.

Group A: Capability and Capacity - Core Darwin Plus Standard Indicators (select one)

Unchecked	DPLUS-A01: Number of people from key national and local stakeholder groups completing structured and relevant training.
Unchecked	DPLUS-A02: Number of secondments or placements completed by individuals of key local and national stakeholders.

Unchecked	DPLUS-A03: Number of local/national organisations with improved capability and capacity as a result of project.
Checked	DPLUS-A04: Number of people reporting that they are applying new capabilities (skills and knowledge) 6 (or more) months after training.
Unchecked	DPLUS-A05: Number of trainers trained reporting to have delivered further training by the end of the project.

Group A Indicator Results

Over 14 participants reported applying new skills gained from the project, including growing herbs, preparing natural remedies, and incorporating local produce into meals. These changes have supported healthier lifestyles, cost savings, and knowledge-sharing within households and church communities, reinforcing the project's impact on wellness, food security, and sustainable living.

Group B: Policies, Practices and Management- Core Darwin Plus Standard Indicators (select one)

Unchecked	DPLUS-B01: Number of new/improved habitat management plans available and endorsed.
Unchecked	DPLUS-B02: Number of new/improved species management plans available and endorsed.
Unchecked	DPLUS-B03: Number of new/improved community management plans available and endorsed.
Unchecked	DPLUS-B04: Number of new/improved sustainable enterprises/ community benefits management plans available and endorsed.
Unchecked	DPLUS-B05: Number of people with increased participation in local communities / local management organisations (i.e., participation in Governance/citizen engagement).
Unchecked	DPLUS-B06: Number of Local Stakeholders and Local Communities (people) with strengthened (recognised/clarified) tenure and/or rights.

Group B Indicator Results

NA

Group C: Evidence and Best Practices - Core Darwin Plus Standard Indicators (select one)

Unchecked	DPLUS-C01: Number of best practice guides and knowledge products published and endorsed.
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Unchecked	DPLUS-C02: Number of new conservation or species stock assessments published.
Unchecked	DPLUS-C03: New assessments of habitat conservation action needs published.
Unchecked	DPLUS-C04: New assessments of community use of biodiversity resources published.
Unchecked	DPLUS-C05: Number of projects contributing data, insights, and case studies to national Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) related reporting processes and calls for evidence.

Group C Indicator Results

NA

Group D: Sustainable Benefits to People, Biodiversity and Climate - Core Darwin Plus Standard Indicators (select one)

Unchecked	DPLUS-D01 Hectares of habitat under sustainable management practices.
Unchecked	DPLUS-D02: Number of people whose disaster/climate resilience has been improved.
Unchecked	DPLUS-D03: Number of policies with biodiversity provisions that have been enacted or amended.

Group D Indicator Results

NA

Section 5 - Project Partnerships, Wider Impacts and Contributions

Project Partnerships

Project Partnerships

i) Roles of Partners:

The Montserrat National Trust provided valuable technical guidance throughout the project, particularly in the planning and design of the greenhouse structure and irrigation system. They also supported implementation through regular check-ins and advisory calls. The Ministry of Agriculture played an instrumental role by sharing their expertise on endemic plant species, biodiversity, and bird-attracting flora, which informed both planting decisions and educational content.

ii) Government Involvement:

Yes, the Government of Montserrat was involved in the project through the Ministry of Agriculture, which provided technical input and endorsed the project's goals related to conservation, food security, and community resilience.

iii) Partnership Strengths and Challenges:

One of the key strengths of the partnership was the open line of communication. The willingness of partners to provide practical, context-specific advice strengthened the project's outcomes.

iv) Involvement of Other Stakeholders:

Beyond formal partners, the project actively engaged local schools, church groups, wellness practitioners, and experienced farmers. These stakeholders contributed to implementation by participating in training sessions, offering cultural insights on traditional plant uses, and helping to spread awareness. Local technical specialists such as irrigation technicians and plant nurseries were also consulted during the build phase to ensure quality and sustainability. This broad base of involvement strengthened community ownership and ensured the project responded to local needs.

Wider Impacts and Decision Making

Yes, the project has contributed to embedding environmental awareness into community and institutional decision-making. By demonstrating the practical value of native plants, traditional herbal knowledge, and the use of local foods, the project has inspired local schools to incorporate plant-based wellness into their activities and encouraged church groups to adopt herbal remedies and garden care as part of their community outreach.

Additionally, collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture has helped reinforce the importance of protecting endemic species and integrating biodiversity goals into small-scale land development. The site now serves as a model for how environmental education, wellness, and conservation can coexist in practical, community-driven ways.

Sustainability and Legacy

Yes, the project has created several continuing benefits beyond the funding period. The greenhouse and garden remain active as a community hub for biodiversity, environmental education, and wellness outreach.

While formal funding has ended, plans are underway to launch a small-scale herb subscription program and guided eco-tours to support long-term sustainability and community engagement. The foundation laid by this project ensures that the space, knowledge, and partnerships will continue to evolve and serve the people of Montserrat for years to come.

Section 6 - Communications & Publicity

Exceptional Outcomes and Achievements

Showcase Summary: Cultivating Community Wellness Through Biodiversity

The Community Kitchen & Medicinal Garden for Education and Tourism in Montserrat is a clear example of how environmental care, cultural traditions, and community wellness can come together in one meaningful space.

What started as a small, cluttered greenhouse surrounded by invasive plants is now a vibrant, multi-use garden rooted in local knowledge and built for long-term impact.

One of the most powerful outcomes of the project was the level of community participation. Underemployed youth were trained in plant propagation and garden care. Nursery school teachers, church members, and wellness practitioners took part in sessions on food preparation and using local herbs for healing, nutrition, and everyday home use. These hands-on experiences didn't just restore biodiversity, they helped people reconnect with cultural practices and see the land as a resource for both healing and learning.

The project also sparked fresh interest in healthy, locally grown food. People started making small changes in their daily lives, from using more homegrown herbs to reducing reliance on imported products. It became clear that this wasn't just a garden, it was a catalyst for more conscious, sustainable living.


To keep the momentum going, plans are now underway to introduce a small herb subscription service and offer guided wellness tours. The garden has also naturally become a space for weddings, meetings, and community gatherings. Surrounded by nature, it offers a peaceful and welcoming atmosphere that brings people together in a way that feels restorative and grounding.


What began as a simple idea has grown into something much more, a place where environmental awareness,


community resilience, and cultural pride come together. It's a reminder that with the right intention and local leadership, small projects can create lasting change and serve as a model for other island communities navigating similar challenges


Photo, video or graphic to be used for publicity and communications.


Please upload at least one relevant and engaging image, video or graphic that you consent to be used alongside the above text in Defra, JNCC or NIRAS communications material.


 [community awareness session](#)


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 [building progress 3](#)


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 [Original Structure](#)


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 [building progress 2](#)


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 [training sessions](#)

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Photo, video, and/or graphic captions and credits.

Original Structure.JPG

Caption: The original greenhouse structure prior to transformation — overgrown, aged, and underused.

Location: Montserrat

Credit: Ivason Jerome

Building progress 2.JPG

Caption: Installation of foundation and path layout to improve access and usability.

Location: Montserrat

Credit: Merle Tracey Galloway

Building progress 3.JPG

Caption: Progress on greenhouse structure and preparation for planting zones.

Location: Montserrat

Credit: Akesha Beveney

Training sessions.jpg

Caption: Hands-on garden training session with community participants.

Location: Montserrat

Credit: Alexia Allison

Community awareness session.jpg

Caption: Public awareness session sharing knowledge about herbal uses and plant care.

Location: Montserrat
Credit: Merle Tracey Galloway

I agree for the Biodiversity Challenge Funds Secretariat, Administrator, and/or JNCC to publish the content of this section.

☒ Yes, I agree for the BCFs Secretariat and/or JNCC to publish the content of this section.

Please list any accounts that you would like tagged in online posts here. This can include project pages, partners' pages or individuals' accounts for any of the following platforms: LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram.

NA

Section 7 - Darwin Plus Contacts

Please tick here to confirm that you have read and acknowledge the BCF's Privacy Notice on how contact details will be used and stored and that you have sought agreement from anyone that you are sharing personal details with us on their behalf.

☒ I confirm I have read the Privacy Notice and have consent to share the following contact details

Project Contact Details

Project Contact Name	Merle Tracey Galloway
Role within Darwin Plus Project	Project Manager
Email	<div></div>
Phone	
Do you need further sections to provide additional contact details?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> No
