

# GREENHOUSE MASSES

by Craig Winning

**AN environmental project with a difference was given a seal of approval from one Scotland's political heavyweights recently.**

Green Party joint-leader Robin Harper MSP was in Muirkirk last week to officially open the village's plastic bottle greenhouse, which is only the second of its kind in Scotland.

With the help of Muirkirk Primary pupils and members of the Muirkirk Enterprise Group, the project - devised by the Coalfield Environment Initiative - took off and has proven a major success.

After sending out a call for the 1500 empty plastic bottles needed to complete the project, CEI officer Paul Sutherland was stunned when he received close to 2000 bottles, meaning several lay in a storeroom without ever being used.

The mammoth project, which kicked-off in November, was completed in March and complements the work already done to create a community garden at the rear of Garra House, a task carried out by a team of youth offenders under the Community Service for Offenders project.

Speaking at the launch of the greenhouse, Paul Sutherland said: "Having already seen a plastic bottle greenhouse in Falkirk, when I came to work in Muirkirk it was an idea I was keen to introduce here."

"Plastic is a major problem for the environment, with more than half our household waste coming from plastic packaging. I thought the plastic bottle greenhouse was a fabulous idea and I've been delighted with how the community of Muirkirk has come together for this, especially the children at Muirkirk Primary."

"This is a great use for plastic bottles which could otherwise just be going straight to landfill."

Robin Harper, who was blown away with what he saw on his visit, agreed with Paul.

Mr Harper said: "It's great to be in a community that obviously takes great pride in its village. This project appears to have involved just about everyone from Muirkirk and it is such a wonderful project with so many environmental benefits."

## Muirkirk folk turn out to watch official opening of new environmental project



Muirkirk Primary School's Gardening Club get to work on planting some of the many of the flowers and vegetables in the plastic bottle greenhouse along with organisers Morag Goldie Weir and Ina Torbet.

Pictures: DAVID BINGHAM



Green Party co-leader Robin Harper MSP prepares to cut the ribbon to officially open the plastic bottle greenhouse, aided by willing young helpers Chelsie Young and Scott Williams.