



Project Story: Bluewater

Trevor Hodge

Volunteers and Neighbours Making It Happen in Bluewater

The Bluewater Park community has approximately 150 households. Many properties and roadside areas were impacted by the early March '24 storm event and although we cannot tackle the Muni portions of the neighbourhood, we felt it was more efficient as a community to chip the waste from resident properties.

During March 2024 we initiated the idea of collectively managing our chipping efforts within the community. We formed a Steering Committee consisting of Sarah Graham, Trevor Hodge, Claire Stewart, Jesse Lyons, Chela Davison, Claire Rushton and Mick Rushton, to lead the project. We emailed all residents and also posted information on the Bluewater Facebook page about the project and the need for volunteer participation.

The Bluewater Green Waste Chipping Clean occurred on April 6th and 7th (morning), as well as the following week.

We were fortunate that the ferry wasn't running so traffic was fairly quiet in the neighbourhood. Sixty two households participated or just over 40% of the neighbourhood.

This event was strongly supported by Ian Stuart and Todd Sorbo who provided a rented chipper, a truck to tow it, plus ear plugs. There was a volunteer crew of over 40 people (morning and afternoon shifts) made up entirely of Bluewater residents, who supported Ian and Todd during the day. Ian and Todd provided a safety briefing to all the volunteers involved with the chipping to ensure there would be no issues or injuries. Their knowledge, experience and guidance to the volunteer crews allowed us to do this project at a significantly lower cost than would have been possible using commercial contractors. In addition, breakfast coffee/scones, lunch and evening appetizers and beverages was provided to all the volunteers, as well as refreshments during the day.





There were three key deliverables (or benefits to Bowen) from this event:

1. Reduce green waste from having to be hauled off-island.
2. Reduce the risk of fire from fallen storm/and old dead tree debris.
3. Retain chip in the Bluewater for households to use (e.g. on pathways).

The project became a community event and provided many additional benefits like getting outdoors and doing physical work, as well as meeting and socializing with new neighbours. There is now talk of making this an annual “chip fest” now as so much fun and value to all who participated. Thanks to the Foundation for helping us achieve our goals. There has been a little publicity since the event on the Bowen Facebook pages and elsewhere. If other communities wish to understand how to make this type of project a success our steering committee would be happy to update them, so more of Bowen Island communities can participate.





Project Story: Cates Hill

Jeff Ballou

Debris, Fire Hazard and Neighbourhood Small Grants

A number of years ago we were in St. Andrews-by-the-Sea, New Brunswick when a hurricane blew through. The morning revealed significant tree toppling, damage and uprooted shrubs. When the power was restored, the Municipality posted a schedule – much like a garbage collection schedule – showing when residents could expect a municipal or contractor chipper to be in their neighbourhood. This service was paid for out of Municipal funds. Residents knew from previous practice that if they hauled their debris to the street that it would be chipped and hauled away. Within the week the town was cleaned up. Brilliant!



Oakley was proud of her contribution to the debris piles!

We don't yet have this service on Bowen but, thankfully, there is the Bowen Island Community Foundation offering Neighbourhood Small Grants to achieve the same ends. When the Grants were offered, following the early March weather event, our neighbours in Cates Hill quickly decided to apply, given the extensive tree damage the event caused. In surveying the damage, it was realized that the fallen limbs and trees, along with the debris from previous storms, has created notable fire risk. With our successful application and an agreement from Bowen Tree Services to chip up our collection efforts the debris piling began. Over the next month and a half, the debris piles grew and grew. Everyone "chipped" in! The original intent was to expand the Grant coverage to cover more properties in the Cates Hill area but, in the end, the Grant covered only a fraction of our existing piles (they were large!) Moreover, there is still much debris to clear.

Robert Clayton of Bowen Tree Services provided professional, thorough and efficient service as his crew chipped up our numerous piles of debris and left a clean site. We are thankful for their service and also thankful for the Bowen Island Community Foundation for incentivizing our neighbourhood clean-up and reduction of our neighbour fire risk. Even with the work that remains to be done it is comforting that with the Grant we have worked towards making our neighbour fire-smart.





Project Story: Queen Charlotte Heights

Jen Harvey

Queen Charlotte Heights community cleanup took place in May 2024. Word got out by word-of-mouth, text message, and mailboxes. There was a coordinated effort to clear debris from private property where the owners weren't present. We worked with Bowen Island tree service and their instructions were to get the debris in



a limited number of piles for them to come Chip. For this reason it was more of a decentralized work party, folks were given a couple weeks to drop off their debris in designated areas. Chips were piled and folks were welcome to collect them for a personal use. Thank you to the Bowen Island community foundation and the Vancouver foundation for supporting this neighbourhood Small grant!





Project Story: Bishop's Hill

Cindi Keep

The Grant enabled our community of Bishops Hill to clean up our properties after an incredible storm that left many of us with some devastation and a giant mess. The storm itself interrupted our power for days (my own power was out for 46 hours). It took some time for the snow to melt, given we are in a valley with little sunshine, only to discover what was left behind.



All that is to say that we were very grateful for the support of BCF. Once we received confirmation that our application was approved, we reached out to the neighbours to spread the news. We had seven participating properties, and then we need to find the labor! Robert Clayton and his crew came through for us. In true community spirit, Robert's invoice did not exceed the grant amount.

This Grant demonstrated what we can achieve when we work together. We are sincerely grateful and thank you once again for your generous support.





Project Story: Evergreen

Glen Shkurhan

The members of the Evergreen Strata would like to thank the Neighbourhood Small Grants of Bowen Island for the support of our 2024 spring clean up. We in Evergreen cherish our tree lined streets, but causes considerable wind fall through the winter, requiring annual attention keeping our roadways and trails useable and safe. Many strata members routinely donate their time to accumulate windfall, and we hire a Bowen Island business to complete chipping and disposal. Windfall this past winter was particularly heavy, and the costs of chipping exceeded our annual budget allowance. The NSG was a welcomed surprise to filling our budget deficit.

