



Two-year report for Hillingdon Community Trust

January – June 2014

Ref: 006-910

Contact Information	
Name of organisation:	A Rocha UK
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Position in organisation:	Community Events Co-ordinator
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Fund Information	
What funding was for:	Community events co-ordinator
How much awarded:	£32,990 over 2 years
How much spent to date:	£32,990

Our 2013 report and accounts showing receipt of this grant will be available September 2014.

Summarise your most significant achievements and how these match the outcomes and targets agreed when the grant was approved.

The last six months have been very successful in terms of attendance at Minet Country Park events, arguably the most successful six months since we started the Events Coordinator post. From January – June, **418** people visited the park, out of which **385** were from the targeted wards (**Bothwell, Pinkwell, Townfields, Yiewsley, West Dryton and Heathrow Village**), well over the target of **250**. Of those, 85% had never been to the park before, and 80% want to come back to the park.

This year most of our spring season activities were well attended, partly because we had built good relationship with children centres, local networks and faith institutions. In addition, we made an effort dropping our event poster door-to-door through letter boxes and distributed flyers on the streets as well as advertising through local newspapers, faith institutions and children centres. This combination of methods proved to be very effective.

The most popular events were **“The Great Outdoors”**, **“Draw Wild Things”**, **“The Great Strawberry Share”** & **“Picnic in the Park”**. These events were thoroughly enjoyed by the participants and each attracted over 80 people.

“The Great Outdoors” – this event featured kite-making out of junk (eg. newspapers & plastic bags) which was very popular. One of the participants said “I thought it’s just a kid’s activity but I enjoyed it as much as they did – I just love flying kites. I will definitely come back with my family to fly a kite.”

“Draw Wild Things” – children were shown around the park and encouraged to draw/sketch what they saw. They were assisted and taught easy ways of drawing different animals and plants, like trees, birds and squirrels. One of the participants said “The event helped awaken the sense of adventure in my kids, as they set of to explore and discover the nature. Learning how to draw and paint them is a real bonus.”

“The Great Strawberry Share” – this event was arguably the most successful event. Activities featured demonstration on how to grow strawberry plants and make jam out of them. We distributed over 120 seedlings on the day. This particular event attracted people from all ages and backgrounds, and most of the participants commented they thoroughly enjoyed the event.

“Picnic in the Park” – People enjoyed sitting outdoors listening to music as they shared a giant picnic with one another. It was a relaxed environment for people to bring and share food, play outdoors and chat with one another. One of the participants said “it’s a great opportunity to meet many people from my Ward and I’m really pleased.”

All our events encourage the use of Minet Country Park through increased knowledge and familiarity of the site. In surveys, **over 80% of our participants** say they would bring families back to use it in their own time, especially for nature walks, food foraging, picnics, to play with their children and fly a kite.

The majority of our participants commented that they have learned more about the value of greenspaces and how they enjoy coming to the park. In addition, over 99% of the people who had participated in outdoor activities commented that they enjoyed meeting new people, and felt “uplifted” walking around the park and learning about the nature.

Feedback on quality of events from participants:

Event element	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good
Park	0%	10%	20%	70%
Event	0%	5%	15%	80%
Organisers	0%	0%	15%	85%

What difference has the work made (so far)?

- 90% of the attendees felt they learned something about the natural environment and the value of their local parks
- Over 85% said they learned new skills (eg. kite making from junk, food foraging, jam making, species identification, painting and easy way of drawing wild things etc.)
- Majority of the attendees commented the events were very enjoyable and uplifting and felt important for their wellbeing (walking around the park, meeting people and interacting with them)
- The events attracted people from various faith and cultural backgrounds and often created an opportunity to discuss faith and the natural environment
- Free family events offered people from deprived areas an opportunity to learn new skills, meet people and a platform to productively engage their family
- Weekend events offered the local community an opportunity to participate in outdoor activities and enjoyed their local park with their family, friends and neighbours
- People from various faith and cultural backgrounds (Muslim, Hindu, Sikh, Christian, non-faith groups etc) met and share their perspectives on greenspaces, and some have become a good friends

How you know your project has made this difference? (Please provide evidence where possible)

Feedback is collected with questionnaires, event feedback forms, photos, observation and also informal discussion with participants. Photos are attached.

Have any problems occurred during the lifetime of our grant? If so, what have you done to address these?

In the last six months we ran 12 events and had no major problems, except bad weather on one of the occasions which delayed the event; overall, we were lucky enough to enjoy fairly good weather and more people came to the park than in the previous year. We have learned from our previous events to have a plan for inclement weather for all events. When heavy rain and cold wind is expected, we do advise participants to wear appropriate clothing. We also use the Lodge at Minet Country Park for shelter and some activities if necessary.

Have you changed any aspect of the work since the start of the grant? If so, please provide details of how and why.

We are now working in partnership with other organisations, networks and groups (e.g. Hillingdon Asian Women Association, Age UK Hillingdon, children centres, and Hillingdon Interfaith network). We have hosted events for these groups specifically, as well as running events which are open to all. In addition, we started door to door leafleting, which proved to be one of the best ways to draw people's attention who don't access the internet, a local newspaper or go to the library for information. We tried this in order to engage with new and different groups of people across the community.

Will the work continue beyond the life of our grant? If so, please indicate in what way and what funding you have secured or need to secure.

Although we have applied to other funders, including HCT, we do not have funding in place to continue this work beyond the term of this grant.

Have there been any organisational or external factors, which have influenced your work? e.g. staff changes, premises, funding, changes in government policies.

No

What lessons have you learnt from your work that would be useful to yourself and others?

- There are some people in our community who don't access the internet, local newspapers or visit the local library. Leafleting door-to-door (through letter box/street) proved to be the best way to get their attention. In fact, 25% of our audiences commented that they received information about the event through leaflets dropped in their letter box.
- There are people who want to come to the park for an event specifically with their own group and some who just love mixing with different groups of people. Offering both types of events and activities involves more people.
- Groups and organisations require advance notice of events to work with their schedules and they are more likely to book with more notice.
- Organising events requires patience and flexibility as some people who have already booked their place could come very late and don't follow event timing.
- To organise a big family event it is always better to have more volunteers than less to help coordinate and to keep both adults and children entertained.
- To run a joint event with other groups, good communication is extremely vital
- Families prefer activities for children during half-term / school holidays
- Over 60% of our participants prefer weekend events over weekday events

With hindsight would you have done anything differently?

- More personal visits to local children centres and groups
- Produce more posters for door-to-door leafleting
- Raise more volunteer support to promote the event on the streets

MONITORING

PROPOSED OUTCOMES	24-MONTH MONITORING
Bridging gaps between faith communities	All our events were family friendly and welcome people of all ages and level, irrespective of their cultural and religious backgrounds. Of these, 90% of the participants met someone new. Some have shared contact details, inviting one another for tea/coffee in their home or sharing information about further local events or to attend a religious event.
Increased awareness of global and local environmental issues and ability for residents to take positive action	Majority of our participants not only enjoyed the beauty but also said they learned the value of open greenspaces, and also have gained practical skills (e.g. food foraging and making jam, local nature identification, growing strawberries, etc)
Enhanced well-being through being outdoors	Over 99% of adults participants commented that being in the outdoors was very helpful for them in relieving stress. Some said they feel “uplifted” and renewed in spirit and mind walking in an open greenspace. They also enjoyed meeting new people.
Increased use of the park outside of events by families as a free, safe, accessible, local resource for recreation and enjoyment, especially those in deprived areas such as Townfield Ward	Majority of people who have participated in our events commented they would surely come back to the park to do similar activities with their children as they find it fun and enjoyable. Half of first-time attendees returned for another of our events at Minet. All events are free, and there are often free take-away items from the events, such as seedlings, jam or artwork. Townfield Ward was most represented at the events, with 38% of all participants.
Increased discussion around and awareness of faith perspectives on environmental issues	Since last year’s “Faith and the environment” Conference there has been a growing interest from various people. We have received inquiries from some faith groups wanting to continue discussion around faith perspectives on the natural environment. In fact, in partnership with faith groups (led by Hillingdon Interfaith network) an information leaflets about recycling centres was produced for faith institutions. With the above activity focussing on faith traditions “commonalities” there was better understanding amongst different faith communities
Increased availability of affordable events for families in the area	All of our events are free
Increased number of local volunteers involved	Within these six months we have recruited eight

with activities and events at Minet Country Park	local volunteers to help/support our events, an increase from five last year.
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BENEFICIARIES

AGE CATEGORIES	PERCENTAGE (%)
Adults aged 20-50	27
Older people aged 60+	20
Young people aged 12-18	15
Children aged under 12	38

Residential location	Percentage (%)
Townfield Ward	38
Pinkwell Ward	27
Botwell and Yeading Wards	20
Heathrow Villages	2
Yiewsley	3
West Dryton	6
Outside Hillingdon	4

Ethnicity Group	Percentage (%)	Ethnicity Group	Percentage (%)
Asian or Asian British	30	European	15
Black or Black British	12	Mixed Heritage	0
White British	30	Chinese	5
Other		Prefer not to say	8

Religious affiliations

Faith	Percentage (%)	Faith	Percentage (%)
Christian	20	Buddhist	4
Muslim	12	Jain	2
Sikhs	20	Jewish	1
Hindu	22	Others	3
None	13	Prefer not saying	3









