

South Shropshire Youth Forum

Clee Young Rangers and Taste for Adventure programme 2015/16



2015/16. We proposed that the project be run through two locations.

Clee Hill: the funding was used to support the continuation of the Clee Hill Young Rangers project. There were two outcomes – the best outcome was to secure the funds from the Heritage Lottery Young Roots programme and this would enable us to deliver 2 years activity. The CDF grant would be used as match for this programme. A full application was submitted on 13th March 2015. Unfortunately we were not successful in time to deliver our activities for the 15/16 period and instead we had to resort to a reduced activity programme

Clee Hills Young Rangers PLAN B

- Recruit up to 12 young people aged 10-16.
- Deliver 2 days activity over the summer holiday period – based in Novers woodland

What happened?

3 activity days were delivered over the summer period. On 7th August we had 6 young people participating on a mammal search (we had set cameras and traps in the Novers woodland the previous night). The group had to use navigation skills to find the cameras and traps and report and download what was on them. There was evidence of bank voles, muntjac, badgers and foxes. Images and footage were uploaded on the TCHT Facebook page. On 21st August we did a laser tag session in the Novers woodland. The group sent the morning session considering the best place to set up an arena to play their games. It meant that they had to apply risk management to their considerations. This meant making a suitable area safe and making sure

boundaries were marked out (in this case built with fallen branches). The session worked really well and the group thoroughly enjoyed themselves. 9 young people participated in the session. On Tuesday 18th August we delivered a bush craft activity – using the Mesolithic camp as a base we did some basic foraging, fire lighting, made weapons and used the hunting path SSYF and TCHT had devised for the prehistoric family camp day back in June.

In all 20 young people participated in the activities organised over the summer period.

Church Stretton: the pilot helped to develop different approaches to engage with local individuals and groups of young people (as we had done with the Clee project in previous years) – we would use the Development Fund to work with local people and partners. We aimed to offer a range of different activities to at least 20 young people aged 10-16. Activities would include: bush craft, conservation work with the National Trust and Shropshire Wildlife Trust, outdoor pursuits, awareness/informal training sessions (for example water safety).

6 full day sessions were delivered over the summer holiday period. 14 young people participated in activities over the summer including; Hay strewing at Wilderhope Manor, bracken bashing, path clearance, repairing drainage channels and gorse clearance at Cardingmill Valley. We ran a bush craft session at Womerton Farm with Don Hales.

In February we delivered a further 2 activity days – an orienteering session followed by a gorse burn with the National Trust and a laser tag session at Easthope on Wenlock Edge. 15 new young people signed up for the 2 extra activities in 2016 – with 2 young people involved from the previous sessions signing up. In all we had 28 young people, aged 9-15 taking part from a wide geographical area.

In total we delivered

- 2 activity days in Church Stretton (Bush craft & Laser tag)
- 6 activity days day with the National Trust during August 2015 and February 2016 (Hay strewing, bracken bashing, path clearance, drainage channels, gorse clearance x 2)
- 3 activity days in Clee Hill – including bush craft, mammal trapping and laser tag

What was achieved?

After feedback from young people and parents and partner organisations the project achieved many positive outcomes including:

- The project was again successful in fully engaging the young people on the project. The activities are very popular with young people and parents. We have had a lot of positive feedback from parents. Parents and young people are hoping that the project will continue.

- A disappointing number of girls took part in the summer activities on the Clee. For the first time we had only 3 girls participating on the Clee Young Rangers project.
- The new partnership with the National Trust was problematic at first, changes to planned sessions were regular and often the participants and SSYF staff were left to their own devices. Issues have now been resolved, as new personnel have been recruited within the National Trust.
- Despite our best efforts, Church Stretton School still remain unhelpful for recruitment and general promotional purposes. SSYF have offered to go into school and talk to pupils or assemblies, have emailed posters and booking forms and tried phone calls to get into the school to recruit. However, social media and emailing existing partners and individuals worked very well.
- The Church Stretton project made links with new partners such as Don Hales.
- In Church Stretton, young people have learnt practical skills and have also worked alongside National Trust staff gaining an appreciation of conservation of the natural landscape and also a work ethic.
- 1 young person, from Church Stretton, has gone on to run a small garden enterprise scheme while still at school as a direct result of being involved in the programme.

Feedback from Participants

Clee group – we had a general discussion about the project this year. Overall the group were disappointed that we could only offer a short programme, obviously this was not helped with the failure of the Young Roots application. SSYF will endeavour and reapply.

The activities on offer were very popular on the day – the laser tag activity was most enjoyable, even if the group spent the morning identifying a safe area and preparing it for the game itself. It meant the group were hands on throughout the day. The technology on the mammal trap activity was a bit temperamental and so not all the footage could be downloaded on the day itself.

In February, we contacted the existing group again to see if any participants would like to continue to be involved in the project and we had lots of interest and new interest from pupils based at Lacon Childe School.

Church Stretton – we had lots of feedback from parents and participants. Many parents were keen for activities to continue in the future. The response from young people was equally positive. Favourite activities included building fires, bush craft and working with the National Trust.

Proposing a way forward

One area the programme needs to work on in the Stretton area is the relationship with the local schools. There has been some but not much support for recruitment and promotion of activities so far, particularly from the secondary school. We would like to consider the potential to explore ways of providing activities in school hours so we are hopeful that we would be able to offer a bigger and more varied package that is appealing to schools and local children alike.

It was extremely disappointing that the Clee project didn't get funding through the Young Roots programme and as a consequence we haven't been able to fully deliver what young people wanted. This may hurt the programme, in terms of working with the previous participants, although we will be submitting a second application to the Heritage Lottery to support this programme starting this summer.

There is huge potential to develop both programmes further, we have shown that we can engage young people and that they are committed to getting actively involved in their local area, with an enthusiasm to make stronger connections to their heritage and to feel empowered to look at helping to make decisions and get involved in the development of any future activities.

