



6 Month Review

18 March 2013

Wild4life Project

Wild4life is a four year project providing opportunities for local people to get out and about and involved in their local green spaces in South Gloucestershire. The Wild4life project launched in autumn 2012 and will run until September 2016, primarily working with children, young people and families in Filton, Patchway, West Yate, Cadbury Heath, Staple Hill and Kingswood. www.southglos.gov.uk/wild4life

Wild4Life is being managed by the South Gloucestershire Council's Community Spaces team and has been funded by a grant from the Reaching Communities Fund of the Big Lottery Fund in addition to funding from South Gloucestershire Council and NHS South Gloucestershire.

During the first 6 months of the project, 16 events have been held involving 1016 people including holiday wild play workshops, wild encounter walks, Nature Play sessions, geocaching for referred families and work with special schools. Feedback has been excellent with 100% of those engaged in targeted work reporting that involvement in the project has improved their feeling of emotional well being, levels of physical activity and confidence to access local open spaces.

With the summer months to come, the next 6 months of the project will be packed with an abundance of opportunities for priority neighbourhood residents and referred groups to get outdoors and enjoy local green spaces for health and well being.

Feedback, ideas and further suggestions for the project are always welcome so please do get in touch.

Rowena

Rowena Kenny Wild4life Project Officer

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Wild4life Project launch October 2012

The Wild4life project was officially launched at an Apple Day school workshop in Cadbury Heath. During the workshop, pupils made giant apples and an apple tree from recycled wood and natural materials as well as learning about the importance of orchards for wildlife. The 'giant apple tree' was displayed at a local community Apple Day event and is now an art installation in the school grounds.



Community events

- Orchard and wildlife themed Wild4life creative activities at the 'Big Apple' community Apple Day at Grimsbury Community Farm, Kingswood, October 2012. 650 participants.



'A fantastic day for the entire family. Loved the natural feel of the whole day. Thank you'
written feedback

- The autumn South Gloucestershire Discover Festival featured 3 Wild4life Wild Encounter Walks attended by 94 participants.



'My daughter and I attended an owl prowl last night and I just wanted to say that it was a fabulous evening with great friendly people. It was a really good chance to see owls in their natural environment and we were lucky enough to see a beautiful owl in the middle of the woods up very close. It was also great to learn about their habitat and how we can help in the future. My 8 year old daughter learnt lots and asked loads of questions, which were answered in a patient, fun and knowledgeable way. We are both very much looking forward to doing many more activities like this. Thank you:-)'

Feedback by email

Targeted project work

Most targeted project work is scheduled for spring, summer and early autumn due to the advantages of warmer weather when engaging groups outdoors. Highlights from targeted work delivered so far are summarised below:

- Wild4all celebration event December 2012 following completion of new access improvements at Warmley Forest Park involving pupils from Warmley Park special school and members of the South Gloucestershire Disability Action Group.



- Cadbury Heath Nature Play Project - Progress Summary

A programme of 10 Nature Play sessions for families attending Cadbury Heath Surestart children's centre is currently being delivered through a partnership between the Wild4life Project and the children's centre. The project aims to support families living within the priority neighbourhood and children's centre staff and volunteers to use local open spaces for outdoor play, learning and recreation to improve health and well being.

As of the date of this report (18 March 2013) 6 sessions have been delivered involving 18 children and 14 adults (including 3 fathers) between February – March 2013 and a further 4 sessions will run in April 2013. Following excellent feedback and a request from families to sustain the work into the future, parents, volunteers and other stakeholders are currently working together to explore how this work can best be carried forward into the future.

Written feedback gathered from questionnaires given to parents/carers:

- **What have you and your child most enjoyed about the sessions?**

'The ideas gained to use at home, outdoors, creativity, freedom'

'Outside fun. Ideas of making that we can do at home. Fire – marshmallows!'

'Getting involved in everything. Learning. Planting'

'Interaction with other children' 'Making and using resources from out and about'

'Learning new skills' 'Creating things' 'Improving confidence'

'Everything – tree planting, bluebell planting, bear hunting, fire and marshmallow toasting. My child has enjoyed every bit of the sessions and always looks forward to coming.'

- **Is there anything you/your child have not enjoyed about the sessions or we could improve in the future?**

'More sessions. More outdoor explore!'

- **Have nature play sessions helped to improve your confidence to play outdoors and access local green spaces with your children? Yes/no**

100% respondents yes

- **Does coming to sessions improve your feeling of well being? Yes/no**

100% respondents yes

- **Do you feel that coming to sessions improves your child's feeling of well being? Yes/no**

100% respondents yes

- Has coming to sessions helped to increase the amount of physical outdoor activity you do on a weekly basis with your family? Eg walking, outdoor play etc. Yes/no
100% respondents yes

- Any other comments or suggestions?

'Fantastic sessions for all ages. Really important for children to explore the outdoors and understand the world we live in!'

'The groups are lovely and my children love them. They are run by lovely people who really care and help get the children 'stuck in' – we love the Wild4life groups!'

'We have really enjoyed these sessions and look forward to more sessions. My child enjoyed making things too.'

'X doesn't normally sleep very well and slept really well after the last session'

'This is the first time I have done something creative in over 15 years!' parent

'Wonderful to see the park being used constructively' resident from Coronation Road
(verbal comment)

'Really great what you are doing here' verbal comment from Coronation Road resident

- Nature Play images (February and March 2013)



Community Conservation Projects



Plans are well underway for the launch of the 'Big Pull' community conservation action project to tackle the spread of Himalayan Balsam along the Frome. Five community workdays have been planned for 2013 and local groups and residents are keen to get involved. The Big Pull is a regional partnership project working with the Avon Invasive Weeds Project:

'With a genuine interest in conservation and a passion for involving the community it has been a pleasure to work alongside the Wild4life project. The local knowledge of Rowena was intrinsic to helping me hit the ground running so we can really help local community groups in practical conservation events, to improve and maintain the riparian habitats along the River Frome. I very much look forward to the summer events alongside the Wild4life team.'

Avon Invasive Weeds Officer

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