



Cotswolds Conservation Board and Young Gloucestershire

Pilot Activity Programme for Prince's Trust Teams 2018

Project Report

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1. Introduction

The Cotswolds Conservation Board (The Board) has long desired to do more to broaden engagement in the AONB, particularly to better include young people from communities that face barriers to getting out to the Cotswolds.

Policy UE2 of the new 2018-2023 Cotswolds AONB Management Plan states that “Communities from the surrounding urban areas, particularly those from deprived wards and those who do not traditionally visit the AONB, should be a priority for engagement.”

The Cotswold Voluntary Wardens do some good work in this area for example by facilitating farm visits for city centre schools from deprived wards, however as an organisation we still feel that we are just scratching the surface of what could and should be done.

In December 2017 contact was made with Young Gloucestershire and an opportunity was identified to run a pilot project with the purpose of gaining experience and gathering evidence to support future proposals. Both organisations had complimentary skills which together could deliver a project which neither alone would be able to do.

This pilot project had two objectives

1. To demonstrate that by working together the project partners can provide a programme of exciting outdoors rural activities to young people who would not normally access them.
2. To gather evidence of the impacts of these activities on the young people along with organisational learning on how to deliver more of this type of work.

2. Project Outline

Delivery model & roles

The project was developed with both organisations playing to their own strengths. Young Gloucestershire has the access and contacts to recruit participants from the target audience and the personnel and vehicles to transport and supervise them in accordance with best practices. The Board has the volunteers and officers with both the expertise and the contacts to put together a programme of activities.

The participants were mainly drawn from Gloucester & Cheltenham with individuals also coming from Dursley, Wootton under edge, Stroud and Bourton-on-the-Water

They were recruited through the Prince’s Trust ‘Team’ scheme. This meant that the rural activities were integrated into a managed personal development programme. This is the first time Young Gloucestershire had included rural activities in the Cotswolds as part of this programme.

Two Prince’s Trust Team groups participated in the pilot project, each completing a programme of eight activities comprising of; dry-stone walling, stone carving, bushcraft, blacksmithing, map reading/walking, archery, thatching, and charcoal making/coppicing and either green woodworking (group 1) or thatching (group 2). A copy of the programme along with brief activity descriptions are included in appendix 1.

All the activities were for half a day apart from Bushcraft which took a whole day. Most days comprised of two activities with officers monitoring the attention levels of participants and managing the days in a flexible manner accordingly.

The Cotswolds Discovery Centre was used as a venue for; dry-stone walling, stone carving, blacksmithing, thatching, and green woodworking. The on-site rural skills facilities (forge, walling centre, thatching rig, courtyard and covered gallery) along with having good toilet and refreshments on hand was very helpful. The coppicing/charcoal making was delivered at the woodland managed by the Board at Ullenwood. Bushcraft was delivered at and by the Cotswolds Farm Park and Archery at Far Peak.

Each group started with 12 participants though individuals did drop out of the programme, which is normal. Attendance at events ranged from 4 to 12. Attendance at both final events was 8 & 7

Funding and costs

The project budget is included in appendix 2. The cash cost of the project was £7,095. This does not include the cost of non-cash contributions particularly Board officer time which was significant.

This pilot project involved an investment of approximately 14 days of Board officer time. Putting together the programme, scheduling, rescheduling and booking activities took an estimated 5 days of officer time. The charcoal/coppicing days were delivered by Board officers taking up another 4 days. There was an estimated 5 extra days of officer time supporting the activity days, particularly the first ones and days new to the Board. Most of these extra days were as a result of the pilot nature of the programme and would not be needed in a repeat programme.

Activity day cash costs varied from £1,012 for an individual bushcraft day to no cost at all for the blacksmithing which was volunteer led using existing resources. The average costs per activity day was £471

The cash cost of this pilot project was met from the Board's Cotswolds Trails and Access budget on the basis that it represented an investment that would help take this area of work forward. This budget has been cut significantly in recent years and there are many calls on it. This budget would not normally be able to fund this work to the same extent.

Evaluation

Participants were asked to complete feedback forms at the end of their final activity. 14 forms were returned, 7 from each group. A compilation of this feedback is in appendix 3.

The final activity for the second group (coppicing and charcoal making) was filmed and this included interviews with participants and delivery officers. The audio of these interviews was also reviewed.

Officers involved in the project were also asked to complete a different feedback form. Three forms were received back and these are included in appendix 4

3. Lessons learned

What worked?

The partnership approach with both organisations playing to their strengths worked very well. It would be challenging for either organisation to attempt such a programme on their own.

The rural activities and the wider programme's activities complimented each other creating a more varied and interesting programme than doing either alone.

The variety of activities was a strength. The activities ranked by mentions in the answers to the question; "Which of our activities have you enjoyed the most and why?" are listed below. Only thatching was not mentioned though only one group undertook this activity. The more expensive activities tended to be more popular though combining them with activities that could be delivered in-house made it more affordable.

Bushcraft x6
Archery x6
Stone carving x5
Blacksmithing x3
Green woodworking x2
Charcoal making x2
Stonewalling x1
Maps/walking x1

The Board officers, trainers and volunteers responded positively to the project and enjoyed working on it. The spirit of the days was positive and there was a good appreciation of the value of this work. This was communicated well to the participants, as the Programme Leader observed;

"Most of the professionals understood the young people and connected with them on a brilliant level. The environment created remained relaxed and a level trust was earned quickly both ways."

This project both reached the target audience and had an effect on them. 8 of the 14 participants completing feedback forms had not visited the Cotswolds before (57%). A shocking figure considering that they were mainly recruited from the immediate vicinity of the area. One participant report during an interview that;

"I basically spend every day in my bed."

13 of the 14 said that they would visit the Cotswolds again and the one that didn't cited transport as the reason for not coming back. Another respondent mentioned transport as a difficulty too.

The effect on participants was significant in many cases. 8 of the 14 said that they would consider progressing a rural/countryside career.

Lessons for the future

The coach pickups at 9.30 am proved early for some participants effecting attendance.

There is more work to do in tailoring some of the activities to the target audience. As the Programme Leader observed;

“Some workshops could take slightly longer to get into which can result in a lack of engagement from young people (Map work). Additionally the explanation behind the trade/ workshops could be better.”

It is easy to underestimate the time it takes to put together and schedule the programme with an array of activity providers. This is in part because of the wide variety of activity providers and also because the Board officer was ‘in the middle’ liaising with the Young Gloucestershire Officers as well as the activity providers. The allocation and resourcing of staff time for this role is important if a sustainable delivery model is to be found.

Although as a pilot, this project was short term in nature it did highlight the need for longer term activity. There was a risk of giving participants a taste of rural activities & then taking it away. As the Board’s Trails and Access Officer observed;

“The challenge is not to just ‘parachute’ them in, show them the opportunities and then they do not have the ability/support to visit again.”

1. Conclusions

This pilot project met both of its objectives.

It demonstrated that by working together, the project partners can reach an audience of young people who do not normally access outdoors rural activities and deliver an exciting and engaging programme. It also demonstrated that the programme was successful, delivering a positive rural experience and having a significant impact on many of the participants.

It led to a great deal of organisational learning and went a long way to inform the project partners on how to take this work forward.

We have demonstrated that we can deliver this kind of work through working in partnership, we now need to figure out how to do more of it.

The Programme Leader summarised the pilot project best;

“A brilliant programme for all young people to engage in that clearly provided many benefits. We have numerous teams at Young Gloucestershire and for most it was their first chance to experience the Cotswolds. Moving forward it would be great for further teams to gain this invaluable experience.”

2. Recommendations

That the project partners continue to work together to make more of this work happen and ultimately aim to find a more sustainable long term delivery model.

That the project partners collaborate in identifying sources of funding and securing more resources for this work.

That the project partners look into delivering a programme of this nature more efficiently. In the light of the experience gained in the pilot we could look into;

- Young Gloucestershire booking activity providers directly to best fit with their programme schedule.
- Reducing the attendance of Board officers on activity days.

That the project partners seek to cast the net wider, finding more partners to collaborate with. We will look into holding a 'wider access forum' event to bring more partners together to help take this work forward.

We will continue to seek new ways of delivering longer term engagement with young people, for example the Board's recent work with schools focussed on young people who have fallen outside of the formal curriculum.

Appendix 1

Project Programme

PRINCE'S TRUST COTSWOLDS ACTIVITY PROGRAMME SUMMER 2018

Week	Activity	193 & Yazmin Nicette	Youth Engagement Options	194 & Archie Morton	Youth Engagement Options
1	Induction week – team building	W/C 14 th May		W/C 25 th June	
2	Residential Devon	W/C 21 st May		W/C 2 nd July	
3 & 4	Community Project Preparation	W/C 28 th May & 4 th June		W/C 9 th July & 16 th July	July 16th Walling and stone carving
5 & 6	Community Project Delivery	W/C 11 th June & 18 th June	June 18th Bushcraft	W/C 23 rd July & 30 th July	
7	Work Placement Preparation	W/C 25 th June	June 27th Forge and walling	W/C 6 th August	August 10th Map and Archery
8	Work Placement	W/C 2 nd July		W/C 13 th August	
9	CV development, mock interviews	W/C 9 th July	July 11 Stone Carver and green woodworking	W/C 20 th August	Aug 20th Bushcraft Aug 23th Forge and thatching
10	Final Team Challenge Preparation	W/C 16 th July	Wed July 18th charcoal and coppicing	W/C 27 th August	Aug 30th Charcoal, and coppicing
11	Final Team Challenge Delivery	W/C 23 rd July		W/C 3 rd September	
12	Graduation Event Preparation and Delivery	W/C 30 th July	July 31st Map and Archery	W/C 10 th September	

Activity descriptions

Dry-stone Walling – half day taking down and rebuilding a wall under the supervision of a professional drystone walling instructor at the Cotswolds Discovery Centre.

Stone carving – half day stone carving under the supervision of a professional instructor at the Cotswolds Discovery Centre.

Bushcraft – Cotswolds Farm Park - full day of survival skills at a fairly advanced level. Included skinning and cooking rabbits, using knives and fire.

Blacksmithing – half day in the forge under the supervision of a volunteer instructor at the Cotswolds Discovery Centre.

Map reading/walk – half day volunteer led – walk with map reading from Northleach to the Far Peak activity centre.

Archery – half day at Far Peak with a professional instructor.

Green woodworking – half day at the Discovery Centre, making whistles with a professional instructor.

Thatching – half day at the Discovery Centre's thatching rig with a professional instructor.

Charcoal making and coppicing - half day at a Board managed woodland including; loading and unloading a kiln, creating a fire pit and having a cook out.

Appendix 2

Project Budget

Provider	Dates	Details	Cost
Cotswold Adventures	June 18th, August 20th	Day bushcraft course @£75 pp	2,025
Forge	June 27th, Aug 23rd	Volunteer led	0
Archery	July 31st, August 10th	£7 pp plus	210
Thatching	Aug 23rd	Trainer	420
Walling	June 27, July 16th	Trainer @£220 per day	440
Green woodworking	July 11th	Trainer @ £230	230
Map and compass	July 31st, Aug 10th	Volunteer led, materials to support	50
Stone Carving	July 11th, July 16th	Trainer	660
Charcoal making/coppicing	July 18th, Aug 30th	AONB staff led Food for cooking on charcoal	£60
Transport and YG staff x 2 per event costs			3,000
		Total Costs	7,095

Estimated Board officer time;

Putting together the programme, scheduling, rescheduling and booking activities; 5 days.

Delivering the charcoal/coppice days; 4 days

Attending and supporting other activity days; 5 days

Total 14 days

Appendix 3

Participant Questionnaire with answers (14 completed)



Prince's Trust Scheme – Cotswolds Questionnaire

1. Have you visited the Cotswolds before the Prince's Trust Scheme? Yes x6 No x8

If yes where have you visited and why?

Sort of. Guiding camp at Cowley (Girlguiding Gloucestershire County Headquarters)

Northleach/Farm Park

I live in the Cotswolds though have also visited local landmarks with family/college archaeology

Hills

Woodland, adventure

I live in Bourton

2. Which of our activities have you enjoyed the most and why?

i.e. Bushcraft, Stone Walling, Blacksmithing, Charcoal Making, Stone Carving, Green Woodworking, Map Work, Archery

Blacksmithing because it was nice to see the process of metal objects being made.

Bushcraft, stone carving, green woodworking and archery underlined. I enjoyed the more creative activities as they were similar to what I do in my own time. They were also very engaging.

Archery

Bush Craft, Archery

Archery, Charcoal making, Stone Carving and blacksmithing

Stonewalling, charcoal making, Green Woodwork, Bushcraft.
Career based, interesting and fun. Something different.

I have enjoyed archery the most because it is a different experience and it was a fun activity that I can do again and get into. I also enjoyed the bushcraft as it was a different experience exploring the outdoors & gaining knowledge of the activity.

Walking

Blacksmithing underlined. Blacksmithing is a long term interest of mine and I appreciate the opportunity to do it myself.

Bushcraft

Bushcraft & archery circles. Most interesting enjoyable skills

Stone carving because I'm artistic

I enjoyed the stone carving, it really sparked my creative side

Stone Carving

3. Do you think you will visit the Cotswolds again?

Yes x13 / No x1

If no why not? *e.g. no transport, travel cost, doesn't appeal*

No transport

Transport is still a problem (had answered yes)

4. From this experience would you now consider progressing a rural/countryside career?

e.g. walling, blacksmithing, leading outdoor activities, conservation.

Yes x8 / No x3

Dunno x1, Maybe x1, neither marked x1

Conservation

Leading our deer culling

Leading outdoor activities

Conservation, leading outdoor activities

I would like to lead activities outdoors such as archery since I find it very enjoyable and it is always good to help others & get them interested in the same thing as you.

Perhaps more volunteer work though a career is a possibility

It has now crossed my mind (did not circle yes or no)

5. What could we do to encourage more young people from urban cities and towns to visit, partake in activities or work in the Cotswolds.

Approach schools and PRU places

Offer more things that appeal to them, eg. Rock climbing, camping and more. Also advertise a bit more.

Thank you for a wonderful time

Have a website for all around

Go around town centre and tell people about them

Go out and give talks about the activities/Cotswolds

Encourage them to join groups such as guides or scouts

Suggest they camp

Organise informative and interactive days, authentic experiences.

I think that possibly promoting yourself more to young people, making it affordable and visiting more frequently in schools/colleges.

Social media

Make an advert

Seasonal festivals

Continue providing activities that are not found in typical classrooms in workplaces such as blacksmithing thatching etc.

Adverts

Work with college

Further promote the exciting skills available
More activities

Take them to the water park in Cirencester

Appendix 4a

Cotswolds Conservation Board and Young Gloucestershire

Pilot Activity Programme for Prince's Trust Teams 2018

Partner Questionnaire

Role: CCB Rural Skills Officer

1. What difference do you think this project made to the participants? Please report any individual observations you think may be informative.

Working outdoors, trying new things. Completely different from their normal life. One participant could have become a waller according to the trainer.

2. What do you think worked well?

The whole programme. A lot in there with a variety of activities & the way they linked together.

3. What could have been improved? What would you do differently next time?

The dropout rate, need to understand why better.

4. What do you feel are the barriers to doing more of this type of activity?

Costs. Need commitment to funding. Have to pay market rate for activities.

5. How do you think these barriers can be overcome

A sponsor could pay for activities & staff time/costs

6. Do you have any further comments or suggestions? What other opportunities are there to do more of this work?

Partnering with schools. Now working with Winchcombe School. 13-16 year olds. Students outside of mainstream education within the school. Delivering a similar programme over a longer time (though more rural skills based). School paying for it all.

Appendix 4b

Cotswolds Conservation Board and Young Gloucestershire

Pilot Activity Programme for Princess Trust Teams 2018

Partner Questionnaire

CCB
Role: Trails & Access Officer

The majority of participants had failed the education system. They had skills that had not been tapped in the formal education environment. It needs to be incorporated into the curriculum as an alternative pathway in schools.

1. What difference do you think this project made to the participants? Please report any individual observations you think may be informative.
Good to get them out of their usual environment and in many cases out of their comfort zone. For a small number it opened up the possibilities of working in the rural environment - outdoor activities, walking. Everyone would be keen to get out into the Cotswolds again and the hope was it sowed a seed for the future.
2. What do you think worked well?
The important aspect was variety. Different individuals preferred different activities. The creative young people particularly enjoyed stone carving. The blacksmithing was popular as they produced an item to take away. The centre worked well as we could easily support them with drinks / facilities.
3. What could have been improved? What would you do differently next time?
It was important to have limited 'classroom' time, and shorter sessions between breaks.
4. What do you feel are the barriers to doing more of this type of activity?
Staff co-ordination time and funding for activities. Transport to sites also a challenge. Creating a sustainable way of running a programme.
5. How do you think these barriers can be overcome?
Fully funded application for a larger scale project / sponsorship + staff resources.
6. Do you have any further comments or suggestions? What other opportunities are there to do more of this work?
It was a very rewarding project. It is so important to get young people out into the Cotswolds to broaden their understanding and appreciation of the rural environment.
~~The challenge is the best site~~
The challenge is not to just 'parachute' them in, show them the opportunities and then they do not have the ability / support to visit again.

Appendix 4c

Cotswolds Conservation Board and Young Gloucestershire

Pilot Activity Programme for Prince's Trust Teams 2018

Partner Questionnaire

Role: Programme Leader

7. What difference do you think this project made to the participants? Please report any individual observations you think may be informative.

It enhanced their knowledge in different trades and possible careers moving forward. It allowed them to see a different area and on the days completing the workshops they seemed a lot more relaxed and engaged. Specific individuals learnt more about themselves and realised what it was they wanted to do next.

8. What do you think worked well?

It was great for the young people to have variety of professionals to deliver to them as it was a new face and activity each week. Most of the professionals understood the young people and connected with them on a brilliant level. The environment created remained relaxed and a level trust was earned quickly both ways.

9. What could have been improved? What would you do differently next time?

Some workshops could take slightly longer to get into which can result in a lack of engagement from young people (Map work). Additionally the explanation behind the trade/ workshops could be better.

10. What do you feel are the barriers to doing more of this type of activity?

Possible barriers to completing this project again could be the lack of transport for groups to explore this specific area.

11. How do you think these barriers can be overcome

Supplying additional transport to make the Cotswolds more accessible to young people. Making young people aware of what the Cotswolds has to offer through specific advertisement/ taster days.

12. Do you have any further comments or suggestion? What other opportunities are there to do more of this work?

A brilliant programme for all young people to engage in that clearly provided many benefits. We have numerous teams at Young Gloucestershire and for most it was their first chance to experience the Cotswolds. Moving forward it would be great for further teams to gain this invaluable experience.