

Date: 27 November 2007
FAO: News Editors



PRESS RELEASE

Contact: Farrukh Tariq
Tel: 0115 9648 390
farrukh@ndcnottingham.org.uk

Kids get a taste of the wild through new learning project

Local school children have been given the opportunity to improve their confidence and skills, while also learning more about the natural world, thanks to a special woodland project funded by the Neighbourhood Development Company (NDC).

Based at Bestwood Country Park, Wild Things formed in 1998 and has been working to provide young people aged between 5 and 21 years old with 'Forest School' and 'active environmental learning adventures' ever since. The Forest School initiative targets children in year 5 and 6 who may have additional learning needs, behavioural issues or who need extra support in building self-esteem, confidence and group work skills. The children take part in activities such as; building a group shelter, woodland craft, conservation skills, exploring the woods and cooking on camp fires.

This year NDC's Neighbourhood Investment Fund granted them a total of £4,648 for them to purchase the equipment for, and to run, a Forest School Film Project. Children at Berridge Juniors and Mellers primary School will make a film about their experiences at Wild Things and all that they have learnt, designed to increase awareness in the natural world as well as increase interest in the project amongst other schools.

Kate Millman from the Wild Things Project, said: "It was a fantastic success and all the kids got so much out of it. The majority of the kids had never experienced nature first hand before. The feedback from their schools is that the kids have shown a marked improvement in their confidence and learning ability since the project."

"The project wouldn't have been possible at all without funding from the NIF. If we had not secured this funding the kids would have missed out completely on the benefits. Most kids don't get opportunities like this. Funds like the NIF, that are so accessible for small groups, are absolutely vital."

The group will use transcripts and footage from the project to build a case to apply for funds from larger bodies and trusts, and to make links with other schools so that even more children can benefit from future projects.

/ends

For further information contact Kate Millman (Wild Things) on 0845 4584727

Neighbourhood Development Company (NDC) runs the government's New Deal for Communities Programme for Radford and Hyson Green until 2010, and will also manage the £20 million worth of community assets to ensure the long term sustainability and regeneration of the area.

The National Evaluation and Ipsos Mori Data released in 2006 reported that:

- Unemployment had been reduced to 7.2% exceeding the NDC 10 year target
- The NDC programme had got over 1,100 people into work
- In 2005/6 The number of NDC Children staying on at school had increased to 65% (5% above the national staying on rate) exceeding the 10 year Target
- The latest figure (2004) for young people entering Higher education has risen by 12 % and is now 3% above the city average exceeding the 10 year target