



THANET COUNTRYSIDE TRUST

Registered charity No. 285972

Founded: 1971

Charitable Status: 1982

Conservation and Education

Nineveh funding

Final Report of Monkton Nature Reserve

Environmental Education Officer

2014 - 2017

Monkton Nature Reserve, Canterbury Road, Monkton, Nr Ramsgate, Kent, CT12 4LH

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Supported by Thanet District Council

Supported by Neville Weston Chartered Certified Accountants

Summary of work achieved over the funding period

Planning and pilot work

Developed a data base for local schools including 30 Primary schools, 10 Secondary schools and 4 Independent schools in the Thanet District.

Developed a database of local speakers / tutors including those with expertise in conservation, entomology, British flora and fauna, biodiversity, environmental protection and legislation, archaeology, astronomy and also skills such as photography.

Piloted 29 visits with 14 schools in the first year with over 400 pupils in total.

Promotion

Improved the website: www.monkton-reserve.org and produced a new marketing flyer.

Created a Facebook account: www.facebook.com/MonktonNature.

Increased the reputation of the Nature Reserve with parents, teachers and support staff.

Marketed the benefits of visiting the Monkton Nature Reserve to schools and other educational establishments.

Monkton Nature reserve experience

Updated the notice boards at the centre and developed fun and interesting displays in the education centre, improving the visitor experience.

Developed a gallery wall for staff and visitors to add photographs of interesting species found around the reserve throughout the year.

Designed more interactive activities at the reserve for families visiting with children e.g. Fairy, dinosaur and hedgehog trails to improve observation skills. Other activities included making your own clay hedgehog decorated with items such as feathers and leaves, scavenged from around the reserve.

Adults with learning difficulties

Engaged groups of adults with learning difficulties weekly. We now have two groups coming for a full day per week comprising of at least 16 individuals with varying levels of ability.

Activities included bird and butterfly walks, potting plants and general gardening. They also have their lunch at the reserve. One lady in particular who, support workers had already noticed had good matching skills, surprised us when she could not only match pictures and colours, but went on to clearly identify birds when she saw them at the bird table and immediately showed them to people in the reference books. See a full case study in Appendix D.

Mental Health work

Two new NHS mental health support groups now attend weekly and take part in self-directed wellbeing activities e.g. nature walks and wildlife observation.

One individual incapacitated by long term mental illness, volunteers weekly and reports that being at the reserve helps him cope with everyday life.

Work experience

Engaged with 16-19 year olds at Canterbury College resulting in a permanent art display- a mega spider which is now in our Secret Garden and a pilot promotional video as course work.

Assisted young people with work experience from local schools (approximately 5 per week) for example, pupils from St Anthony's school took part in bramble clearing and learnt how to plant trees. Their experience was subsequently used to plant an area of trees in the community near their school at Dane Valley Woods in Margate.

Engaged the long term unemployed to expand their skills (1 per week).

Promoted long term interest in the reserve and conservation shown by an increase in young volunteers e.g. a student from Hadlow College, Canterbury after visiting the reserve continued to volunteer for the rest of the academic year.

Education

Delivered educational activities at the Nature Reserve for 432 children in 2014, 704 children in 2015 and 813 children in 2016 from local schools, nurseries and youth groups. This year we predict to increase the numbers further.
Designed and delivered Nature and Craft clubs.
Marketed and delivered new educational birthday parties at the reserve (See Kashmir’s report for further information).

Evaluation

Investigated the barriers faced by school visiting the Monkton Nature Reserve e.g. transportation costs.

Outreach

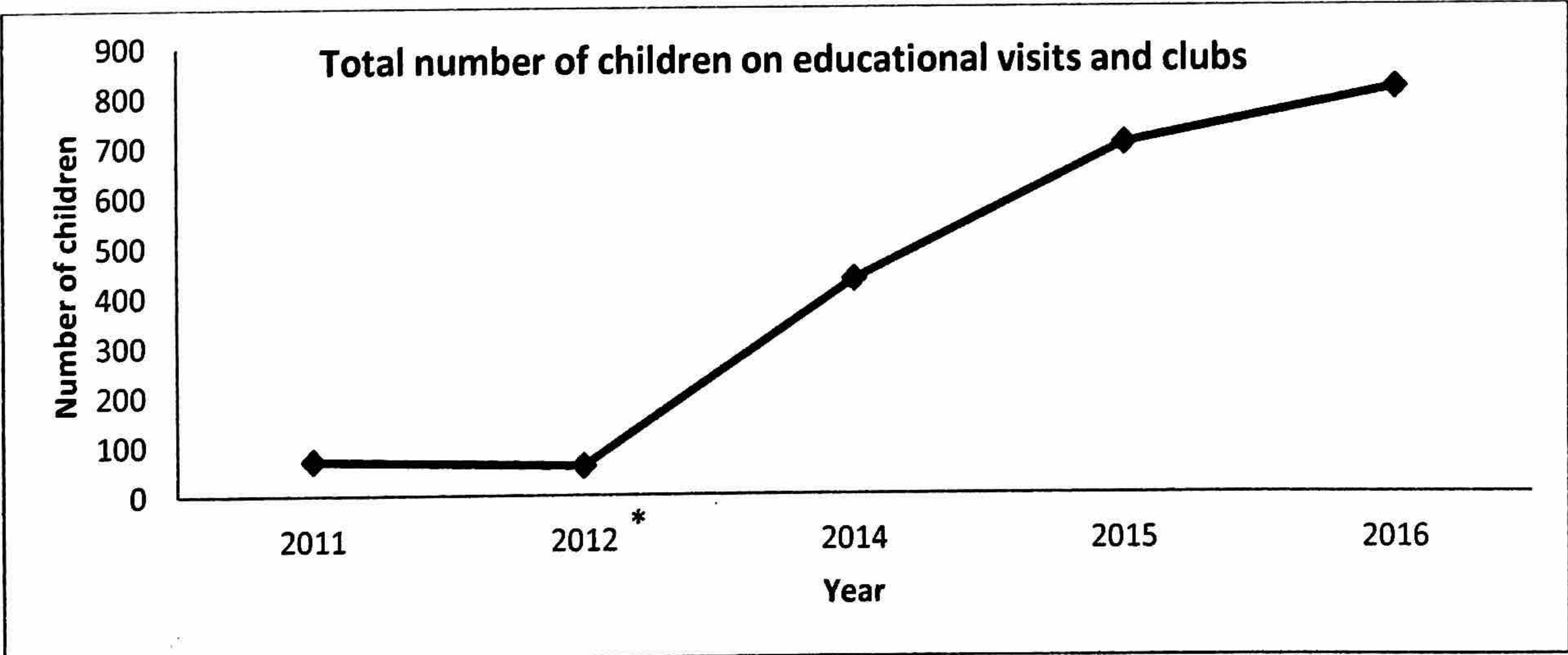
Following the evaluation of the barriers, an educational outreach package for schools was developed. This will be delivered throughout the year if future funding bids are successful.

Graphs

Figure 1 below shows significant increases in total number of children involved in educational visits. In 2012 the MNR had very few school visits (60 children) but with the funding from Nineveh, the number of children on educational visits has increased steadily to a peak of 813 children in 2016.

These figures include 592 children from schools groups, 54 children from visiting youth groups such as the Scouts, 98 and 21 children taking part in the new nature and craft clubs and 48 children who had nature themed birthday parties in 2016 We envisage that the final figures for 2017 will be similar if not more than the 2016 figures with further funding.

See Appendix B for a full list of educational visits and Appendix C for data in tabular form.



*Figures for 2013 are similar to 2012 however the exact figures are not available.
Figure 1. Total number of children that have attended the MNR as part of a school, youth, club or nature party education group.

The nature themed birthday parties initiated by Kashmir have been a real success and the number of children choosing to have these educational parties have increased year on year (Figure 2). This year there have already been 61 children who have had their birthday parties at the reserve, showing that we can make conservation and wildlife education fun and memorable.

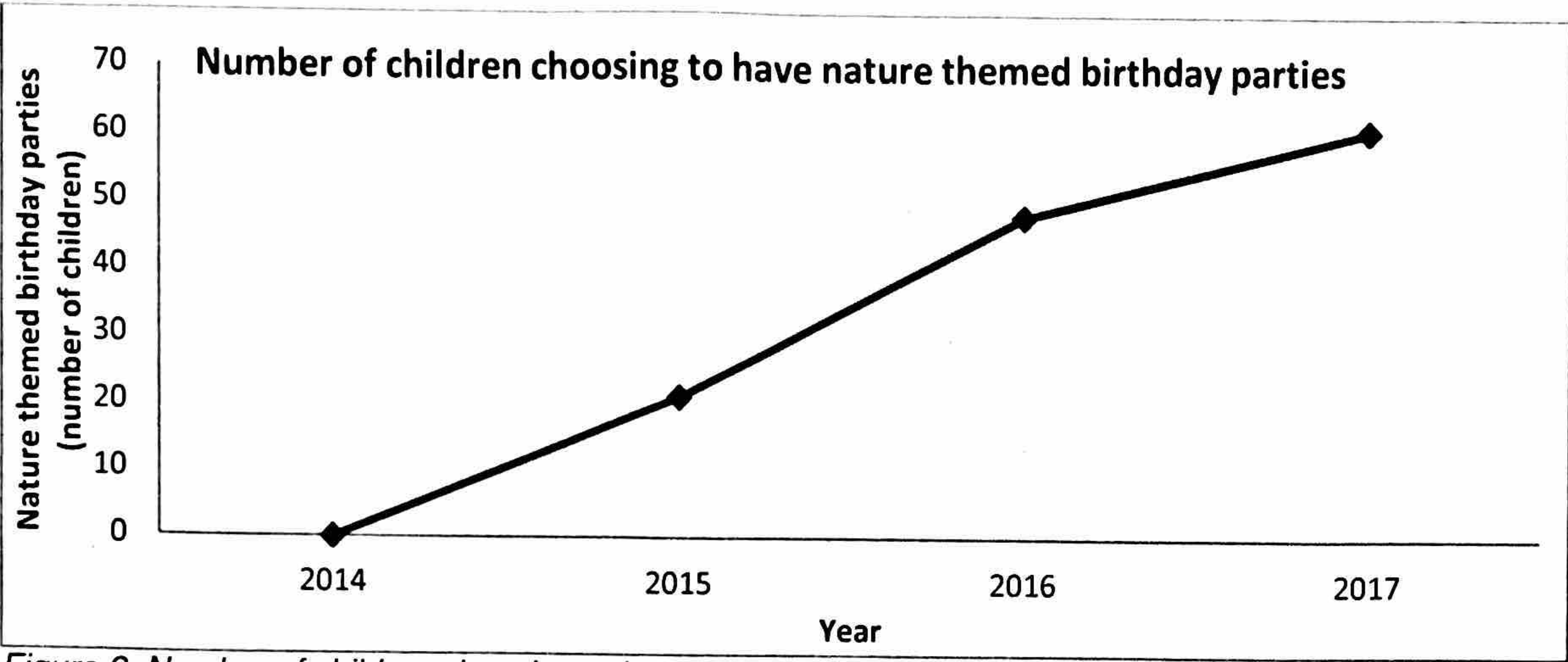


Figure 2. Number of children choosing to have nature themed birthday parties at the MNR. This initiative was started by Kashmir, our education officer and brings in extra income. (Appendix C)

The funding from Nineveh has also supported our outreach work to those who have learning difficulties and mental health issues. The number of visits have increased from zero in 2014 to 90 per year for both groups (Figure 3).

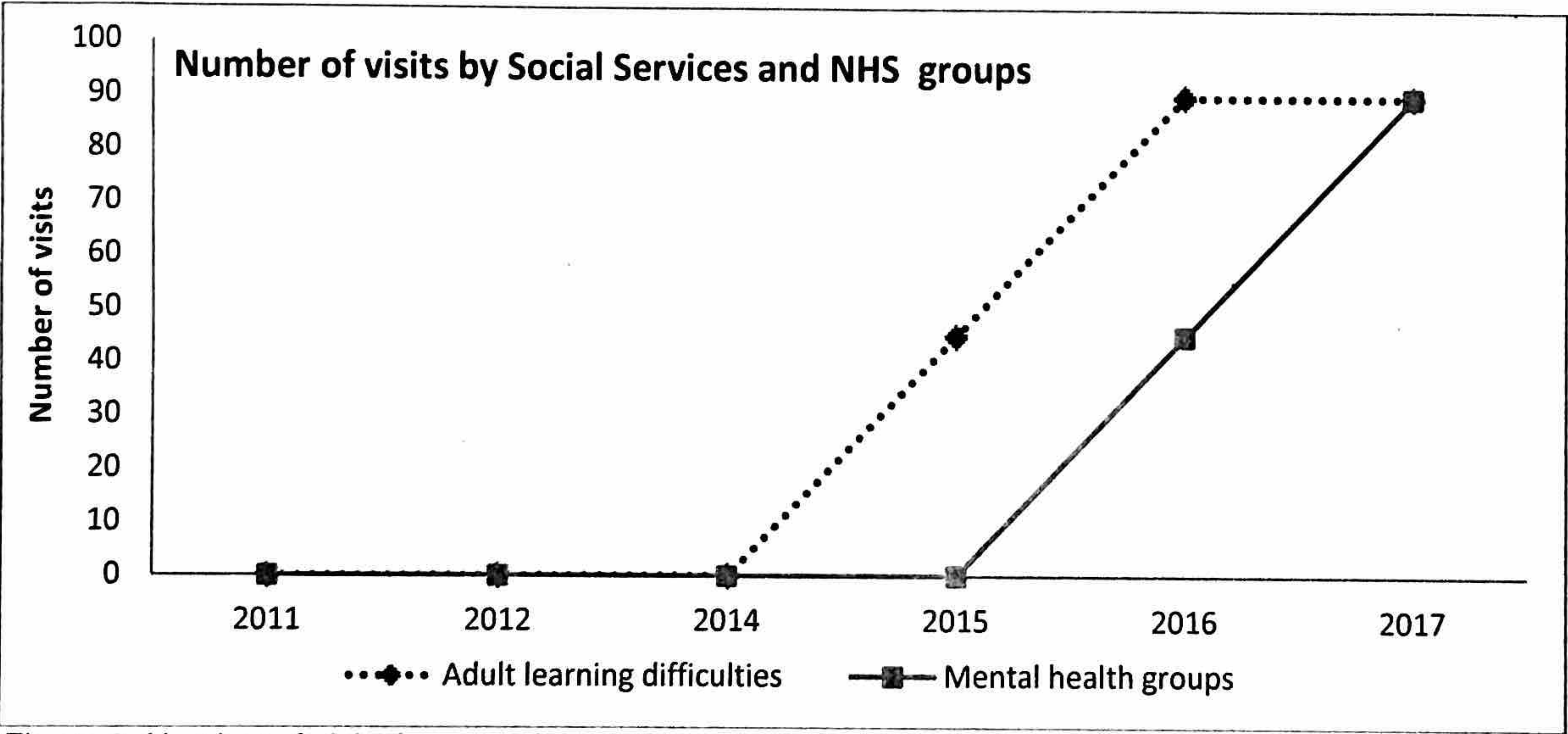


Figure 3. Number of visits in a year by adult learning difficulties and mental health groups. This has also increased revenue of the MNR.