

**THE NINEVEH CHARITABLE TRUST
PARK FARM
FRITTENEDEN ROAD
BIDDENDEN
ASHFORD
KENT TN27 8LG**

Registered No. 256025

Tel: 01580 291531

Questionnaire

Tell us about yourselves

Windmill Hill City Farm improves the lives of local people through education activities, by addressing disadvantage, providing community facilities and undertaking community development. Based in a 4-acre green oasis in the city centre it has an annual footfall of 130,000 and is supported by 400 volunteers.

Its education programme works with local schools and families facing hardship to engage them with food, farming and the environment. We bring nature into the city. A variety of agricultural approaches are demonstrated with a programme that responds to seasonal changes and the needs of its users.

Tell us about the Funds

Has the project we helped to fund been completed? If so, how is it maintained?

Education at the city farm is an ongoing programme of activities. Funding from the Nineveh Charitable Trust helped to support it through the current financial year. In that sense it is complete. It is maintained by continual fundraising and direct payments from schools. This year (2020) has been a particularly tricky one.

We had a fully booked programme of session for Jan - July this year. Sessions began in January and we had 415 children visit before our delivery stopped in March due to the Covid-19 pandemic, when the Farm closed to the public. Against expectations we have been able to continue working with schools and families, albeit in a different way to expected.

If not completed yet, why not? Are plans in place to finalise the project?

The project is complete.

www.ninevehtrust.org.uk



Did the funds provided by us prove adequate, or was there an over- or under-spend?

The funds provided were a really important element of enabling us to undertake the work with schools and families, particularly in such an uncertain year. The pandemic has highlighted the immense value of grant funding at times of community crisis. The 'traded' income of the organisation came to a complete stop during lockdown, including revenue from visiting school groups. The grant element that we received enabled us to keep staff on site delivering services to vulnerable families and children of key-workers that were still attending school.

The funds were intentionally part of a larger programme and have been fully spent.

How were any surplus funds used, or was further funding made available?

Having our staff in place allowed us to access other funding to provide sessions for children experiencing food poverty during the holidays. The overall funding for the education programme relies on a combination of income earned from school visits, from project activity (eg project funds from Awards for All), and from more general support of the education work (eg funds from Nineveh Charitable Trust and other donors).

Tell us about the project

Has the project been successful and well received by the beneficiaries?

The project has been extremely successful with good feedback from participants. The first part of the delivery was 'normal' in-so-much as school visits constituted the major part of the work. The arrival of measure to counter the pandemic meant a big switch to our activity.

We were keen to make sure we used our facilities to continue supporting our community. We were able to provide outdoor sessions for our local school. They came twice a week with the key worker's and vulnerable children still attending. Staff were really appreciative of the sessions at a very stressful time for them, as they have limited space on their site. They planted and harvested vegetables to use at school for cooking.

We also provided sessions for individual families, who live in the nearby high-rise flats and had no other access to safe outdoor space during lock down. It was especially important to provide these families with a connection to nature, helping strengthen their resilience during this difficult time.

Once lock down ended, by retaining our staff, we were able to switch our work from schools to supporting the wider local community. As we had staff in place we were able to access additional funding which then allowed us to support children in food poverty during the summer holidays and engage with the BAME community to connect them with the Farm. We are now working on re- building our school programme and working with schools to provide on-going connections with nature, food and farming.

www.ninevehtrust.org.uk



Are you satisfied with the outcome, or, with hindsight, would some modifications have been appropriate?

We are satisfied with our outcomes, though the extent of modifications that were undertaken to the programme this year make it hard to answer this question. We will be glad to return to a more 'normal' education programme for schools, however we have also made the most of the charitable support that we have to engage new families facing hardship. We hope to maintain and build on these new relationships and to undertake ongoing community development work, in particular with some locally identified communities that face disadvantage. We believe we've found our 'silver lining' to this cloud.

- Was funding for this project made available from any other sources?

With a vastly reduced income from schools, this funding was essential maintaining our services so that the Farm could be used as a much needed resource during the pandemic. We also secured a grant from the Nisbet Trust and had some income from schools while they were still able to visit. The same team also work on project-based activity, notably a project funded by Children in Need and one funded by the Lottery through Awards for All.

Feedback about us

- How did you find our own process of selection and payment?

Straightforward.

- Have you considered providing us with an update on the activities for which our Trust provided the funding?

With a grant period of less than 12 months we have limited capacity to write additional updates. We aim to convey the outcomes in this report.

- Would you welcome a visit by our Trustees?

We'd be delighted to show you our work and would welcome a visit.

- Have you any other comments?

We're very grateful for the support of the Nineveh Charitable Trust. Direct charitable support to our programme has proved to be a really effective and stable means of helping our community through what has been a challenging time.

Thank you for helping us to make a real difference to people's lives.

This questionnaire is part of our due diligence, obtaining feedback to help us, and we are grateful for your input – please return the questionnaire as soon as possible.

www.ninevehtrust.org.uk

