

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

Registered No. 256025

Tel: 01580 291531

Questionnaire

Please note if you would prefer to write a report on your project with photos that is also acceptable.

Tell us about yourselves (Charity Name, Donation Amount and Date of Donation)

Blackthorn Trust was awarded £4,829 towards the salary costs of our Gardener in August 2020.

Tell us about the Funds

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

Last year during the lockdown periods, our Gardener was responsible for keeping our gardens growing and under control, whilst we were closed to our service users. At the same time she made films and carried out online support for our service users, so that they could enjoy the garden remotely as much as possible. This aspect of the project has been completed.

Once lockdown was over and we were able to welcome service users back onto our site, the Gardener was responsible for running gardening workshops for our Co-Workers, who have mental health problems or long term health conditions. We maintain the gardening workshops through grants and contract funding from Shaw Trust and the NHS.

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

This is an ongoing project for us at Blackthorn.

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

The funds were adequate for our request (towards 7 hours a week of salary costs).

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

There was no surplus, we have applied for further funding, there was no other specific additional grant funding received in 2020 for this post; which makes us especially grateful to Nineveh Trust for supporting us.

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Tell us about the project

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

This project was essential to us over the last year. With the site closed to volunteers and Co-Workers we needed to ensure our Gardener was able to continue working in the garden, keeping the site tidy and well stocked with new plants until we were able to reopen fully. During lockdown we introduced a number of communication tools to ensure our service users and the general public (who normally visit the garden) were able to enjoy the garden as it grew through the summer. We sent out a regular newsletter and put gardening videos on our You Tube channel; which were very well received. Now that we are open again the newsletter has remained in place and often contains updates from the garden.

Having the garden ready for reopening was essential for us, so that we could start supporting our beneficiaries again straight away. Since we have reopened at least 27 people each week have benefitted from the garden workshop. Each day we run a gardening workshop from 10-3.30 for 4 people, they usually stay on this workshop one day a week for 8 weeks. When undertaking the 8 week gardening workshop individuals can enjoy the peaceful calm of the garden, working alone initially (if they want to), then over time, they are gently coaxed into group activities; which provides them with a peer support network.

The garden provides food for our social enterprise café. Produce goes to the kitchen where our chef teaches Co-Workers how to prepare healthy food providing them with skills for work, but also with the knowledge they need to prepare low cost healthy meals at home, helping to improve symptoms of their health conditions. Many of our Co-Workers have reported to us that they have continued to use the gardening skills they have learnt at Blackthorn at home and some have gone on to achieve a career in gardening post Blackthorn.

Another outcome of the lockdown period, is our new foodshare project. We developed a new partnership with two local charities supporting homeless people and vulnerable families to provide fresh food from our garden to supplement the tinned and dried goods that they were giving out. This project has been very popular and continues to run alongside our other programmes.

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

We are satisfied with the outcome.

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

We have recently been successful in securing a further 18 months of funding from Shaw trust; some of which will help to fund the salary costs of the Gardener, but we are seeking further funding. We have had support from Involve and Golding Homes for the foodshare project.

Feedback about us

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

The application was proportionate to the grant size and payment worked well.

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

We would like to be able to provide regular updates, however in the past year in particular we have been constantly changing and adapting to meet with COVID regulations and this has absorbed our time. We appreciate your funding and could add you to our mailing list for our newsletter if this would be of interest.

- Would you welcome a visit by our Trustees?

Yes and we often host visits. We have a café and there is always something going on at Blackthorn that is interesting to see. We have seasonal events and this year we are hoping to run our Christmas Fair again; which has stalls dotted throughout the garden, some of which sell our own homemade items. All being well, this year's fair is on: 20th November.

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- Have you any other comments?

We thought you might like to see one of our garden updates from our newsletters:

NATURE CORNER

This week in Nature Corner...

MEET...COLUMBINE

Prominent in the Blackthorn Garden right now is the Columbine. Standing tall and straight in small clumps, the Columbine is a flower of two halves.

The flowers are very pretty and dainty, yet the power and force of the growing plant is such that it can grow through concrete.

Yet again, the plant has two common names: columbine and aquilegia one meaning 'dove' and one meaning 'eagle'.

In folklore the man who gives his lady Columbine is expressing not only his love, but also the enduring strength of his love.



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. Please email all questionnaires and/or reports to sally@ninevehtrust.org.uk

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