

The Nineveh Charitable Trust

The Conservation Volunteers (TCV) Manchester – End of Grant Report 2022



TCV Manchester received a grant of £7783 from the Nineveh Charitable Trust towards the employment of a Project Officer whose role was to engage people with disabilities in practical conservation and horticulture activities, with the aim of improving health and wellbeing during the ongoing Covid 19 pandemic.

During the grant period December 2020 – December 2021, the Project Officer delivered:

- 79 nature-based wellbeing sessions for disabled people in Trafford. These all focused on engaging disabled people in outdoor activities including:
 - Horticulture sessions (food growing, gardening)
 - Conservation sessions (tree planting, path creation, meadow management)
 - The activities were delivered at a range of sites in Trafford, including Humphrey Park Allotments, Sale Water Park, and Urmston Meadows.
- 5 weekly home-based activity packs
During the Covid 19 lockdown in Jan 2021 outdoor activity sessions were paused. During this time the Project Officer created and delivered weekly easy read activity packs to engage disabled people in horticultural activities whilst they were at home.
- Engaged with a variety of disability organisations including:
 - Age UK Trafford – a charity that supports older people with dementia
 - Brentwood - a special school and community college for young people with SLD, PMLD, autism and complex needs
 - Trafford One2One – a service that supports adults with learning disabilities
 - Leonard Cheshire – a charity that support disabled people
 - St. John Vianney RC School – a school for pupils with autism, learning difficulties and complex needs
 - Manor Academy – a school for young people who have a range of learning difficulties and additional needs
- Engaged with 144 people with disabilities – most participants were young people.

What went well?

- The project involved a variety of conservation and horticulture activities that were adapted to ensure disabled people were able to engage in all elements of the project.

‘The project staff were great, they had a good understanding of the complex needs of the young people and adapted the activities using picture charts and sensory aids to engage all of our students’ (Partner organisation staff)

- Flexible approach to Covid. The project plan had to be adapted due to the ongoing Covid pandemic and lockdowns. Flexibility from The Nineveh Charitable Trust allowed project staff to create home activity packs, that engaged disabled young people in nature-based activities to improve their health and wellbeing during periods of isolation.

Learning lessons

- Provide shelter on outdoor projects for vulnerable young people. Partner feedback suggested that the project could be improved with the addition of a better shelter space across all the project sites to allow disabled people a place to shelter if the weather gets really bad.
- Sustainability of project beyond the funding. Partner feedback expressed concern that the project was ending as they felt the project could have benefits to new people each year.

'It is a shame the project is coming to an end as it is such a great opportunity for disabled students to get active outdoors within their locally community. I hope you can find funding for next year!' (Partner organisation staff)

Project Outcomes:

Improved physical health and wellbeing

- *'I feel happy because I like to look after the other plants and care for the park'* (participant)
- *'I look forward to coming to see my friends and to use the wheelbarrow'* (participant)
- *'I like going on walks and using the wheelbarrow, I can walk far now'* (participant)
- *'Jxxx is calmer and able to focus on tasks after they have been working with TCV'* (partner organisation staff)

Increased confidence in greenspaces

- *'I visited Sale water Park with my family and showed them what I'd done'* (participapnt)
- *'I'm not worried about the rain or mud'* (participant)
- *'I like visiting the park now'* (participant)
- *'One students who didn't want to come was very negative about the outdoors at the start and now is really engaged, works hard during the activities and looks forward to coming'* (partner organisation staff)

Increased understanding and skills in horticulture

- *'I didn't know what balsam (Himalayan Balsam) was until today'* (participant)
- *'I have learnt how to grow different things like carrots and potatoes'* (participant)
- *'I liked learning about tools like spades and rakes and digging the potatoes'* (participapnt)
- *'They have learnt lots about growing vegetables and have taken the things they have grown home to their family'* (partner organisation staff)

Wider impacts: improvement to local greenspaces

- *'The paripants planted and cared for the community plot at Humphrey Park Allotment, producing a large amount of food that has been donated to local foodbanks. The project invovled improving footpaths, planting trees, removing invasive species, making willow hurdles and much more! This improved Sale Water Park for wildlife and visitors!'* (TCV staff)

Thank you to The Nineveh Charitable Trust for the grant awarded to make these outcomes possible. For any further information please contact: ruth.crawford@tcv.org.uk.