

## Final Report

1. Name of Project 'Hub Club' – Mencap Gateway Club in Barnard Castle, Heart of Teesdale project
2. Funding allocated from Heart of Teesdale £2000
3. Have you provided additional funding for this project? If yes, please give details and evidence  
Salary & travel expenses of Group Leader; salary of Administrator; admin costs; donation of fabrics approx. £53. Details attached.
4. Short introduction to the project  
Mountain Explorers – exploring the environment; Art – exploring the landscape, exploring materials, making a landscape with collage & paint; Farming on Cotherstone Moor – Woolcraft
5. Aims and objectives of the project and how they have been met

**Mountain Explorers** – The Youngsters discussed and then voted for their 5 preferred options.

**Session Length** – 1-1 5hours (& 30/45 min set up time for MEXP staff)

Activity Outline	Session location
1.Improvised shelter building – using manmade materials to make shelters to protect from the sun or observing wildlife	The Hub NO
2.Traditional shelter building – learn how our ancestors kept safe in the forests making shelters, hiding and hunting	Copley Woods or Lowlands Farm (Cockfield) YES – good teamwork! Following instruction, Youngsters were very engrossed; they searched and found suitable materials and built their shelter
3. Water Wildlife – river quality testing – wading and paddling in the River Gaunless to find and survey the fantastic wildlife we have living in our local streams	The River Gaunless – Cockfield fell YES Youngsters were interested that Rachel's job is to test the water for pollution – she demonstrated the method she uses. They were fascinated by the range of wildlife from the stream and were then able to identify and name them from Rachel's information charts; they took photos and sketched. The Youngsters really appreciated the views and have asked us to return them to this spot! We later used our photos of the landscape for the WOOLCRAFT felting project
4. Foraging for food – making a meal using only ingredients found in the woods!	Lowlands Farm (Cockfield) NO Deemed not appropriate for our group
5. Fire-building – traditional fire starting methods and making our own bread!	The Hub or Lowlands Farm NO As above...
6. Mountain Rescuers! Learn all about how it feels to be a member of the Teesdale Mountain Rescue – learn knots & how to put together and carry a rescue stretcher.	Teesdale & Weardale Mountain Rescue Base - Barnard Castle NO We have a Volunteer who is in the MRT; we will save this activity for him to organise
7. Navigation & tracking – understand how trackers use evidence to find humans and animals in the wilderness.	Any woodland area NO
8. Make our own adventure playground – make our own rope swings, hammocks, ladders and maybe even a zip line!	YES – Lovely woodland walk from the carpark with the added bonus of an interesting venue – the Gaunless lead mill and the iron smelting chimney. The Youngsters were excited in anticipation of this activity, but making the required knots tested even the Volunteers; fortunately we had a retired MRT member and a Scout Leader to assist, otherwise we could have run out of time on this exercise
9. Mini- raft building – build your own raft & on the Gaunless Beck's mighty rapids!	The River Gaunless – Cockfield Fell NO
10. Bows and Arrows – learn how our ancestors defended Barnard and Raby Castle – make and decorate your own bows- then time for some target practice!	The Hub YES – An ideal introductory session, with lovely 'getting to know you' activities. The materials provided for the bows could have been better – a couple of bows snapped in the making, and decorating with paint was not successful - there was no time for the paint to dry! However, all had target practice to defend Barnard Castle!

**11. Camouflage – learn how animals use camouflage to hunt and hide. Have a go at hiding from the rest of your team using modern military methods.**

**Barnard Castle woodland area**  
YES – Rachel’s knowledge of fauna and flowers was endless, she led a lovely woodland walk, and then CAMO exercises. Youngsters practised looking very carefully to notice differences, and successfully covered 2 members of the group in natural materials to hide them

### **Artist – Ann Whitfield**

WEEK ONE – the Youngsters explored the grounds of The Hub and found interesting textures from which to make rubbings, using paper and wax pastels. They were totally engrossed in this, and shared their findings. Indoors again, Ann taught them how to work with watercolour to apply colour to the paper to enhance the textures of their rubbings. The artwork was very pleasing – lovely patterns and colours were created, which the Youngsters were thrilled with.

WEEK TWO – again, Ann demonstrated the use of water colour, mixing to the colour required and applying. They each created a background, a landscape, for the collages. Then, they chose templates in the shapes of leaves and used them to draw around and cut out leaves from the sheets of artwork from Week One.

WEEK THREE – with a tree trunk and branches arranged and glued down onto their landscape paintings, the Youngsters applied their beautifully coloured and patterned leaves. Gradually, each Youngster added a tiny animal or bird so that when you look carefully, you can see, hidden, a spider, owl, mole...

Those who finished before the end of the session were able to make greetings cards, still on the theme of leaves, using printing stamps & pads and then, colouring in.

All of the finished collages are beautiful, packed with colours and textures, each one unique.

### **Farming on Cotherstone Moor**

The opportunity to visit the Farm was not possible due to unforeseen circumstances; the visit from the Spinner also was not possible within the timescale. Both of these can be activities for the future.

Knitting was a non-starter as I discovered that I am the only one who can knit and our Youngsters need 1:1 support.

Instead of knitting, we used wool to make pompoms - an accessible craft - which took THREE SESSIONS to complete! They were made up into chicks, or lambs, which would be found on the farm.

Preparing the natural wool fibres for felting was extremely therapeutic, and filled ONE SESSION. In the SECOND SESSION of felting, the Youngsters referred to the photographs that they had taken on Cockfield Fell, and used the dyed woollen fibres to make their own, individual felted pictures. These were finished off by Joan, by being appliqued onto complementary coloured fabrics chosen by the Youngsters and then being made up into sumptuous cushions, a bag, rustic pictures.

A discussion on the beautiful colours of the chemical-dyed wool led to SESSION SIX, the final Woolcraft session, when we discussed what natural materials could successfully stain our clothes, and then we dyed

some natural wool with natural materials. Each Youngster took home a kit which contained an accessible instruction sheet and packs of some natural wool yarns, so that they could experiment and dye their own wool (with help from parents/carers!). They, and their parents, enjoyed sharing this activity and the range of colours achieved was stunning.

All of the above – the collage pictures, chicks (enclosed in a wire chicken coop!), lamb badges, felted cushions, bag and pictures, and mounted and labelled samples of natural dyeing, were on display at The Hub for a week. I now have all items until we recommence Hub Club in September... so if anyone wants an instant display, I have one.

**6. Please include photos of the completed project as well as of people working on the project (please indicate if the Heart of Teesdale is allowed to use these in their publicity e.g. website, newsletter, social media).**

I will send a selection of photographs electronically.

Yes HoT can use any photographs, I have signed agreements from the parents of our members.

**7. If possible, please include quotes from participants and staff. Additional achievements and legacy – community involvement/benefits**

- Most of the parents supported their Youngsters in dyeing the wool. One parent related that she and her son had gone for a long walk looking for materials and his observation of the different insects and plants was remarkable – and they had really enjoyed each other's company! They collected thistles... but unfortunately didn't succeed in getting any dye from the plant, so had instead resorted to using strawberries. Success.
- Volunteers were extremely enthusiastic about this project and entered wholeheartedly in supporting the Youngsters... we even had 2 male volunteers along especially for the walk and the
- Adventure Playground activity.
- When visiting parents, siblings and grandparents saw the work displayed, they were so impressed that they requested that it remain on display for the whole of the Summer! We succeeded in negotiating with The Hub a further week.
- The display has been well received at The Hub. It has showcased the Heart of Teesdale project and also our MENCAP Gateway Hub Club.
- During the time that the HoT project has been running, our membership has increased – we have attracted 2 new members and also a Volunteer has returned.

## 8. Lessons learnt

- Don't underestimate the Youngsters, or Volunteers! They have thoroughly enjoyed taking part in ALL of the HoT Activities, and have not been fazed by going out-and-about and meeting and working with new people – the various Instructors from MEXP, and the artist Ann. They have really appreciated the freedom of being outdoors – and have commented endlessly on the environments and scenery.
- Relax and accept that a task takes as long as it takes! The pompoms took up an inordinate length of time BUT the Youngsters saw the project through and were thrilled with the finished result; in a MEXP session, youngsters in one of the 3 groups simply watched the water wildlife in their bowl and didn't move on to sketching or photographing – they were fascinated simply to watch.
- With our group, we are prepared for a Youngster not to have all of the skills that are required – e.g. cutting out is a very difficult task for many – and we work to be ready to discreetly differentiate tasks. We need to discuss this with any future Instructors who are invited to work with us.
- The Youngsters enjoyed just 'being' on the Fellside in Cockfield and want to return; we can revisit and take our fishing nets and buckets (purchased for a TODYS' sea-side trip years ago) for those who want an activity. The Heart of Teesdale project has demonstrated to us that we can successfully run a Club session with a simple activity on a visit to a beautiful local venue.

Thank you, Heart of Teesdale, for your support, we have thoroughly enjoyed the project, as evidenced by the photographs. As co-ordinator, I have just 4 weeks to organise a program for Autumn Term. What on earth can we do to compare with last term's experiences?!

Joan Bailey (TODYS)

30/07/2016