

backbone

Celebrating Diversity Through Adventure CIC

OUTDOOR FESTIVAL FOR ALL GRAMPIAN 2016-17



"CELEBRATING
DIVERSITY IN
PRACTISE!"



OBJECTIVES:

Hold a series of overnight residencials, offering woodland and outdoor activities aimed at celebrating the diversity of Scotland's landscapes and people. Rangers and Backbone CIC trainees from all backgrounds will lead activities together – having role models from all backgrounds in the environmental arena.

The festival will introduce people from diverse communities to a range of outdoor recreational and learning activities in forest and woodlands within Forestry Commission Scotland: Grampian region.

Events were held at Balmoral and Findhorn

An initiative delivered by
backbone
Celebrating Diversity Through Adventure

www.backbone.uk.net
info@backbone.uk.net
+44 01997 414 704

Background

Backbone CIC has established strong partnerships with the Forestry Commission Scotland and the Environmental sector in Scotland. Our main mission is to "**Entice & Excite**" people from all backgrounds and abilities to engage with Scotland's diverse landscapes. Ultimately enhancing the quality of life of Scotland's communities. We specifically target communities that would not normally go to the countryside, whether that is due to lack of knowledge or ability to access areas or lack of personal confidence due to language barriers and/or self-esteem etc.

Acknowledgements

Forestry Commission Scotland Grampian: Funders Delivery Team

Backbone CIC Volunteers

Balmoral Estate Ranger Service

Forestry Commission Ranger Service

Cairngorms National Park Authority

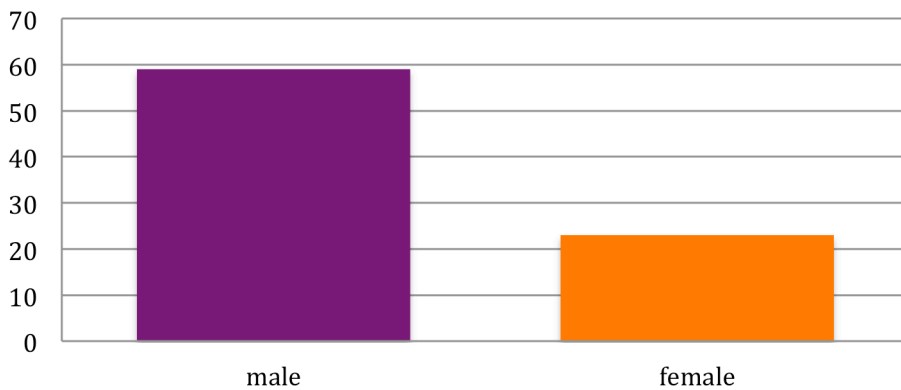
John Muir Trust



4 residentials took place in November & December 2016 at Balmoral Estate and in March 2017 at Findhorn. Backbone CIC volunteers and local rangers provided a range of outdoor woodland engagement activities to a variety of community groups from Aberdeen, Glasgow, Dundee & Edinburgh. The project engaged with a total of **83 people** most of who had little or no previous experience of woodlands outside of their own neighbourhoods. Communities involved were; Aberdeen based Nepalese family groups from Nepal Himalayan Association and Aberdeen Multicultural Centre, New arrivals to Scotland group based in Dundee, Young Volunteers from Yusaf Youth Initiative Dundee and Glasgow/Edinburgh based BME family groups with Boots n Beards.

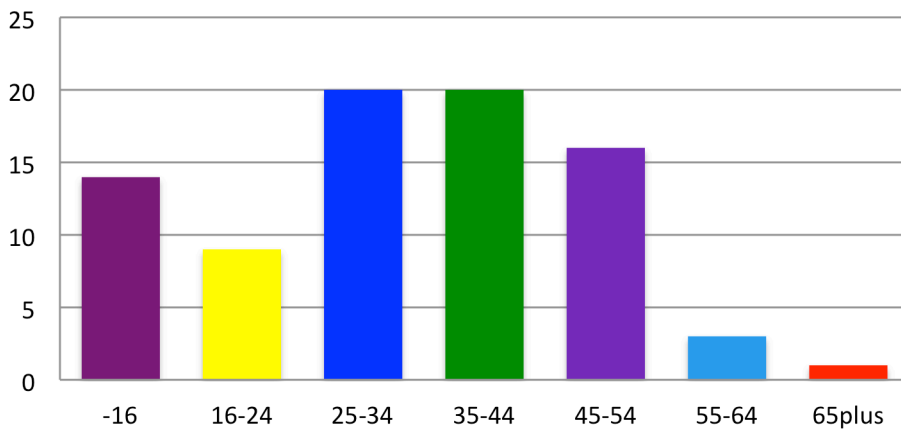


Gender Mix



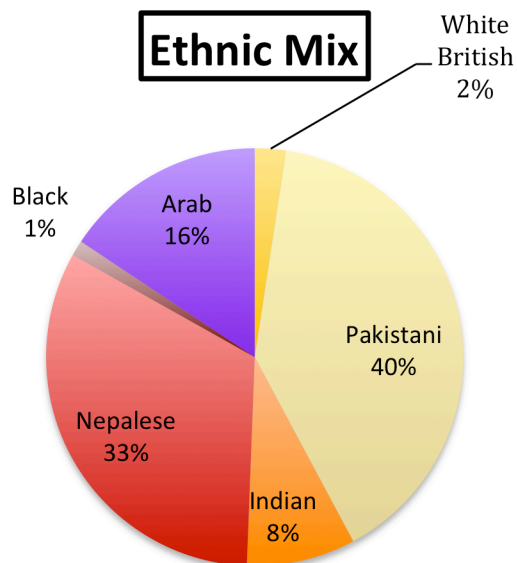
59 Male
24 Female
1 Disability

Age Range



-16: 14
16-24: 9
25-34: 20
35-44: 20
45-54: 16
55-64: 3
65+: 1

Ethnic Mix



White British: 2
Pakistani: 33
Indian: 7
Nepalese: 27
African: 1
Arab: 13

What we did



Learnt about life in woodland environments: birds, mammals, trees and plant identification

Built exciting things in woodlands: Dens, fires and sculptures

Made mandalas out of nature

Fun games in nature with the rangers; getting muddy and wet!

Climbed out of the woodlands and into the hills and moorland

Explored the woodlands by the sea and coastline

Learnt about conservation and how to protect our environment

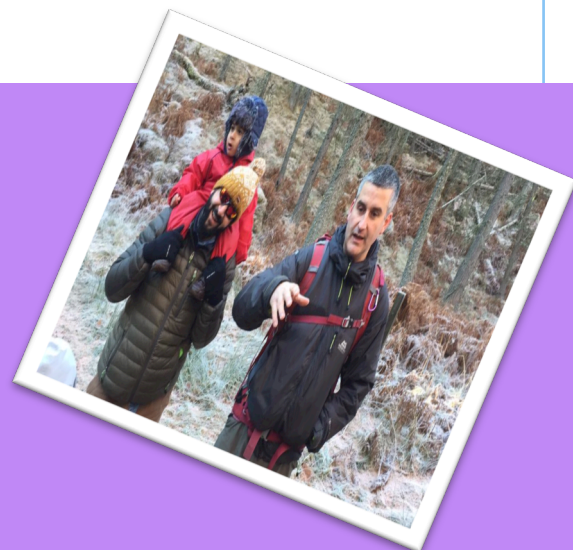
Had adventures on our bikes

Walked in woodlands



Woodlands Visited

Woods of Garmaddie
Alltcaillach Forest
Culbin Forest
Monaughty Woods
Heldon Woods
Bergie Wood
Darnaway Forest



What participants had to say...

During our Balmoral visit, the idea was to offer a 'weekend escape' for our community group. We don't normally have the entire family out together, however, Balmoral allowed entire families to experience the outdoors with likeminded people over a two day period.

The Balmoral visit allowed our community to escape from our day-to-day busy lifestyles, as commonly found in our community, and allow them a fresh perspective on life.

We wanted to focus our entire activities around nature, woodlands and keeping all the families engaged and on their feet, being active - which is a huge challenge in any society nowadays.

All the participants learned very quickly in meeting and working with new people during the activities. The fact that this was an overnight session meant that people who were once not comfortable talking with new people had no other choice, because we had to eat and do all the activities together! This was key to the success!



The residential focused on our volunteers achieving three outcomes:

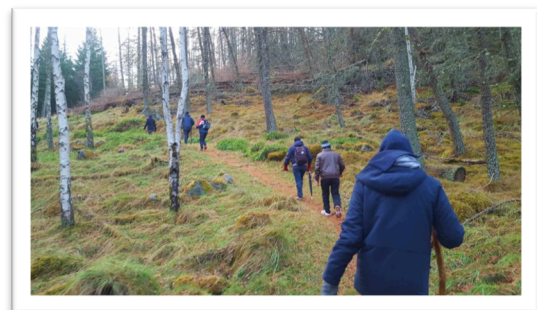
1. They were to teach the group navigation skills so the leaders can take their groups out in the future
2. Leadership skills so people better understand themselves as leaders
3. Activism so people understand why it is important to be active in society and strive to improve it.

The group was a very good group with a great deal of potential in them. I feel this has left us in a positive situation where we can call upon these people to give back and support the community in the future.

The group felt a rush of confidence with their own skills!

The group learnt lots about Balmoral Estate, the woodlands, wildlife and history, this complimented their walks and skills.

The woodland walk was a good chance to get to speak with people and know the individuals better. It was also good to be able to pass on some of the learning and experience with the outdoors to others, and I could see they were picking it up and learning from this.



What participants had to say...

The residential focused on achieving three outcomes.

1. To introduce the group to woodlands and the outdoor environment
2. Integration within the group and with the local Balmoral community
3. Learning about the local Scottish culture and history surrounding Balmoral.

The majority of people within the group had very little exposure to Scotland as a whole. Over half of the group was Syrian Refugees who were new to Scotland, and the remaining numbers were comprised of the elderly generation of Dundee's BME community.

During the evening, the Syrian males cooked a traditional meal in a special oven called a 'Mundi'. Glyn invited his family and a few close families from the estate to join us for the evening meal. The tables were divided up to mix the groups and families so everyone could meet new people. It was a great atmosphere to bring all the different communities together to meet each other.

One of the Syrian men commented saying they feel like they are the happiest and luckiest Syrians in the whole of the UK through the way the community has looked after them, supported them, and provided them with opportunities such as the residential.

I really enjoyed the trip. It was an excellent way of bringing people who would not normally cross paths together and form new friendships. Meeting with the Balmoral Locals was a very good idea and it was nice for them to be hosted and served by the Syrian's with traditional Arab food.





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Forestry Commission Scotland
Coimisean na Coilltearachd Alba

Further information
www.backbone.uk.net