



GORDON HIGGS TRUST FUND

2022 - 2023 REPORT

FEBRUARY 2023



Overview

We were delighted to receive a further £23,000 from the Gordon Higgs Trust fund in April 2022. This money was allocated to our 'Try Something New' fund, to continue the work from 2020-2021.

As Covid restrictions had meant we had run a series of digital events the previous year, it was important for us to focus entirely on in-person events, which would allow the participants opportunities for social interactions, making new friends, and much needed respite for parents and carers. This was a decision based on a combination of the feedback from last year, and consultation with parents and carers via social media.

As the fund was to 'Try Something New', we wanted to create a programme of events that would allow the children participating to push themselves and their boundaries, by engaging in activities that are not easily accessible to everyone.

Programme



The programme was created to allow participants to take part in multiple activities, or single activities, suited to their abilities; able to push themselves out of their comfort zone in a way that felt safe for them. The activities were spread over 5 weeks, to allow enough time between activities for children to decompress, process and prepare for upcoming activities, allowing them time and space to grow in confidence throughout the summer. The programme started out with a theatre trip in Edinburgh and ended with two 2 night stays on adventure camps. There were 11 events in total, each one with varying numbers of spaces available.

172

APPLICATIONS

164

ACTIVITY SPACES

103

PARTICIPANTS



Events



The Lion King



Coasteering



Loch Canoeing



River Canoeing



Safari Park



Canyoning



Weekend Camps



Giant Swing



Zip Line



Orienteering



Abseiling



Challenge Course



Night Walks



Climbing



Raft Building



“ I found the whole experience very positive the staff were all really good at communicating with us about my sons time with them , they were very accessible and if any questions were good at getting information needed. ”

Our 2022 Goals

Feedback from our 2021 - 2022 events informed us that there are some young people who struggled to engage with digital activities, so our goals for 2022-23 were to focus on in-person events to ensure their needs are met.



Financials

2019 - 2020 - £855.00

2020-2021 - £27,478.82

2021-2022 - £22,252.74

In 2020, we had been awarded £25,000 from the Gordon Higgs Trust. Due to the Covid pandemic, we had to cancel the planned activity programme, and instead replaced this with a programme of digital activities. This was significantly cheaper, and so we had underspent. The trust allowed us to carry that amount forward to the 2022 - 2023 financial year, and awarded a further £23,000.

Budget = £48,000

Cost = £50,068.56



Feedback

We carried out a feedback evaluation survey with the families who were involved in the programme this year.

How would you rate your young person's overall experience? 

How would you rate the organisation and communication of the programme? 

How would you rate the activities that your young person took part in? 

What did your young person like most about our events?

“
She loved the whole experience and making new friends
”

“
(She) loved the outdoor nature of all the challenges and the supportive environment created by staff made her feel capable of trying so many new things.
”

“
Being able to try new activities meet and make new friends
”

“
The friendliness off staff and being with others like himself.
”

“
(They) loved it all! Thank you is simply not enough.
”

“
Where do I begin? (He) loved being away from us, his family and carers. He is exhibiting typical teen behaviour and it was wonderful to watch him go on his own with his friends. The nature based activities were his absolute favourite as he was having and adventure every time. Laughing and splashing and zipping!
”

Feedback

What did your young person gain from their experience with us?

Confidence to stay away from home

Being away from the safety of home and being more independent and responsible for their own stuff. Making new friends. Doing things outside of their comfort zone.

A bit of independence going away with others

To be more independent

Some new friends and a few life skills

(He) appeared so pleased with himself. Sleeping away in a camp! With no parents or siblings! His confidence rocketed through the roof! Thank you for the opportunity

He was so proud that he completed new challenges on weekend away

Confidence to try new activities, friends. The chance to be himself and have lots of fun (his words)

I've never seen such a relaxed and happy (daughter). The way the staff members read and understood the young people meant (she) relaxed and connected with staff quickly. (She) made long lasting friendships with other participants and tried so many new things. When I initially told her that I had signed her up for activities with the action group she was quite cross with me but by the end of the summer she was gutted that the programme had come to an end! (She) developed her own self confidence, self esteem and realised how brave she could be to try new things.

Feedback

What did your young person say about their experience?

The programme was the perfect balance of support and freedom. I liked doing the outdoor activities and felt safe with the staff who helped to run it. I was treated as an individual and not just seen as my challenges.

It was fun and all the workers were kind

He had a fabulous time and hopes to go again on any of the excursions.

Really enjoyed it, was proud of myself for managing the activities at dalguise. Would love to do more

I was on an adventure with Action Group

When can I go to the camping weekend again

Two words: "Go again!"

Really really really enjoyed the weekend away first time he had been away and just didn't stop talking about his time away. We felt he has grown in self confidence and now believes he can do more than he thought. Weekend away was a very special time for him.

Thank you

We are incredibly grateful to the Gordon Higgs Trust, who have made it possible for us to provide the children who took part over the last two years with these incredible opportunities to 'Try Something New'.