

**THE NINEVEH CHARITABLE TRUST
PARK FARM
FRITTENEDEN ROAD
BIDDENDEN
ASHFORD
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Registered No. 256025

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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)

World Education Berkshire (RISC) is a Reading- based educational charity that works to raise the profile of global human rights & social justice and promote action for sustainable development based on the principle 'think globally, act locally'. Food4Families (F4F) is one of RISC's major programmes, working in Reading's most deprived areas where we have created over 25 food growing gardens in various community settings and assisted 10,000+ people of all ages from a broad range of social and ethnic backgrounds in acquiring food growing skills.

Our work is mainly focused on seven large community gardens where we run tutor-led community growing sessions throughout the growing season. Our gardens help address the challenge of food poverty, health and wellbeing, providing opportunities for disadvantaged groups to access outdoor spaces, social support and engage in light physical activity in a safe environment. We also deliver careers and language support training for the local FE college, offer cookery courses through the local Adult Education provider and develop green wellbeing gardens with other partners, most notably the Royal Berkshire Hospital.

F4F is an active partner in local, national and international networks promoting community food growing. RISC's edible forest roof garden is an internationally recognized example of sustainable urban design to mitigate and adapt to the climate crisis.

Our volunteers grow food for distribution to families in need and vulnerable people - the highly successful Veg4Reading (V4R) project.

The Nineveh Trust gave F4F a grant of £4480 towards the costs of a community worker to reach out and support people suffering from anxiety and depression caused by social isolation who would benefit from green social prescribing, and wages of freelance tutors who deliver gardening sessions.

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Tell us about the Funds

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

The project has been successfully completed. The activities were part of the programmes offered at our ongoing long term community food growing projects. So the momentum will be maintained.

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

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

We were able to use additional funds to extend the activities.

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

Tell us about the project

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

The feedback from beneficiaries has been extremely positive - see below. The model of providing a menu of different outdoor wellbeing activities was based on the experience of one of our larger gardens during the pandemic which became a refuge for local people during lockdown – a very diverse group of new users used the space for a range of activities: growing veg for vulnerable people, knitting, art workshops, yoga... The project funded by the Nineveh Trust enabled us to pilot a package (guided walks, arts activities, gardening) at other gardens – a proof of concept. Its success has provided the basis for a model we are promoting both locally and through our national community food growing networks.

- *I really enjoy the wonderful sculpturing sessions at Aisha Mosque. You are a wonderful, inspirational and patient teacher and have made me realise that it's never too late to learn a new skill in life. Apart from learning about sculpturing, I am finding each session to be very therapeutic and good for my mental well-being. At the end of each session I really don't want to put down my tools but just want to carry on sculpting and forget my worldly worries.*

Fozia

- *Stone sculpting has been a great driver for me personally relearning to slow down and be more mindful.*

Working in the outdoors and with your hands has been hugely rewarding. I've enjoyed these sessions so much.

Zara

- <https://mcalistairhood.artweb.com/british-islamic-gardens-residency->
- <https://mcalistairhood.artweb.com/sculptor-in-residencegallery-page-title>

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- One of the ladies was so elated by the whole experience she burst into recitation of the Qur'an. One lady found an apple with a baby apple attached. She was taking it for her daughter who is in sha Allah expecting her first child very soon. She had a few more apples to share with the family. Another lady was looking forward to showing her grandchildren photos of the session.

Others enjoyed: picking berries & learning about their nutrients; the company; the views; the idea of experimenting with making the same 'berry drinks' with their children; the wind (one lady said she would usually stay indoors in windy weather but was glad she got to experience how refreshing it is.); looking at the flowers on the ivy and discussing how the covid virus came to mind looking at it; the fact that there was a walk this week; the information shared; learning about rose hip and its benefits... and wanting to understand how it was extracted.

Overall Sarah's getting messages from the ladies on how they are loving the sessions and feel they are benefitting. One lady mentioned twice how she felt her mental health was really benefiting from the sessions. As much as she loves her family, she said it was good to get out and join the sessions to get away from responsibilities and sometimes mayhem for a bit. The ladies are loving the sessions and have also really warmed to the facilitators.

Shaheen
- By looking through the mirror, it was like looking with someone else's eyes



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

We were able to deliver the same outcomes with a different set of partners, and take advantage of new opportunities, eg availability of artists and other facilitators & collaboration with a large garden project on the beautiful Hardwick Estate, on the edge of Reading. This provided vulnerable refugees with the opportunity to enjoy the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

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

We were able to source funds from Berkshire Community Foundation and Reading Borough Council to support our programme of green wellbeing activities.

Feedback about us

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

The whole admin process has been simple and straightforward to navigate.

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

No

Would you welcome a visit by our Trustees?

Yes

- Have you any other comments?

The funding was invaluable given the extremely challenging funding climate for the voluntary sector. Partnership working is the way ahead and the funds enabled us to provide evidence for an innovative approach to providing opportunities for green wellbeing, with new partners, especially groups serving some of the most vulnerable people in our communities: refugees, the homeless, elderly and those facing food poverty.

The positive feedback from the project has given us the foundation to develop the model further and source additional funds to create a good practice manual for other community groups to adapt. We are implementing similar packages at another mosque in Reading and the new Royal Berkshire Hospital Oasis wellbeing garden.

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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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