

Case Study:
Off Grid Kids
East Renfrewshire



Stalled Spaces Scotland

Off Grid Kids was awarded Stalled Spaces Scotland funding by East Renfrewshire Council to deliver a series of taster sessions at their site, a small area of woodland in Clarkston. These sessions enabled children to try some of the activities the organisation offers as after school provision to four primary schools and forest school clubs.

The organisation was established in 2016 with the aim of encouraging children to once again play outdoors, and to experience nature whilst living in an urban environment. An area of disused land next to a scout hall was identified, providing an ideal base. The sessions are delivered throughout the year by a trained forest school leader and a small team, including volunteers.

They received information about the Stalled Spaces Scotland fund through a funding event held by East Renfrewshire council, at Clarkston Hall. This was the first time the organisation had made any kind of funding application and they received £1,622.22.

“It helped us introduce what we wanted to do to the community. It was a really worthwhile event for us. It was also really helpful in progressing us as a community company.”

- Jacqui Frame, Off Grid Kids



Stalled Spaces Scotland

The funding enabled the group to clear some areas of undergrowth within the woodland and remove the large amount of rubbish and glass that had built up over the years. They were also able to purchase equipment the children would use, such as flint steels and trowels; it also paid for flyers and other marketing material to promote the events. The sessions were held in April, and although the weather conditions weren't ideal, they were so successful that a lot of the children continued to attend.

The group plan to make their outdoor learning and play available during the day for other children, and will seek additional funding to improve accessibility, and to promote their work to disadvantaged groups in the area.

The activities have brought attention to this piece of woodland within the community, some of whom might not have known it existed. The group had help from the landowners, who have given permission for it to be used in this way. It is no longer an area with a reputation for attracting antisocial behaviour; now it also provides a space where people are happy to walk their dogs.

“It's sparked children's imagination, and sometimes they just need to realise the world is not contained behind a computer screen.”

- Jacqui Frame, Off Grid Kids

Young leaders who attend the local high school help out, and there are generally five or six involved. One of the volunteers has gained employment within the organisation, and they now offer student places for teacher training experience. They are registered with Volunteer Scotland and received a small grant from them, which enabled some additional staff training.

Reflecting on the project, Jacqui Frame - owner of Off Grid Kids - suggested groups hoping to explore stalled spaces projects should think of something unique to get the local community involved.

The group is currently applying for further funding to use the site during the daytime, and to encourage a wide range of outside activities, such as art sessions or visits from theatre groups.

Project Key Facts

£1,622

Stalled Spaces Scotland funding awarded to Off Grid Kids

4

Number of primary schools who regularly use the after school club facilities

9

Number of hours a week provided by volunteers to deliver the project

10

The length of time the area of woodland had been left neglected

For further information

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