

North East case study for Heritage Counts 2015

Region:	North East
Theme demonstrated by case study:	
Name of project/group:	Kirknewton Archaeology Festival
Lead contact:	Ann Logan, Voluntary Ranger
Location:	Northumberland National Park Authority

Short description of project:

The Kirknewton Archaeology Festival was conceived, designed and developed by National Park Volunteers. Its purpose is to promote the archaeology of the northern Cheviots to the wider public, particularly around the village of Kirknewton.

Working with Kirknewton residents, the Gefrin Trust and the County Archaeologist, volunteers delivered the first event in 2012. This week long event involved a series of displays in Kirknewton Village Hall, featuring the work of local archaeological societies, craft displays, guided walks to local archaeological sites and talks by a historians and archaeologists.

The event was repeated in 2014 and also included a short literature course. Approximately 250 people attended the 2014 festival.

Why did you get involved with this project or activity?

I am one of the National Park Volunteers that helped to develop the Kirknewton Archaeology Festival alongside Brian Rogers.

How did you resource your project or activity?

The 2012 and 2014 events were given seed-corn funding from the National Park's Action Area Fund, supported by contributions from the Gefrin Trust to cover the hire of the village hall. Refreshments were provided by the Village Hall Committee, and a significant amount of in-kind time was provided by project partners. This was all co-ordinated by local volunteers with the help of National Park staff.

The 2014 event also attracted £500 in donations from the general public and won the 2014 UK National Parks Volunteer Award and the sum of £1,000 towards a 2016 event.

What would have happened without your project or activity?

Without support from local volunteers, the Kirknewton Archaeology Festival would not have taken place and opportunities for people to enjoy, understand and appreciate the rich archaeological heritage of Kirknewton would not have been available.

What difference been made by your project or activity?

The Festival has raised the profile of Kirknewton's archaeology through work to promote the festival, including leaflets in tourist information centres, articles in local press and features on local web sites and social media platforms. The publicity was put together by volunteers and staff working together, with distribution carried out by volunteers.



Kirknewton Archaeology Festival © Northumberland National Park Authority

What have you learnt from this experience?

We have learnt to set out a realistic, costed programme and to involve a good-sized working group to help with planning, organisation and decision making.

It is a significant amount of work to plan, organise, co-ordinate, deliver and evaluate an event of this nature. Each festival takes at least 12 months of planning, which can't be achieved without the support of a sufficient number of volunteers and the advice of National Park staff.

With each subsequent festival, we maintain the core aims and objectives but try to make improvements wherever possible.

What does the future hold for your project or activity?

A third event is planned for August 2016 based on the walks, talks and exhibitions of the original festival but with two literature courses, a music concert and a Young Archaeologists Club event.

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