

Young Carers Nature Challenge Celebration Day!



Media Release * 28 February 2013 * For immediate use

The Swindon Young Carers Nature Challenge Celebration Day will take place at Lydiard Park on Thursday 28th March 2013, 12pm until 3pm. There will be a BBQ for young carers and their families, and a range of nature based activities to take part in, including making Bug Houses, Pine Cone Bird Feeders, Egg Cress Heads, and much more!

The highlight of the day will be the unveiling of the Interpretation Board designed by the Swindon Young Carers aged 8-11, and the awarding of certificates to ALL who participated. We are even hoping to meet the mayor...!

The Young Carers Nature Challenge is part of the Access to Nature grant scheme managed by Natural England with funds from the Big Lottery Fund and aims to give young carers respite from their caring responsibilities by taking them outdoors and engaging them in fun, nature based games and activities, and practical conservation projects.

The YCNC teaches young people about the natural world whilst also improving green spaces for local communities. But more than this, it gives young carers the opportunity to meet other young people with shared experiences, and make new friends, whilst boosting their confidence and encouraging them to take part in new challenges.

One young carer says: *"When we're at home we hardly get to go out and don't have a chance to play. So it's really good to come outdoors (on the YCNC) and have all this space to run around and play in".*

Helen Rankin, Young Carer Support Worker from Swindon Carers Centre says there are huge benefits for Young Carers from being involved with the YCNC project: *"Definitely! They have worked together as a team, learnt new things, and experienced things they wouldn't usually get to do. They have developed valuable life skills and shown their developing knowledge of nature. They are getting a break from their caring role and discovering things they have ability for, while developing peer relationships. It's a great initiative."*

The project has been running for two years, and in this time, more than 450 young carers and their families have participated in 6 areas in the south west. Sadly, the project will come to an end on 31st March 2013, but rather than commiserate, we plan to CELEBRATE young carers and all they have achieved. (And we haven't given up looking for more funding opportunities either!).

"For me, it is without doubt the most rewarding job I have ever had. Having the opportunity to engage with the Swindon Young Carers as Youth Project Coordinator for The Conservation Volunteers has been a joy and an honour, and at times quite humbling!" - Mellie May.

Ends

More follows

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Notes to editors

- For further information about The Conservation Volunteers visit www.tcv.org.uk
- Swindon Carers Centre is part of the national network of the Carers Trust with 144 such centres across the UK
- SCC offers help and support to people in Swindon who have caring responsibilities
- There are approximately 19,000 carers of all ages (including children and young people) in the Borough of Swindon and Swindon Carers Centre is available to provide them with much needed support, help and information
- Swindon Carers Centre has recently been awarded the PQASSO Quality Mark Level 2 and the Carers Trust Level 2 Centre of Excellence Award
- For more information about Swindon Carers Centre visit www.swindoncarers.org.uk

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