

# Environmental Education Project

2010/11 Report



South Derbyshire  
Environmental  
Education  
Project

# Environmental Education Project

## Annual Report 2010-2011

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### Introduction

2010-11 has been a significant year for the Environmental Education Project team, with a return to a fully staffed and well-established team – the main reason for all our successes this year. In particular Ruth, Yvonne and Flick have taken on a lot of work, which has been completed to a high standard and led to more bookings. Flick and Yvonne have completed their first full year with the team, and Ruth has completed her first year in her current role, and they have each contributed to this report in the 'highlights' section.

During the year we have benefitted from additional funding from South Derbyshire District Council (SDDC) which has given us sustainability for the first time. This has enabled staff to have more job stability both in contract terms and in their work programmes, and enabled us to increase our outputs. For example, it has meant we were able to take advantage of funding opportunities at short notice like the European Social Fund and Future Jobs Fund – both of which have enabled us to bring in extra staff and volunteers to work with us and generated £10,000 of additional income during this financial year.

As in previous years, our main areas of work include public events and initiatives, work with schools and work with partners. All of these work areas are delivered in line with our aim and our objectives, which are listed overleaf.



## Partnership arrangements

The Environmental Education Project is part of South Derbyshire District Council, and our funding partners are Rolls-Royce plc and The National Forest Company.

We are delighted to report that a new 3-year term of partnership with Rolls-Royce plc has been confirmed this year, working from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011.

The support we get from, and provide to, partners far exceeds any financial arrangements and provides added value on many levels. For example, with the National Forest Company we help to deliver initiatives across the Forest, like the Free Tree Scheme and Apple Day, which achieve objectives for all concerned.

Our non-funding partners, like Aurora, Derbyshire County Council, The Forestry Commission and Derbyshire Wildlife Trust also have a strong influence on our work. For example, the Wildlife Watch brand, which is owned by the Wildlife Trusts, helps us to promote our events and activities; and also helps to promote the Wildlife Trust.

We have also done some significant conservation work with the Forestry Commission, Aurora and Rolls-Royce plc this year.

The role of the Environmental Education Project Steering Group plays an important part in developing and managing our work programme, and we would like to thank Councillor John Grant for all his effort both at the group meetings and behind the scenes on our behalf over the past 3 years. He also spent time working with our new chairman, Cllr Jim Hewlett to help him settle in to the new role admirably!

### Our aim:

'To develop knowledge, understanding, respect for and involvement in The National Forest and the environment through enjoyable learning opportunities'

### Our Objectives:

1. To lead on the provision of high quality and enjoyable environmental education services for schools in The National Forest and South Derbyshire
2. To provide high quality accessible public events and activities, providing opportunities for people of all ages to develop their environmental knowledge and take action towards a more sustainable environment.
3. To develop networks and partnerships in order to make best use of resources, add value to projects, share knowledge and skills and disseminate best practice
4. To manage performance, evaluate all activities and incorporate results in further work. To market and promote the service and keep up to date with local and national developments in Environmental education. Disseminate best practice.
5. To secure existing service and staffing levels through core funding and charges, and finance new project work through sponsorship and grants.

## Key Achievements 2010-11:

- Co-ordinating Climate Week activities across The National Forest
- 34 x 'More Trees More Good' school visits and developing our Partnership work with the Woodland Trust.
- Joint work with Aurora to support their 'Herbie' Project.
- Well received and popular programme of school visits, events and walks
- Installation and use of The Poetry Trail.
- Rolls-Royce Camera Obscura and Cloud Observatory Project team– joint project work within the Leisure and Community Department.
- Environmental Forum Network of environmental groups and parish councils across the District– consultation resulted in a series of themed meetings throughout the year.
- Grants from partners and:
  1. The European Social Fund for 'Get Employed in the Forest' through the FEI Forest School Partnership to support environmental training for unemployed adults: £5,000
  2. The National Lottery for 'Wild and Woody' Sculpture Trail – due to be installed in spring/summer 2011: £10,000
  3. Future Jobs Fund for one of our Casual Staff, Ellen to have part time work to increase bookings at quiet times, Jan – July 2011: £5,000



Dot's Walk programme



Poetry Trail in Use!



Outreach work at a Childrens' Centre

## Issues this year:

We have had a period of around 6 months during the year when the computers and internet were not working properly. The rest of the year has been very patchy, with power and line quality issues which had a detrimental impact on our ability to get any work done! IT at SDDC have had to set time aside to keep our system running, with input from them on a weekly basis (sometimes daily). Without them we would have had no connection at all.

The Shelter project stalled due to problems with a funding bid – Flick and Ruth are now working with the information collated by our 2009 Rolls-Royce Team to submit new funding applications using the original brief. This project management practice is part of their First Line Management Training.

We have also had problems with the Flight Pond, which we have worked hard to resolve thanks to a huge amount of support from the Forestry Commission and SDDC.

## Performance Monitoring:

Outputs per year	Target	2007-8	2008-9	2009-10	2010-11	Notes:
<b>No of events (total)</b>	<b>24</b>	19	27	29	<b>42</b>	For SDDC and National Forest Company targets
<b>'Wildlife Watch' family events</b>	<b>12</b>	13	13	14	<b>13</b>	For SDDC and National Forest Company targets
<b>No. of people at events</b>	<b>1000</b>	2119	2310	2761	<b>2814</b>	For SDDC and National Forest Company Targets No's do not include bird or astronomy groups: 40/50 per month each
<b>No. of school visits to Rosliston Forestry Centre</b>	<b>75</b>	99	88	87	<b>98</b>	For Derbyshire Education/Business Partnership and Forestry Commission targets
<b>No. of outreach visits at other sites/ school Grounds</b>	<b>6</b>	20	7	8	<b>30</b>	For SDDC and National Forest Company targets. No's very variable: based on commissions
<b>No. of pupils at school visits</b>	<b>2500</b>	4682	4178	3898	<b>4883</b>	For SDDC, Derbyshire Education/Business Partnership and Forestry Commission targets
<b>(includes outreach):</b>		(465)	(412)	(578)	(891)	
<b>No of pupils at school visits from black/ ethnic minority groups</b>	<b>N/A</b>	535	463	662	<b>420</b>	For National Forest Company targets
<b>No of volunteer hours</b>	<b>N/A</b>	-	529	675	<b>736</b>	For Derbyshire Biodiversity, Breath of Fresh Air and Rolls-Royce plc targets
<b>No of trees planted</b>	<b>N/A</b>			300	<b>516</b>	For National Forest Company targets
<b>No of organisations worked with:</b>	<b>5</b>	10	10	15+	<b>15+</b>	
<b>Income generated from school visits</b>					<b>26,964.18</b>	For SDDC and for EEP Steering Group
<b>Income generated from external sources</b>	<b>N/A</b>					For SDDC and for Rolls-Royce annual report.

## Performance Monitoring: Comments and predictions for 2011-12

### Education

We have been very busy this year with school visits! We have noticed that some schools have asked for slightly less contact time to save money, but in all we have still seen an increase in income on last year with an average of £200 for each school visit/outreach visit. This represents a big spread from 1-hr for 1 class at £40 to a full day for up to 4 classes which is £600. Our fees increase has not affected the number of bookings, but it has had a beneficial affect on our income and shows full cost recovery for most school bookings.

We have noticed that some schools have switched to us from more expensive providers due to financial constraints, and also we have done more outreach for schools that can not afford the coach to come to us. We have also noticed that a few of our regular schools have struggled to get enough parental contribution to pay for their trips, and several were cancelled in the summer despite our efforts to re-arrange the day to reduce costs (eg less contact time). We were able to offer these schools the chance to plant trees and attend the Woodland Trust's 'More Trees More Good' programme which is funded by WT and The National Forest Company.

'More Trees More Wood' (Woodland Trust) has been a huge part of our school visit programme this year, with 24 days in The National Forest (instead of 8-10 in previous years) and 10 days at Lichfield. Most of these days have seen 40-60 children taking part in activities each day and have contributed to the increase in outreach numbers and overall income.

### Community

Events have gone well this year, with good attendance (and good weather) and great feedback. Comments included:

*'We saw a good display from the bats when we were on the enclosed path between the Larch and Pine plantations, and Bill from Derbyshire Bats commented on this, and how he had never seen such a good display' and 'there was so much to do it was hard to fit it all in'*

As well as the comments on how people felt about the events we have also asked for ideas for other events and activities, and how we can enhance events. We will implement these suggestions next year. For 2012 we need to look at attendance at some events, for example, the Environmental Forum events and Nightworld, and work on promotion and slight changes to format for others eg the Science Discovery Day and Nightworld tend to attract a good proportion of 'repeat visitors' so we need to make sure that there are fresh ideas and activities each year.



Camera Obscura workshops,  
2011 with Michael Fairfax, Feb 2011



Electric Bike Event, part of Climate Week, March

## Project Highlights:

### Ruth's Highlights:

The bread and butter work of teaching education sessions is always interesting and rewarding. A new departure, "Teddy Bushcraft", was great fun, culminating in toasting marshmallows at an open fire! Regular events such as the Science Discovery Day, the Festival of Leisure and Night World always have something different to keep the experience fresh.

In June, I worked with North West Leics District Council to put on a planting session at a community event. I organised the supply of plants and pots and attended the event to help people plant interesting vegetables and colourful flowers. The weather was glorious and it was great to see the satisfaction and pride on people's faces as they carried off their pots at the end of the day!

Apple Day is always a highlight of the year for me. The education sessions we offer, which include looking at (and tasting) different varieties of apples and making apple juice, are great fun. I always enjoy the two days we do at Swadlincote market, talking to passers by and encouraging them to try a wide variety of apples. There is always an entertaining range of comments and reactions!

Since October, Felicity and I have been working with Zoe Sewter at SDDC on the "Love Your Parks" scheme. In October "Focus on the Crocus" involved working with five schools in Eureka Park. The children came to plant crocus bulbs with members of the Rotary Club, and then took part in an education session which encouraged them to explore the park and learn a little about some of the trees. Since then, we have worked with some of the same schools to investigate the history of the park, using resources at the Magic Attic, and to encourage the children to think about what they would like the park to be like in the future.

I have finished training courses in IT and teaching adults, and I am approaching the end of First Line Management training. All of these have been interesting and have increased my capabilities and broadened my experience. I am very lucky to have such an interesting and varied job - with no two days the same, there is no chance of getting bored!

### Yvonne's Highlights:

This year I project managed a 'More Trees More Good' two week project with the Woodland Trust at Pipehall Farm in Lichfield. Over a period of two weeks, in November 2010 and February 2011, EEP staff delivered Woodland activities, which included a Treasure Hunt, using maps and Tree Planting Sessions to 17 local schools.

Both weeks were a great success and we had excellent feedback from the schools. We delivered sessions to around 350 children and planted approximately 700 trees for the Woodland Trust, (which also generated income for us).



We are now working on a further project with the Woodland Trust for the Queen's Jubilee year in 2012.

Pipehall Tree Planting Feb 2011: pupils find their treasure!

### Flick's Highlights:

Since starting my role as Education Development Assistant in June 2010, I have enjoyed being involved with various projects and activities. I was a casual Environmental Facilitator for a year prior to this, which meant I could get stuck in pretty much straight away in the new role.

I gained a £5000 European Social Fund Community Grant shortly before starting full-time and set up the Get Employed in the Forest Project, which meant I had plenty to do from the outset. This involved working with partners from the local FEI Forest School Cluster group and arranging work experience and training opportunities for 5 unemployed adults.

A couple of months later I had the opportunity to attend an initial Forest School level 3 week near Cannock, which was a great experience learning various woodland activities and games. Since then, developing the Forest School portfolio has been ongoing, with a series of practise Forest School sessions delivered to a group of students from William Allitt over the winter. I am on schedule to submit the portfolio and attend my Forest School Assessment week in July 2011.

Another highlight of the year has been successfully gaining £10,000 lottery funding (through the Rosliston Community Liaison Group) for the 'Wild and Woody' wildlife sculpture trail, which will provide a noticeable addition to the site and be great for education sessions and the public.

I have also been enjoying working with Ruth and the Zoe (SDDC) on the Eureka Park 'Invisible Heritage' Project, developing and delivering bespoke sessions on Eureka Park and at the Magic Attic.

In addition other training and development opportunities have included First Line Management training (& the associated Shelter Project), submitting my application to the Institute for Learning to gain Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills (QTLS) status and the recent Camera Obscura workshop. Alongside the above, everyday activities have included teaching and assisting with various environmental education sessions, contributing to the planning and implementing of various events and investigating new opportunities for the Environmental Education Project.

### Education work with schools:

Working with schools represents a key part of our work, and we have a varied programme and many bookings (see performance monitoring). Here are some of our most notable activities this year:

Over 2010-11 we reviewed our education programme and booking details, and re-wrote the Visit Information Packs. This was in response to the pattern of requests for information and the development of more bookings by email. We separated the session information into 2 packs: essential information, and session details. This means that only those making first-time bookings will need both packs.

Yvonne has revised the booking procedure and standard information emails, and these have been well received. The new procedures have also helped staff to plan sessions with more advance notice! In addition, the sessions we offer were reviewed based on feedback and new requests, so we were able to scrap some 'rarely booked' sessions and add new ones linked to Early Years requests and Forest School. We also re-wrote the section on self led visits to reflect frequent issues we were having with these groups, especially when it rained! The work we have done this year has helped us to manage visits more efficiently and effectively.

As well as our usual school visits we have also linked outreach sessions to very specific topics requested by schools like bees and foxes or subjects, like outdoor maths. Flick and Ruth have been working with Zoe from SDDC on the Eureka Parks project which has involved a whole range of different activities from historical research to planting crocuses.

During the autumn term we worked with Woodville Infant School on a sculpture project, which started with a visit by children to Rosliston, to learn about sculpture. The children then created their own sculpture in the school grounds working with Clare, Katy Doncaster and Kevin Banton (who are both freelance workers). The sculpture is made of wood and includes individual leaves made by each child in the school.

### Partnership work

We are delighted to be starting a new period of joint working with Rolls-Royce in 2011-12, and arrangements have been agreed during this current year.

Initially through the National Forest Company, we have worked with partners at East Staffs Borough Council and North West Leics District Council on projects like the Free Tree Scheme and Apple Day for some years. This year we decided to focus on Climate Week as well. Between us and other partners, we organised over 20 Climate Week events across the 3 Districts. The finale was an Electric Bike Showcase and Relay in Swadlincote and across The National Forest. The events attracted 979 people and created a lot of positive publicity relating to efficient use of resources, partnership working and saving money/increasing fitness... whilst also benefitting the environment.

Flick has spent time this year developing a new partnership with Derbyshire Learning Consortium, which resulted in the 'Get Employed in the Forest' grant to work with people on the unemployment register to provide environmental training. Following this we also gained a grant through the Consortium from the Future Jobs Fund.

We have enjoyed working with Amy and Sarah from OPAL Explore Nature (through Nottingham University) to provide training for our staff, members of the Environmental Forum and members of the public. The training has helped us promote the national OPAL surveys, covering worms, water, air and climate.

The Environmental Forum has had a wide range of events covering subjects from child protection to pond dipping. Feedback is always very positive, but we will be reviewing the inputs/ outputs from Forum events next year and also looking at working with neighbouring authorities to reduce the amount of time spent planning and developing each Forum event, and to find ways of 're-using' the training programmes and sessions developed for the 1-off Forum events.



### Events



During the year we have worked with others on a range of events both at Rosliston and elsewhere. These included Play Day, the Festival of Leisure, Apple Day in Swadlincote and our Wildlife Watch programme at Rosliston. Dot organised another highly successful series of summer walks around the District and also led our Walking Festival walk.

Our events are designed to be educational but also fun, and do not generate much income. They are subsidised through the income we receive from partners, in line with partner objectives. For example, the Science Discovery Day fits in well with Rolls-Royce aims.

## Site, conservation and Volunteering

Rolls-Royce teams have done some excellent project work this year down in the meadow and in the garden. They have started a long willow fence near the willow dome, completed habitat work in Fox Covert and 'Spider' wood for school groups to use and done conservation work on the Meadow Pond and Flight Pond, which included having to break the ice first!

We have worked with Chris Payne from SDDC and The Forestry Commission to resolve long standing issues with drainage near the Flight Pond and poor quality water from the Meadow Stream.

The Flight Pond is now filled from the Boundary Stream which has better quality water following extensive investigation and new pipe works. We are looking forward to a new era of successful pond dipping as a result.

Aurora are leading on 'Herbie' and general garden projects, and we have been able to support this through regular 'drop in gardening' events, helping with garden maintenance. Ruth and Ellen are involved in organising the garden maintenance schedules with Aurora and 'Red Welly' who have the contract for Herbie.



## Advertising and publicity

- We now have a Facebook page for 'Roger Badger'.
- We have had great support from Communications at SDDC with web, press release and other information sharing. Much appreciated.
- The templates which Tamsyn Port designed for us in the previous financial year have proved popular with eye catching designs. Furthermore, they are now proving their worth as we have so many variations we are able to do most of our own artwork for advertising very quickly and cheaply.
- We gained national Publicity for events and activities like Climate Week and the Dawn Chorus Walk, through partner support with press releases.

## Resources and Training

Grants through the European Social Fund and 'Future Jobs', and the 'Breath of Fresh Air' project plus additional income from SDDC and the 'More Trees More Good' project have enabled us to maintain a higher level of staffing all year, and this is reflected in the number of additional projects we have taken on and the extra income to re-invest in the project. We have been able to buy some gardening tools, and a shed to store them. The money from Dot's Summer Walks contributed to the tools.

- Our budget planning is based on a 5-year Plan, whereby the budget is balanced across the whole 5 years rather than on an individual year's figures.
- Our annual expenditure for 2010-11 was £120,000. £81,200 is wages and salaries and £22,450 NI / pensions. The remainder is site rent, telephones, equipment, printing and publicity.
- SDDC provides £71,673k plus central support costs (100% increase on 2009-10)
- Rolls-Royce sponsored EEP with £20k which is the final year of a 3 year £20k/ yr programme. A new 3 year programme will run from April 2011 until March 2014.
- We brought in £24,000 through fees, charges, one-off project grants and commissions (last year it was £18,000).
- We also brought in £10,000 in grants (plus £10,000 into Rosliston Community Group for 'Wild and Woody' trail to be launched in 2011).
- We received a grant for £7,000 from National Forest Company.

- Flick started her Forest School Level 3 Training (assessment next year). Yvonne, Clare and Ellen did their Forest School Level 2.
- Kate completed Middle Management training programme, and Ruth and Flick started their First Line Manager Training.
- Ruth and Kate completed IT training programmes (for example Kate can now format 'annual report' word documents....).
- Various in-house training was completed for new staff in environmental education, and for all staff in outdoor Risk Assessment, thanks to SDDC.
- Flick gained her professional teaching qualification (started before she joined the team) and Ruth/ Kate completed an adult training course with South Derbyshire Council for Voluntary Services.

We are always interested in talking to new partners, so if there are any businesses which would like to work with us, maybe sponsor an event or piece of equipment, please get in touch!

## Future Plans

We are looking forward to working with the Woodland Trust on their 'Jubilee and Diamond Woods' project, helping to develop the programme for tree planting and educational activities across Great Britain.

The Herbie Project will involve work on a series of educational trails around the site, planned for launch in Spring 2012. We will also be working on a new Autumn trail for Rosliston and an 'Apple Trail' for Swadlincote Town Centre to coincide with Apple Week.

There may be an opportunity to work with partners including Sharpe's Pottery Museum/ Tourist Information Centre and Derbyshire County Council on joint school visits/ activities for Swadlincote Town Centre which celebrate the district's mining, pottery and cultural heritage.

The new Lottery Funded 'Wild and Woody' sculpture trail will be launched in July 2011, giving people the opportunity to follow the 'Walk for Life mile' route developed by 'Get Active' and see interesting sculptures during their walk. One of the sculptures will also double-up as a sun/rain shelter for children while they are pond dipping, as this has been requested many times on school visit evaluation forms.

Right at the end of this financial year we did a great deal of promotional work and organised events for Climate Week. Next year we will be looking at the balance between stand-alone community events and initiatives like Climate Week and trying to identify the best use of resources to achieve environmental and community objectives and outputs.

During 2011-12 we plan to start putting the results from my MA into practice, working with the University of Derby, Derbyshire County Council and local schools to develop training for teachers to support schools which want to increase their use of the outdoors for whole curriculum learning.

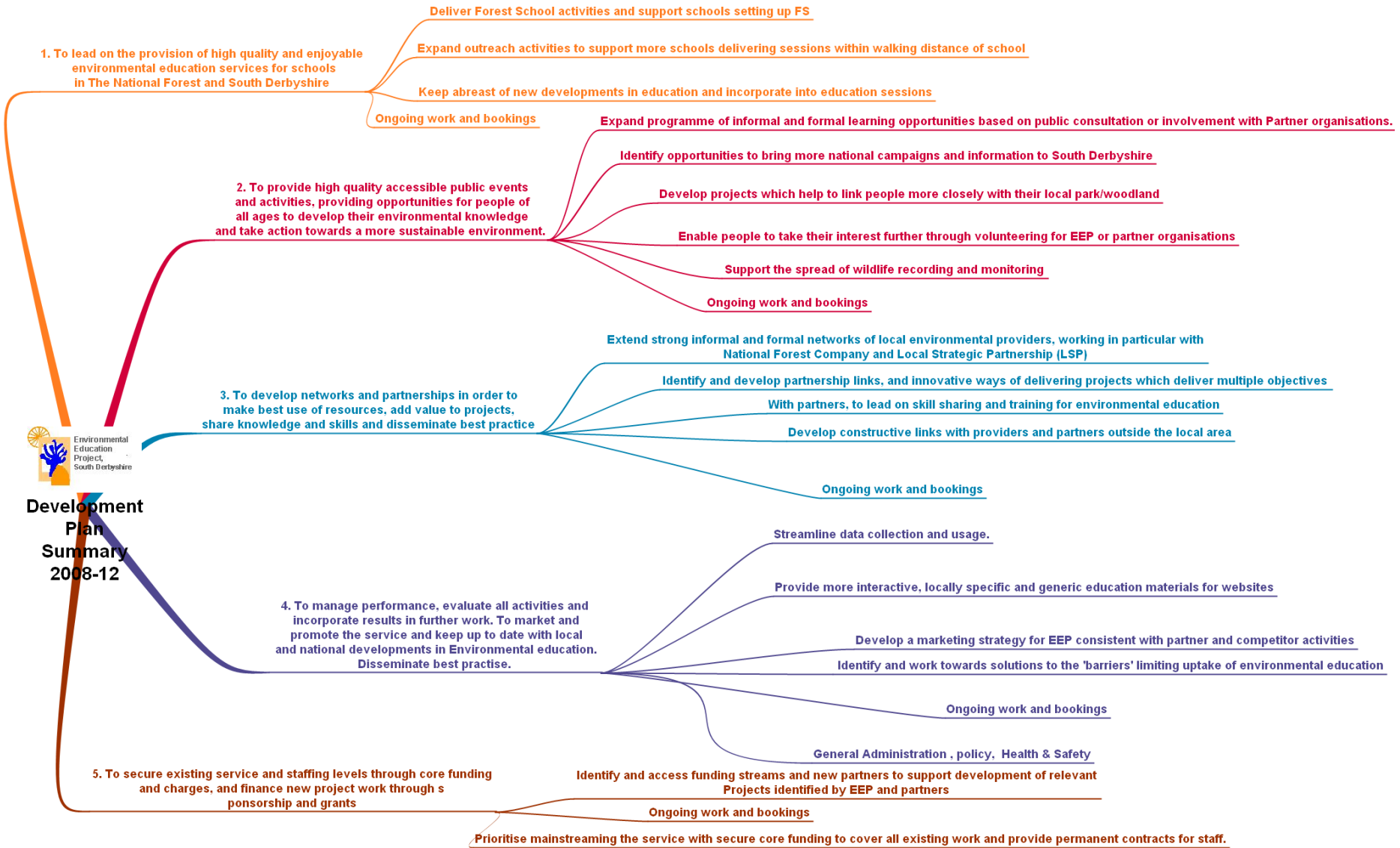
2012 should see the completion of an outdoor shelter next to the Classroom for school lunches (funding permitting).

Thanks to everyone for their help and support during 2010-11  
I look forward to working with you all in the future!

Kate Allies May 2011



# Development Plan Summary



Due for review 2011-12

2010-11



## Project Staff 2010-11



Kate Allies  
Environmental Development Manager



Ruth Frudd  
Senior Facilitator



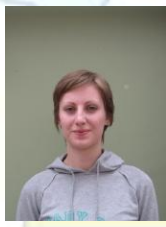
Felicity Towns (Flick)  
Education  
Development  
Assistant



Yvonne Waring  
Team Assistant



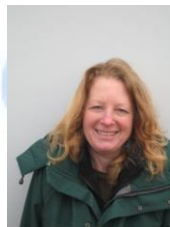
Clare



Dawn



Dot



Ellen



Katrina



Lesley



Will



Richard

## Feedback from Partners:

“As the managing company for both the Forestry Centre and the Get Active in The Forest Project it has once again been our privilege to work alongside the Environmental Education Project on projects including the Gardening drop-In sessions and 'Herbie'. The team consistently offer a high quality service to all their customers and are an integral part of the overall success of the Centre”

Debbie Chesterman,  
Manager, Aurora Country Developments Ltd and Rosliston Forestry Centre

“The Environmental Education Project continues to be a leading provider of high quality environmental learning across the Forest. National endorsement of what was done for Climate Week was very exciting and the way in which the project has increased environmental education income in a challenging year is impressive. At the same time, physical improvements have been made to Rosliston (eg drainage near the Flight Pond and Herbie the herb garden) and this ongoing vision for the place as a truly learning and growing environment is an example to us all”.

Sophie Churchill

Chief Executive, National Forest Company

“The Forestry Commission, as one of the partners at Rosliston Forestry Centre, and the major landowner are very happy to be associated with SDDC’s Environmental Education Service. They play a major role in enthusing local school children about science and natural history, encouraging them to care for their environment. The staff within the Education Service are very enthusiastic, professional and a pleasure to work with. Their ability and willingness to work with the local community group and search out external funding streams has been instrumental this year in obtaining funding for an exciting new sculpture trail on the site. Their efforts with the ‘More Trees More Good’ project played a major part in ensuring its continued success, and their on-going liaison with FC staff helps us provide the necessary high quality resources they need to complete their education programmes at Rosliston.”

Ian Hickman,  
Forest Management Director, Forestry Commission

“The two key long standing strengths of the Environmental Education project have been the commitment and enthusiasm of Kate Allies, and her hardworking team of staff and volunteers and the passion of all engaged in the project for partnership working. These strengths have been manifest again this year and resulted in excellent work flowing from Climate Week and the Environmental Forum as well as the huge bonus of renewed alliances with Rolls-Royce plc, and the Woodland Trust.

Another really pleasing feature of the project is the general contribution it makes to the Rosliston Forestry Centre site. Features introduced by the team such as the poetry and sculpture trails can be enjoyed by all visitors not just those using the Environmental Education project.”

Councillor Jim Hewlett,  
South Derbyshire District Council, Chair of Environmental Education Project Steering Group

