

Go Wild on Grabbist



Name of project: Go Wild on Grabbist

Location: Grabbist, Dunster

How:

The event took around 5 days work for the Heart of Exmoor Moorland Education Officer (David Rolls) to organise and deliver with a budget of around £500.

Preparation and delivery was managed by a Steering Group comprising staff from: Exmoor National Park Authority, The Crown Estate, National Trust, and Butterfly Conservation.

16 volunteers were present on the day.

Aims:

Go Wild on Grabbist was a day of fun and learning for the local community (Minehead and Dunster area) to raise the profile of Grabbist and all it has to offer.

How long has it been running for and has it changed over time?

Event ran once a year for 2 years in a row (2012 and 2013)

Who attended?

The feedback forms suggest those attending Go Wild were primarily families with younger children with a smattering of grandparents in attendance. Most of those who visited Go Wild were local people or had travelled from places close to Grabbist and Exmoor.

Those involved:

- Adam (ENPA Ranger): part of his job description
- Patrick Watts-Mabbot (ENPA Volunteer and Outreach Officer): through getting the volunteer hours and involvement
- David Rolls: moorland activities and publicity
- Volunteers: ENPA volunteer scheme
- The events could not run at the same scale without volunteers as there are no limit on numbers, as would be with staff time; involvement is fun; training (eg, first aid)



Was the event a success?

- The general feeling from providers was that Go Wild was a success and that it did what it was intended to do, i.e. raise the profile of Grabbist, particularly among local people.
- Feedback forms filled in on the day indicated high levels of satisfaction and learning, and that those who visited were predominantly local people. Feedback therefore confirms the perceptions of providers that local people were engaged, had a good time and learned something new about Grabbist and Dunster.
- There was consensus that the range and variety of activities suited the planned day and that particular aspects, such as the Story Teller and Exmoor Pony were very good ideas and this is echoed by comments from visitors.
- Advertising was deemed as much better this year than the previous Grabbist event. Posters were noted all around Minehead and the locals schools in the lead up to the event.
- Also a request for 'more about the area' - suggests for some there needs to be more specific information available or they weren't signposted to the NPC?
- One query about the day chosen was raised and whether there is a danger by going for a Saturday of clashes with sports.
- Having someone going into local schools to do talks is beneficial and recommended ahead of future events. Talks in previous years, especially accompanied by the Exmoor pony, caused great excitement.
- Otherwise there were no indications from feedback forms of any faults with the event summed up in the comments of one visitor in response to the What could we do better question: 'nothing I can think of - very good'.
- After two good years, it has been suggested that raising the profile of Grabbist has been achieved and future events could take on a new focus, perhaps more specifically school and parents.

Could things have been done differently?

- Suggestions included having more breaks and rest-time planned in for providers and volunteers.
- Also a request for 'more about the area' - suggests for some there needs to be more specific information available or they weren't signposted to the NPC?
- The paired locations presented a challenge – visitors had to walk up to a hilltop site from base camp.
- Some providers suggested thinking about better use of the space, particularly around the National Park Centre (NPC). NPC preferred providers to be the back room of the centre and this was less productive in enticing people in than having things happening at the front.
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- Having someone going into local schools to do talks is beneficial and recommended ahead of future events. Talks in previous years, especially accompanied by the Exmoor pony, caused great excitement.
- Otherwise there were no indications from feedback forms of any faults with the event summed up in the comments of one visitor in response to the What could we do better question: 'nothing I can think of - very good'.
- The paired locations of a base camp and a hill op site was challenge (ie. some people were put-off by the walk, although other enjoyed it).

Something that didn't go to plan:

The numbers of people attending was noted as a slight disappointment (80 – 100 visitors). Numbers of people attending were more or less consistent over the years the event ran, but were lower than earlier half term events. Conversely 95% were local, which was the target audience. The main concern was that at times it didn't feel very busy and events appearing busier tend to attract more people passing by.

The weather was mentioned by visitors and providers but there is nothing much that can be done about this.

Feedback:

Thought it was very good

Interactive stuff is cool

We loved the stories

The range of activities and free drinks and chocolates were a lovely touch

Everyone was very friendly and knowledgeable

The children had a great time



'We have certainly raised the profile of Grabbist in a very positive way'
(National Trust Ranger)

'I thought that the Go Wild on Grabbist event had a good range of activities and that having the story teller and Exmoor pony on the walk was a good idea. However it would be nice for people running the actives on top of the if there was the opportunity for a short break. I enjoyed taking part.'
(Volunteer)

'We loved the stories, the range of activities, the refreshments, all the lovely touches. Everyone was so friendly and knowledgeable.'
(From a Dunster family)

