

## Prudential Grass Roots

Supporting communities to improve their local environment



### CASE STUDY

## Three Brooks Nature Reserve, Bradley Stoke, Bristol

An ambitious schedule of events was designed to bring local people into Three Brooks Nature Reserve, close to The Mall at Cribbs Causeway, of which Prudential is a part owner. The events sought to enable local people to learn new skills, discourage anti-social behaviour and encourage respect for and enjoyment of the reserve and were a huge success in Bradley Stoke.

With higher than envisaged turnouts of local residents, groups of school children and volunteers from the Friends of Three Brooks Nature Reserve all engaging in a wide range of fun activities, local perceptions of the value of the reserve are increasingly positive.

Through the support of The Mall at Cribbs Causeway, and owners Prudential, Capital Shopping Centres and J T Baylis, there is also a physical legacy of this Grass Roots project with a new pond on site and a clearer woodland area which people feel safer to walk through.

Working very closely with the local council's 'Wildspaces' initiative and staff, the project is also a fine example of partnership working between the corporate, charity and public sector.

*"It was great to see so many volunteers taking part in helping look after the nature reserve over the last year. They have certainly made a positive impact on the reserve, with a new wildlife pond, traditional fencing, thinning of woodland and access improvements, as well as engaging different groups."*

JOHN MORRIS, WILD ROOTS OFFICER,  
SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNCIL

Prudential Grass Roots was launched in 2001. It is run by BTCV, the UK's leading practical conservation charity, and funded by Prudential plc.

The programme is helping to drive regeneration for people and wildlife in communities around shopping centres and business parks throughout the UK, invested in by Prudential plc and managed by PRUPIM.



# Building healthy and sustainable communities

## Three Brooks Nature Reserve, Bradley Stoke, Bristol

The Three Brooks Nature Reserve in Bristol is a 46 hectare Local Nature Reserve in the heart of Europe's largest privately owned housing estate, Bradley Stoke. It is an oasis of green space in an otherwise very built-up area and Grass Roots has invested in regenerating the site into a much-loved and well used resource by local people.

Co-owners of and staff at the nearby Mall at Cribbs Causeway recognised great potential to transform part of the nature reserve to make it cleaner, safer and greener for the Bradley Stoke community and wildlife within the reserve.

The Friends of Three Brooks Local Nature Reserve was already a well established group. Grass Roots funding enabled a packed programme of events and transformations, already on their wish list, to be undertaken over a twelve month period.

A fun-packed programme of activities ran regularly through the course of the year-long project, starting in June 2006.

Children from the local community school in Bradley Stoke, which borders the Three Brooks Nature Reserve were visited several times by the project and had the chance to visit the woodland and make musical instruments and artefacts with wood from the reserve, using the pole lathe. The children also planted up one of the new ponds on the reserve while learning about the wildlife in the area.

The project:

- Enabled local people and school children to learn new skills and gain knowledge about the reserve
- Introduced residents, visitors and children to the wildlife within the nature reserve
- Encouraged people to return to Three Brooks Nature Reserve and to feel that it is a safe place to visit.



## Taking practical action

A busy programme of activities was rolled out between June 2006 and June 2007:

- A number of bat walks at dusk proved highly popular
- The ancient pole lathe made regular visits to the nature reserve.
- School children visiting the nature reserve made musical instruments and the cricket club made wickets, all from wood reclaimed from woodland management within the reserve
- The Friends of Three Brooks Nature Reserve met monthly to carry out woodland management, fencing, pond and habitat creation work.

*"The Mall is delighted to have supported the local community in carrying out this transformation at Bradley Stoke. The Grass Roots project reflects the importance of this valuable amenity."*

JON EDWARDS, COMMERCIAL DIRECTOR, THE MALL AT CRIBBS CAUSEWAY

# Connecting people with place

Three Brooks Nature Reserve,  
Bradley Stoke, Bristol



*"Thanks to the generous funding package through Prudential Grass Roots and the co-owners of the Mall at Cribbs Causeway, we have really been able to engage with the local community around the nature reserve in Bradley Stoke. Through a series of regular events in the nature reserve, local people now view the space as a great resource on their doorstep."*

PAUL HUMPHREYS, SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE COMMUNITY PROJECT OFFICER, BTCV

## Launch Event

Prudential Grass Roots at Three Brooks Nature Reserve was launched on 7 June 2006 in a large public space within The Mall at Cribbs Causeway.

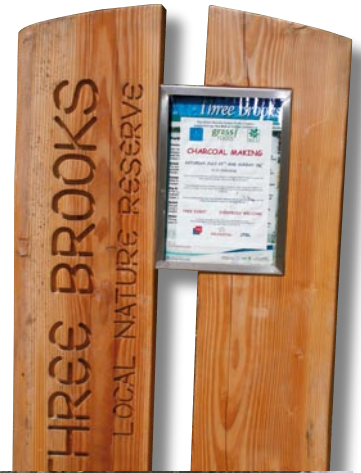
BTCV and the Grass Roots funders wanted to launch the project by bringing the natural environment into the shopping centre. Accordingly, the centre-piece of the launch was a 'green-woodworking lathe' which was assembled in The Mall, and attracted a lot of attention from shoppers.

Wood reclaimed from woodland management tasks in the nature reserve was used to build the ancient design pole lathe and visitors to the shopping centre were able to create wooden artefacts, e.g. spoons and pots and take them home with them.



# Revitalising green spaces

Three Brooks Nature Reserve,  
Bradley Stoke, Bristol



## Evaluation results

- The evaluation, carried out by the University of the West of England, indicated 67% of those who attended an event claimed they now wish to visit the Three Brooks Nature Reserve more regularly
- Young people engaged in the project clearly derived great social and educational benefits
- There is an increased awareness of the reserve and resource that it offers.

## Project legacy

Three Brooks Nature Reserve is now much more established in the sense that local people see it as a resource to be enjoyed, respected and appreciated rather than as a site where there is anti-social behaviour and litter.

It is a much cleaner, safer and greener nature reserve. The woodland management works carried out have helped people to feel safer walking through the woodland areas, because of increased light and visibility.

Undoubtedly the involvement of local schools, one of which borders the reserve, will leave a lasting legacy in terms of the pupils growing up to feel a sense of belonging to the reserve – this implies that they will look after it in years to come.

The physical changes have increased the reserve's potential for use as an outdoor classroom facility.

## Project costs

The Prudential Grass Roots funding contributed £10,000 towards the Three Brooks project and The Mall at Cribbs Causeway hosted an event free of charge. Co-owners of the Mall at Cribbs Causeway, Capital Shopping Centres and JT Baylis contributed a further £10,000 and £5,380 respectively.

Total project funding – £25,380



## Achievements

- A total of 50 events were held, including the launch of the project as well as celebration events
- £27,500 worth of volunteer days
- In total over 550 people attended the events
- Positive media coverage in the local Bradley Stoke free magazine, written up by a local resident
- The Friends of Three Brooks Nature Reserve is stronger and now has more members
- Two large-scale public events were held: the first, to launch the project inside The Mall at Cribbs Causeway and the second to celebrate the completion of the project in June 2007.
- Hundreds of posters and flyers publicising the events were distributed in the local community

## Partners in the project

BTCV • Prudential • Capital Shopping Centres  
J T Baylis • South Gloucestershire Council  
Bradley Stoke Community School

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