

## The Young Roots Files Video Transcript

In 2001 the Heritage Lottery Fund set up the Young Roots Programme.

To be honest it was a really great experience being able to instil and capture our creativity and design and history and heritage and everything.

The aim was to help engage young people in heritage.

The sorts of young people that are coming to us in our school aren't always interested in heritage or what they perceive to be heritage.

So far they've given over 20 million to Youth and Heritage organisations across the UK.

The relationships you get with the people that you're working with are amazing.

This is a story of just a few.

The idea for the project came about as I was mountain biking across local Fells and the landscape's littered with industrial heritage and I thought this is an ideal teaching opportunity for kids basically to get them into heritage. Our school is a school for pupils that have been excluded from mainstream schools so the biking element was completely new, fresh element and it's drawn them in. We developed their mountain biking skills which will develop their confidence and maintain their interest. We'd also stop off at various heritage features to record the information, we'd take photographs and we also did some work with GPSs so we could actually plot the routes we were doing and plot the heritage features. They've gained a lot of information and appreciation of their own history really as well as developing the biking skills and their confidence and behaviour and attitude really towards the general public. It's been great.

In a quiet corner of Cambridgeshire a renovated barn is home to Red to Green, a charity that provides a safe environment for young people with Asperger's syndrome.

We've been putting together their family history or their family trees. What we really want to achieve is them getting a greater understanding of where they fit in to society and where they fit in to their family.

I've been doing work on my family tree project learning all about my family and learning a bit about Asperger's and the autism.

These are a bunch of people who can find life very very challenging. They come out of the house in the morning with levels of anxiety you and I would perhaps never ever experience and they come here and it's safe, they can just be themselves.

This is my scrapbook that I made, lots of pictures on here of what I like.

Who's that at the bottom there?

That was me when I was younger.

The whole idea is to get them to talk to their families, you can have a lot of anxiety and difficulties that have built up in families and this has actually been a bridge builder to those relationships again. It also opens up their social side and friends are really really important to them and they learn how to make friends and not just to make friends but how to keep friends and friendships going.

When young people said they wanted to put a festival on and combine it with heritage with conservation with everything it was like this is a lot to try and achieve.

In 2009 a group of young people staged a free festival in Bridgewater, Somerset. In conjunction with the festival the young volunteers carried out a large amount of conservation for the National Trust.

It's basically an idea that we wanted to get a group of young people around about 500 in total to a National Trust property and get them to work for a full weekend and do about two years' worth of conservation work during that weekend.

This was a festival with a twist and they thought that they could get young people to go to a free festival and give something back to society and to the community.

I absolutely love volunteering, I've done it for a couple of years now with different various organisations. It's a great way if you're out of work because when you go to a job and they say well what have you been doing you haven't just been sat there doing nothing you've been out there actually doing stuff and interacting with people.

I'm personally very, I won't say surprised, but yes, surprised at how much enthusiasm there is from a lot of the youngsters.

Bringing young people in just changes the whole character of the place. It brings everything to life. It makes it a living place rather than just a dry, dusty, old property.

We've done it and now we're finished.

How does that feel?

Great. Great and we're now we're getting good food for doing it so, it's a reward at the end of it.

We thought that it would be interesting to look at children and their work and we started to look at school records and things that are held at Aberdeen Archives. One of the people there said why don't you look at Poor House Records and that was us, off.

She'll catch us. She'll beat us on the head.

We found in the census in one year that there was a little girl, Lottie, and they would realise later that she had a different surname and she'd been adopted by the Governor and Matron of the Poor House.

It was kind of a different source of inspiration, Rona had directed us towards it and then from there we were just really carried away by it and we'd come in and if some people had been at the archives the day before then the next time they came to rehearsals we were kind of what's the update on Lottie.

We did the finding out of information we put together the story, we improvised it and rehearsed it and the script was put down based on our improvisations.

They had a huge sense of ownership over the piece, you know, they were the ones who created the characters, who did the research and then ended up performing it.

Six young people passionate about architecture got involved in exploring the heritage of Kings Cross.

The idea for this project came from the fact that Kings Cross is changing very very fast and lots of very exciting buildings that are being constructed but also really interesting things happening to older buildings.

It's probably one of London's most historically rich areas and at the same time one of London's most dynamic.

It's basically an interdisciplinary kind of project, we've got to do film making, graphics, art work and all that stuff.

We did a bit of web design, computer aided design, lots of design workshops with architects, one of which was working with a heritage building, an old tram shed, and getting them to come up with a new life for that building.

My love for history has actually been brought out more through the project. I think history kind of it's like a good reserve. It gets people to know more about what they are changing and see if they will still change it once they've known that and I think for me that's what I'll take away.

I think there's so few projects going on for architecture, for young people, it's like you know, any of the first chance you get grab it.

It's just the opportunity of a life time really.

This programme really raised the bar of what we can do with our education programme and I think any future Urban Pioneers programme that we do will have to be judged against the high standards set by Kings Cross.

The Young Roots programme awards grants between £3,000 and £25,000 pounds.

My name is Jessica Smith and my job at HLF is a Grants and Development Officer. The Young Roots programme has a number of criteria and the project must relate to heritage, it must involve young people between the ages of 13 and 25.

My names Ellie Moyer and I'm a Grants and Development Officer at Heritage Lottery Fund. Applicants need to be a partnership between an organisation whose main business is youth work and also a heritage organisation.

Young people have to take the lead in developing and delivering a project.

They need to celebrate the achievement of the young people involved and then they need to either create opportunities for young people to volunteer for teaching young people skills such as identifying, recording or caring for heritage.

Although it's an in-depth application process it's not impossible to get so much support, lots and lots of help, you just ring up and ask and they'll point you in the right direction.

To find out more pick up the phone and contact your regional or country office, or visit the website at [www.hlf.org.uk](http://www.hlf.org.uk)