

St Edmundsbury Heritage Service : *Case Study*



St Edmundsbury
BOROUGH COUNCIL

We Dig Archaeology (1) (02/06/2010)

Aims

- To provide a themed event with activities during the half term.
- Design fun activities to inspire and inform visitors of all ages about archaeology and experimental archaeology and enhance leisure time.
- Provide finds ID stall in association with PAS and SCC to promote responsible metal detecting etc.
- Link activities to the Anglo-Saxon archaeology of West Stow.
- Create a low cost event through the use of volunteers, partnerships and using staff expertise.
- Increase visitor numbers, related income and increase visitor satisfaction to encourage repeat visits.
- Inspire visitors interest in archaeologist and desire to protect heritage.



Description

- Portable Antiquities Scheme from SCCAU set up a finds ID and handling stall with information boards.
- Buried replica Anglo-Saxon finds in a 'Mini-dig' which was set dressed with hard hats, hi-vi jackets, wheel barrow, ranging rods etc to suggest that it was real dig. Children were invited to be an archaeologist and uncover finds which they then recorded on site sheets and placed in finds bags.
- 'Make a Pot' activity where children (of all ages) made and decorated their own Anglo-Saxon style pinch pot (clay donated by West Stow Friends). For younger children pottery colouring sheets were available.
- Tours programme was extended to provide three tours of the village.
- Fencing demo showed past practical skills and practical knowledge required for experimental archaeology.
- 'Silicon Trail' showed technological development through time.

(Quotes from participants)

- I thought it was great and cant wait to come again.
- The dig was great.
- I loved it, it was exciting and brill.
- I learnt lots and I want to be an archaeologist when I'm big.
- The kids loved the pots they made.
- Superfrajerlisticspoledosios!
- Wonderful day, the kids learnt so much while having fun.
- It's great, nothing to change!
- The activities today were fantastic.
- The mini dig and pot making activities were excellent.

Evaluation

Feedback from visitors showed that the day was thoroughly enjoyed. The event was competing with the popularity of the Suffolk Show and a number of other half term events but visitor numbers were still greater than standard half term days. It was a stretch to cover all activities and breaks for staff on activities as over all staffing was limited. Feedback demonstrated that positive visitor experience has encouraged people to make repeat visits.

Tickets to village: 165

Outgoings: £0

Profit (minus VAT): £495.32

Legacy

Evaluate the event in order to further develop and refine for it's repeat on 28/07/10. Look at ways that simple activities might become more frequent in the village. Develop staff input for the event to ensure activities and breaks are adequately covered.

For further details about this project contact:

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