



To Tony Muston & the Friends of Phoenix Park,

I am writing to thank you for funding the Habitats Project which the All Saints and Blakenhall Primary Schools have recently participated in.

Each school had a whole day visit from Dr. David Beeston of Dudley Zoo Education Dept., approximately 1000 children participated in these talks. One class per school, 160 children in all, worked in Phoenix Park for a morning with Nick Hinton of BTCV, myself and Matthew Knott of Wildeside Activity Centre, taking part in minibeast hunts and leaf, seed and tree identification.

In the afternoons the same classes made bird boxes for the Park.

The feedback from the schools, from both children and staff, has been very positive, with the practical work supplementing the National Curriculum work on rural and urban environments and understanding wildlife habitats.

Of particular importance was the time spent looking at Phoenix Park as a habitat for wildlife, raising the children's awareness of;

- Wildlife living in Phoenix Park
- Wildlife which could be attracted to Phoenix Park
- Tree species in Phoenix Park
- The threat to wildlife because of urbanisation
- The importance of green spaces in urban environments

The children really enjoyed making the bird boxes in the afternoon, many had never built with wood, hammer and nails before. Nick from BTCV made the bird box building pertinent for the children by explaining the significance of the boxes to the park.

Teachers commented that working in the park had made the habitats work much more relevant for the children than just discussing it in the classroom. The work in the environment had interested and stimulated them and has led to exciting follow up work in the schools which has resulted in impressive classroom displays.

All the schools greatly appreciated the visit from Dudley Zoo Education Department. The whole school was able to take part in this experience, which Dr David Beeston differentiated for the different age groups. The children were fascinated by the various species and Dr Beeston linked the talks with the work on habitats.



A Year 6 teacher commented that that the Dudley Zoo talk had introduced the theme of habitats and the day in Phoenix Park had made it all relevant so the children were able to apply what they had heard to their own local environments.

We hope to be able to build on this work and continue to involve the children from the local Primary schools in the development of Phoenix Park.

The park is an important resource for the community and it's use as an outdoor classroom could make a significant contribution to children's understanding of various wildlife and environmental topics, as well as involving the children in appreciation of and care for this vital green space in their locality.

Once again, thank you for funding this interesting and very enjoyable project.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Ginny Denner'.

Ginny Denner
Assistant Project Manager