Your Park Celebrates Incredible Volunteers at Awards Ceremony

Wednesday 7 February, 2024

Your Park Bristol & Bath has celebrated its second awards ceremony to honour the incredible park volunteers from across Bristol and Bath.

Your Park Bristol and Bath, a Charity founded in February 2019 as part of the national Rethinking Parks programme, transforms how communities can benefit from and support parks and green spaces. They do this by improving access, supporting nature's recovery, and organising mental health community initiatives. On **Saturday 03rd February**, Your Park **celebrated some outstanding volunteers with a ceremony at the Bristol Beacon**. Over 100 volunteers attended the awards ceremony, including smaller community groups which make a huge difference to their local parks.

The awards are split into two sections, each with a small number of categories. Your Park celebrated six individual park volunteers who made an outstanding contribution to their green space and local community. The categories were Bristol & Bath Volunteer of the Year - People aged 25 and over, Bristol and Bath Young Adult Volunteer of the Year - People aged 16-24 years, and Bristol and Bath Young Volunteer of the Year - People aged under 16 years.

Simon, a Youth Worker involved with the Hartcliffe Club for Young People, who were winners of Young Volunteers of the Year Award, said:

“It was amazing to see this group of young women’s work and patience rewarded. As we had lunch together, they were instantly asking what the next project was and whether we could litter pick the harbour side?”

The second part of the awards, The Community Impact Awards, saw groups of volunteers being recognised for their efforts which fall into three categories: Community Connecters, celebrating projects that have brought people together from all sections of the community, Happy and Healthy, celebrating projects that have improved local people’s health and well-being, and Nature Lovers, celebrating projects that have transformed their park for nature. One park from Bristol and one park from Bath were announced as the winners for each category, alongside the volunteers who made the work possible.

Manor Woods Valley Group, located in Bristol, winners of the Nature Lovers category said:

“A big thank you everyone for your hard work that has made this possible.”

Finally, shortlisted groups from the **Community Impact Awards** (**Community Connecters, Happy and Health and Nature Lovers**) took part in the Community Choice Award, an award where the project with the most votes from their community won £200 towards their work. Redcatch Community Garden, located in Knowle, Bristol, were the winners of the Community Impact Award and have received the park funds. Redcatch Community Garden received 301 votes out of nearly 1000.

Redcatch Community Garden, winners of The Community Impact Award and Community Connectors Award said: “We are absolutely delighted to win two awards. Huge thank you to the individuals and panel who voted for us, we are thankful and grateful for this recognition and motivated to continue all we do for our community.”

The winners of all the awards received vouchers for garden centers and certificates of thanks.

Judy Gowenlock, Awards Manager, said:

"The awards are about celebrating all that volunteers do, across our cities, for their parks and green spaces. Many residents of all ages and backgrounds give up their free time to make our parks and green spaces more welcoming places to be, places which benefit our health and places which support nature. It has been inspiring and heartwarming to read the nominations for all the individuals and groups and I would like to say a big thank you to them for all that they do. We finally wanted to say a huge thanks to Hargreaves Lansdown for sponsoring the awards.”

Your Park Bristol & Bath works closely with the two local authorities, Bristol City Council and Bath and

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North East Somerset Council, who are responsible for the upkeep of the 2,000+ hectares of local parks and green spaces, but the charity operates completely independently."

If you would like to volunteer and make a difference in your community get in touch with Your Park today: www.yourpark.org.uk/get-involved. The event was made possible by sponsorship from Hargreaves Lansdown.

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