Wild EAST CHILTINGTON

Winter Solstice Celebration

DECEMBER 21ST 2022

Thanks to the National Lottery the **Wild East Chiltington Project** was able to offer two free events to celebrate the winter solstice with games, crafts, stories and songs.

The Solstice celebration, in beautiful East Chiltington woods, was attended by **23 families**, **over 60 local children and adults celebrating together.**



What is the Winter Solstice?

On the Winter Solstice the northern half of our planet is as far away from the sun as it possibly can be. When this happens we experience the longest night and the shortest day of the year. It has been an important celebration throughout the ages. Although it is the darkest time of the year it is also the turning point when the days start to get longer again.

These free celebration events were a wonderful opportunity for families to come together, away from a frantic and often commercial time of year, and celebrate what is truly important to us.

CIRCLE

We started our sessions gathered around the fire circle. In the morning session the children helped light the fire by using flint and steel to add their sparks to the central fire. In the afternoon session everyone added an individual stick.

We shared our names and our gratitudes in the present moment and intentions for the year ahead.





GAMES

The weather was definitely ‘welly weather’ but we played a fun active chasing game of Robins and the Frost Sprites.







CRAFTS

We had time to make solstice decorations. There were wooden discs to colour with natural paints. Or stars and angels to make from natural rush and reeds. Everyone had the opportunity to make something to take home and decorate their house or hang on their Christmas Tree,







STORIES AROUND THE FIRE

We gathered around the fire and enjoyed mulled apple juice warmed over the fire and homemade solstice biscuits. Everyone listened to the story of how the Moon came to have a cape and a beautiful poem about the Winter Solstice.





SOLSTICE SPIRAL

Throughout the session everyone had the option to take a quiet moment to walk the Solstice double spiral.

Walking the spiral is an opportunity to think of the past year as you follow the route to the centre and and then hopes and plans for the coming year as you follow the spiral back out.

SONGS

We finished around the fire singing traditional songs to the sound of many instruments and bells



SOLSTICE SUN

The children added strips of golden paper to our Solstice sun. At the end of the celebration the children took turns to parade the Solstice Sun out of the woods to the sounds of the bagpipes!



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Feedback

Thanks so much Sarah and Hannah for a wonderful morning. We had a brilliant time - another winter solstice celebration to remember. Anna

What a magical morning. Thank you. Aimee

I enjoyed it so much, such lovely experiences, thank you Marianne

Thank you for a wonderful afternoon. Coco

For further information on the Wild East Chiltington project including the Children's Forest and the Forest from Seed project please go to the East Chiltington Trust Website.

With thanks to Antonia for allowing the use of their beautiful woods.

With thanks to the National Lottery for funding this project