



## Bulwell children help families to discover the art of play

A range of free play resources for families - created by children from the Bulwell Community Toy Library - is being launched at the Nottingham Contemporary on Saturday 22nd October at 11.30am - to help families explore and enjoy playing in the woods at Bulwell Hall Park in Nottingham.

The children involved and their families will be guests of honour at the event.

The children have worked with Nottingham Contemporary artists Sian Watson and Gillian Brent to create the resources, which include a storybook based on families' experiences of playing in the woods, together with hands-on play activities for children of different ages and creative maps designed by children to give other young people a 'child's eye view' of the woods.

For example, the maps include children's favourite trees, great spots for hide and seek and lots of ideas for making up your own stories.

The children are part of the toy library's nature-inspired outdoor play project 'Play on the Wildside' so they are familiar with playing in the woods at Bulwell Hall Park and wanted to share this experience with other families.

The resources have also inspired a new Play and Learn Trail at the Contemporary, which will help children to explore the gallery's exhibitions in a fun, inspiring way. The Trail will feature the toy library's logo and the wording 'inspired by work done with children from Bulwell Community Toy Library.'

Both the resources and the Play and Learn Trail will be available for Nottingham families to try out, as the launch event coincides with the start of the Contemporary's Family Extravaganza weekend, which is on from 11am to 3pm on Saturday 22nd October and Sunday 23rd October.

A slide show showing a selection of photographs capturing the children and artists in action will also be available to view at the Contemporary.

Children from the toy library will be invited to join in with the Family Extravaganza (which is also open to the public) following the launch.



**Steve Parkinson, Project Manager at the toy library explains how the idea for the Bulwell Hall Park resources came about:**

*“Through talking to local people, we found that many families weren’t using Bulwell Hall Park, even though it’s a great outdoor space for play, including an ancient woodland and a nature reserve.*

*The reason for this is because families didn’t know what the Park offered or what they could do there.*

*We’re hoping that our free resources will help families to explore and have fun in the Park whilst introducing them to the amazing benefits of outdoor play.”*

A survey carried out the Open University recently showed that children are happiest when they’re playing outside with other children. However, the numbers of children playing outside in their local neighbourhood has fallen to just 21%, down from 71% of children from the last generation.

Steve is hopeful that the free Bulwell Hall Park resources will encourage more families to enjoy the natural, open spaces that are on their doorstep.

The Bulwell Hall Park resources will be available to borrow from the toy library from Monday 24th October.

**Saima Kaur, Community Programmer at the Nottingham Contemporary says:**

*“It’s been amazing working with children and the toy library. We’ve helped them to create the Bulwell Hall Park resources, which will help families get outside and play and they’ve helped us to create our new Play and Learn Trail, which will help families to explore, learn and play at the Contemporary.*

*All the children involved should be very proud of their achievement, as they’ll be helping children and families to play for many years to come. The launch event is our way of recognising and celebrating the children’s achievement and contribution.”*

**To find out more about the Bulwell Hall Park resources or toy library please call Steve Parkinson on 0115 975 3898 or email [steve@toy-library.co.uk](mailto:steve@toy-library.co.uk)**

**To find out more about the launch event or Nottingham Contemporary please call Saima Kaur on 0115 948 9783 or email [saimakaur@nottinghamcontemporary.org](mailto:saimakaur@nottinghamcontemporary.org)**

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