

# Celebrating Mile Lane!

community-led project

<https://www.beaconheathsquilometre.org/>

Evaluation Report April 2023

Report prepared by JoJo Spinks BA MPhil PgCER,  
Community Animator  
with Interwoven Productions CIC  
Company no. 11076455  
[www.interwovenproductions.com](http://www.interwovenproductions.com)  
[jojo@interwovenproductions.com](mailto:jojo@interwovenproductions.com) 07855 935137



## Project background

The Celebrating Mile Lane project is the first community-commissioned project of the Beacon Heath *Squilometre* initiative. There are six ongoing neighbourhood *Squilometre* projects in Devon each facilitating street projects with Interwoven trained resident volunteer Place Champions.

Interwoven Productions CIC have been developing and refining their technique for neighbourhood celebrations now since early 2015 and we're thrilled to be able to report that the Beacon Heath community has embraced the opportunity to actively engage in the design and delivery of their own project ideas and have many successes to report.

The Celebrating Mile Lane project was a community nomination that then led to the formation of a "Pod" of local residents who volunteered to drive the project forward, supported by the governance and facilitation of Interwoven Productions CIC and the *Squilometre* place-based technique. This unique way of working ensures a grass-roots approach and means that the technique is well-grounded in Asset-Based Community Development.

The Mile Lane Pod deserve particular recognition for being the first in the area to work in this new way and to prove that the residents of Beacon Heath can devise and deliver their own projects for the benefit of their neighbours.

### What they have achieved:-

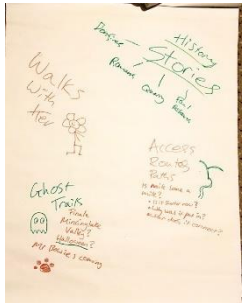
- ✓ Successful partnership working between Interwoven Productions CIC, the Mile Lane "Pod", the Beacon Community Centre, the ECI Community Builder and the Devon Wildlife Trust.
- ✓ 15 events/activities (see below) held in the area attracting active engagement of 295 community members of all ages.
- ✓ Craft workshops held in partnership with the Beacon Community Centre have ensured that there is now a lasting relationship between *Squilometre* activity and the users and staff/volunteers of the Centre.
- ✓ Activity has demonstrably achieved positive results against Devon County Council and Exeter City Council objectives – see below.
- ✓ A joyful finale celebration was provided for 100 local residents, receiving universal praise and calls for more community-led activity.
- ✓ Knowledge of the unique heritage of the Beacon Heath area has been presented and shared more widely.
- ✓ A locally resident volunteer Place Champion continues to receive training and support to continue into 2024.
- ✓ A Pod of seven (eight including the resident Place Champion) Beacon Heath residents are now animated and ready to continue to create community activity for the benefit of their neighbours.




### **What we learned for next time**






We were, in fact, delighted by the community response to the *Squilometre*. Many of the activities were over-subscribed and had to be capped. The Mile Lane Pod was particularly dynamic and animated; a real pleasure to work with. All in all, indications are that the Beacon Heath community, particularly young families, are actively searching for affordable family activities like this.



In future, *Squilometre* projects will be looking at way to include those sections of the community that we saw less of – particularly young people and individuals from more diverse ethnicities.



**Celebrating Mile Lane! – Evaluation Detail against project objectives**

ACTIVITY	Supporting community connection	Helping people to become more physically active – improving health and wellbeing	Helping people to take notice of and care for their environment and/or to develop opportunities for culture, creativity or learning	Providing opportunity for volunteering	Evaluation method
<p><b>First Pod meetings March 2022 – 5 individuals</b></p>	<p>Recruitment of Jan Cadeddu, resident volunteer Place Champion to be trained and supported to facilitate ongoing Squilometre projects</p> 		<p>Images collected to stimulate ideas and memories</p> 	<p>Residents signed up to join the Pod as volunteers</p> 	<p>Collation of ideas</p> 
<p><b>Second and Third Pod meetings March 2022 – 3 new individuals</b></p> <p>Pod built to 8 members</p>	<p>Residents from broader area, from Mile Lane itself and from the Beacon Heath local authority-built estate come together to form the Pod.</p>		<p>Pod begin to explore the heritage of Mile Lane and the Beacon Heath Estate</p> 	<p>Further volunteer Pod members enlisted.</p> 	<p>Individuals signing up to the Pod and allocation of tasks and development of a Project Plan</p> 




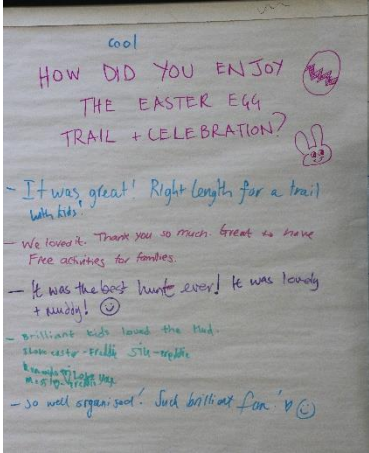
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<p><b>Knights in Yarn – Arthurian bunting – 2 participants</b></p>			<p>Two participants formed a mini Pod to create Arthurian themed decorative bunting for future events.</p> 		<p>Finished bunting</p>
<p><b>Walks with Kev – Five separate walks led by Pod member and local resident Kev Pearson Apr-Aug 2022 – 65 participants</b></p>	<p>Wonderful moments of community connection in appreciation of a shared landscape</p> 	<p>Five popular Walks with Kev completed — memory walks around the Lane and links with local historical sites between April and August 2022. Great physical exercise in good company.</p> 	<p>Kev led two extended walks all the way up to Stoke Hill Iron Age Camp. The Pod negotiated special permission to enter the privately owned field and participants learned about Exeter’s wider prehistoric landscape.</p> 	<p>The Pod completed Risk Assessments for the walks and all acted as volunteer stewards to keep everyone safe and well.</p> 	<p>Participant feedback – “I really enjoyed the memories of the people who grew up in this area. I finding out a little bit more of the history. The Iron Age Fort - that's just amazing! The views, you can picture it can't you with the ramparts and the huts. Definitely glad we came today. A nice group, plenty of chatter. Thoroughly enjoyed it.”</p>

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<p><b>Spring 2022</b></p> <p><b>The “Beacon Heath Bandits”</b></p> <p>4 Pod members</p>			<p>A small sub-Pod were keen to explore natural planting on Mile Lane and the Estate. Early wildflower planting suffered in the hot summer but connection has now been made with the Devon Wildlife Trust and that activity will continue.</p> 		<p>Feedback from Devon Wildlife Trust “Great to hear that the pod (love that!) would like to encourage more flowers into Mile Lane.... It would be lovely to meet with you and the pod to learn a bit more about Mile Lane and the heritage of the area to see how we can best support you and also share what you have learnt about the area.”</p>
<p><b>August 2022</b></p> <p><b>Bespoke research visit to Devon Heritage Centre</b></p> <p>Pod members</p>			<p>The Pod visited the Devon Heritage Centre, with pre-considered questions, for a bespoke group learning session with the Community Outreach Officer.</p>	<p>They were able to gather heritage research to share with 100 community members at their finale event the following Easter</p> 	

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<p><b>Spooky Craft Workshop October 2022</b></p> <p>30 participants</p>	<p>The Spooky Craft Workshop was a wonderful family event – in some cases with three generations all enjoying free activity</p>		<p>Materials and refreshments were provided at no costs to participants. Some wonderful creative activity happened!</p> 	<p>The Spooky Craft Workshop was held in partnership with the Beacon Community Centre and both Pod and Centre volunteers ensured that all went smoothly</p>	<p>Participant feedback – “Amazing timing for the beginning of half term. I brought 4 children with me today and they all loved it. Really nice combination of activities! Thank you for the refreshments from the lovely volunteers.”</p>
<p><b>The Mile Lane Spooky Stroll October 2022</b></p> <p>65 participants</p>		<p>More than 20 local families joined the Pod on a Spooky Stroll along Mile Lane, filled with spooky clues and treats at the end. Several families said they’d never visited the Lane before.</p>	<p>The Pod took the opportunity to dress themselves and the Lane to make the event as creative and fun as possible.</p> 		<p>Participant feedback – “Thank you so much. This was a fabulous activity for the kids! We are so grateful!”</p> <p>“Great costumes and lots of fun”</p> <p>“Excellent spooky fun. Thank you”</p>

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<p><b>Easter Craft Workshop</b></p> <p><b>March 2023</b></p> <p><b>Full Pod and</b></p> <p>25 participants</p>			<p>Families asked for more, open access, creative events like these and again the Pod had to cap numbers in order to manage in the space.</p> 	<p>Again, in partnership with the Beacon Community Centre the RA was completed and four Pod members ensured that all went smoothly.</p> 	<p>Feedback from participants</p> <p>“Really well organised, lots of activities for the kids. A really nice thing to do”</p> <p>“It’s been a really lovely experience, the people have been really welcoming. There’s so much to do. The kids have loved it... It’s been really lovely, thank you very much”</p>



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<p><b>Mile Lane Easter Egg Hunt</b></p> <p><b>(Project finale)</b></p> <p><b>March 2023</b></p> <p>Full Pod 100 participants</p>	<p>The Pod welcomed over 30 families, with people of all ages, to Mile Lane to enjoy an Easter Egg Hunt</p> 	<p>The open air event encouraged participation (even in the mud) in physical exercise and introduced some, for the first time, to the delights of Mile Lane and Mincinglake.</p> 	<p>Then back at the Beacon Community Centre they were able to enjoy refreshments, more crafting and a Beacon Heath heritage exhibition.</p> 	<p>Again, all Pod members attended, acting as outdoors stewards, providing refreshments or supervising play.</p> 	<p>Feedback from participants –</p> <p>“It was very well organised. They makes a lovely cup of tea!”</p> <p>“Really well organised. The kids absolutely loved it.”</p> <p>“It was great! Right length for a trail with kids”</p> <p>“It was the best hunt ever! It was lovely and muddy!”</p>
<p><b>TOTAL ACTIVE PARTICIPATION = 295 Beacon Heath residents</b></p>					



The Mile Lane "Pod" – enjoying the success of their finale event, Easter 2023