

DPLR1\1042

Darwin Plus Local - Final Report (1)

Officer: Linzi Ogden

Section 1 - Darwin Plus Local Project Information (Essential)

Project Reference Number

DPL00031

Q1. Project Title

No Response

Overseas Territory(ies)

Montserrat

Lead Organisation or Individual

Montserrat National Trust

Partner Organisation(s)

Department of Environment, Department of Agriculture, United Kingdom Conservaiton Forum

Value of Darwin Plus Local Grant Award

£49,896.00

Project Start Date

01 April 2023

Project End Date

31 March 2024

Project Leader Name

Delmaude Ryan

Project Website/Twitter/Blog etc.

[@montserratnationaltrust.ms](http://www.montserratnationaltrust.ms)

Report Author(s)

Report Date

26 April 2024

Project Summary

No Response

Project Outcomes

Checked	Biodiversity: improving and conserving biodiversity, and slowing or reversing biodiversity loss and degradation;
Unchecked	Climate Change: responding to, mitigating and adapting to climate change and its effects on the natural environment and local communities;
Checked	Environmental quality: improving the condition and protection of the natural environment;
Checked	Capability and capacity building: enhancing the capacity within OTs, including through community engagement and awareness, to support the environment in the short- and long-term.

Section 2 - Project Outcomes (Essential)

On a scale of 1 (high – outcome substantially exceeded) to 5 (low – outcome substantially did not meet expectation), how successful do you think your project has been?

4 - Outcome moderately did not meet expectation

Project outcomes and justification for rating above

The project had several components, which included the development of a nature trail and outdoor educational facility and campsite and the inclusion of a Junior Conservation Officer. A number of extenuating challenges hampered the ability to establish the outdoor educational facility, which reduced the impact envisage with a facility in place at the end of the project cycle. The cost of the building once officially passed required different standards and as such the construction preparation was way higher than the scope of work envisaged. Shortage of labour, electrical outages, high inflation, and unusual rains hampered the ability to deliver the project in its entirety inhouse. Several activities hinged on the facility being in place such as; the herbarium training sessions and gardening. The camp site preparations and usage were dependant on the outcome of the outdoor educational facility.

The nature trail on the other hand exceeded expectation, it was the first to be established with the level of detail, with signage of the common flora and fauna of the habitat. The interns and youth had the opportunity to map out the trail with GIS expert, the Junior Conservation Officer lead the selection of plants to be highlighted and the

trails objective to be with minimum impact was achieved by not removing the existing flora. MNT's childrens club "Monty's Messenger used it as a learning excursion on their maden hike of the trail, members of the public also told us of their experience.


The other major challenge , was the Junior Conservation Officer, in post, withdrawing from the role at the end of December 2023. This created a vaccum that was difficult to fill with the short time left on the project. This lead to increase in workload and a void at the middle managment level that challenged the capacity to deliver on all aspects of the project as the objective was to utilize this project experience to help build the field experience of the then postholder.


Notwithstanding, Junior staff and interns were exposed to undertaking biodiversity surveys on the lot while learning about the Dry Forest habitat. This included a junior intern from the Department of Environment's team and a student from the undergraduate student at Grinnell College, Iowa, USA.


The project helped to build new partnerships with the Public Works Department and the Meridian Construction BVI Ltd.


Supporting Evidence - file(s) upload


 [At MNT-Pipers Lot Nature Trail](#)


 02/05/2024


 19:39:55


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 [Undegraduate intern conductign invertebrate survey at MNT Piperslot](#)


 01/05/2024


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 [Recycling old lampoles for steps on the nature trail](#)


 01/05/2024


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 [Interpretive Board- Pipers Nature Trail](#)


 01/05/2024


 04:08:43

 jpg 8.42 MB


 [DoE Intern -Biodiversity survey -MNT-Pipers lot](#)


 01/05/2024


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 jpg 4.47 MB


 [Mapping MNT Pipers lot nature Trail](#)


 01/05/2024


 04:05:12

 jpg 5.62 MB


 [Friths Classroom Working Drawings 15.06.23](#)


 01/05/2024


 03:47:04

 pdf 1.96 MB

 [siigns on pipers lot nature trail](#)

 01/05/2024

 03:41:50

 jpg 3.56 MB

Supporting Evidence - links to published document/online materials

Instagram Reel #montserratnationaltrust , Monty's on Piper's lot nature FIND

The Montserrat National Trust Heritage Show of 4 July 2023- Interview with Princess Joseph undergraduate intern from Grinnell College Iowa, USA -https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?ref=watch_permalink&v=574065468231680

Project Challenges

The Project encountered many unexpected problems as referenced in the project outcomes, in human resources and the construction of the outdoor educational facility. Supporting staff (Outreach Officer) not funded by this project but who played a vital role in community engagement affected the reach envisage at the design phase of the project with an unexpected resignation. Unrelated to the loss of the Outreach Officer, the Junior Conservation Officer withdrew after 7 months in the role. The duties were shared but this created heavy work loads for the team, while attempts to find replacements were being persued.

Completing the outdoor educational facility as programmed was hampered by a number of island while issues, from unstable electricity, labour shortages, costs and changes in weather patterns; heavy rains affecting access to the site. The Trust partnered with the Meridian Construction Company Ltd, who reached out to assist with access to the site for the outdoor educational facility and for completing the outdoor educational facility, which they have committed to complete the next three months , baring any unforeseen challenges.

The builing drawings and quotes required technical expertise. The Trust reached out to the Public Works Department for civil engineering support and advice in the construction of the outdoor educational facility where the expertise was not present at the MNT.

Lessons Learned

1) Exposing the youths to the dry forest habitat, having them lead on plant selection and identification, and plotting the new hiking trail. The impact for using the trail in the dry forest habitat as an open classroom. For example; the Monty Messengers childrens club, having a hike through the trail but also learnt about the ecosystems of the habitat by playing a bingo game called FIND which involved spotting the common birds, lizards and plants on the trail.

Being able to keep the biodiversity of the area intact, during the construcion of the trail, having little disturbance t.

2) The Outdoor classroom facility, required funding of its own. The building construction requirements, is unpredictable given the shortage in labour, electrical outages and access to the lot after heavy showers. It was difficult to predict the changes in weather conditions as the known rainy season and dry seasons were different, possible due to chanign weather patterns. A thorough risk analysis with the help of civil engineers at the start would have better advised the project scope in relation to the funding available and timeframe.

3) Involve the relevant technical expertise from idea to project concept based on the elements of the project.

4) Improve the project design by not having too many interdependencies of outputs. The involvement of technical expertise outside the remit of your core organization where that expertise does not exist inhouse; for example civil engineers.

Section 3 - Project Finance (Essential)

Project Expenditure

Project Spend (indicative) since last Annual Report	2023/24 Grant (£)	2023/24 Total actual Darwin Plus Costs (£)	Variance %	Comments (please explain significant variances)
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Staff Costs			
Consultancy Costs			
Overhead Costs			
Travel and Subsistence			
Operating Costs			
Capital Items			
Others			
Total	49,896.00	49,769.59	-0.25%

Please provide a short narrative summary on project finances.

1) Planned spend for the educational facility was way below quotes submitted for the works to be done for the construction of the outdoor educational facility. Instead of abandoning the project, Meridian Construction committed to assist as one of three community outreach projects of the company meeting the shortfall through material and labour and management of the project. These funds were available through the undispensed of the salary assigned for a conservation officer, who resigned at the end of the third quarter. Meridian agreed to assist in Q4 of the project.

2) Co- financing (in kind) offered for the outdoor educational facility at MNT Pipers lot by the provision of material and labour for widening access road, and construction of the facility . £25,000 allocated from this project to Meridian Construction BVI Ltd towards completion of the outdoor educational facility in 6 months baring weather conditions.

Section 4 - Contribution of Project to Darwin Plus Programme Objectives

Please select up to **one** indicator that applies within **each group/indicator list (A, B, C, D)** and report your results for that indicator in the text box underneath. If you do not have relevant results to report for any of the indicators in a particular group, you can leave them blank.

Please also submit some form of evidence (above) to demonstrate any results you list below, where possible.

Group A: Capability and Capacity - Core Darwin Plus Standard Indicators (select one)

Checked	DPLUS-A01: Number of people from key national and local stakeholder groups completing structured and relevant training.
Checked	DPLUS-A02: Number of secondments or placements completed by individuals of key local and national stakeholders.
Unchecked	DPLUS-A03: Number of local/national organisations with improved capability and capacity as a result of project.
Unchecked	DPLUS-A04: Number of people reporting that they are applying new capabilities (skills and knowledge) 6 (or more) months after training.
Unchecked	DPLUS-A05: Number of trainers trained reporting to have delivered further training by the end of the project.

Group A Indicator Results

Relevant training in hands-on GIS mapping undertaken by 8 persons including 5 young persons. One intern from the Department of the Environment was attached one day per week for training in biodiversity surveys

Group B: Policies, Practices and Management- Core Darwin Plus Standard Indicators (select one)

Unchecked	DPLUS-B01: Number of new/improved habitat management plans available and endorsed.
Unchecked	DPLUS-B02: Number of new/improved species management plans available and endorsed.
Unchecked	DPLUS-B03: Number of new/improved community management plans available and endorsed.
Unchecked	DPLUS-B04: Number of new/improved sustainable enterprises/ community benefits management plans available and endorsed.
Checked	DPLUS-B05: Number of people with increased participation in local communities / local management organisations (i.e., participation in Governance/citizen engagement).
Unchecked	DPLUS-B06: Number of Local Stakeholders and Local Communities (people) with strengthened (recognised/clarified) tenure and/or rights.

Group B Indicator Results

4 persons had increased participation in citizen engagement through participation in radio programmes such as the Montserrat National Trust Heritage Show. Sharing on the nature of the project, its benefits and the biodiversity of the dry forest. 3 persons participation at youth career fair open to all schools

Group C: Evidence and Best Practices - Core Darwin Plus Standard Indicators (select one)

Unchecked	DPLUS-C01: Number of best practice guides and knowledge products published and endorsed.
Checked	DPLUS-C02: Number of new conservation or species stock assessments published.
Unchecked	DPLUS-C03: New assessments of habitat conservation action needs published.
Unchecked	DPLUS-C04: New assessments of community use of biodiversity resources published.
Unchecked	DPLUS-C05: Number of projects contributing data, insights, and case studies to national Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) related reporting processes and calls for evidence.

Group C Indicator Results

Invertebrate survey data contributed to the citizen science data collection for Biodiversity of Montserrat on the iNaturalist platform.

Group D: Sustainable Benefits to People, Biodiversity and Climate - Core Darwin Plus Standard Indicators (select one)

Checked **DPLUS-D01 Hectares of habitat under sustainable management practices.**

Unchecked **DPLUS-D02: Number of people whose disaster/climate resilience has been improved.**

Unchecked **DPLUS-D03: Number of policies with biodiversity provisions that have been enacted or amended.**

Group D Indicator Results

14 acres of land reserved by the Montserrat National Trust to preserve the dry forest habitat, protected by the Montserrat National Trust

Section 5 - Project Partnerships, Wider Impacts and Contributions

Project Partnerships

i) The Montserrat National Trust was the lead partner who organized and planned activities. The UKOTCF provided guidance in biodiversity surveys. The Department of Environment provided additional technical support in species identification or conditions through its technical officers.

ii) The Ministry of Agriculture and the Environment agencies represented the Government's involvement. The Minister with responsibility for the environment was involved in a site visit along with his technical team, at the start of the project. The Minister continues to pledge his support to the Trust in promoting this initiative that aligns with the goals of the Ministry. The Minister has also attended public events at the Montserrat National Trust where project updates on the project were provided.

iii) The Montserrat Secondary School Agriculture classes have considered the nature trail in the Dry Forest as one of its sites for student School Based Assessments. The Public Works Department through their Civil Engineer technical support in the form of advice. The support of Meridian Construction BVI Ltd for technical support in engineering, building material and construction management and supervision.

Wider Impacts and Decision Making

It is still early to determine the level of impact at the policy level.

Sustainability and Legacy

Yes. The Nature trail and outdoor educational facility and campsite will continue to be a choice for learning for the immediate community of Salem and Montserrat at large. Youth clubs, school groups and researchers all have an interest. The secondary school is anxiously awaiting the completion of the facility to provide alternative learning environment to better engage students in the ecology of Montserrat.

The role of a Conservation Officer is part of the management structure of the Trust and recruitment for a middle level officer

Conservation Officer I, is being advertised to fill what was once the Junior Conservation Officer, to continue the understudy of the current Conservation Officer and build the capacity of conservation at the Montserrat National Trust. Notwithstanding, the withdrawal of the former junior conservation officer; the officer continues to volunteer in other activities of the Trust.

Visiting Scientists have begun to utilize the nature trail to collect data on Dry Forest habitats.

The MSS Agriculture Classes will utilize the site for Science base School Base Assessments.

Section 6 - Communications & Publicity

Exceptional Outcomes and Achievements

The MNT-Pipers lot Dry Forest nature trail would be an excellent model demonstrating simply and sustainable ways to preserve a Dry Forest habitat by bringing awareness of the habitat to the community by encouraging increased nature connectivity and immersion into the Forest.

Photos of the before, the process of construction, and the resultant established trail, will demonstrate a natural learning lab for the community and visitors alike. There is a depth of knowledge that can be garnered from a 20 minute hiking trail in a dry forest habitat which highlights common birds and lizards of the forest along with native and endemic plants.





This project also demonstrates how a trail can be constructed by protecting the existing vegetation using natural pathways through raking of leaf litter and meandering through the trees, and utilizing recycled material ; in this case, old utility poles were donated from the local utility company (Montserrat Utility Ltd). They were cut, sliced and shaved to create threaders, and wooden pegs to support the threaders, thereby reducing the risk of slipping, and establishing a more level footed path on the steep topography of the trail.





Choosing the right material is important for the longevity of the threaders and safety on the trails. The recycled utility poles repurposed for threaders and stakes are green heart wood and similar green heart wooden poles were used to secure a light weighted rope that provides support at steeper inclines when traversing up or down the trail. Utilising small rocks and the careful relocation of soil along the pathway gave the trail a natural integration with its surrounding. This approach in utilizing existing material in the habitat, mitigates any introduction of potential invasive species which may become destructive to the habitat





The presence of signage identifying some of the common flora that can be found on the trail, along with common birds and lizards is a source of education for hikers. Documentation of the flora along the proposed pathway, prior to construction can be found on the Biodiversity of Montserrat Project on the Inaturalist platform which can be used for further education by the community and is also available to researchers who may be interested in undertaking research on the Dry Forest Habitat of Montserrat.





Photo, video or graphic to be used for publicity and communications.





Please upload at least one relevant and engaging image, video or graphic that you consent to be used alongside the above text in Defra, JNCC or NIRAS communications material.





 [DPLR1-00031 Monty Messengers Exploring MNT -Pipers Lot Dry - Forest Nature Trail. -Montserrat](#)
 09/07/2024
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 [DPLR1-00031-MNT-Pipers Lot Nature Trail threa ders completed-Montserrat](#)
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 [DPLR1-00031-MNT Pipers Lot Nature Trail Recycl ing Utility Poles-Montserrat](#)
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 [DPLR1-00031 MNT-Pipers Lot Trail Flora Identific ation- Montserrat](#)
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 [DPLR1-00031-MNT-Pipers Lot Nature Trail-Lowe r friths Salem Montserrat](#)
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 [DPLR1-00031-MNT-Pipers Lot Trail under Constr uction-Montserrat](#)
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 [DPLR1-00031-Mapping the MNT-Pipers Lot Trail- Montserrat](#)
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 [DPLR1-00031-MNT-Pipers lot Before-Montserrat](#)
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Photo, video, and/or graphic captions and credits.

Permissions have been agreed to publish photos of persons included in the above images who are all either a staff, volunteer or a member of the Monty Messengers Club.

The photos provided are all taken in Montserrat, specifically for this project and are credited to Delmaude C Ryan and Virginie Sealys.

I agree for the Biodiversity Challenge Funds Secretariat, Administrator, and/or JNCC to publish the content of this section.

Yes, I agree for the BCFs Secretariat and/or JNCC to publish the content of this section.

Please list any accounts that you would like tagged in online posts here. This can include project pages, partners' pages or individuals' accounts for any of the following platforms: LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram.

www.montserratnationaltrust.ms

instagram: @montserratnationaltrust

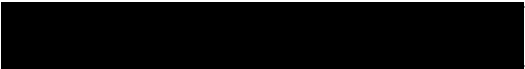

Facebook: Montserrat National Trust

Section 7 - Darwin Plus Contacts

Please tick here to confirm that you have read and acknowledge the BCF's Privacy Notice on how contact details will be used and stored and that you have sought agreement from anyone that you are sharing personal details with us on their behalf.

I confirm I have read the Privacy Notice and have consent to share the following contact details

Project Contact Details

Project Contact Name	Delmaude C Ryan
Role within Darwin Plus Project	Project Lead
Email	
Phone	
Do you need further sections to provide additional contact details?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> No