



**Mark Burns-Williamson**  
Police & Crime Commissioner  
West Yorkshire

# Safer Communities Fund

## Final Evaluation Report 2017-18

As part of the Safer Communities Fund process, you are required to complete the following evaluation forms once your project has concluded.

The terms and conditions of the grant which you accepted refer to this detail and can be found [here](#).

A full list of the priorities and outcomes listed in the Police and Crime Plan can be found [here](#).

Please complete this form and return to the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for West Yorkshire. Please note the office will review this in line with your successful application.

[safercommunitiesfund@westyorkshire.pnn.police.uk](mailto:safercommunitiesfund@westyorkshire.pnn.police.uk)

The Engagement Team, at Ploughland House, 62 George Street, Wakefield, WF1 1DL

To be completed by a member of the Engagement Team.

<b>Name of Organisation</b>		<b>6 million+ Charitable Trust</b>	
<b>Name of Project :</b>		<b>The Weeping Sisters</b>	
<b>Grant Round Awarded</b>		<b>Round 11</b>	<b>Date Awarded : 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2017</b>
<b>Total Grant</b>	£4950.00	<b>Number of beneficiaries</b>	A core of 40 and 250 more at the event
<b>Priorities</b> Safeguard vulnerable people		<b>Outcomes</b> Community cohesion Avoiding radicalisation	
<b>Project Description</b> The project was to invite the Kurdish community of Huddersfield and the Roma community of Mirfield and Dewsbury to make giant processional figures of a Kurdish woman and a Roma woman for a processional event which marked Holocaust Memorial Day 2018. The two communities would work with professional artists and at least two other non Roma non Kurdish community groups, who know little about them, to make the figures. It would be a way of people getting to know one another better and developing increased understanding of the			

history and experience of different groups living in Kirklees. The events of the past would be connected to present day issues. Participants would discuss the negative impact of allowing a culture of blame, suspicion and scapegoating to inform how we treat others. The project would aim to challenge any form of extremism and encourage positive dialogue.

**Was the project completed on time?**

**Either as predicted in your original application form or within the maximum 12 month period. Please detail any project extensions required.**

The project took place between September 2017 and February 2018 as planned. Recruitment and preparation happened with groups between Sept and November 2017. The sessions took place between December and the end of January 2019 with the event happening successfully on 25<sup>th</sup> January.

**Was the project completed on 'budget'?**

**Referring to the total value on page 1 and the financial breakdown provided in your original application form, were some figures in the financial breakdown altered, did your project exceed these costs, overall costs or underspend providing reasons for each.**

The budget was £4950 and £4953.60 was spent.

The project did not exceed the costs and original budget headings were adhered to but some areas of expenditure were adjusted for the following reasons:

We were offered workshop spaces as help in kind, so our estimated budget for rent was underspent.

This meant that we could book another community musician for the procession and also pay the artists for extra sessions; the high winds that were forecast for the day of the procession meant that the puppets had to be strengthened and made windproof to make them safe for the volunteer carriers.

Extra materials were needed for the Kurdish puppet.

**Did your project meet the priorities indicated? Please provide an example/evidence of each.**

**Referring to the Police and Crime Plan priorities listed on page 1, did your project make a positive difference towards them; providing an example per priority.**

Safeguarding vulnerable people

The Roma and Kurdish communities were given the opportunity to share and exchange their history and experiences with the other participants in the project as well as wider audiences on the final procession and at the indoor event. In so doing, other participants and members of audiences developed understanding of the circumstances that refugees have fled from and what caused them. An example of this: some of the girls from Batley Girls High School, looking at the power of the media to present refugees in a negative context, changed their thinking and attitudes, having met and listened to some of the individual refugees who were involved in the puppet making workshops. Bosnian, Kurdish, Roma, South Asian, Syrian and white participants worked together to create the processional figures and shared common experiences and different beliefs and opinions in a safe and friendly space.

**Did your project meet the outcomes indicated? Please provide an example/evidence of each.**

**Referring to the Police and Crime Plan outcomes listed on page 1, how did your project contribute to each outcome; providing an example per outcome**

Community cohesion

The creative process of making and decorating the 15 ft high "Weeping Sisters", talking about their significance and creating words and music to accompany them on procession, successfully linked refugees and local people, to work together on a creative project with a positive, practical outcome. It pulled people away from screens and monitors for a while, replace the virtual world with the real world. It encouraged people not just to live side

by side but to live together. During one session, when pockets were being sewn on to the costume of the giant figure, a conversation arose about how pockets and seams were used to hide money and jewellery when Jewish families were taken from their homes and transported to camps. Kurdish, Bosnian and Roma participants had similar stories to share and this united the group and provided powerful testimony for those who had never experienced that kind of persecution and fear. On a lighter note, coffee and cakes became a feature of the workshops, especially in Dewsbury, when recipes from different countries and cultures were exchanged and consumed. Participants felt like friends at the end of the project and wanted to continue working together.

A Bosnian participant invited delegates from 3 European countries, plus the UK group to have coffee and cakes in her home. There were 17 of us squashed into her kitchen. Some of our group were Serbian so this was a hugely significant, inclusive and generous act on her part.

#### Avoiding radicalisation

The two giant figures were carried by adults and young people in procession, accompanied by community musicians and singers from a variety of cultures, providing a powerful image of solidarity and unity locally and regionally. There were no negative responses from members of the public on the streets as the procession passed by. People were amazed to see commemorations of Jewish, Bosnian, Kurdish and Roma genocides happening as one event. One Czech Roma boy, adopted by a local family and having some issues at school, was delighted to meet other Roma residents of Kirklees and have the opportunity to feel proud of his culture with his adopted family. The message of the final event was to reach out to people we consider as “other” and make them feel welcome. 6 million+ was also working with a group from Serbia, Poland and Italy who joined the procession. It was brilliant to see a Serbian violinist and a Bosnian accordion player playing together. The Serbian musician said “The power of music transcends politics and we can be friends”.

#### **Did you face any barriers or challenges in completing this project?**

The very cold winter weather presented the group with a challenge as the working space in Dewsbury was very cold but people pulled together to provide heaters and hot coffee.

It was difficult to find days and times that everyone could manage and a lot of hard work went into recruiting participants, but as the weeks went by, word of mouth and facebook posts encouraged more people to attend. The Huddersfield venue, associated with the Kurdish community turned out to be problematic for some of the Kurdish participants. It was not the neutral venue we believed it to be. Having changed venues, half way through the programme of workshops, more people participated. We managed not to get involved in the internal politics of this, constantly promoting the vision of encouraging people to work together and to accept difference.

The Trust became aware that more South Asian and Syrian individuals might have got involved in making the puppets if it had not been for the Holocaust Memorial Day theme. Some people could not bring themselves to be associated with Jewish history, especially those sympathetic to the plight of Palestinians. It did not threaten the completion of the project but is a constant issue faced by the Trust, and in fact, the wider world.

#### **How many beneficiaries did your project engage with?**

**Referring to the estimate quoted in your original application form and listed on page 1, please provide details on how this number was met or why it was not achieved**

22 people participated in the workshops in Dewsbury

*(a mixture of Bosnian, Roma, South Asian and white men, women and young people)*

17 people participated in the workshops in Huddersfield

*(a mixture of Kurdish, Syrian, Iranian and white men, women and children)*

10 people participated in rehearsing with and carrying the puppets in procession

*(a mixture of all of the above – mainly family members or friends of participants)*

Approx 150 people accompanied the procession on 26<sup>th</sup> January in Huddersfield

Approx 120 people attended the indoor Holocaust Memorial Day event at the University of Huddersfield, in which the giant figures featured.

**Did you feel your project had a wider impact on your community?**

**If so, can you provide examples of this**

Giving the project a public profile by taking the giant figures through the streets and sharing the stories of individuals at the event, meant that a wider group of people were touched by the experiences of others. Statistics thrown at us by the media became individual human stories of people in crisis, what is so often presented as scrounging is in reality desperation, looking for a better life is in fact searching for a safe place to call home, free of violence and trauma.

At the end of the procession, students from Batley Girls High School, in role as Daily Mail readers, interrogated 94 year old Holocaust survivor Iby Knill about why she was here and what she'd contributed to British society; why are you here taking our jobs? Do you even speak English? Have you got leave to remain? She answered their questions with dignity, authority and her personal story. The audience was shocked. Later, the girls did the same to a Kurdish refugee. Would the audience have been so shocked if those questions had been put to him first?

The project and event succeeded in questioning and examining the reasons why some young people blame refugees for everything that is wrong with the UK and others are drawn to extremist beliefs about how the failures of the West should be punished.

**If your project is part of a longer term programme, how do you plan to sustain this work?**

At the end of the project and event, in February 2019, we gathered together some of the key participants to hold a reflective session (with cakes!) to talk about the challenges and successes of the process, what people had enjoyed and what they would like to do next.

The group, especially the participants making the Roma puppet in Dewsbury, expressed a strong interest in continuing to work together creatively with clay and textiles. They will be involved again in similar workshops this coming winter and this time they will take more of a role in recruiting others and co-facilitating workshops.

The puppets created during the workshops will be available to use for other events such as the Halabja Memorial event and Remembering Srebrenica. Volunteers will be able to come together again and carry the puppets together at key events during the year.

**Did you work with any partners during this project?**

**Including those listed in your original application form, please provide details of partners and activities**

Creative Scene in Dewsbury, provided a space to work in and some funding for the Dewsbury arm of the project.

A Kurdish restaurant - Med 1 - provided an upper floor, free of charge for workshops in Huddersfield.

Local churches: Dewsbury Minster, Huddersfield Methodist Mission and New North Road Baptist Church assisted with recruitment and spaces.

Local refugee support groups like DASH, Reach and Sanctuary Kirklees helped with recruitment of refugees.

The University of Huddersfield worked with 6 million+ Trust to host the final event, providing spaces and resources as help in kind.

Local police supported the outdoor procession of the figures and worked in partnership with us to identify a safe route.

**Did you do any social media or publicity around your project?**

Please include any links to posts or newspaper articles if available.

Newspaper coverage online and in the Huddersfield Examiner and Dewsbury Reporter:

<https://www.examinerlive.co.uk/news/west-yorkshire-news/giant-puppets-bring-colourful-yet-14204421>

<https://www.examinerlive.co.uk/whats-on/major-holocaust-memorial-event-huddersfield-14189428>

<https://www.dewsburyreporter.co.uk/news/puppet-art-to-mark-the-holocaust-1-8962555>

<https://www.hud.ac.uk/news/2018/january/holocaustmemorialday2018/>

Video of the procession made by 6 million+ Trust and featured on the Every Button Counts website, at the end of which the Police Commissioner's Fund is credited.

<https://vimeo.com/266718690/>

Report of the EU Every Button Counts project and event, see Section 5 (Remembrance) that covers the Weeping Sisters process

<http://publications.everybuttoncounts.eu/report>

Also our facebook page @6MillionPlus where the whole process of working with groups is documented in words and pictures if you scroll back to December 2017 and Jan - Feb 2018

We have attached the press release to the report to prove that we asked for support from the Police Commissioner's Fund to be acknowledged. The media did not always acknowledge our request.

Also attached: the HMD programme and recruitment flyers.

**Please tell us about any difficulties which you may have faced throughout the SCF grant, suggesting any improvements we could make to the process going forward.**

The SCF grant process has been quite straight forward and the officers have been helpful. It was a pity that the Police Commissioner himself could not attend any of the workshops or the final procession which was such an innovative and moving event. We were glad to welcome Celeste (Armitage) to one of the workshops in Dewsbury.

**Any other comments...**

**Signed :**