

# GreenSpace

A partnership approach to Green Social Prescribing

in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire

Integrated  
Care System  
Nottingham & Nottinghamshire



Nottingham  
Community  
and Voluntary  
Service



Growing healthy people,  
connected to nature

2021

April

2023

April

**What this pilot on Green Social  
Prescribing has taught us**

# GreenSpace

Nottingham Integrated Care System (ICS) was selected to be one of seven government Green Social Prescribing Test and Learn sites to run a two-year pilot nature-based programme. Nottingham Community and Voluntary Service (NCVS) led the pilot locally, working with system partners across the city and county to connect people, places and projects into a green network offering something for everyone, no matter their ability or where they live. Thus, in April 2021, GreenSpace was born.



## Aim of the pilot

The pilot was set up to test how green social prescribing could be embedded into communities, particularly those who had been disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, with the aim of improving mental health, reducing health inequalities, reducing demand on health and social care services, and making green social activities more resilient and accessible.

## What is green social prescribing?



Green social prescribing connects people with local nature-based and outdoor activities and community groups to improve their mental and physical wellbeing. Often, this will be through a referral from a Social Prescribing Link Worker, healthcare clinician or other community connector, although many people self-refer into activities. Green social prescribing activities may include gardening, walking, cycling, animal husbandry, woodwork and outdoor maintenance projects, arts and crafts, conservation, and much more.

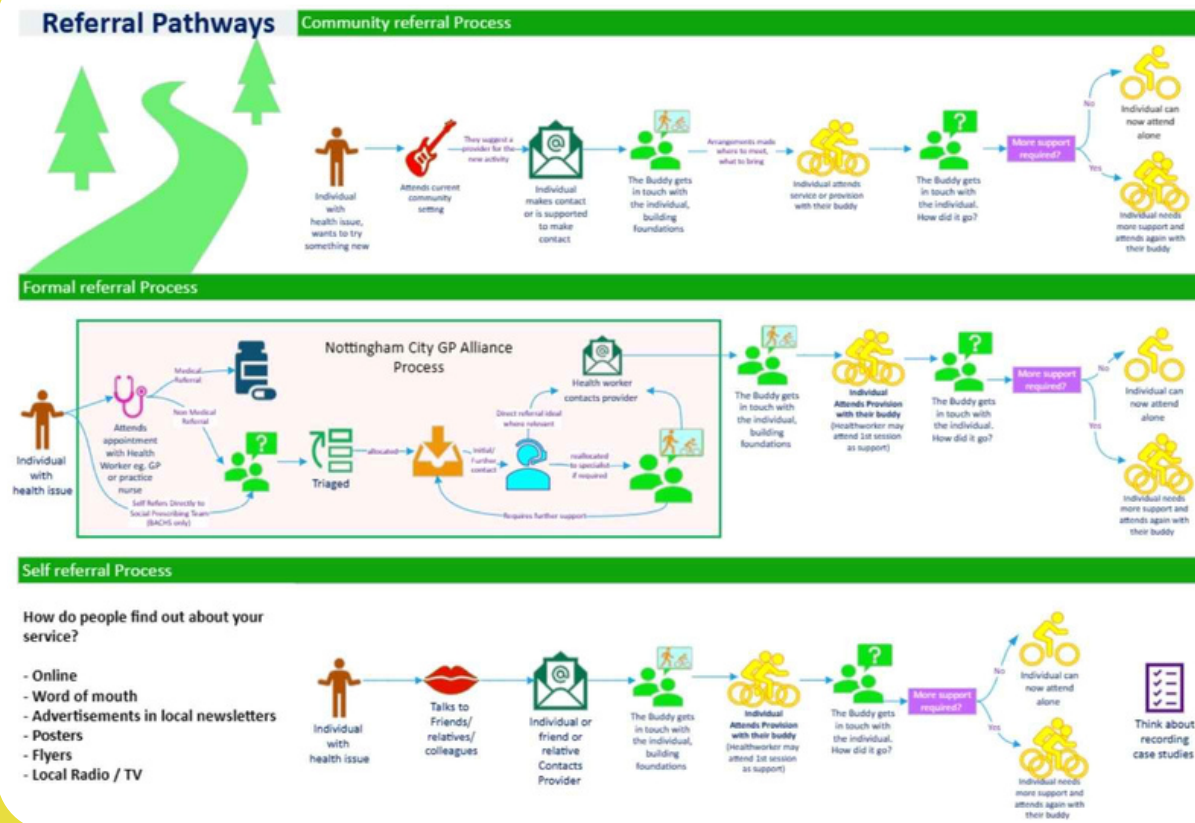
## Why did we do it?

Over the course of the test and learn period, the GreenSpace team at NCVS worked with a wide range of organisations across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire to explore the different opportunities they could offer to enable us to integrate green social prescribing into the local health and voluntary, community and social enterprises (VCSE) infrastructure to ensure that nature-based activities become an intervention of choice when supporting people to improve their mental health and wellbeing.



# Referral Pathway

It soon became clear that Social Prescribing Link Workers was only one of the many routes people were referred into social prescribing activities. People were also referred via healthcare professionals such as physiotherapists and occupational therapists, charities, community and faith organisations, and schools.



We soon found that the general public and many healthcare professionals had little to no understanding of green social prescribing. This meant that referrals were limited to professional bodies and organisations that were already aware of social prescribing and green social prescribing pathways.

This highlighted the need to raise the profile of green social prescribing as an intervention of choice for treating or complementing the treatment of mental ill health and enable a greater number of people to access the benefits of green social prescribing activities.

Work continues to implant green social prescribing into local healthcare systems. By educating clinicians about the benefits of green social prescribing and the referral routes available and supporting VCSE organisations to continue to provide opportunities for patients, we can better secure referral pathways into green activities.

# GreenSpace Trusted Provider Scheme

## What is a Trusted Provider?

The GreenSpace Trusted Provider Scheme was developed in response to a desire from social prescribers who wanted a variety of organisations that they could confidently refer people into, knowing that the activities were suitable and that all the relevant policies, procedures and insurance were in place to keep their clients safe during sessions.

## How do you become a Trusted Provider?

All organisations had robust safeguarding and health and safety policies and procedures in place; their insurance covered all activities; and they demonstrated other benchmarks that showcased their care and consideration of all participants, volunteers and paid employees.

As part of the application process, organisations received feedback and support, including tailored support and training from NCVS where needed. As a result, organisations reviewed and updated their policies, more organisations employed designated and trained safeguarding leads, and NCVS provided tailored business support and training to organisations across the city and county.



## Feedback

Providers reported that the application process was a positive experience for them; they appreciated the external review of their documents and the feedback they received. Because of this support, some organisations now find it easier to apply for funding as they have the relevant documentation in place. A guide has been developed to support other locations and organisations to develop their own, bespoke Trusted Provider scheme. For more information, contact [greenspace@nottinghamcvs.co.uk](mailto:greenspace@nottinghamcvs.co.uk).



# GreenSpace Mental Health Levels

Many organisations expressed early concerns that they may end up supporting a large number of individuals with complex mental health needs. While they wanted to help, they realised they lacked the necessary experience and specialised training to do so in a way that would be safe and effective. In order to help organisations determine the level of need they could meet and to encourage communication between prescribers and providers, a set of level descriptors was developed in conjunction with the GreenSpace Mental Health Lead from the LiVE team at Highbury Hospital. This was crucial to making sure that the right referrals were made to each organisation.

The levels, ranging from 0 to 4 (see below), define escalating mental health demands. Most institutions determined that they could assist individuals falling into the first three

categories of need. The Live Team at Highbury Hospital and the staff at Framework's Nature In Mind project provided specialised support for Levels 3 and 4.

Throughout the project, the Mental Health Levels were held in high regard by providers who felt empowered by the fact that the emphasis was on what they could truly offer and that they had a standard framework to use when talking with social prescribers before a person came to their setting. Social prescribers expressed their gratitude for the tool's assistance in helping them choose the best activity for their clients.



# GreenSpace Mental Health Levels



## **Level 0: A person who is well and wishes to take steps to safeguard their mental health.**

This is a person who has made the decision to improve their mental health through a green or nature-based activity. They will independently access advice and self-help resources as they need them and manage their own mental wellbeing without the need of additional support.

## **Level 1: A person who is at risk of developing mental ill health**

This person is seeking help for mental health issues from a health worker or from their general practitioner (GP) due to issues such as anxiety, low mood, loneliness, a lack of routine, or motivation that are negatively affecting their mental health. Their GP can manage their low level of assistance with help from Social Prescribing pathways in the community and voluntary sectors.

## **Level 2: A person with mild mental ill health**

This is a person who can manage their mental health with general practitioner (GP) support in addition to psychological therapies like cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) or counselling, short-term medication, and/or regular monitoring. To help them settle in during the first few sessions, they might require a Green Befriender. Rather than attending regular open sessions, they might need to attend specific sessions. If necessary, they can get support from their mental health professional or Link Worker. Volunteers who work for organisations that offer sessions for Level Two patients can receive training because the individual participating in the activity could require assistance from a volunteer.

## **Level 3: A person with moderate ill health**

This individual needs care in multiple areas, from specialists to the local mental health team. Their requirements are more complex. Health professionals will monitor and assess their progress as needed. They could require a lot of assistance to participate in sessions, perhaps from a support worker. Services having specialised resources and experience in working with individuals who have persistent and complicated mental illness would provide the provision, which might be for a predetermined amount of time or as part of a package. The referrer will help the GreenSpace provider by offering information and advice. The provider and referrer will communicate regularly as needed, and in the event of a crisis, there will be a designated contact to reach.

## **Level 4: A person with severe or complex mental ill health**

This could be someone with an acute mental health crisis requiring inpatient treatment or intensive crisis team support, or someone with a long-term serious mental health condition that affects their functioning and requires regular care and support. This person can use GreenSpace activities in a hospital setting, such as a hospital community or therapy garden. Services would be provided by specialist teams, such as medical professionals with experience working with people with a range of long-term and acute mental health needs. This person would need an initial visit and an individual needs assessment before starting the activity with ongoing support from a nurse or health professional, along with ongoing communication between the referrer and service provider.

# The Big Green Book

Our early research revealed that Social Prescribers wanted easily available, detailed information about the range of different activities on offer to be shared with their clients. Our initial plan of an online portal was not simple or inclusive so:

## Our answer to this - The Big Green Book

The Big Green Book is a directory of nature-based activities and opportunities around Nottingham. Social prescribers, healthcare workers, and other key referrers can find a wealth of information organised by location to help their clients choose an activity that is suitable for their needs. The book outlines the facilities available and details the level of mental health need that each group is able to support to ensure the right referrals are made to the right organisations.



“

*'This is one of the first resources I was given as a Key Worker and I thought, this is going to make my job really easy.'*

*'We print this to use with people across different sites, as people like the paper copy.'*

*'We have a copy and use it with our service users to find activities.'*

*'The Big Green Book is how I found the community garden with my link worker.'*

”

Our Big Green Book can be found on the [NCVS website](#).

Did you know?

The Big Green Book is regularly updated, if you offer outdoor or nature-based activities, fill in our [online form](#) and they may be added to the next version.



Other localities around Nottinghamshire are developing their own Big Green Book.

Rushcliffe Health's book can be found [here](#).

# The Big Green Book: Special Edition

In 2023, NCVS began work on the Travel Well project, an active travel social prescribing project working in partnership with Nottingham City Council and Nottingham City GP Alliance. Special editions of The Big Green Book have since been developed to support the Travel Well project, integrating walking, cycling, and wheeling activities with the existing nature-based activities in each of the project's delivery areas.

The decision to create a special edition of The Big Green Book, rather than a specific Travel Well book, was intended to promote green social prescribing activities as a whole to better encourage people to build physical and social activity into their lives. Possibly by travelling to the activity by walking, cycling, or wheeling.

The Travel Well special edition books provide vital information for the Travel Well Community Connectors, as well as other members of the local social prescribing teams, enabling them to see at a glance the different activities available for their patients and the pathways to progress into other activities beyond the Travel Well offering.

There are three editions of the **Travel Well Big Green Book**, specific to the project's target areas, divided into Nottingham City West, Nottingham City North, and Nottingham City East.





# Nottingham Greenground Map

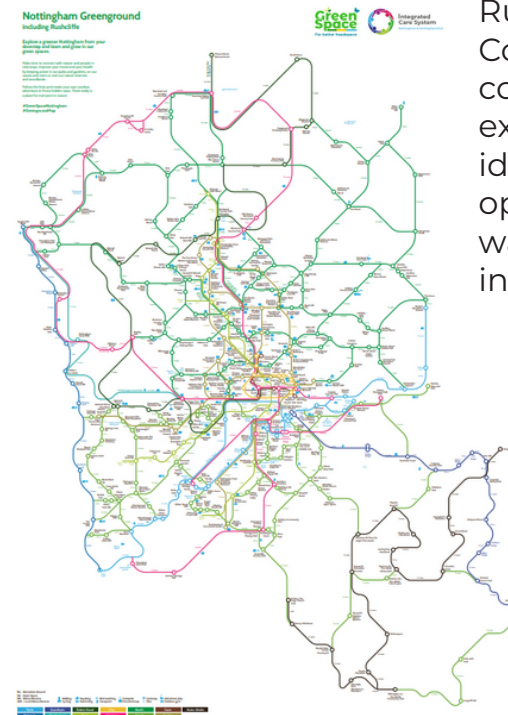
The Nottingham Greenground Map was designed to inspire people to explore the green spaces in the city. The map was created in collaboration with Helen Illus, an artist living in Tallin who has created Greenground Maps for several cities in the UK, including London, Sheffield, and Birmingham.

Inspired by the iconic London Tube Map, Helen's Greenground Maps identify and connect all the different green spaces around the city with coloured lines representing different themes. For example, the pink line links heritage locations such as Wollaton Hall, Newstead Abbey, and Green's Windmill, while the khaki green line links all of the different community gardens.

The themed lines demonstrate how Nottingham's green spaces can be viewed as one connected network. While the lines do not provide exact routes, they give an idea of the distances between locations, so you can see how far it would be to walk, run, or cycle from one site to another. The Nottingham Greenground Map includes the addition of a checklist of all the different locations on each line of the map so that people can keep a record of the places they have visited.

When the map was launched, people were encouraged to use it to create their own challenges, such as visiting all the places on a specific line or creating a walking or cycling route that links a few different locations. Printed maps were distributed at key locations in the city, such as libraries, GP surgeries, and tourist locations.

An interactive digital version of the map was made available on the [Notts Guided Walks](#) website.



Rushcliffe Borough Council subsequently commissioned an extension of the map, identifying the different opportunities and walking routes available in the borough.



# GreenSpace NG App



## Or, how the map became an app

The GreenSpace team wanted to add a checklist to the Greenground map so users could tick off the places they had visited. Doug Colton had created the Ethel Ready App for climbers in the Peak District. Known as the Ethels, the 95 peaks could be ticked off as they were climbed. The team wanted to create something similar for GreenSpace participants, so they got in touch with Doug, who jumped at the chance to get involved!

**Doug Colton**

*“Having grown up in Nottinghamshire and enjoying lots of outdoor activities myself, I was keen to help. I live in the Peak District, and during the pandemic, I taught myself to build smart phone apps. My Ethel Ready app offered people the challenge of climbing 95 prominent hills in the Peak District. It became incredibly popular, and I realised that I could use it as a model for the free GreenSpace NG app that I’ve built for NCVS. It’s been a pleasure to work with Laura and Kate to provide the communities in Nottinghamshire with a simple, handy, free tool to find and benefit from visiting the multitude of green spaces around Nottingham and the rest of the county. With the pressures of modern life, I’m convinced that finding time to go outdoors, get some exercise, and enjoy nature is a great way to look after your mind and body.”*

The app was produced on a purely voluntary basis, with Doug and his volunteer helpers giving their time and expertise for free. The group took on the painstaking task of building our app. The end result is a fantastic resource for the people of Nottinghamshire!

For each location, our intrepid volunteers:

- Recorded the longitude and latitude coordinates.
- Researched facts.
- Found free-use images.
- Took photos

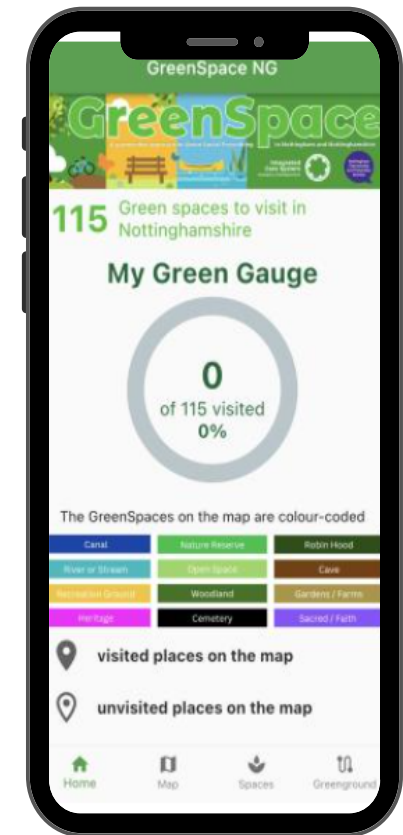
# GreenSpace NG App



The GreenSpace NG app is not just a digital tick list; most of the locations listed have their own photographs and facts, and users can keep a record of where they have been and mark their favourite places. If you want to know how the app works, there is a video that takes you through it step by step on the GreenSpace YouTube channel: [GreenSpace NG App walkthrough](#).

We have tried our best to include as many of the city's green areas and spots as we could, but do let us know if there are any that we missed. We'd be interested in learning how you make use of the Nottingham Greenground Map. Please email [greenspace@nottinghamcvs.co.uk](mailto:greenspace@nottinghamcvs.co.uk) with your thoughts, experiences, and any new routes you would like us to share.

People can submit new green areas through the online form within the app. Updates may take up to 3 months to be reviewed and added.



DOWNLOAD



The GreenSpace NG app can be downloaded for free from the

[Google Play store](#)



or

[Apple App store](#)



# Nottinghamshire Walking Network

GreenSpace was instrumental in the development of the Nottinghamshire Walking Network - a network to connect the different walking groups and activity providers in the city and county.

This network facilitated connections between organisations and the sharing of information related to walking activities. As a result, the Notts Guided Walks printed guides, which had ceased during COVID-19 and faced challenges in rebuilding, were successfully reinstated.

This network successfully formed a Ramblers super-partnership, now managed by Ridewise, a charity providing cycling and walking opportunities locally. With the Ramblers Association as a partner, Nottinghamshire's walking groups gain access to their 'Wellbeing Walks'. This partnership has expanded walk leader and coordinator training, allowing more groups to offer a variety of wellbeing walks in the area.

Some walking groups found the time and distance of the Ramblers Wellbeing Walks, along with administrative requirements, unappealing. Yet, Ridewise has kept them engaged with the Walking Network, which enhances walking opportunities across the county. Recognising their needs, Ridewise collaborated with smaller groups, offering tailored walk leader training in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, supported by GreenSpace and the Active Travel Team at NCVS.

This network established a Ramblers super-partnership, led by Ridewise, a charity providing cycling and walking opportunities locally. With the Ramblers Association as a partner, Nottinghamshire's walking groups gain access to their 'Wellbeing Walks'. This partnership expanded walk leader and coordinator training, enabling more groups to offer wellbeing walks in the area.



# Nottinghamshire Walking Network

The Ridewise Walk Leader Training has been developed over the last two years based on research into local place-based needs.

It is in person and covers:

- Physical, social, and mental health benefits of walking.
- Physical Activity Guidelines for 19 to 64 year olds.
- Nottingham Walking Statistics.
- The Role of a Walk Leader.
- Planning a group walk.
- Risk Assessments.
- Managing groups of people.
- Practical group walk.
- Incidents and emergencies, and insurance.
- Promoting walks.
- Best practice.
- Gaining confidence in leading a group of people.
- Being prepared and meeting expectations.
- Links to support organisations and applications specific to Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.

Ongoing follow-up information and support from Ridewise require funding.

## Ridewise Walk Leader Training

Ridewise is starting to build a network of local walk leaders across Nottingham City and County. These leaders address gaps identified at the beginning of the project.

The work that was put into this network helped to support the creation of a Strategic Walk Lead funded by Public Health across the city and county in 2024. The role will link Walk Derbyshire and Walk Nottinghamshire and help groups engage more people in walking for better health and wellbeing.

*"I am passionate about fostering community well-being, and to bring this vision to life, I initiated a walking group at the Nottingham Muslim Women's Network. Completing the walk leader training has empowered me to approach this initiative with a professional touch, from meticulously planning each walk to actualising the experience."*

*The training not only equipped me with essential leadership skills but also instilled a heightened awareness of the associated risks, ensuring that every walk is a safe and enjoyable journey for our participants. By leading these walks, we are not just encouraging physical activity but also nurturing a sense of community and belonging within our network."*

**Newly trained Community Walk Leader Zaynab from Nottingham Muslim Women's Network, February 2024**



# Nature Buddy Training Programme

Natural England was researching the role of Nature Buddies to support people in accessing green social prescribing activities by building a national toolkit. GreenSpace was invited to be involved in this research, and part of our role was to develop and deliver induction training to volunteers who wanted to become Nature Buddies.

As a result of our work in collaboration with Natural England and Nottingham-based green activity providers, we have:

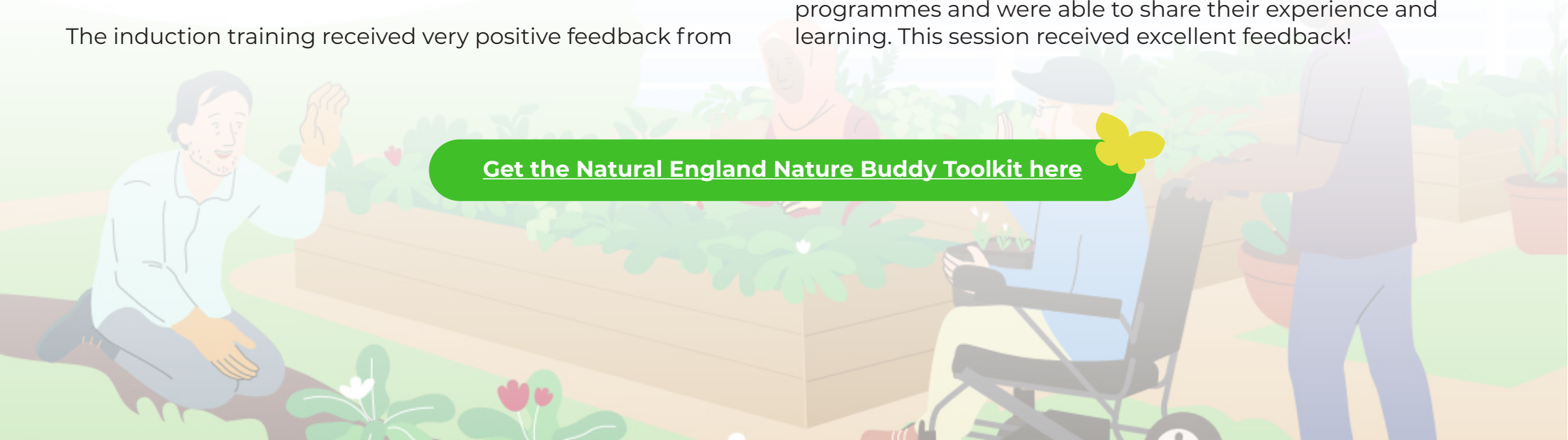
- Developed pathways of support for outdoor activities through introducing Nature Buddies.
- Developed pathways for volunteers to advance their skills and abilities through additional responsibility and training.
- Reviewed issues surrounding management, boundaries, safeguarding, etc.
- Built and delivered initial training to help organisations and volunteers introduce Nature Buddies to provide support for their service users.

The induction training received very positive feedback from

the volunteers, who said they felt 'more confident', 'prepared', and 'inspired and fired up to get the scheme going'. In addition to being incorporated into the Natural England Toolkit, the GreenSpace Nature Buddy training materials have since been used and adapted to support other projects, such as the Heritage Buddy programme hosted by NCVS, along with other organisations across the country who have adapted the materials to suit their local projects.

We were further commissioned by Natural England to provide online training for the toolkit's release. Our first training session was attended by forty people and went beyond the content of the toolkit itself, enabling attendees to take time to consider their own projects and including presentations from providers on the ground who had implemented nature buddy programmes and were able to share their experience and learning. This session received excellent feedback!

[Get the Natural England Nature Buddy Toolkit here](#)





# Children and Young People



## The Primary School Pilot

Wild Things, a provider that offers forest school programmes for schoolchildren across the city and country, carried out a pilot on behalf of GreenSpace. Teachers in primary schools were asked to choose a group of children they thought would benefit from taking part in the programme of bespoke, nature-based activities in a dedicated woodland space away from the school environment. The children were chosen for a multitude of reasons: some were shy and had trouble making friends; or had trouble collaborating with others; or were nervous about school; or had been diagnosed with autism or ADHD; others were dealing with challenging situations outside of school and required some time off. In addition to fostering social skills and emotional resilience in

the kids, the programme was intended to instill in them a love and respect for the natural world and inspire them to participate in extracurricular activities that would allow them to continue interacting with and enjoying nature after the sessions ended.

Initially, there was a lot of reticence amongst the children; they felt anxious about attending because they didn't know what to expect, they were scared of the wildlife they may encounter in the woods, and the school staff were convinced that many would not want to return after the first session. In fact, all of the children wanted to return the next week, and in the subsequent sessions, the providers saw the children's enthusiasm and confidence grow exponentially.



“

*I was really scared on week one and didn't think I would like it, but I love it now*

”

**A child who took part**

“

*There's five here that I thought wouldn't come again after week one—that's what worried me—and look, they've all come for twelve weeks! I didn't think they would make week two! But they all did. They love coming; they love what you do in the woods.*

”

**A Teaching Assistant who accompanied the children**

# Children and Young People

Each session followed a set routine.



Circle time allowed the children to talk about what they wanted to do during the session. During the first session, many children were reluctant to talk in front of the group; however, once the children became more comfortable with each other and their new surroundings, this reluctance started to disappear. By the end of the programme, it had completely vanished!

## Activities



Children could choose to take part in a wide variety of activities, such as building shelters and dens, creating tools, exploring the woodland, and investigating local plants and creatures. If the children needed some time to themselves, they could take a break in one of the many hammocks or warm up with some hot chocolate. A trained team taught the children how to use the tools and equipment safely to encourage independence and choice. The children also developed their teamwork skills, learning to listen to, help, and play with each other, enabling new friendships to blossom. The team offered advice and support and built a great working relationship with the children, who valued their time and expertise.



The children finished the day back in the circle to talk about what they had done that day and the things they were proud of. The children became more confident in contributing when the programme had been running for a few weeks.

“

*I feel like I'm a nature person! I didn't know I liked nature before Wild Things*

”

**A child who took part**

# Children and Young People

During the project, teaching staff noticed positive changes in the children at school. Many became more talkative and confident in speaking out in class. The children also improved in their ability to

work with others, and friendships that started in the woods continued to grow both inside and outside of school. Many of the children viewed the sessions as the highlight of their week—in fact, the schools even found that the sessions had an impact on improving attendance on the days that the children knew they were going to visit the woods!

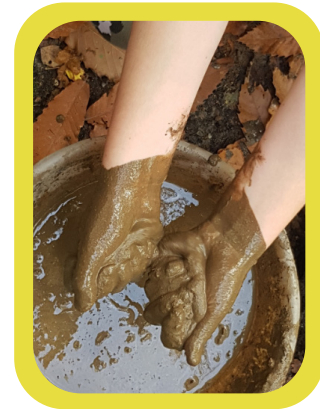
## Findings

**A member of the GreenSpace team visited the children during one of their sessions.**

“ On speaking to the team afterwards, it became clear that the happy, smiling and engaged group of children I had just met weren't always like this. It is amazing what taking a group of children out of their typical environment can do for their self-worth. By giving them access to tasks they succeeded at and allowing them space to make their own decisions and complete things in their own time. ”



“ I didn't go outside before this. This has made me think being outside is fun. I was really scared on week one and didn't think I would like it, but I love it now. ”



“ I didn't go outside before this. This has made me think being outside is fun. ”

**Children who took part**

“ It is now my favourite place. I want to be here all day! ”



# Children and Young People

By the project's end, the children showed a marked improvement in their confidence, behaviour, and trust; they began to work with peers they may not typically engage with at school. The outdoor environment provided a therapeutic escape, particularly for those grappling with mental health challenges, offering stability and respite from their struggles. Their eagerness to return, along with a connection to the woodland setting, reinforces the profound impact of the project on their well-being and sense of belonging.

## School staff member who accompanied the children

“ We have seen a real change in the woods: at school, they'll only talk to teachers they know really well and trust; in the woods, they will work with anyone. The children who are struggling with their mental health love coming to Wild Things; it gives them a lot of stability and a break from it all—a chance to be children—and for those two hours, their mental health will be okay; they get to leave it all behind, which means so much, even if it is just for two hours. ”



## Conclusion

### Some of the children shared their thoughts:

“ ‘I was really scared it would be cancelled today because of the rain. I'd rather be out here anytime, even in the rain.’ ”

‘I want to come back tomorrow!’

‘Can't we come back here every day?’

‘I just want to stay here!’ ”

When asked at the end of the project if they would like to return to the woods, the response was unanimous: Yes! One child explained her sadness at the fact the project had ended simply with the words, ‘But I'm home here’.

### Some children expressed worries about being unable to continue their visits to the woods outside of school hours due to various reasons:

- Parents' busy work schedules make it challenging to find time.
- It's difficult for larger families to organise outings together.
- Lack of childcare options for younger siblings.
- Parents might not want to accompany them, thus preventing the children from going.

# Community Investment and Seed Funding

As part of the test-and-learn pilot, the GreenSpace project provided tailored, small-scale investments to support organisations in developing their green social prescribing (GSP) initiatives. This investment varied significantly, allowing some groups to enhance their capacity by acquiring additional equipment, enabling others to hire staff dedicated to delivering GSP activities, and supporting some organisations in improving their sites to make them more accessible and welcoming to participants.

**£84,850 was  
invested  
across 35  
organisations**

**Nottingham Growing Network** was given funding for a network coordinator and membership to Social Farms and Gardens to ensure the continuation and development of the network over the course of the test-and-learn pilot and beyond. The Nottingham Growing Network has been in existence for several years and connects the different community growing groups around the city and surrounding area, providing a forum for groups to share good practice and to offer and receive peer support and training.



GreenSpace investment enabled **SUP Fitness** to develop their 'WOW' programme, subsidising the costs of an initiative where people were able to pay what they could afford to attend sessions on the water.





# Community Investment and Seed Funding



GreenSpace investment funded **Nordic Walking Taster Courses** in Wollaton Park.



GreenSpace investment enabled the **Rushcliffe social prescribing team** to develop their own allotment.



GreenSpace investment supported **'Climbing Matters'**, a project developed by Richard Chapman in collaboration with Turning Point, enabling a group of their service users to learn to climb and belay, along with techniques to manage fear and anxiety during the sessions that can be transferred into everyday life.



GreenSpace investment helped **Growing Forward** develop their own bespoke site next to Windmill Community Garden.

# Conferences, Networks and Training

The third Monday in January is often referred to as Blue Monday, supposedly the most depressing day of the year. While there is no scientific evidence to support this claim, on Monday 17 January 2022, GreenSpace decided to turn Blue Monday green by hosting an event to showcase the benefits of nature connectedness and green social prescribing. The session featured presentations from Prof. Miles Richardson, who leads the Nature Connectedness research group at Derby University, and his colleague Dr. Carly Butler, along with speakers from Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust, the LiVE Team at Highbury Hospital, and NCVS. Topics covered included green social prescribing, community garden setups, biodiversity and health, walking for health, and small-space

garden design. It was wonderful to bring together so many individuals from various areas within social prescribing and healthcare to discuss mental health and wellbeing issues and share management strategies and coping techniques.

Following the success of the Turning Blue Monday Green event, we held three additional sessions promoting mental health awareness. These sessions connected participants from all areas of the GreenSpace project, facilitating ongoing discussions to de-stigmatise mental ill-health, promote mental wellbeing strategies, and explore the benefits of nature connectedness.

On Tuesday 29 March 2022, the Nottinghamshire Healthcare and NCVS Spring Conference took place, attracting over 50 attendees online. The event featured presentations from guest speakers such as Dr. Carly Butler, a researcher in nature connectedness at Derby University, Liz Fluety from Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust, and Laura Armitage from GreenSpace, who discussed the green social prescribing project.

Participants had the opportunity to engage in various workshops covering topics like Biodiversity and Health, Activity in Green Spaces, and Walking for Health. In the afternoon, taster sessions were held at Highbury Hospital

Community Garden, including a session by the Nature in Mind Team, a mindfulness techniques demonstration in outdoor spaces, and an outdoor drumming session by Opus Music CIC.

The conference was well received, with attendees expressing appreciation for the insights into current projects and research on nature connectedness, biodiversity, and health. They also found it helpful to learn about different activities and opportunities available, and how to connect people with local services. The integration of different professions working together for a common cause was particularly praised.



# Conferences, Networks and Training

On Wednesday 12 October 2022, we hosted another GreenSpace conference, introducing the Trusted Provider Scheme, The Big Green Book, and the Greenground Map. Paul Paine discussed Ecoworks and their use of permaculture techniques, while Murat Basaran from Ridewise talked about the walking super-partnership and the opportunities at Ridewise. Sandra Horner detailed the work of Nottingham Green Guardians and the Nottingham Parks and Open Spaces teams. Additionally, Mayita Wyldeck-Kelly, Andy Simpkin, and Debs Butler presented on the role of Social Prescribing Link workers.

Attendees praised the event, noting the significant progress in the area and the excellent work utilising green spaces for physical and mental health support. They appreciated the networking opportunities, which helped them connect people with non-medical support groups. One attendee expressed amazement that even well-established providers like the 30-year-old Ecoworks are surviving on short-term funding.



On Thursday 29 June 2023, we participated in the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Social Prescribing Link Worker Conference. We led a group of social prescribers on a walk-shop, enabling them to experience the benefits of nature firsthand and learn simple ways to incorporate nature connection into their patient meetings.

# Case Studies

## Rushcliffe Social Prescribing Team

The Rushcliffe Social Prescribing team developed their own allotment space, which enabled them to connect their patients with nature during appointments and activities. The space was kindly donated by Ruddington Parish Council, and the allotment gives people at risk of social isolation or loneliness the opportunity to socialise while learning about gardening.

[Watch the video here!](#)



## Nature in Mind

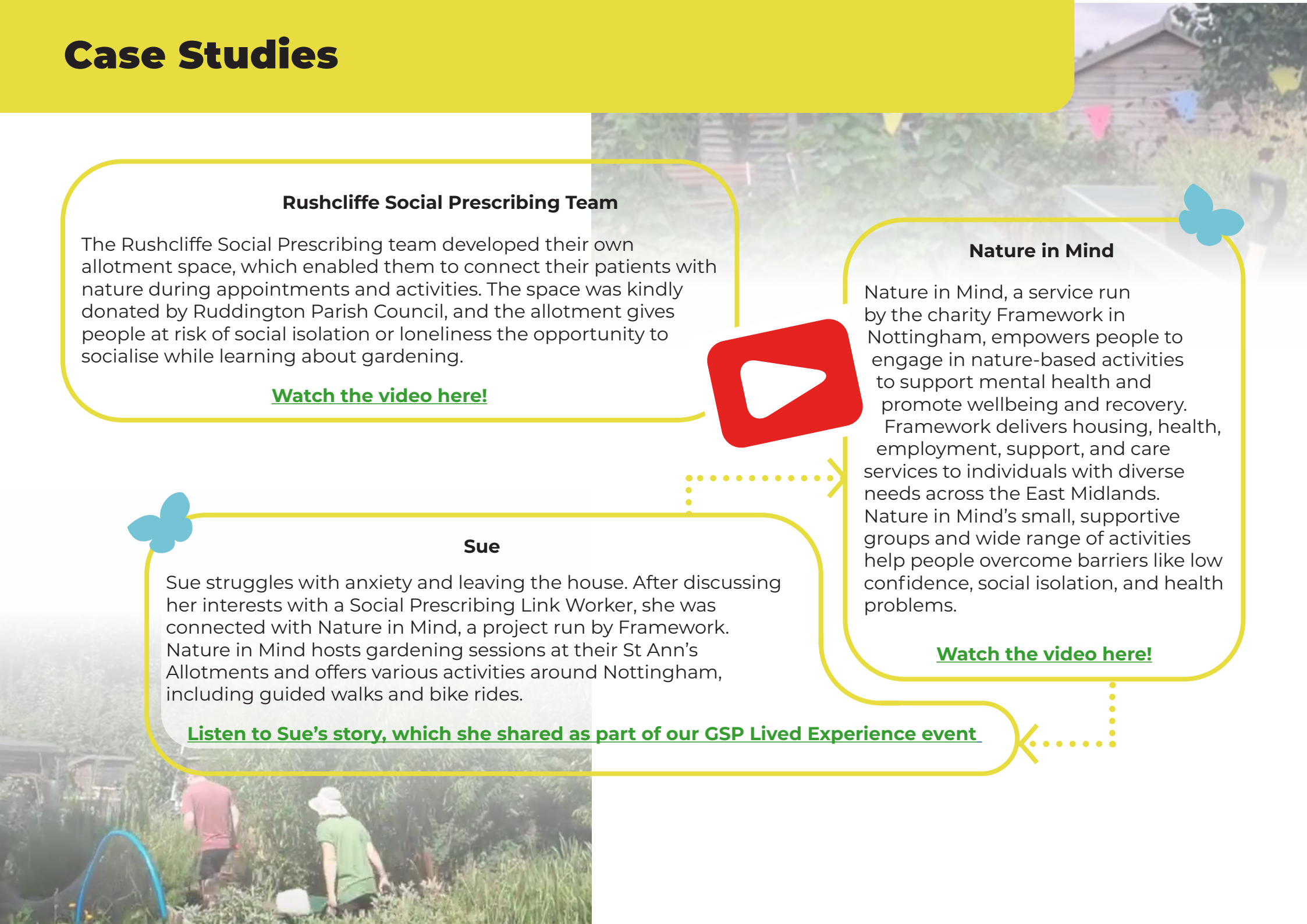
Nature in Mind, a service run by the charity Framework in Nottingham, empowers people to engage in nature-based activities to support mental health and promote wellbeing and recovery. Framework delivers housing, health, employment, support, and care services to individuals with diverse needs across the East Midlands. Nature in Mind's small, supportive groups and wide range of activities help people overcome barriers like low confidence, social isolation, and health problems.

[Watch the video here!](#)

## Sue

Sue struggles with anxiety and leaving the house. After discussing her interests with a Social Prescribing Link Worker, she was connected with Nature in Mind, a project run by Framework. Nature in Mind hosts gardening sessions at their St Ann's Allotments and offers various activities around Nottingham, including guided walks and bike rides.

[Listen to Sue's story, which she shared as part of our GSP Lived Experience event](#)





# Case Studies

## Highbury Hospital – The LiVE Team

In February 2022, representatives from NHS England visited Highbury Hospital in Bulwell and filmed a case study on the green social prescribing initiatives at the site and their positive impacts. This short film highlights the efforts in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire to integrate nature-based activities into treatment and support programs. Participants in the recording included representatives from NHS Nottinghamshire Mental Health Services, the LiVE Team at Highbury Hospital, the Dementia Hub, the Nature In Mind team, and a service user. In the film, team members discuss how various groups have utilised the hospital's community garden, the partnership between Highbury and Nature in Mind, and the benefits of incorporating green social prescribing and nature-based activities into local mental health services to enhance both short-term and long-term patient outcomes.

[Watch the video here!](#)

## Karl

Karl has benefited from attending the Peer Support Dementia Hub based at Highbury Hospital. He was connected with the hub through his support worker and describes it as '*a lifesaver*'.

[Listen to Karl's story](#)



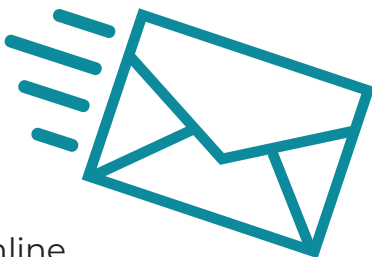
# Spreading the Word About GSP in Nottinghamshire



## Bulletin

The GreenSpace Bulletin is a monthly online publication designed to share news and opportunities around the city and county relating to green social prescribing and nature-based activities.

- ✓ Read previous editions of the bulletin in our archive [here](#).
- ✓ Register to receive the GreenSpace bulletin by emailing [greenspace@nottinghamcvs.co.uk](mailto:greenspace@nottinghamcvs.co.uk).



## News Articles

You can find [GreenSpace-specific news articles](#) on the NCVS website.

Discover what the team has been up to, explore 'green' funding opportunities, and get the latest updates.

## Website

Information on the [GreenSpace webpage](#) can be found on the NCVS website.

Keep up-to-date with project updates, access The Big Green Book and any other resources



## Facebook

The GreenSpace Facebook page shares national and local developments.

We have a range of followers, including:

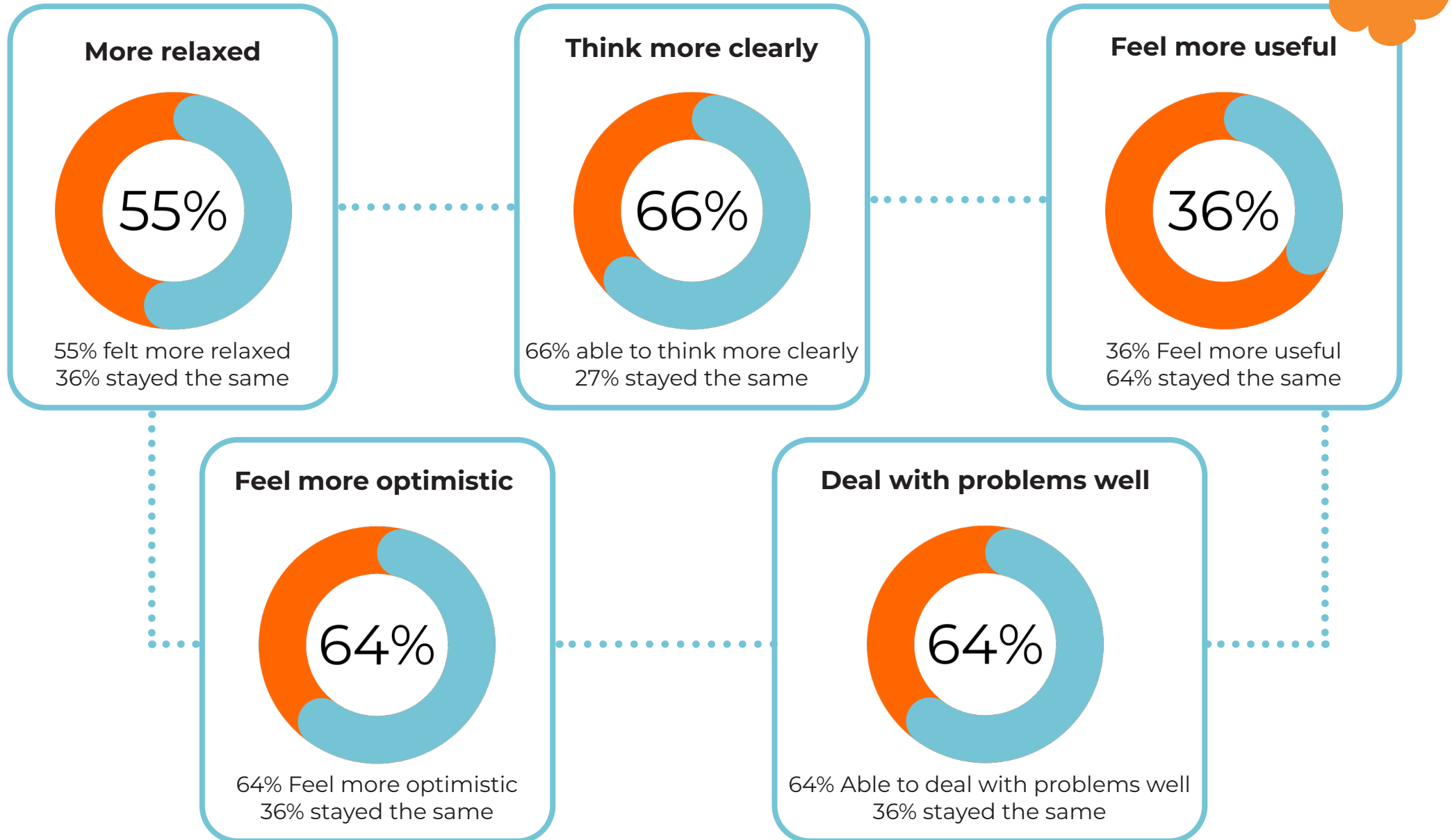
- GreenSpace providers
- Social prescribers and healthcare workers
- Local community groups
- Members of the general public.

[Follow us on Facebook](#)



# Participant Voices

After attending green social prescribing sessions for six weeks, our clients:



# Participant Voices

“ Being outdoors is good for my wellbeing. ”

“ I have felt more relaxed when I am in the allotment. It helps with my mental health problems - it's like magic! ”

“ The fresh air and meeting other people has enabled me to feel better in myself. ”

“ Being outside is always good for your mental health and it helps that there is a specific time and day to make you go outside for an hour. Otherwise it is too easy to put it off! ”

“ I love attending the allotment. I look forward to going every week. ”

“ I feel calm when I'm around nature. It's when I'm around negativity, that brings on my stress. ”

“ The provider has supported me to build confidence. It's fun! ”

