

Feedback/Outcomes

Survey of Partners

- 100% of respondents felt that the Nature and Wellbeing Project had improved participants mental wellbeing.
- All respondents agreed that the project had helped the organisations concerned to build their own skills, knowledge, and confidence. They experienced the project not only as being of great benefit to those they support, but as empowering and developing their organisational capacities and ambitions. This is an important finding in terms of sustainability and value for money invested.
- For two thirds (8) a lack of knowledge about suitable sites had been a significant barrier to working in the countryside. Lack of transport, lack of availability of suitable staff, skills, and/or knowledge were also important factors (5 mentioning each of these).
- There was some variation between strong agreement and agreement about reducing loneliness, improving physical health, anxiety, positivity, and other measures but there was consistently a 100% strongly agree or agree response across all positive indicators. There is no doubt that all the partners believe the project to be extremely beneficial to people they work with and support.

- All organisations would strongly welcome more training opportunities to embed the nature-based approach in their own work if future work of this kind is funded in the county.

...within our group there have been improvements to both mood and engagement since involvement in the project

The group say that the sessions make them feel good, proud, and tired

The whole group reported being more physically active since getting involved in the project



Need Caption

SOMERSET'S Nature & Wellbeing Project Evaluation - 2016-2019 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Landscapes
for life
.org.uk

QUANTOCK HILLS
BLACKDOWN HILLS
MENDIP HILLS
Three of the
AONB Family



Summary

Project Overview

In February 2016, Public Health at Somerset County Council funded the Nature and Wellbeing Project which went on to run for 4 years. Managed by the Quantock Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), the project worked in partnership with the Blackdown and Mendip Hills AONBs to provide opportunities for county wide engagement.

The project tackled some of the barriers that prevent groups and individuals experiencing the health and wellbeing benefits that Somerset's Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty can offer. It helped people to access top-quality natural spaces, with a focus on supporting mental wellbeing and physical activity. The project focused on linking people to existing provision and setting up new activities and events.

Wherever possible the project has encouraged new activities to find a model that can be sustained after the project itself has ended.

2016-2019 Totals

Total people engaged in Nature & Wellbeing Activity Sessions/ Projects

2345

Total Number of Project Sessions

515

People benefitted from Training/ Awareness Raising

216

People presented to at Meetings/ Engagement events

1160

AONB Community Engagement Volunteers Recruited /Trained Working on the Project

10

Partners

The projects established throughout this piece of work would not have happened if it wasn't for the support of our many brilliant partners. In total we estimate that Nature and Wellbeing Project has worked with over 50 health, social and nature-based partners - including;

- Various NHS services (for adults and young people with a mental health need)
- 3 Primary Schools, 1 Secondary School and 1 College
- Mental Health Charities, including; Mind in Somerset, Rethink, In Charley's Memory, Watch and Heads Up.
- Support, health and care services for adults, including: Green Days Day Care, Discovery, Somerset Care, Reminiscence Learning, The Alzheimer's Society, The Beacon Centre and The Symphony Project.
- Support Services for young people, including, Young Carers youth groups
- Other community-based support services including, Carry Me Kate and Get Set.
- Various independent, local and national nature and conservation organisations including; Forestry England, Somerset Wildlife Trust, National Trust, Folly Farmyard, Timberscombe Lodge, Otterhead Forest School, The West Country Man, Huntstile Farm and Plantlife.

Feedback/Outcomes

Survey of Participants

- 100% of respondents agree or strongly agreed that the Nature and Wellbeing Projects had improved their mental wellbeing
- 97% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that participating in Nature and Wellbeing activity had made them feel more positive about the future.
- 100% reported that participation had made them appreciate Somerset's countryside more
- All but 4 participants agreed or agreed strongly with a range of other positive indicators; feeling less lonely, less anxious, having more energy and having more confidence.
- There were 37 free text reactions, all positive and expressing happiness, a sense of calm, enjoyment, social engagement, and valuing the countryside experience.

Being part of the group has improved my confidence so much

It gave me hope and got me back into doing things again



Working Well Group