

The Five Ways to Wellbeing



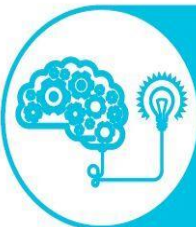
BE ACTIVE – Take part in health walks and practical outdoor activities. Explore your local paths, woods and greenspaces.

CONNECT – Meet new people. Connect with the people, the wildlife and the nature that's all around us.



GIVE – Your time to be in nature. Give something back by sharing experiences and undertaking conservation tasks.

TAKE NOTICE – Note the changing cycles of life. Use your senses. Listen to birds, smell the flowers, live in the moment.



LEARN – Identify plants and wildlife, try new crafts, learn new skills. Discover things about nature and about yourself.

Spending time with nature improves wellbeing

Spending time outdoors, amongst nature, makes people feel better about their lives.

Ladywell Neighbourhood Nature helps people to get out into the greenspaces of their local area to discover and experience the natural world.

Whilst out amongst the trees and greenspaces participants get a chance to slow down, relax and enjoy being in the company of other people.

All sessions include a walk, a chance to safely socialise with other people over a hot drink and opportunities to try a variety of environmental and conservation related activities designed to fit in with the internationally recognised Five Ways to Wellbeing mental health framework.



BE ACTIVE – Take part in health walks and practical outdoor activities. Explore your local paths, woods and greenspaces.

Being active is one of the most important things we can do to be healthy in body and mind. Walking helps us sleep, builds our mental and physical stamina and gives us time to think. It is also one of the best exercises we can do – and it requires no special equipment or training!

- **Discover a new Green Space** - Exploring new spaces helps to stimulate our minds – and can lead to amazing discoveries. What is down that new path, or round that next bend? There are hidden wonders all over Scotland waiting for you to discover them.
- **Start a John Muir Award** - Discover, Explore, Conserve, Share. The four tenets of the John Muir Award fit very well with the Five Ways to Wellbeing. You can get the chance to earn a reward as part of our nature groups or you can register for a John Muir Award as an individual and challenge yourself.
- **Go for a picnic** - Don't just wait for a chance to get outdoors, make your own opportunities. We all need to eat so why not eat outdoors! You could have lunch in the woods with a friend, or share your meal with some wildlife. Wild Ways Well sessions always include a cup of tea (preferably made over a fire), we have conducted many experiments and concluded that tea really does taste better outdoors.
- **Join a Green Gym** - Working outdoors is a great way to get some exercise. You can work your core by hefting a shovel, work your biceps with a bow saw or get some resistance training by pushing a wheelbarrow. There are formal Green Gyms run by TCV all over the country (you can find your nearest on the TCV website) or you could start your own in your back garden.
- **Start a Wildlife Walk** - Take note of all the nature you see when you go for a walk. It doesn't matter where you are going, your daily commute, your regular dog walk, the path from your house to the local shop – all of these can be wildlife walks. If you like you can record the wildlife you see and many wildlife recording organisations would love to receive your records.

CONNECT - Meet new people. Connect with the people, the wildlife and the nature that's all around us.



Connecting with nature, with other people, with your community and with the wider ecosystem that we all share is vitally important. Watching wildlife and spending time in a natural place helps you connect with the life that's all around you. There are thousands of groups, organisations and individuals who have an interest in nature, seek them out.

- **Discover and share some nature knowledge** - start a whatsapp group with friends and family, join a book club, write a quiz, set a weekly wildlife challenge, start a blog or a photo journal – you can even do so anonymously.
- **Start a nature art project** - pick a subject that you can follow for the whole season or even the whole year. Perhaps you could photograph a particular colour or draw the same spot in different seasons? You could make a collage of leaves or simply sit in a beautiful place and write. Don't worry about your ability, just express yourself.
- **Meet a tree** - pick one tree in your local area and get to know it thoroughly. Find out what species it is, work out its age—what events has it seen in its lifetime? Watch it closely, what other species live on it or depend on it? Get up close and touch its bark, sketch or photograph it. Just like people every tree is unique, there won't be another tree like your one anywhere in the world.
- **Connect with an animal** - Pick a species – or even an individual – and try to imagine how it lives its life in your local area. What senses does it have, what does it eat, where does it live or find shelter. It lives in the same world you do and experiences it through the same basic senses but in a very different way. Empathise with it. How could you make its life easier?
- **Connect with other people** - There are millions of people all over the world who would consider themselves nature lovers and there are loads of ways we can connect with them. Look online for volunteer groups, friends groups, or charities which champion particular causes, species or habitats that you are interested in. Join in online discussion groups – or just chat to a neighbour over the garden fence about making a hedgehog highway.



GIVE – Your time to be in nature. Give something back by sharing experiences and undertaking conservation tasks.

We've all felt that little glow within when putting money in a charity box, giving a gift to a friend or just passing a compliment to someone else. **Giving** helps us to feel good about ourselves – whilst also doing good for someone or something else, a total win-win! Giving to others helps us to feel part of a community, to feel like we are part of something larger than ourselves and that our role within that is valued. It doesn't need to involve money, giving can take any form – you can give time, advice, wisdom, love, patience, attention, energy ... the list is endless.

- **Volunteer** – TCV has a 'volunteer pathway' after spending some time with us we help people to volunteer with other aspects of our projects or with other organisations. What volunteer opportunities are there in your local area? Try the Volunteer Scotland website www.volunteerscotland.net
- **Make a Wildlife Record** – Wildlife recording (writing down and reporting the wildlife you see) is one of the best and easiest things you can do to help conservation. To make a wildlife record you need to know What you saw, When you saw it, and Where you saw it. Go to the iRecord website (www.brc.ac.uk/irecord) and enter your record.
- **Plant a tree or a wildlife meadow** – Leave a legacy that will last. You could do this in your own garden if you have one, or you could find out if there are any local volunteer groups or charities like TCV planting larger areas. You could also get in touch with us and come out on one of our sessions.
- **Share** – you can share your wildlife experiences with others. Perhaps simply take a friend out into the greenspaces to share a cup of tea, or to see something you've found. You could write stories or poetry, draw, paint or photograph, and share these works online or to family.
- **Protect** – by taking an interest in nature you can help protect it. Feed the birds, put out a dish of water, plant some seeds, make a hedgehog highway through your street, write to newspapers and politicians, create, repair or look after habitat that is vital to all sorts of wildlife.

TAKE NOTICE - Note the changing cycles of life. Use your senses. Listen to birds, smell the flowers, live in the moment.



We rarely **Take Notice** of the natural environment or our place within it. By practicing this skill we give ourselves time to breathe, to think and to be at peace. Everyone has problems in their lives, and Neighbourhood Nature does not aim to solve these, but spending time out in nature can give you a couple of hours of free space and time to take your attention away from life's issues and concentrate just on being you.

- **Listen to the birds** - Every bird has a different call and as you walk through the woods or streets you'll hear all sorts of noises. Sit somewhere quiet and listen – can you recognise any calls? Can you have a conversation?
- **Notice your senses** - Focus on one sense and try to tune into the world in a new way. Challenge yourself to go ever deeper. Close your eyes and open your ears... What can you hear? Now go deeper. Quieten your mind and body. What other sounds can you hear beyond the first ones. Now go even deeper. What faint noises are there right on the edge of your hearing? Try the same with your other senses. How many experiences pass you un-noticed every day?
- **Take a closer look at the familiar** - Take a subject, a scene or a situation that you feel familiar with and try to look at it in even more detail. Do you enjoy watching birds? Pick one species or individual and learn everything you can about it. There is always something new to learn.
- **Find a rainbow** - Take a walk through a greenspace and try to make up a rainbow out of purely natural objects. Some colours are more difficult at different times of year but it is nearly always, just about, possible...
- **Notice your surroundings** - Natural experiences are all around us all the time. What can you see from your office window? What wildlife can you find on your back doorstep, what wild things live in your street?
- **Unleash your creativity** - a great way to take new notice of something is to open up your creative side. Draw a detailed study of a leaf, sculpt an insect out of clay, write a detailed description of a natural space.



LEARN – Identify plants and wildlife, try new crafts, learn new skills. Discover things about nature and about yourself.

Learning should be a life long process, not something we only did at school, or do for work. Learning keeps our minds active, exposes us to new challenges and allows us to take pride in new achievements. Everyone can learn – but importantly, not everyone learns in the same way, learning by doing is just as good as learning from books or from other people and it’s a good idea to try lots of different methods to find the one that works for you.

- **Take an online course** - There are loads of ways to learn online, the Open University is a good place to look for free courses, but there are other sources too. If you’d prefer informal learning then sites like YouTube have thousands of films and channels devoted to nature that you can learn new skills from.
- **Learn a new technique** - You might be a whizz at identifying trees by their leaves – but can you do it by their bark? You can use a camera, but how about a camera trap? We can all tie a granny knot but who can do a reindeer hitch? You can write a blog, can you code an app? You can read a spreadsheet, can you read the landscape?
- **Learn a forest skill** - On some of our sessions we teach participants how to safely make, sustain and extinguish a fire using traditional techniques. Learning ancient forest skills like these brings us closer to our ancestors. It brings a real sense of satisfaction and confidence – plus it can be used to make a cup of tea! What forest skills could you practice?
- **Discover a new route** - find new ways around your local area, discover new paths and even new greenspaces themselves. There is wildlife and wild places on everyone’s doorsteps – all you have to do is step out into them and explore.
- **Learn about yourself** - Try new things, look at the world, and at yourself, in a new way. Everyone has hidden talents and skills within them, challenging yourself can reveal new things about your character and your interests. Build confidence in yourself and your abilities.