

Press Release

Workshop Guardian Monthly Column

Bassetlaw Community and Voluntary Service



Green Social Prescribing

Unlocking the power of nature as sustainable healthcare

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The Covid-19 pandemic significantly highlighted the importance of being outdoors as a way to benefit people's mental and physical health. We were all permitted to take part in 30 minutes of socially distanced outdoor exercise and for so many of us, that was something we really looked forward to being able to do each day.

The healing properties of Mother Nature have been known for many years – we have all heard the saying “Get some fresh air to clear your head” – so this is exactly what we are encouraging people to do via Green Social Prescribing right here in Bassetlaw.

A survey conducted by Nature England in January 2022 revealed that “90 percent of adults in England reported they view green and natural spaces as good places for mental health and wellbeing” and we couldn't agree more.

Nicola Gitsham, Head of Social Prescribing and Community Approaches, NHS England said:

“Social prescribing starts with what matters to the person. Green Social Prescribing specifically supports people to connect with nature-based activities ”

Bassetlaw organisations that have benefited from funding to increase their Green Social Prescribing offering include Rhubarb Farm, Bassetlaw Action Centre, Centre Place, The Oasis Community Centre, Idle Valley Nature Reserve, Time Flies Activities, YMCA Worksop and Chesterfield Canal Trust. We also work closely with The National Trust, Muddy Fork and various community allotments.

As a result of these ongoing local partnerships, our team of Social Prescribing Link Workers are able to signpost anyone that would benefit from nature-based activities to a variety of different groups including those that facilitate gardening, growing, walking, cycling and more, to provide a more natural and sustainable solution to any physical or mental health condition that would benefit from the power of nature.

Willow Community Gardens, in Manton, Worksop brings the benefit of the outdoors and green space to an array of different people. From encouraging people to grow their own produce, to using the community space as a place to meet for a chat - it is the perfect example of how a green space can provide so much to a local community.



A medical student from Larwood Health Partnership visited Willow Community Gardens in April 2022 to learn more about Social Prescribing and the benefits it has to the local community.

He is pictured here with Sonya Bown, Social Prescribing Link Worker, BCVS

Not only is Green Social Prescribing supporting physical health, but the very aspect of being surrounded by people that understand is proving to be groundbreaking in supporting mental health. Bassetlaw (as part of the South Yorkshire and Bassetlaw project) is leading the way in ensuring anyone that can benefit from this method of healthcare is able to access it.

One individual, who recently benefited from visiting Rhubarb Farm in Langwith said:

'I don't know how to explain it but I felt really excited about going to help out on the farm - I honestly can't remember the last time I had this feeling - I know this will help me feel better and I know I need to do this for myself'.

Not only did this person feel better mentally from visiting the farm and helping care for the animals, they also commented on how it also gave them more energy physically too.

Sometimes, the main reason people feel depressed and anxious is simply because they are lonely.

Anyone can contact a relevant organisation directly to find out about how they can be of assistance via the Green Social Prescribing project - you don't need to be referred and all the activities and services are either free, or low cost.

Our Social Prescribing Link Workers are also available to signpost people to a group or project if they need some additional support in finding a suitable group.

Not only is this giving people a potential new purpose in life, but it also gives them an excellent opportunity to make new friends with people that will understand them and support them holistically.

And for us, that is the ultimate definition of a thriving community.

To find out more about Social Prescribing services in Bassetlaw, please visit <https://www.bcvs.org.uk/social-prescribing>