

Using Scotland's Natural Resources for Mental Health:

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Branching Out:

Conservation and greenspace on referral for adults who use mental health services in Glasgow

A 12 month service development with GGCNHS and partners.

Equally well report of the Ministerial Task Force on Health Inequalities 2008:

Key points: “Physical environments have an impact on people’s mental and physical health and wellbeing”

Recommendation 29: the Government, NHS Boards should take specific steps to encourage the use and enjoyment of green space by all, with a view to improving health....they should encourage and increase the prescription of “greenspace use” by GPs and clinical practitioners.

A recent Mind report advocated ‘ecotherapy’ as a clinically valid treatment option for people using mental health services.

Populations that are exposed to the greenest environments also have the lowest levels of health inequality related to income deprivation (Mitchell & Popham, 2008)

Nature based activity programmes have found improvements in:

- Self-Esteem, stress, depression, and well being
- as well as improvements in social skills including leadership and interpersonal skills
- Improvements in physical fitness (aerobic capacity and perceived exertion.)
- Attention Restoration

Cathkin Braes



Carmunnock





Branching Out Referral Process

Service given presentation on intervention and information leaflet/ referral forms.

Participants identified by service & referral form filled out.

Referral form received and participant invited along to a baseline appointment and presentation.

Baseline physical health check and consent form signed.

Details including days and time given to the participants.





Branching Out Delivery

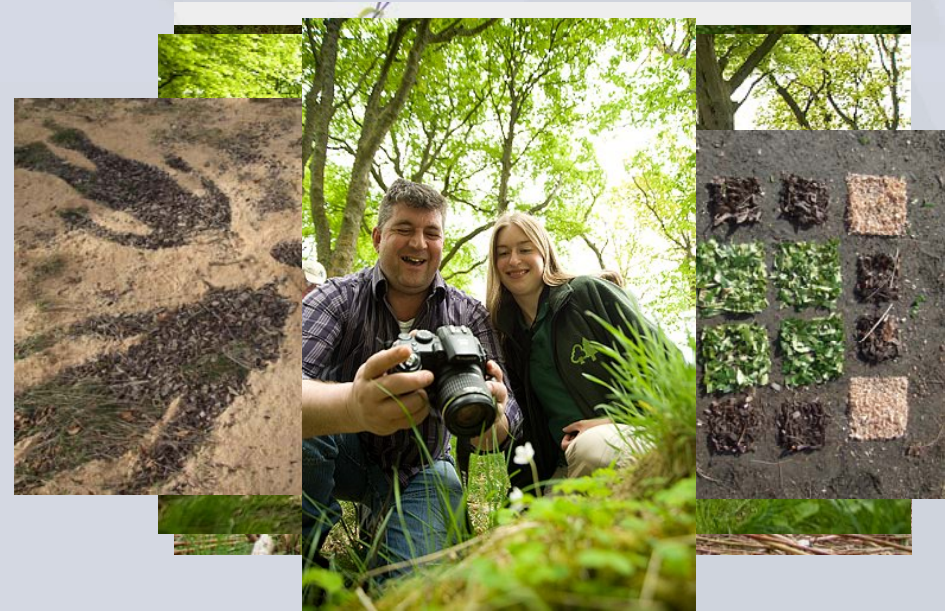
- 12 week programme with 3 separate groups per week lead by FC Ranger and NHS staff including Occupational Therapists and CPN's.
- Each session is once a week for 3 hours.
- Ratio of 1 staff member to every 4 patients
- Full risk assessment for sites and activities
- All transport, waterproofs and refreshments provided.
- John Muir award incorporated into the sessions
- Presentation ceremony on completion of the 12 weeks





Content of Sessions

- Physical Activity
- Bushcraft
- Use of natural materials
- Learning
- Conservation
- Environmental art
- Photography







Attrition Rates

	Number of referrals received	Number of clients who attended at least one session	Number of Completers		
Total	125	110		77	70%
			88%		62%
Forensic Services (Low & Medium Secure Units)	24	23		19	83%
			96%		79%
Community Mental Health Teams	40	34		18	52%
			85%		45%
Employability	36	33		26	79%
			92%		72%
Other Tertiary Care Services	25	20		14	70%
			80%		56%



•SF12v2™ Health Survey

Short Form version of the most popular health survey in the world
Generic measure of health which encompassing psychological, social and physical parameters Subdivided into Mental Component Summary (MCS) & Physical Component Summary (PCS). Uses norm based scoring from US population norms.

•Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS)

Covers both hedonic and eudemonic perspectives
Only UK validated scale that measures well-being. Validated in two national Scottish surveys and found to be ,“psychometrically sound” (*Parkinson, 2007*)

•Scottish Physical Activity Questionnaire (SPAQ)

Designed to be used where more invasive measures (BMI / HR) are not appropriate
Shown to be reliable and hold strong concurrent validity (*Lowther et al, 2008*).

Quantitative Results

Results <i>Completers N = 77</i>	Pre Intervention Mean	Std	Post Intervention Mean	Std
Mental Health <i>SF12v2TM MCS:</i>	47.1	8.4	46.8	9.7
Physical Health <i>SF12v2TM PCS:</i>	45.1	10.7	46.8	9.6
Well-Being <i>WEMWBS:</i>	48.5	10.6	49.2	11.1
Physical Activity <i>SPAQ:</i> <i>(In minutes per week)</i>	788	594	1106	920

- Client Interviews $N = 20$
- Staff Focus Group $N = 6$
- Observational Journals $N = 2$

- 1 Interest in Outdoor Activities & Greenspace
- 2 Enjoyable Experience & Break from Monotony
- 3 Learning New Skills
- 4 Provision of Daily Structure
- 5 Increased Socialisation
- 6 Stepping Stone to Community Involvement



“I sleep better and it’s something I look forward to.”

“I just seem to get on a lot better with people and it’s being in a group...I seem to be communicating a bit better with people.....(and additionally).... it’s out with the project, over the past 2 months I feel I’m getting involved in conversations more.”

“Tuesdays can’t come soon enough for me. I get away out and forget all my troubles and I’ve got quite a lot of troubles in my life.”



- Low Attrition rates
- Strong trends in lowest scoring third for all quantitative measures: SF12v2 MCS, SF12v2 PCS, WEMWBS, & SPAQ
- Significant increase in physical activity (SPAQ)



Summary (continued)

- Provided an opportunity to pursue enjoyed interests.
- Provided break from monotony / troubling circumstances and boredom.
- Learning new skills appeared to increase confidence and self-esteem.
- Non clinical setting
- Forests and woodlands are natural stress relievers as they offer a calming environment

- Provided purposeful activity, daily structure and improved sleep patterns
- Increased confidence in interacting in group situations.
- Increased interest and involvement in, other voluntary and conservation projects



- Conservation and greenspace on referral should be offered as an adjunct treatment option for clients who use secondary and tertiary care mental health services



What next?

- Full Evaluation report due out early 2009.
- 3 papers submitted for peer review and possible publication.
- Resource Guide produced by the end of 2008
- DVD to be distributed
- Secure future funding