



The Wild Swim Project

The Wild Swim project in Ripley has just announced some more dates for this exciting project.

- 1: Friday 2nd Sept 10:00-12:00
- 2: Friday 9th Sept 10:00-11:30
- 3: Friday 16th Sept 10:00-11:30
- 4: Friday 23rd Sept 10:00-11:30
(subject to confirmation)



About the Wild Swim project

It is a series of 4 wild swimming sessions designed for people who will gain from the mental and physical health benefits that immersing in cold water, within the natural environment, brings.

Immersion in cold water gradually reduces stress levels in everyday life and generates a greater sense of wellbeing. It is well known for reducing feelings of anxiety and boosting the immune system of those who regularly swim or dip. It also provides a fantastic way to immerse yourself with the local environment, be active in a non-competitive way and share the experience with other like-minded people.

Participants benefit from improved confidence, body positivity, mental health, the learning and passing on of new skills, taking on new challenges, engaging with their local wild spaces and thereby creating emotional connections to it, meeting people from other walks of life and very importantly socialising as part of a wider community.

“ it completely resets your mind and body, I almost feel like a new person every time ”

For further information please call Jude at the Wild Swim Project on 07946 637584, or contact the social prescribing team.



photo provided by Project Lead, Georgina

WATTS ART GALLERY

Watts Art Gallery, Creative Minds, and the Guildford & Waverley social prescribing team have been working in collaboration on the new test and learn ‘explore, refresh and express’ workshops at the Watts Art Gallery which began this July.

“ it was brilliant, I really enjoyed myself ”

Giving attendees, over a number of sessions, the opportunity to spend time in the woodlands at Watts Gallery and take inspiration from nature and the art around them. Exploring the buildings, gardens, and history of the remarkable Watts Gallery and following in the footsteps of visionary artist Mary Watts to find a personal connection with nature through art, by creating their own personal clay symbol tile.

The course was a great success and Watts Art Gallery have announced the course will be running again this Autumn, from September 26th until 31st October. **Please contact the social prescribing team for further information.**

The Forest Bathing Institute

NHS STAFF DAY



‘Shinrin-Yoku’ or Forest Bathing started 40 years ago in Japan when scientists started to research the physiological and mental health benefits of spending time in nature. Defined as a mindful walk under the canopy of the trees its popularity is increasing.

Forest Bathing+ is underpinned by a mindfulness practice, with participants being invited to engaged with each of their senses via structured exercises. The aim of which is to switch the body to the parasympathetic autonomic nervous system, which is more recuperative.

Spending more time in nature has increased in popularity across the UK, particularly since the Covid-19 pandemic in March 2020, where more people spent time outdoors pursuing hobbies and keep fit. This was evidenced by the *Natural England, People in Nature Survey* which revealed that over 55% of people in England spent regular time outdoors in nature. This resulted in a greater appreciation of the benefits of spending time in nature and woodland, as they experienced an enhanced sense of health and wellbeing.

Social prescribers and other NHS staff from across Surrey were recently given an opportunity to experience Forest Bathing+ at Alice Holt Forest. Situated just four miles south of Farnham, Alice Holt

Forest offers a variety of wellbeing activities for individuals and families to enjoy, along with over eight miles of waymarked trails through the forest that covers an impressive 2,100 acres.



During our Forest Bathing+ session we were guided through ancient woodland where we were invited to engage with nature using each of our senses to assist with switching to a more mindful state. The Forest Bathing+ nature session also included meditations, relaxation, and grounding in the forest. *Scientific evidence* reveals that these sensory experiences are proven to reduce stress and



THE
FOREST
BATHING INSTITUTE

anxiety whilst being guided on a Forest Bathing+ nature session under the canopy of the trees.

The Forest Bathing Institute (TFBI) is currently working with 6 universities on various scientific studies to further evidence the physiological and mental health benefits of this nature-based therapy. You can review the UK’s first ground-breaking scientific research conducted in partnership with the TFBI and the University of Derby by visiting the TFBI website (tfb.institute).

Jonathan Knight, *Social Prescribing Link Worker*, North Guildford PCN, said

“ Forest Bathing is a wonderful mindfulness tool. I felt refreshed, grounded, and totally re-energised! ”

Green social prescribing has such an important part to play within the social prescribing service moving forward’.

Please contact the social prescribing team for future forest bathing and other green social prescribing opportunities.

Referrals

Any member of the practice staff and any health or social care professional can refer to the social prescribing service.

Please find a copy of the referral form attached to the accompanying email.

