

# Woodland Therapy Project

**Progress report for the first year of this four year project which supports adults living with mental health conditions through weekly access to nature.**



**Reporting period:  
1st September 2015 – 31st August 2016**



**LOTTERY FUNDED**

## What is Woodland Therapy?

Woodland Therapy is a long-term programme of weekly gatherings at Bouldnor Forest Nature Reserve which aims to support adults living with a range of mental health conditions through access to nature. The project uses evidence that shows that the vital ingredient for success is regular access to the natural environment, the richness of the environment linking directly with the success of the outcomes, eg some success is recorded from visits to green spaces with a few trees such as a town park, but those outcomes will be far greater from sessions delivered in an ancient woodland. Studies also show that when people spend time in nature their stress levels subside and their heart rate and blood pressure are reduced. We also know that routines and continuity of staff help people to feel safe and secure, and taking part in group activities such as cooking and eating together supports well-being. The sessions are staffed by two qualified and experienced Forest School leaders who use the ethos of Forest School to promote independence, self-confidence, self-esteem and resilience through spending time in the natural environment, with opportunities to learn and take part in:

- green woodwork projects, such as spoon carving and rustic furniture making;
- a range of crafts using natural materials, such as willow weaving;
- campfire cooking, producing healthy meals from fresh ingredients to share together;
- woodland management tasks, such as coppicing;
- larger projects encompassing rural skills such as fencing and hedge laying.



Carving a tiny mushroom

## When does it happen?

Sessions take place every Monday throughout the year except for bank holidays, staff annual leave and dangerous weather conditions. This ensures continuity and reassurance that the sessions will be available whenever they are needed. There is no need for clients to book ahead and we offer telephone support and transport from the towns of Yarmouth and Freshwater to help people get to the site. This is particularly important for those who find using public transport stressful.

## Where does it happen?

The location is Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust's Bouldnor Forest Nature Reserve on the north-west coast of the Isle of Wight, which includes woodland, coastal and heathland habitats, offering a wealth of wildlife watching opportunities and commanding stunning views across the Solent. Notable wildlife includes red squirrels, ravens, nightjars, a number of rare plants and numerous invertebrate species, including butterflies, bees and dragonflies, which are often encountered during the sessions.



A view of the Solent from Bouldnor Forest Nature Reserve



## What do you do?

A typical session will begin with camp craft routines such as

- Putting up the rain shelters
- Collecting firewood in the wheelbarrow
- Using an axe and mallet to chop firewood
- Using a stick chopper or billhook to split kindling
- Collecting natural tinder from the forest
- Lighting the fire using a flint and steel
- Making hot drinks for each other
- Preparing vegetables and cooking a healthy campfire lunch
- Filling up the bird and red squirrel feeders

Although there is always something to do there is no obligation for anyone to take part in the activities and, although we plan for each session, there is no set programme or task list. The group is organic, feeding in to what the individuals require on the day and what the weather and the seasons present us with, eg making jam from blackberries gathered from the site. There will sometimes be a walk to watch birds on the heath, to collect materials from the beach or forest, look for wild flowers or dip nets in one of the many ponds to see what we can find. The main focus of the sessions is the fire circle, where the group prepares a healthy campfire lunch to share and individuals can carve spoons, weave willow and enjoy the opportunity to simply sit and “be”. The group leaders also try to respond to spontaneous requests and ideas that clients bring to the group. All the participants are aware that if they simply want to take themselves off to sit alone in the woodland at any time, they are free to do so.



Carving out a blank for a spoon from freshly harvested sycamore



Busy hands making decorations for the Brighstone Christmas Tree Festival

## Woodland Therapy and the Six Principles of Forest School

We adhere to the six principles of Forest School to provide the best outcomes for our clients

- 1 The sessions are frequent and regular;** the outdoor natural environment is an essential ingredient and sessions run in all but the most extreme weather conditions (eg high winds or thunder and lightning) and throughout the seasons. Planning, adaptation, observations and reviewing are integral elements of the project and the structure of the sessions is based on observation and collaboration between clients and practitioners.
- 2 The sessions take place in a woodland** (with options for visits to coastal and heathland habitats on the site) to support the development of a relationship between the participant and the natural world. We use natural resources which the group helps to harvest from the site as part of our management regime, providing a sense of custodianship over the nature reserve.
- 3 The sessions aim to promote the holistic development of all those involved,** building resilience, confidence and self-confidence, independence and creativity. The programme aims to promote the physical, social, cognitive, emotional, social and spiritual development of the participants. Physical health and well-being is important too; we provide healthy, nourishing ingredients for lunch and provide opportunities for walks and other forms of physical activity such as tool use, woodland management tasks and preparing firewood.
- 4 The sessions offer clients the opportunity to take supported risks appropriate to the environment and to themselves.** Opportunities are designed to build on an individual's innate motivation, positive attitudes and/or interests. Tools and fire are used where deemed appropriate to the participants, in accordance with our risk assessment procedures. It is important that participants feel safe at all times, but to provide opportunities to develop a range of skills is important in building self-confidence and resilience.
- 5 Sessions are run by qualified practitioners who continuously maintain and develop their professional practice.** (Group leaders hold an accredited Level 3 qualification in Forest School leadership). Leaders also hold current Outdoor First Aid and Outdoor Food Hygiene qualifications. A high staffing ratio is essential; staff and volunteers regularly helping at Woodland Therapy are subject to relevant checks into their suitability to have prolonged contact with vulnerable people. The project is backed by relevant working documents, which contain all the policies and procedures required for running the programme and which establishes the roles and responsibilities of staff and volunteers. The leaders are reflective practitioners and see themselves, therefore, as learners too. The programme uses a range of client-centred processes to create a community for personal growth and development. Monthly reviews with the group consider our achievements and plan projects for the future. Staff also liaise with organisations running eco-therapy projects in different parts of the UK to

Level 3 qualified Forest School  
Leader status has been verified by the



Qualified practitioner database link:  
[www.forestschoollassociation.org/location/kathryn-grogan/](http://www.forestschoollassociation.org/location/kathryn-grogan/)

share good practice, eg Neroche Young Woodlanders in Somerset and Nature Unlimited in the Scottish Borders.

- 6 Practitioners use a range of learner-centred processes to create a community for development and learning.** The approach is responsive to the needs and interests of the learners. The practitioners model the Forest School pedagogy, which they promote during their programmes through careful planning, appropriate dialogue and relationship building. Choice, individual preferences and dispositions feed into the programme, together with leaders' observations and reflection, tailoring experiences to the needs of the individuals in the group at any one time.

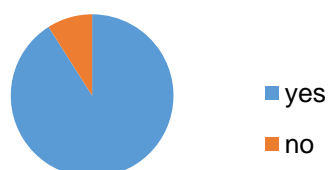


Our programmes are built on a foundation based on these three behaviours

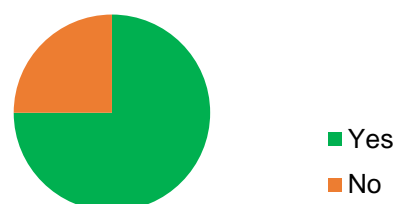
## Evaluation

At the end of the reporting period 12 completed evaluation forms were received from clients currently accessing the project. This includes those who have only recently started to attend as well as those who have been attending all year. This is what they tell us:

**Are you more confident about meeting new people since starting Woodland Therapy?**

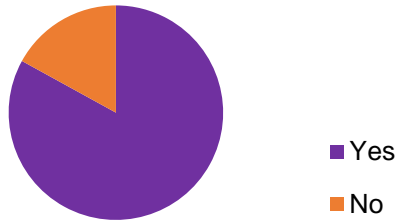


**Are you more confident about learning new skills since starting Woodland Therapy?**

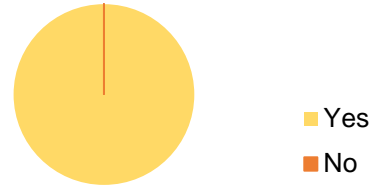




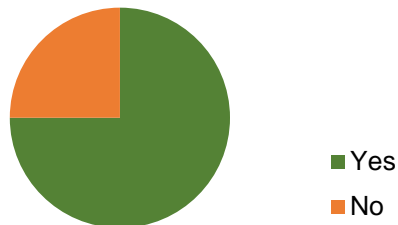
**Are you more enthusiastic about joining in group activities since starting Woodland Therapy?**



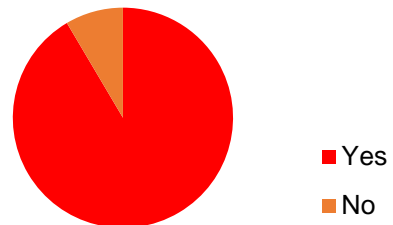
**Are you more aware of the positive effect of nature on your mental health since starting Woodland Therapy?**



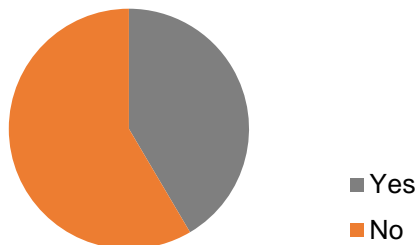
**Are you more self-confident since starting Woodland Therapy?**



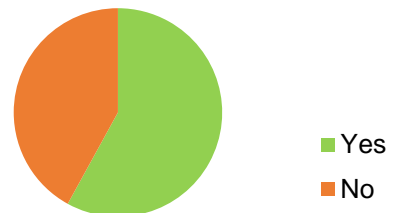
**Has your self-esteem increased since starting Woodland Therapy?**



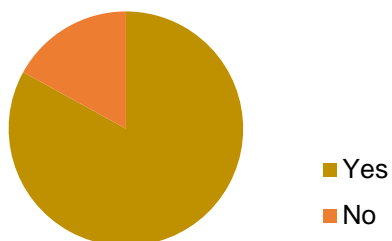
**Are you more independent since starting at Woodland Therapy?**



**Has your dependence on support services decreased since starting Woodland Therapy?**



**Are you more confident about sharing skills with others since starting Woodland Therapy?**



## What progress have you made?

43 Woodland Therapy sessions have been delivered to 56 adults living with long-term mental health conditions during the reporting period, 1<sup>st</sup> September 2015 to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2016.

### Local partnerships

We have liaised with mental health professionals, Social Services staff, the Occupational Therapy team and sheltered housing staff and taken an active role in the Isle of Wight Council's Public Health Outreach Forum, where we attend regular meetings. We also attended the Isle of Wight Mental Health Summit where we were able to network with other local service providers. We work in partnership with staff from the Seven Acres mental health unit, Chantery House support unit, the Council run West Wight Day Services and the New Avenues Group, a service user led group based at the Memorial Hall in Freshwater. Any concerns about individual group members can confidentially be passed on to the local mental health team.



A tasty lunch

### Sharing good practice

We have hosted visits from 6 mental health professionals and 7 Forest School professionals wishing to set up similar projects in different parts of the UK, including Wildlife Trust staff from other Trusts such as Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust and independent practitioners such as Niki Willows from Niki Willows Outside [https://www.facebook.com/NikiWillowsOutside/photos/?tab=album&album\\_id=10153839752429726](https://www.facebook.com/NikiWillowsOutside/photos/?tab=album&album_id=10153839752429726). Staff took part in a Woodland and Well-being Seminar at Neroche Young Wood in Somerset <http://www.youngwood.org.uk/wildness--wellbeing.html> liaising and networking with other providers of eco-therapy projects, including Somerset Wildlife Trust [http://www.somersetwildlife.org/Nature\\_is\\_good\\_for\\_us.html](http://www.somersetwildlife.org/Nature_is_good_for_us.html)

### Community engagement

- **Brighstone Christmas Tree Festival**

The group took part in a West Wight community project at Christmas in association with local churches, the Brighstone Christmas Tree Festival, working together to create an exhibit and engaging with other local community groups.

- **Ecclestone George and Arc Consulting**

We have been in conversation with a local environmental art collective in regard to putting together an exhibition of Woodland Therapy clients' green wood crafts in order to raise awareness of the project and support clients' self-confidence and self-esteem.



Hand carved Christmas decorations

- **Visit from the Lord Lieutenant of the IW**  
Lord Lieutenant of the Isle of Wight, Martin White, the Queen's representative for the county, visited the Project in summer 2016. He was interested to see the group in action and chatted to some of the group members about the impact of the sessions on their wellbeing.

- **Newport Alzheimers Café**  
We delivered a session to members of the Alzheimers Café, using different natural resources and activities using textures and smells to trigger memories, eg of playing conkers, hanging up holly at Christmas, making elderflower cordial, etc. The session was very successful and plans are in place for more access to nature sessions with this group in the future.

- **Pet Therapy**  
A visit from a trainee pet therapy dog, Millie, and her owner Marion was very popular with the group. We look forward to seeing Millie's progress at future visits.

- **Volunteers and student helpers**  
8 volunteers have helped with the group this year and by far the most successful of these are the three who have been recruited through being group members. Staff and volunteers hold regular meetings with client representatives to direct the group and its activities. We have also welcomed 6 students who have come along to sessions to find out more; this includes those undertaking Forest School training as well as those working in mental health services.

## **What have you learned?**

- **Achievements**  
The group was delighted to make the long list for the National Lottery Awards in the Health Category. Although we didn't make the short-list, it gave a boost to staff, volunteers and clients to know that the concept of using nature to support health and well-being was given some credence.

- **Unexpected outcomes**  
The clients have built up strong relationships which have not only reduced isolation but have enabled them to push the boundaries of their confidence by accessing other community activities such as going swimming, going on walks or to local events. Some group members have even offered to travel to the mainland to help support other practitioners setting up similar projects.

- **Problems**  
Evaluating the project through form-filling is problematic. Clients are not always able to complete and submit the forms for a variety of reasons ranging from issues with literacy to anxiety about saying the wrong thing. Discussions with the groups have given rise to some alternative ideas such as making audio recordings of conversations around the campfire when everyone is relaxed. The group is less enthusiastic about filming the sessions or even having their photographs taken. They are, however, very forthcoming about welcoming visitors to the group and speaking to them about their experiences because they want others to benefit from similar programmes.



Chestnuts roasting



	<b>Actual annual total</b>	<b>Annual target</b>	<b>Target by the end of the project</b>
Number of adults with diagnosed mental health conditions who have accessed the project in Year 1	56	45	180
Number of people with increased confidence and emotional well-being	11	10	39
Number of people who have reduced their use of crisis services	8	10	
Number of people who feel less isolated	10	10	39
Number of people more confident at meeting new people	11	10	39
Number of people who have developed new skills	10	10	39
Number of people who have become volunteers	3	1-2	5
Number of people reporting an increase in community involvement	11	5	20
Number of organisations who will be made aware of the results and evaluation of the project	4	2-3	10



The fire circle

How well did you reach everyone who could benefit from your project?

- **Websites and social media**

The project features on Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust's website, <http://www.hiwwt.org.uk/Woodland-therapy> has twice featured in its membership magazine and is included in a range of national projects supporting mental health through nature on The Wildlife Trust's website <http://www.wildlifetrusts.org/tackling-mental-illness> . We also issue regular news bulletins on social media, eg Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust's Facebook page.

- **Community events**

We hand out flyers, put up displays and speak face to face with the public at a range of community events throughout the year.

- **Community partnerships**

We are very aware that in our local community the most powerful way to promote a project like this is word of mouth, and the positive impact on individual clients over time has fed back to mental health professionals and their colleagues, who then refer other patients whom they consider would benefit. We now have clients attending from all over the county, as well as the local community, and as part of the new register of Isle of Wight mental health support services, we are receiving more referrals as well as clients self-referring.

- **Set-backs**

There have been some set-backs to our plans, mainly connected with cut-backs to local government services resulting in redundancies and restructuring and the winding up of other community projects. However, we have made some new connections and look forward to building up strong relationships in the future, eg with the Alzheimers Café.

- **Improving access**

As an outdoor facility we are well aware that we need to focus on recruitment during the spring and summer period so that new clients will understand the benefits of the project through first hand experience and are more likely to persevere through the more challenging winter months. We understand that some clients will only access the project when the weather is fine, but the core group members attend in all weather conditions because they know what a difference it makes to their mental health. Some clients attend every session; some drop in from time to time and others have benefited to such a degree from the sessions that they no longer feel the need to attend.



Nature and well-being seminar, Somerset



## A team project through the seasons

We harvested willow, hazel and ash from the forest over the winter to create our corral, a space for making hot drinks that can be separated off from the rest of the site – particularly important for when we have groups of young children in attendance. The group designed the space, harvested materials, installed the gate posts, hammered in the stakes at carefully measured intervals, planted the willow, hethered the top with hazel, nurtured the growing plants and designed and built the gate without using any nails or screws.



1. We marked out a circle using a stick and a piece of string. We then dug out a circular trench and replaced the clay with top-soil barrowed in from another part of the nature reserve.



2. We made and installed two gate posts from ash harvested from the forest and then hammered in a series of equally spaced sycamore stakes. We bound the top with flexible hazel hethers in a traditional hedgelaying pattern.



3. We cut willow stems from the forest and wove them them to create the walls of the corral.



4. The different coloured stems looked striking. We watered them and snipped back any unhealthy looking stems in the spring.



5. The first visitor to the corral was the group's tame pheasant, Phil.



6. Owing to the group's watering and nurturing of the stems, every one took root and sprouted new growth in the spring.





7. Group member John, a retired rope maker, found this twine on the beach and made it into a closing loop for the gate.



8. At the corral took shape, we started to use it as our drinks making space.



9. The gate with its hand cut joints and pegs, made with carefully split branch wood.



10. The ceremonial hanging of the gate!



A huge sense of achievement!



## Case Studies

Although it is clearly important to gather and collate data to demonstrate whether or not a project has reached its objectives, it is often the stories of the people behind the statistics that deliver the most powerful testimony to evidence success. Here are the stories of three of our clients who have been regularly attending the sessions during the reporting period. We have used quotes from the clients' evaluation forms to evidence how the clients (and one carer) feel about the Woodland Therapy Project.

## Case Study 1: Jayne

Jayne is a retired single woman who lives alone on the edge of a small town. During her working life she worked in a large engineering firm and was also a maths teacher in a grammar school. The things she enjoys are her garden, her cat and wildlife. Jayne struggles daily with crippling anxiety and depression, in addition to painful arthritis in her joints. Before she started attending Woodland Therapy, Jayne regularly relied on “Crisis Line” for out of hours support and was prone to self-harm. The sessions were recommended to Jayne by her mental health social worker.

When Jayne first started attending, she would often phone the Wildlife Trust office in the morning in tears, saying she couldn't come because she couldn't organise herself to get ready in time. For someone with Jayne's condition the daily tasks that many take for granted, such as washing, eating breakfast, choosing clothes and getting dressed, can seem overwhelming. We offered reassurance and, because we have funding for transport, a lift from her house to the forest. With a twenty minute time slot Jayne could cope and, although she would arrive still tearful, she would very quickly get into the woodland routines and start chatting with other members of the group. Nowadays Jayne is an integral part of the group. She arrives each week in her own car and supervises the daily routines. We rely on her to ensure a good cooking fire is built and lit each week. She tends to be the person who will approach new members to the group, teaching them the camp routines and skills such as fire lighting and wood splitting. As well as supporting others, Jayne has developed her green woodworking skills from scratch through the sessions, and is now a proficient spoon carver, creating beautiful objects to give as gifts to friends and family. Although she will never acknowledge her skills verbally or admit that she is pleased with the result of her labours, she is often called upon to show her finished items to our learners for inspiration and is happy to help others who are learning the skill. She will also think up simple crafts that can be done with natural materials to help a new member to get involved and achieve. She inspires other members about the wildlife of the forest and we will often take a walk on the heath with the binoculars to watch the birds or explore the wildlife of the ponds at Jayne's suggestion. From living in relative isolation, Jayne has made some strong friendships in the group; she and Zoe have bonded over their pet cats, who mean a great deal to them, and have arranged visits with each other. This year she teamed up with another member to go swimming at the local pool in a bid to lose weight and increase levels of health and fitness – this is particularly remarkable for someone who started out with such low



levels of self confidence and self esteem and high levels of anxiety. She even supported another client by attending their mother's funeral when they were going through the pain of bereavement. Jayne's social worker occasionally pops in to visit the group and has said that the difference the group has made to Jayne is remarkable. She still hits low spots from time to time, but the group has benefitted her in many ways, from general health and fitness, reduction in isolation, building relationships and a positive impact on her mental health and resilience. Jayne no longer self harms. Here's what Jayne has to say:

*"It has given me something to get out of bed for. I hope the staff are strong enough not to get side-tracked by individuals' preferences and can keep us on the woodland / wildlife track. I have nothing but praise for the staff's patience and understanding, considering mental health issues can be very varied. I like the lack of pressure; encouragement; quiet and outdoors; the small group; sympathetic and helpful staff – the best. I have confidence in the staff who know what they're doing. The location is perfect, with boundaries set. I have gained skills in whittling, chopping wood, fire building and lighting, recognising some trees and plants. It's something to look forward to after the weekend, a reason to get up and out. It has a calming effect, being in the forest away from "stuff". I now have reduced dependence on Day Services (don't attend as often)".*

### **Case Study 2: Albie**

Albie had been a very fit and active individual, taking part in a range of pursuits including marathon running, rock climbing and abseiling. He used his skills as a mountain leader and outdoor instructor in his role as a volunteer youth leader, working within the scouting movement and a local charity supporting troubled teenagers. When Albie was diagnosed with a serious heart condition he was forced to make drastic changes to his lifestyle and give up his passion for extreme outdoor pursuits. Although he had the support of a loving family Albie sank into a deep depression and became house-bound for several years. His daughter started bringing her children along to the woodland toddler groups at Bouldnor Forest and decided to bring her Dad along. In chatting with staff at the group, Albie learned About the Woodland Therapy group and tearfully agreed that this sounded as if it would suit him. The following Monday Albie drove himself to the session – the furthest he had driven by himself in ten years. Albie had a wealth of bushcraft and green woodworking skills to share with others and felt at home in a community of people where he didn't have to explain himself and where everyone understood the ups and downs of depression and could support each other. Albie continues to attend the group regularly and is a volunteer with the toddler group where he holds the position of





honorary grandad, making bows and arrows and other items for the children to play with and keeping guard over the campfire. Albie agreed to feature in the Wildlife Trust's magazine this year, which has led to lots of interest in the group from Hampshire as well as the Island and will hopefully lead to new groups starting up on the mainland. Here's what Albie had to say:

***“As a result in regaining my confidence I have become a volunteer for the Wildlife Trust and enjoy every minute of it. I now help with the tots Forest School group as well”.***

### **Case Study 3: Tony and Zoe**

Zoe is a talented young artist who lives with her Dad, her registered carer. Zoe was diagnosed with schizophrenia over twenty years ago and struggles with low self esteem and anxiety. Living with her condition is an exhausting affair, which takes its toll on her health and wellbeing. When Tony's wife died he asked if he could stay at the group with his daughter as he dealt with his bereavement and he was, of course, made very welcome. They have been attending the group together ever since; it has helped Tony find his way through his bereavement and the effect on Zoe has been nothing short of remarkable; the hours she spends in the forest each week is the only time that the voices in her head become quiet. This is an extraordinary relief to her and it is in no way exaggerating when she says that the group has been a life saver for her. Through the group she has made strong friendships and she always makes the effort to speak to others and put them at their ease, understanding that speaking one to one with someone with first hand experience of what it's like to live with a mental health condition is not only beneficial but is so much easier than joining in a group discussion when you are anxious. She is also generous with her artistic expertise and is happy to help us experiment with new techniques and inspiration. This year Zoe has started to go out with her family to local events where she has been part of large crowds, something that would have been unthinkable to her before attending the group. She has attended events where the Wildlife Trust has had a stand, such as Wolverton Garden Fair and the Rhythm Tree Festival (a small music festival held on a local farm) and popped in to say hello. This culminated with her attendance at The Bestival in September, a nationally renowned music festival, where she joined a crowd of tens of thousands! A remarkable achievement for her which has been celebrated as much by her family as by Zoe herself. Both Zoe and Tony are so friendly and supportive of other members of the group and extremely eloquent in how they describe the difference the Woodland Therapy Project has made to their lives:



### **Zoe:**

***“Life and the mind (suffering with schizophrenia) is not a quiet or enjoyable affair. However, Mondays at Bouldnor have changed this in an enormous way. I know on a Monday, for three hours, I'll have peace and calm, a safe environment and a sense of belonging. Believe me it is bliss. I never knew this was achievable until the very first day I walked into camp. I cannot praise***

*Kathy and Ric (who are knowledgeable, who provide guidance, confidence and masses of enthusiasm) highly enough, as indeed the rest of our group. Generally for me life is a very noisy, negative affair. However for three glorious hours on a Monday negativity just doesn't exist, nor do the voices that usually plague me. Before coming to Bouldnor, I usually had to listen to music through my headphones the majority of each day. Being at Bouldnor has the same effect, no need for headphones. I can now actually listen to conversation, engage in it and feel safe and confident to do so. It's enabled me to make friends, chat, listen and importantly take myself out of isolation. Nothing is expected of you, if you want to join in a group activity you can. If you just want to watch the fire, no-one ever questions you. Kathy and Ric are awesome, very relaxed, enthusiastic, very knowledgeable and there is no "us and them" feeling at all. Everybody is equal (it's amazing to be treated as an equal). No ideas are scoffed at, never belittling. There is no stigma. I thoroughly enjoy these relaxed, quiet sessions and as well as being "back to nature" its given me a lot of life skills that have never been given / offered to me through many years of being in the mental health system. A huge thanks to everybody in the group who have helped me in so many ways. These sessions should be run up and down the country. Invaluable!"*

**Tony:**

*"Woodland Therapy is an organic group – different every week, depending on who is there and their frame of mind. This ability to reinvent itself is facilitated by the lack of obvious structure and little regulation. But then, in a difficult way to define, there is a very strong underlying current, movement if you like, toward the positive, like the sometimes almost imperceptible but very powerful movement of water in a deep river. Difficult to pin down but it is something the two leaders are both part of and led by. (Very sensitive and gentle leadership, by the way, completely different to the attitudes and way of going on of many professionals whose minds / humanity have been straitjacketed by their training). Maybe this "flow to the positive" in a general sense is what can make the woodland experience a powerfully healing one. One that adjusts itself to whatever an individual needs. Zoe has been attending Woodland Therapy for 2.5 years now. Compared to her having suffered from her mental health traumas for over 20 years this is a short time. But the "emerging from the shadows" is bound to take time as so many habitual ways of thinking, so many crutches to survive the day, have been put in place and these take time and effort to grow out of when no longer needed. In conversation about four weeks ago, I heard her quite naturally say something positive about herself. I was overjoyed, this was the first time in many many years (quite possibly decades). Over the course of the next hour she "found" three more! She then went to write them down so as not to forget them. In a small way she has started to develop a business sense and is becoming more organised, particularly about her creative work. (Maybe fairy doors were a precursor). She is finding more motivation to keep her bedroom and studio tidier. It will*



*be two steps forward then one or two back for a considerable time yet, but there has been a major breakthrough. Who knows what led to this? It's a funny thing but in a way I think that up to recently she has seen the multitude of pills she takes as her saviours. Now, I think, she is just becoming aware (perhaps without realising it!) that rather than being saved by the pills she can empower herself to help herself".*

#### **Year 1 Expenditure: 1 September 2015 to 31 August 2016**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Education Officer and Assistant Education Officer – Salaries, NI and Pension or planning, delivering and evaluating the sessions, including time for liaison with mental health practitioners	£13,185
Contribution towards IT equip costs, IT support, phone costs, stationery, printer costs etc	£1,228
Travel costs for staff attending meetings and events and for picking up and dropping off participants who don't have suitable transport options	£1,090
Materials, equipment and refreshments for all sessions	£4,269
Training costs for staff and for volunteers helping at the sessions and the development of participants who may want to build their skills to become volunteers	£105
Contribution towards the costs of the Bouldnor Centre	£3,176
<b>Total year 1 expenditure:</b>	<b>£23,053</b>

#### **Year 1 Income:**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Big Lottery	£20,535
The Nineveh Charitable Trust *this is the amount spent in this period. Our Nineveh Charitable Trust funding year runs from November to November so doesn't quite match our project years. The remaining £482 Nineveh Charitable Trust funding will be used in the months October and November 2016.	£2,518*
<b>Total:</b>	<b>£23,053</b>



## Plans for the future

- Building on our experience of visiting the Wellbeing Seminar in Somerset, staff are planning a taster event, to take place in the second year of the project, for Isle of Wight mental health professionals and support staff so that they can get a better understanding of the effect of nature on health and well-being and are better able to support their clients to access the Woodland Therapy Project.
- Following the success of the visit to the Alzheimer's Café, we are looking forward to building on this relationship and delivering some outdoor sessions to the group.
- The group has plans to take part in the Brighstone Christmas Tree Festival in 2016.
- The next team project is to build a fence around our pond area to individuals' different designs.
- The group would like to improve the site for nature by planting fruit trees and hedgerow plants over the winter.
- The group has suggested growing food which we can cook and eat during the sessions. There are plans to build some raised beds for growing vegetables and herbs.
- An exhibition of the group's work is still an on-going desire, but will only be put into practice once we have enough items to exhibit; it is important that we don't put the pressure of deadlines on the clients so this is still an open project at the moment.
- We plan to try out a range of evaluation techniques, including audio recording and filming of sessions.



Seasonal fruit punch

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