

S2R
**CREATE
SPACE**
Promoting Positive Mental Health

S2R
**THE GREAT
OUTDOORS
PROJECT**

10
YEARS
OF TGO!



ANNUAL REPORT

2022/23

THE GREAT OUTDOORS PROJECT

Helping You to Thrive in Nature...

The Great Outdoors Project is one of the many projects delivered by the mental health and wellbeing charity S2R Support to Recovery. We know from independent research and the testimonies of our own participants, that connecting people with nature as part of a group in an outdoor activity, an indoor workshop, or an online session is a great way to improve emotional and physical wellbeing, reduce anxiety, create social connections and learn about both ourselves and the natural world.

We offer all* adults in Kirklees the chance to take their first steps into nature on our taster courses; to explore their relationship with the outdoors on mindful walks and through the direct experience of open spaces; to interact and contribute on practical tasks at our Allotment Group, Garden Upcycling or Work Days; to express themselves creatively making natural products and natural art; and to be active and enjoy themselves by walking and running in the biggest gym possible.

**Participants must be able to work in a small group setting either independently or with the help of a carer.*



“I WASN'T HERE LAST WEEK BECAUSE I HAD A JOB INTERVIEW. I HAVEN'T WORKED FOR MANY YEARS. I PREPARED AND DID A MOCK ZOOM WITH MY SISTER AND GOT THE JOB! I MENTIONED S2R IN MY INTERVIEW AND TOLD THEM ABOUT MY WALKS AND HOW YOU HAVE HELPED ME. I'M PLANNING TO WALK TO WORK TO KEEP UP THE GOOD HABIT.”



Support to Recovery
PROMOTING POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH

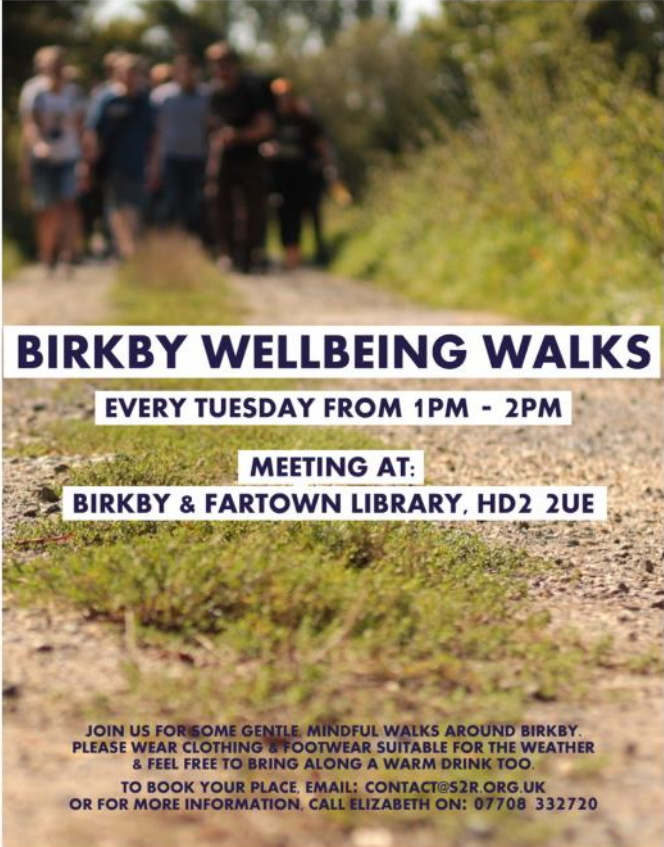
S2R WELCOME SESSIONS:
every Wednesday
from 10am - 12pm

WHO ARE S2R?
Come and meet us and find out what we do and how we can help you...

Book an online appointment or pop in for a cuppa and a friendly chat - we'd love to meet you.

S2R Create Space, 5-7 Brook Street, Huddersfield HD1 1EB
www.s2r.org.uk - email: contact@s2r.org.uk - 07933 358 800

“AFTER COMING TO THE WELCOME SESSION, MY CLIENT CAME TO OUR ONE-TO-ONE THIS AFTERNOON FEELING HAPPY AND MORE CONFIDENT. SHE SAID SHE'D REALLY ENJOYED THE SESSION, THOUGHT THE BUILDING WAS FAB AND EVERYONE WAS REALLY NICE AND FRIENDLY. I THINK IT WAS JUST WHAT SHE NEEDED TO KICKSTART HER S2R JOURNEY!”



BIRKBY WELLBEING WALKS

EVERY TUESDAY FROM 1PM - 2PM

MEETING AT:
BIRKBY & FARTOWN LIBRARY, HD2 2UE

JOIN US FOR SOME GENTLE, MINDFUL WALKS AROUND BIRKBY. PLEASE WEAR CLOTHING & FOOTWEAR SUITABLE FOR THE WEATHER & FEEL FREE TO BRING ALONG A WARM DRINK TOO.
TO BOOK YOUR PLACE, EMAIL: CONTACT@S2R.ORG.UK
OR FOR MORE INFORMATION, CALL ELIZABETH ON: 07708 332720

TGO is 10 Years Old This Year!

This year, The Great Outdoors Project will be 10 years old and over the years, so much has changed in the way we connect people to nature. In the beginning, the project was a fairly simple Social Prescribing offer, connecting people who experienced poor mental health with existing outdoor volunteer groups in Kirklees to help improve their wellbeing. Over the years, experience has taught us that interventions need to be earlier and more person-centred to ensure the best possible results for the greatest number of people. With this in mind, you will now find the Great Outdoors Project in school parents' groups, libraries and community centres as well as parks, allotments and our Brook Street building Create Space. We are continuing to spread the word and showing everyone that nature can be good for you by opening as many different doors as possible and encouraging everyone through them with new skills and confidence.

Jason Kerry *Great Outdoors Manager*



Operating This Year...

Throughout this year, the Great Outdoors team have been responding to people's desire to be back outdoors and to reconnect with one another face-to-face. This has meant we have worked with a wide range of groups from parents in schools like Lowerhouses, Birkby and Ravensthorpe making time for themselves in nature, to corporate teams from Kirklees Council trying to make sense of the new post-Covid working world.

We continued to reach out to new and established partners and develop complimentary funding streams so we can get even more people out into nature and improving their wellbeing. This year, that has included our walking project with City Connect in Dewsbury and building new planters for the Penistone Line Partnership.



We have been striving to help young people regain their confidence after Covid by introducing new groups created specially for young adults, and through work with our partners in the Works Better partnership offering the Positive Minds employment project. The younger demographic has previously been hard to establish, but this year, a new focus means we have much better engagement.

We continue to offer remote ways to access the Great Outdoors Project through our bank of nature videos which are a great resource for those wishing to dip their toe in, or revisit a topic in their own time. We also produced three Dewsbury walking leaflets, available online and in community venues detailing nine local walking routes accompanied by videos, digital maps for mobile phones so no one could get lost and some walking safety tips. Links to these guides can be found at: www.s2r.org.uk/dewsbury-your-health-in-mind.

WALKING SAFETY TIPS!
Walking is a great way to keep fit and keep active outdoors. It's also a great way to get out and about because you can see and hear so much more than you can from a screen. Walking is a great way to get out and about because you can see and hear so much more than you can from a screen.

DEWSBURY: YOUR HEALTH IN MIND!
Grab your coat, step out of your front door, and start exploring your neighbourhood on foot with these three simple starter walks.

DEWSBURY SOUTH WALKING GUIDE

Our video skills also help us attract new participants, with quarterly highlight videos showcasing our latest adventures shared on social media, and when people are ready to visit us in-person, our S2R Welcome Sessions are back and offering a gentle introduction to S2R and the Working Together Better Partnership.

Looking After Our Staff

Our staff are a vibrant group of talented individuals with the kind of highly-developed skills that only come from genuine personal investment in their chosen areas. This is balanced by a desire to share that knowledge with the enthusiasm of those who know its value to wellbeing. Our staff are still mostly working remotely, but this is largely out of choice and to allow us new flexibility. Brook Street is now open most days and we are all starting to see more of one another in the flesh too. Thanks to hard work and relationship-building, we now offer a wider geographical engagement. As a result of this, our facilitators are drawn from many parts of Kirklees. We do our best to support our workforce, staying connected with staff wellbeing activities like walks and yoga classes and with skill share sessions like pizza-making and aromatherapy. For our more informal get-togethers, our social WhatsApp group provides the team opportunities to meet for coffee, go to a gig or lend a fancy dress costume.

Bringing a Hub Back to Brook Street

With remote-working and a wider geographical spread of work, it is more challenging to keep the buzzy feel that Brook Street had before Covid. We are certainly getting there now with our weekly S2R Welcome Sessions, regular workshops running three days a week and quarterly get-togethers all helping participants, staff and partners both old and new to discover or rediscover The Great Outdoors Project.





We Delivered...

1,150
HOURS OF
FACE-TO-FACE
SESSIONS

1,092
COMMUNITY
VOLUNTEERING HOURS

89
PARTNERS
WORKED
WITH

549
SESSIONS
DELIVERED

19,021
WEBSITE
VISITORS

73,638
PEOPLE
REACHED ON
FACEBOOK

3,633
ATTENDANCES AT
OUR SESSIONS

789
NAMED PEOPLE
ATTENDED
S2R SESSIONS

The TGO Project grounds itself in the nationally recognised Five Ways to Wellbeing. We help people *Connect, Be Active, Learn, Give* and *Take More Notice*. Using these proven indicators, participants are invited to use a self-assessment scale to track their progress in each outcome area and also to indicate how confident they feel to make decisions in life and live independently. This process is then repeated later in their journey to indicate the progress they have made.

Connecting People with Nature and Each Other

Connection and loneliness have been important themes again this year. Isolated people can lose their confidence and miss out on important social interactions, so TGO did its best to re-engage with regular participants and reach out to new people feeling the effects of loneliness.

Birkby Library Gardening Group

Birkby and Fartown Library is a new building with a small garden in a vibrant and diverse area but one that is often described as deprived. A social gardening group was an ideal opportunity for us to work with Kirklees Libraries to develop a self-led group that could grow confidence, friendships and flowers. Participants meet weekly to maintain the garden and try new nature-based activities.

Working in an existing hub of the community means local people happen upon the group as well as those coming through S2R and partners like Community Plus. The project is now a year old and some lasting friendships and warm social connections have resulted. To find out more, visit: www.s2r.org.uk/case-studies.

“I’VE COME ON THE RIGHT DAY BECAUSE I’M SUFFERING FROM DEPRESSION AND I NEED TO DO SOMETHING LIKE THIS.”

Wellbeing Team Days

The last few years have been very hard on staff teams so S2R teamed up with TSL to offer our nature wellbeing knowhow to Kirklees Council and frontline service staff by providing team away days. We offered natural crafts and pizza-making sessions with wellbeing conversation opportunities to 12 staff teams or 96 individuals.

Most teams are still working remotely, seeing each other infrequently and in some cases people had never met their teams face-to-face at all! The most common feedback we got was that it was great to see their teams and to meet outside of work. Most resolved to meet socially more often and to look after their own wellbeing. All the participants agreed that our sessions had benefitted their wellbeing and would recommend it to other teams. They consistently gave us 5 star ratings for hospitality, team building and the quality of activities on offer.

“I ENJOYED GETTING TOGETHER AS A TEAM, THE COSY SPACE, THE SNACKS, THE CRAFTING AND THE LOVELY INSTRUCTORS.”

AFTER ATTENDING OUR SESSIONS,

78%

OF PARTICIPANTS SAID THEIR LEVEL OF **CONNECTION** HAD BEEN MAINTAINED OR HAD INCREASED



Being Active

Being active improves breathing, builds muscle and bone strength, helps you maintain a healthy weight and also releases chemicals in the body that make you feel good and improve your wellbeing.

Birkby Walk, Jog, Run...

We teamed up with Kirklees Council and England Athletics to train our keen sports facilitator to be able to lead jogging groups. Every Monday, the group head out to Norman Park and exercise at whatever pace they like, confident in the knowledge that there are people close by should they need help. A range of warm-up and cool-down exercises promote good balance and flexibility and brings the group together at the start and end of each session. A shared love of the outdoors makes the park the ideal place to notice nature as you get your heart rate rising whether you are 22 or 82.

Friday Wanderers

Our women's walking group based in Crow Nest Park focuses on gentle walks with interesting themes rather than step counting. Strong and lasting friendships have been built from the group and everyone learns from and helps to inspire each other. Being active in a safe space with people you trust can do more for your wellbeing than just making you physically fitter too. After a few visits to the group Fatimah (not her real name) felt able to share how the group had helped her when her son passed away: *"I was trying to find ways to heal, grieve, get on with my life. Walking has improved my mental health."* To read about Fatimah's story in full, visit:

www.s2r.org.uk/case-studies.

AFTER ATTENDING OUR SESSIONS,

70%

OF PARTICIPANTS SAID THEIR LEVEL OF **ACTIVITY** HAD BEEN MAINTAINED OR HAD INCREASED



"THAT WAS REALLY ENJOYABLE. IT DIDN'T FEEL LIKE EXERCISE BECAUSE IT WAS FUN!"

"OH LOOK... I CAN TOUCH THE GROUND! I COULDN'T EVEN DO THAT A FEW WEEKS AGO!"



"YOU HAVE UNLOCKED A DOOR IN MY MIND AND I INTEND TO LEARN MORE ABOUT AROMATHERAPY AND HOW TO USE IT IN MY EVERYDAY LIFE."

AFTER ATTENDING OUR SESSIONS,

70%

OF PARTICIPANTS SAID THE AMOUNT THEY WERE **LEARNING** HAD BEEN MAINTAINED OR HAD INCREASED

Learning

Learning is a great way to improve our confidence, self-esteem and to give us new perspectives.

Natural Products

Making natural products like soap, deodorant, and candles is one of our most popular offers. They are tactile, fragrant, help people connect to others whilst they learn and are a great way to make connections with nature for those not ready to go outdoors.

One or two of our participants have gone on to make small businesses out of their new aromatherapy skills and this year, we began to provide raw materials for hobbyists through our refill station so they don't need to buy ingredients in bulk, can benefit from their own group learning and make products they want to make.

Bee Happy

Through talks, visits to local hives and conservation work we learn about bees and the natural processes linking them and other pollinators to our natural world. This leads to a greater understanding of and gratitude for nature and our place in it.

At first people are nervous, but confidence quickly improves as they approach the hives and everyone goes home positively changed by the encounter.

Notice

Noticing things around you can help avoid patterns of thought that leave you reliving the past or worrying about what might happen in the future. This can help us to feel more grounded and content with our lives.

Spring Tree Buds Identification Walk

This year, one of our participants is a professional tree consultant. After taking part in some of our courses, her confidence had grown and she was keen to give something back to S2R. So, we teamed up with the Friends of Greenhead Park for a Tree Identification Walk. Despite initial nerves, our volunteer's knowledge and enthusiasm was infectious. As well as learning to identify native trees by the shape of their buds and twigs, participants mindfully engaged with the textures of bark and the stories that the shapes of trees tell us.

Urban Wild

In March, we worked with Hudds Lit Fest, Bloomsbury Publishers and author Helen Rook for a workshop on her book 'Urban Wild'. During the presentation, she was able to bring us back to the essence of the Great Outdoors Project with simple mindful activities that illustrated the wellbeing effects of nature, reminding us why we need to make time to be in nature. It was a great opportunity for us to form new relationships which will no doubt lead to new projects because of the shared priorities we have discovered.



“WE CERTAINLY TOOK NOTICE TODAY. WE WANDERED FROM TREE TO TREE LOOKING CLOSELY AT THE BUDS, BARK AND SHAPES. IT WAS LOVELY!”

AFTER ATTENDING OUR SESSIONS,

78%

OF PARTICIPANTS SAID THE AMOUNT THEY **NOTICED** HAD BEEN MAINTAINED OR HAD INCREASED



“STARTING TO CONNECT WITH THE COMMUNITY HERE IN BIRKBY HAS HELPED ME FEEL PART OF THE ECOSYSTEM AGAIN.”

AFTER ATTENDING OUR SESSIONS,

82%

OF PARTICIPANTS SAID THE AMOUNT THEY **GIVE BACK** HAD BEEN MAINTAINED OR HAD INCREASED

Give

Giving our time and skills to friends, the environment and our local community can make us feel more positive about ourselves and help us value things about ourselves that we may have been taking for granted.

Work Days

Every week, our Work Day volunteers range across Kirklees improving green spaces for the local communities. Getting stuck into physical work with a group of friends and honing conservation skills in interesting new places is very beneficial to their wellbeing, as is the thanks they get from people who value these spaces and use them for their own wellbeing.

Volunteering with The Great Outdoors Project

Giving your time to improve the natural environment and enabling others to do the same can be very satisfying. Cherry joined S2R as a participant but quickly became an invaluable part of the team. She uses her wealth of knowledge, creativity and infectious positivity to nurture both the plants we care for and the participants who come to join us at the Polytunnels and Birkby library. Now her confidence has grown she has felt able to return to work as an artist-in-residence with WOVEN Festival, where the skills and contacts she made with us have contributed greatly to the success of the Growing Colours Together project. We look forward to Cherry joining the TGO team as a sessional worker in the coming year. Read more about Cherry's journey at: www.s2r.org.uk/case-studies.

Confidence

Getting outdoors and connecting with nature whilst building on the Five Ways to Wellbeing can bring on some profound changes in our participants, including improved confidence and the ability to make important life decisions which helps them to take ownership of their own mental health and wellbeing.

Positive Minds

This year, we partnered with Northorpe Hall, Kirklees Council and C&K Careers to deliver Positive Minds as part of the ESF funded project Works Better. Mental health conditions like anxiety and depression are a major barrier to employment for younger people and TGO can help to build the confidence of young adults that arrive at the Job Centre. At the request of our younger participants, we created the 17-24ers group specifically for them to complement our existing workshops. It is a popular peer-support group with varied activities from video gaming to crafts and even self-defence. The self-belief gained by the young people in the group has been noticeable and has led some participants to find employment as well as develop new friendships and the confidence to shine: *“S2R helped me to realise that I needed help developing my self-esteem and confidence first and this would then lead to successful job interviews... I now have a permanent position as a Science Technician at a high school and I'm feeling much better in myself and confident in my own interests and opinions.”* Read the full story online at: www.s2r.org.uk/case-studies.

This focus on young people has allowed us to appeal to a new demographic, reach into higher education settings and start to smooth the transition between young people's and adult mental health services.

Welcome Sessions and Seasonal Get Togethers

We are really pleased to have our S2R Welcome Sessions back on Wednesday mornings. For people who don't know S2R, it's a great way to take that most difficult first step. Once through the door, you can meet the team, look round our building and find out what we are all about. It has been the start of a journey for many of our regular attendees and the start of S2R's relationship with many partners who are now confident enough to signpost people into our service.

“I WENT TO THE 17-24ERS GROUP LAST WEEK AND HAD A GREAT TIME! I FELT REALLY COMFORTABLE, HAD A GOOD CHAT TO THE OTHER ATTENDEES AND LOTS OF FUN.”

“I WENT TO THE WELCOME SESSION LAST WEDNESDAY - IT WAS REALLY NICE! THE ROOMS YOU HAVE ARE JUST LOVELY AND DAWN WAS SO KIND. SHE INVITED ME ALONG TO THE ORCHARD WELLBEING WHICH I ATTENDED YESTERDAY.”



AFTER ATTENDING OUR SESSIONS,

70%

OF PARTICIPANTS SAID THEIR LEVEL OF **CONFIDENCE** HAD BEEN MAINTAINED OR HAD INCREASED

Website Statistics

- ⇒ 19,021 total page views
- ⇒ 9,231 site sessions
- ⇒ 8,213 unique visitors to the site
- ⇒ 4,444 brand new visitors



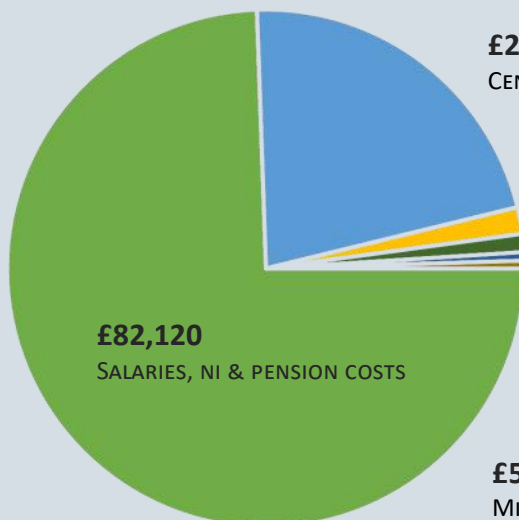
Development, Vision & Targets for Next Year

In the coming year, we aim to build on recent successful developments and to re-establish some of the practices from before Covid that remain pertinent. We aim to:

- ⇒ Continue to develop our offer to younger adults and help bridge the transitional gap.
- ⇒ Continue to develop our funding portfolio of nature-based activities at S2R to compliment the core funding from this commission.
- ⇒ Where possible, include more provision for the working population by working with employers and developing interventions that can be accessed by those in work.
- ⇒ Develop our commitment to sustainability. A balanced natural environment and an understanding of our impact on it is an essential part of the ecotherapy we offer.
- ⇒ Explore where the TGO approach might help residential settings as well as community ones.
- ⇒ Establish a bank of volunteers to help facilitate activities, champion S2R and offer peer support. This will add value to the project and provide greater opportunity for peer involvement and leadership.
- ⇒ Develop and contribute to partnership events throughout the year, both within the Working Together Better Partnership and our wider association of organisations in the worlds of nature, wellbeing and community.



"I JUST WANTED TO SAY THANK YOU FOR YOUR KIND HELP & ASSISTANCE. THE ARTICLE FROM S2R WILL BE FEATURED IN 'OUR WEEK' & THE GREEN EMPLOYERS NETWORK BLOG & WILL REACH APPROXIMATELY 9,000 KIRKLEES COUNCIL DESK-BASED STAFF!"
- DENISE BUCKLEY, (GREEN EMPLOYEE NETWORK) KIRKLEES COUNCIL



£24,000
CENTRAL COSTS INC. MANAGEMENT

£1,834
GROUP MATERIALS & EQUIPMENT

£1,246
TRAVEL / MOBILE PHONES / TRAINING

£581
IT & PRINTING

£535
MISCELLANEOUS / SUNDRIES

TGO Finances

Working Together Better (WTB) Partnership Development

The Partnership comprises seven voluntary sector organisations: *Carers Count*, *CLEAR*, *hoot creative arts*, *Richmond Fellowship*, *S2R Support to Recovery*, *Touchstone* and *WomenCentre*; commissioned by Kirklees Council and NHS West Yorkshire Integrated Care Board.

We are Working Together Better to:

- Improve community mental health services for people and with people
- Ensure services are accessible to all
- Increase positive outcomes
- Enable independence and resilience
- Increase prevention and early intervention

As a collective, we meet monthly to progress these aims. Some areas of work we have focused on this year are:

- We worked with the council to develop the 'Open Up' web page on the Live Well Kirklees website, you can see it here: www.livewellkirklees.co.uk/open-up/
- We have published quarterly Your Voice in Kirklees newsletters, you can see an example here: www.avoiceinkirklees.wixsite.com/yourvoiceinkirklees
- We developed a Working Together Better presentation detailing the work we do together and as individual services. We used this to promote at several statutory and 3rd sector services in Kirklees, overall reaching more than 80 refers.
- We delivered a number of events in the community together such as the Lantern Parade for World Mental Health Day, Pride and Shine - an event celebrating creativity in mental health. All with a view to raising awareness and reducing stigma around mental health.
- We offered the BIH app free of charge to our clients across the partnership.
- We developed a strategic steering group. Together we created a strategic plan for the group in which objectives for the coming year have been identified, this will include new posts to support the work involved.

WORKING TOGETHER BETTER

Are you looking for Mental Health & Wellbeing support in Kirklees?

We are the commissioned, Community Adult Mental Health service providers from the voluntary sector, working together to provide a better mental health service in Kirklees.

RICHMOND FELLOWSHIP MAKING RECOVERY REALITY
HOOT creative arts
clear Greater Yorkshire
womenCentre
Carers Count IN CREATE SPACE
Touchstone

Get in Touch

To find out more about any service you are interested in, or to make a referral for yourself or someone else, you can call, email or visit our websites.

The Kirklees Mental Health Partnership aims to work together better to:

- Improve community mental health services for people and with people
- Ensure services are accessible to all
- Increase positive outcomes for people in our services
- Enable and create independence and resilience
- Increase prevention and early intervention work

NHS North Kirklees Greater Yorkshire Integrated Care Board
Kirklees COUNCIL
NHS Greater Huddersfield Clinical Commissioning Group



Partnership Work and Social Value

As you might expect from a nature project, our roots run deep under the surface and intertwine with those of many other local and national organisations, both large and small. We do this so we can share our resources, skills and knowledge to help each other to reach our individual targets, whilst providing the best outcomes for the communities of Kirklees as a whole.

By working with other organisations, we can ensure that the hard work of our staff and volunteers and the type and nature of our workshops also contribute to larger strategies like biodiversity, community development and public health agendas like reducing diabetes and lowering carbon emissions by encouraging sustainable transport. Where we can share staffing responsibilities and other resources, we can offer improved value for money for everyone involved, as well as introducing particular specialisms that enable certain activities to take place that might not otherwise.

Our outreach efforts into local communities mean that community and public buildings are used more and as footfall increases, so too does the number of people visiting, volunteering at, and engaging in the wider life of these community centres, schools and libraries.

As our excellent reputation increases, we are often the first choice of partner for organisations wishing to work with people experiencing mental health problems.

In the past 4 years of this current commission, The Great Outdoors Project has accumulated 155 active partner organisations with 34 of those organisations being new to us this year. These partners range from public and statutory partners like *Kirklees Parks and Greenspaces*, *Locala* and the *NHS* to larger third sector and independent organisations like the *Working Together Better Partnership*, *Third Sector Leaders* and Academy Trusts and small grassroots organisations like *Friends Of parks* groups, Community Centres and even local cafés.

Although they are too numerous to mention individually, we would like to thank all of our partners for sharing our values and helping to make The Great Outdoors Project a success.

"I was delighted to have been given the opportunity to work with Michelle from Huddersfield Literature Festival and Jason from S2R to develop our workshop for my first book Urban Wild. I knew instantly that both organisations shared the same community focus and a commitment to wellbeing which mirrored my own, I felt at home from start to finish. It was an honour to see what fabulous work both organisations do for Huddersfield and surrounding areas and I am incredibly grateful for the time they both took to welcome me into the community and make the event a success. I hope we get the opportunity to work together in the future." - Helen Rook, Author of Urban Wild



The Great Outdoors Project

To find out more about this project call/text: 07541 095 455
email: contact@s2r.org.uk, or visit: www.s2r.org.uk

S2R Create Space, 5-7 Brook Street, Huddersfield HD1 1EB

Scan the QR Code to view this report online:



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