



Wellbeing, it's in our nature

The Nature Alliance, Press Release, July 2021

<https://naturealliance.org.uk/>

The Nature Alliance is a major new project funded by The Rothschild Foundation to support young people build and maintain resilience in their wellbeing. It will create a fully integrated nature, health and wellbeing service across Buckinghamshire initially for young people under 25.

The Nature Alliance is a partnership of nature based organisations and will support 'green prescribing' in Buckinghamshire and lead the way in establishing nature-based health promotion and green care, first for young people, and subsequently adults. Building on Lindengate's reputation as a leading green care provider and lead Tier Two mental health service provider to emerge from the Buckinghamshire Mental Health Response Group for Covid 19, The Nature Alliance will provide early help and targeted services in the form of specialised nature based activities.

Charlie Powell, Co-Founder and General Manager at Lindengate explains: *"Lindengate is only 40% full at the moment but so many people with low to moderate mental health needs are already in the system, waiting weeks, if not months, for a 'talking therapy' referral like CBT or counselling. Frequently their mental health is deteriorating while they wait. The NHS can't cope. The Nature Alliance can bridge the gap and offer some help now, particularly for young people, where the many volunteering opportunities are particularly important. Not only supporting their wellbeing, but also enabling them to learn new skills, get connected and keep healthy by spending time outdoors".*

Social Prescribers/Link Workers and it is hoped many other referring services, will work with The Nature Alliance partners, Lindengate, BBOWT, Chiltern Rangers, Road Farm Countryways and Chiltern Society to introduce young people to nature based activities. This referral option for GP's, operates alongside existing treatments to improve health and wellbeing for those people with mild to moderate mental health needs. The Nature Alliance will establish a "one stop shop - clearing house" for green based activities for commissioners and referrers. The development of a "passport" will allow ease of movement between activities for participants.

Gavin Johnson, Head of Conservation, Chiltern Society: *"We are thrilled to be part of such an exciting and innovative project and are very much looking forward to working alongside the other partners and The Rothschild Foundation. Nature Alliance has enormous potential to improve the health of young people and the wider community and also support nature recovery in the Chilterns long into the future."*

Support for The Nature Alliance comes from Oxford Health HNS Foundation Trust, Bucks Healthcare NHS Trust, Bucks Public Health Team, Bucks Mind and Trailblazers, Buckinghamshire Mental Health Support Teams, Primary Care Networks, Voluntary and Community Sector, Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust and Buckinghamshire Clinical Commissioning. The work of the partnerships across The Nature Alliance, is linked to

local, regional and national strategies for improving and sustaining our natural environment, enabling partners to support and improve their capacity in this area.

Angela Jessop, Transformation Manager and Social Prescribing Lead for Buckinghamshire CCG: *“Social Prescribing (SP) has been identified as a key element to the NHS Long Term Plan to help integrate the gaps between the NHS and community-based services. In Buckinghamshire, the goal is to increase SP referrals from under 2,000 in 2020 to over 8,000 by 2024. For example, patients referred to IAPT (Improving Access to Psychological Services) wait to access appropriate mental health services such as counselling or CBT as demand is so much higher than supply. ... As our population lives longer than ever before, isolation and loneliness are an increasing challenge. Greencare and nature-based activities are a fundamental part of the support we need to tackle these societal challenges. I am very excited to champion this proposal and to include green social prescribing within the NHS service transformation.”*

Neil Macdonald, Chief Executive, Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust: *“The Trust are big supporters and users of green prescribing as an effective intervention in people’s health and well-being. Not only is this supported in how we offer interventions to residents in our community, it is also important for the health of my colleagues in the health and social care workforce. If one’s job is to care, then one’s first priority must be to look after the people looking after the people! I speak on behalf of my workforce of over 6 thousand colleagues in supporting this valuable initiative.”*

Leona Forsyth, Grants Manager, The Rothschild Foundation: *“The Rothschild Foundation is pleased to support the inception of Buckinghamshire’s first Nature Alliance. We value this collaborative approach which brings together the county’s best in green care. The partnership will create beneficial improvements for nature and for the health and well-being of people who value it.”*

If you are interested in learning more about The Nature Alliance, please contact Anne Mills, Project Manager at info@naturealliance.org.uk Updates will be released when we have news to share about Nature Alliance. As we progress and grow we will welcome other nature based organisations to join us.

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NOTES FOR EDITORS

Lindengate

- <https://lindengate.org.uk/>
- Aylesbury Rd, Wendover, HP22 6BD
- Contact: Communications Manager, Charlie Hughes, 01296 622443
charlie.hughes@lindengate.org.uk

Established at a disused allotment site in Wendover in 2013, now a stunning 5-acre gardens recognised by the National Gardens Scheme, Lindengate provides an all age fully integrated service in Greencare with weekly and short programmes for all low to moderate needs across all age groups. They have also worked closely with Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust to develop its services to be able to interface within their Wellbeing and workforce teams and has recently been made a recognised, quality assured service provider for Buckinghamshire NHS trust offering wellbeing days for staff from all NHS departments including ITU, Doctors, Surgeons, surgery nursing and administration staff. Free drop in sessions are also open to the public and are run three times a week for anyone to come and self-help by spending time in nature. For the under 25’s they have many volunteering opportunities and specialist programmes providing work experience, peer support and exciting learning opportunities.

Chiltern Rangers

- <https://chilternrangers.co.uk/>
- Chiltern Rangers, Kingsmead Depot, 60 Fennels Rd, High Wycombe, HP11 1SL
- Contact: John Shaw, Managing Director john@chilternrangers.co.uk 07931 575374

Chiltern Rangers provides habitat management in Bucks and the wider Chilterns. Managing 13 nature reserves for Wycombe District Council and helping a range of conservation and local authority partners with habitat management in their woodlands, chalk grassland, commons, ponds and chalk streams, with the help of volunteers of all ages, abilities and backgrounds.

Chiltern Society

- <https://chilternsociety.org.uk/>
- White Hill Centre, White Hill, Chesham, Bucks, HP5 1AG
- Contact: Gavin Johnson 01494 490721 GavinJohnson@ChilternSociety.org.uk

Chiltern Society is a volunteer-led, regional environmental charity focused on protecting, conserving and promoting the Chilterns Landscape. Chiltern Society offers staff led activities for young people such as fire lighting, conservation tasks, guided walks, nature spotting.

Road Farm Countryways

- <https://www.roadfarmcountryways.com/>
- Road Farm, Aylesbury Rd, Great Missenden, HP16 9LS
- Contact: Wendy and Duncan Gray, Co-leaders of RFCW, chalkdell.roadfarm@gmail.com 01494 862413

Road Farm Countryways is part of the UK-wide Care Farm network, based on a mixed livestock and arable farm in the heart of the Chilterns. Road Farm Countryways provides existing services to cover a wide range of abilities to support young people with low to high mental health needs

BBOWT

- <https://www.bbowt.org.uk/>
- Contact: Liz Shearer, Head of People Engagement, 07751 082203, lizshearer@bbowt.org.uk

Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust (BBOWT) is one of 46 Wildlife Trusts across the UK working to achieve the shared aim of securing a better future for wildlife. BBOWT's vision is to create a region rich in wildlife and appreciated by all. BBOWT has over 52,000 members. BBOWT brings people and nature together to protect our environment. Our experts work with more than 1,800 volunteers to look after over 80 nature reserves, four education centres and run hundreds of amazing events. We rely on the generosity of individuals, charitable trusts and businesses. Find out more at www.bbowt.org.uk

The Rothschild Foundation

- <https://rothschildfoundation.org.uk/>
- The Rothschild Foundation, Windmill Hill, Silk Street, Waddesdon, HP18 0JZ
- Contact: Leona Forsyth Grants Manager, 01296 653 319 / 07739 363866
leona.forsyth@rothschildfoundation.org.uk

The Rothschild Foundation is a charity supporting arts and heritage, the environment and social welfare by awarding grants, fostering dialogue and debate, and through their support of Waddesdon Manor. Their generous grant of £73,000 has allowed for the creation of the Nature Alliance.

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