



# GOING WILD FOR WELLBEING PROJECT NEWSLETTER

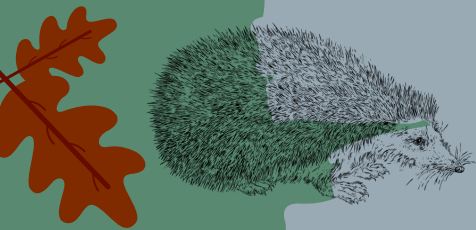
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## Seeing out the season!

As autumn draws to a close, staff and participants have faced much colder conditions for the first time. With this in mind, Project Manager Fran and the rest of the WSWs team have been keeping participants active, carrying out important conservation and community work and providing plenty of warming campfire treats.

## What we've been up to in our community



Improving the community space at our partner site 'Cultivate Community Gardens' in Newtown



Litter picking along the wildlife-rich Montgomery Canal - and elsewhere in Welshpool - with some enthusiastic young people from local schools



Sweeping up leaves to make reserve paths safer, and for creating homemade compost



# Youth Sessions

Llanfyllin High School pupils have been getting physical, keeping themselves busy by making their own woodland seating area. Using a fallen tree trunk, a bow saw and a lot of hard work, they were able to produce three logs. They also had the idea of putting something in place to stop the logs from rolling, so they whittled fallen sticks to a point to produce stakes and used a mallet to knock them into the ground, enhancing their problem solving and woodworking skills. Now they have a lovely communal space where they can come and relax each week.

It is really important to the WSWs team that participants develop a positive connection with nature; in the colder months, keeping active is the best way to stay warm and have fun outdoors.



Two young people using a double-ended bow saw to cut a fallen log



Making popcorn on the campfire, using a couple of metal sieves



Staff and participants utilising their new communal area



Bonfire Art using leaf litter



# Youth Sessions



Participants from a local school, Bettws Lifehouse in Welshpool, have been working hard this month to remove old and unsafe boardwalk from Severn Farm Pond Nature Reserve. In the new year, this will be replaced with recycled plastic boardwalk that will link different parts of the site together, allowing members of the community to enjoy a circular stroll around the magnificent pond at the heart of this special nature reserve.

We're very proud of how well individuals have worked as a team, overcoming many of their worries and insecurities to achieve goals during this project. Doing manual work outdoors is great for both their physical and mental health, and it's been proven to reduce stress and anxiety.



Moving sections of old boardwalk



Smashing up old boardwalk with a sledgehammer



Participants working together to remove chicken wire



## Challenging the senses

Trying new things is a personal goal for many of our participants; providing them with opportunities to prepare and eat campfire food is a great way to encourage them to experience new smells, flavours and textures. A particular highlight this month has been campfire doughnuts! These yummy treats are made by sandwiching slices of bread and jam, cutting them into circles, squashing them with your hands and finally deep-frying them in oil. They're then coated with sticky sugar and cinnamon, making the dish a real experience for the senses.



A participant preparing campfire sandwiches



Freshly cooked doughnuts



A young participant enjoying a campfire doughnut



# Adult Sessions



Making the most of the autumn colour as the leaves turned red, russet and gold, our ecotherapy participants have been mindfully scanning and foraging the hedgerows for seed heads, bright berries and evergreen foliage. We then turned their treasures into seasonal wreaths that'll inject some welcome colour into the darker, duller days to come.



This is a wonderful way to connect with nature and celebrate our countryside. An abundant hedgerow is a source of food and shelter for our much-loved wildlife. Rosehips, crap apples, hazelnuts and seeds build up reserves of fat for migrating birds and hibernating mammals, so only forage for what you really need.

As sunlight burns off the early morning frost, ecotherapy participants tend to fruit trees at our Llyn Coed y Dinas Nature Reserve. As we approach winter, it's important to keep active during the daylight hours as physical exercise can boost your self-esteem and help you concentrate, sleep and feel better; there is nothing like the great outdoors to improve wellbeing. Participants (pictured here) have been busy replacing damaged stakes and making new ones to support the fruit trees, adding wire to prevent any damage from passing wildlife. The WSWS team are excited for winter sessions with participants and getting stuck into conservation tasks on the reserves, not without a cup of something warm to fuel us from the inside!





# Join Us

## FESTIVE GATHERING

### CHRISTMAS WITH THE WSWs TEAM

The Wild Skills Wild Spaces team, invite you and your referrer to a festive gathering on **Friday 17th December 2021**, at Severn Farm Pond Nature Reserve, Welshpool.

Drop in between 10-3pm for a warm mince pie and something mulled over the campfire.

- Discuss the project with the team
- Meet our participants
- Join the Friends of Severn Farm Pond group for some conservation tasks on the reserve
- Take a mindfulness walk around the nature reserve
- Enjoy making festive crafts to take away



A NATURAL WAY TO WELLBEING

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This hugely successful project is all about  
boosting mental health through  
its '5 ways to wellbeing', which are  
connecting with nature,  
being active, taking notice,  
learning and giving back.



Autumn light at Severn Farm Pond Nature Reserve, Welshpool

### 5 top tips for connecting with nature and wildlife

- 1. Physical exercise:** wrap us warm and head out on a walk before work.
- 2. Window gazing:** if you can't physically get outside, move yourself closer to the window and direct sunlight.
- 3. Fireside time:** winter offers the perfect excuse to appreciate our age-old friend, the fire; feel its warmth and unwind near the flames, inside or out.
- 4. Arts and crafts:** if you see a pretty leaf, pick it up - then press it at home to preserve for crafty projects.
- 5. Wildlife watching:** keep bird feeders topped up and see who visits.

## Our referral pathway is always open

### How do I get someone involved?

If you think this could benefit someone you know, email us at [ecotherapy@montwt.co.uk](mailto:ecotherapy@montwt.co.uk) for a referral form. Once we've received your completed form, one of our team will be in touch with you and the participant by phone or email with further information before sign-up. We will also keep your referral pathway updated throughout the process.

We take referrals from primary and secondary healthcare, such as:

GPs and nurses  
Powys Teaching Health Board  
Child and Adolescent Mental health Service  
Adult Mental Health Services  
Integrated Autism Services, (IAS) etc.  
Statutory Services - Powys County Council (PCC)  
Youth Intervention services  
Family Intervention services

**Email us:** [ecotherapy@montwt.co.uk](mailto:ecotherapy@montwt.co.uk)

Stay up to date with the project by visiting  
us on:



Website: [home | Montgomeryshire Wildlife Trust \(montwt.co.uk\)](http://home.montgomeryshirewildlife.co.uk)



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