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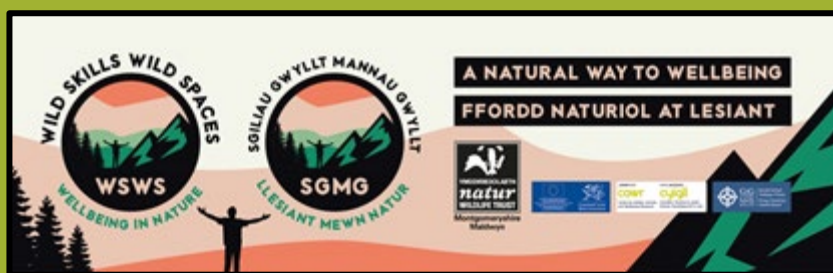
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Montgomeryshire Wildlife Trust - Wild Skills, Wild Spaces project: Delivery and Recommendations Framework for Nature- based Wellbeing Support Programmes (2023)

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DOCUMENT OVERVIEW

This document presents a ‘Delivery and Recommendations Framework for Nature-based Wellbeing Support Programmes’ informed by the Wild Skills Wild Spaces (WSWS) two-year evaluation conducted by the Centre for Health, Activity and Wellbeing Research (CAWR).

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BACKGROUND

The Wild Skills Wild Spaces two-year evaluation¹ report was completed in 2023. This evaluation was conducted by a team from CAWR. Following the publication of this report a Delivery and Recommendations Framework for the Delivery of Nature-based Wellbeing Support Programmes (including recommendations for practice) has been developed. The framework has been informed by the following: (i) the WSWs evaluation findings, (ii) relevant peer reviewed journal articles, (iii) discussions with the WSWs staff and CAWR evaluation team, and (iv) the context of the All Wales Model for Social Prescribing² (Figure 1). The framework is the first iteration which has been developed to inform nature-based programmes for people living with mental health problems. It is not perceived as a definitive framework at this point in time, however, given the lack of current context-specific knowledge in this area, it is hoped that it can act as a guide for those considering developing nature-based wellbeing programmes while being used as a foundation for the development of a more formalised framework to support the delivery of such interventions, in the future.



Figure 1: A proposed 'person centred' model of social prescribing for Wales³

¹ Sellars, P., Crone, D., Clayton, D., & Mercer, J. (2023). Montgomeryshire Wildlife Trust - Wild Skills, Wild Spaces project – Evaluation Report, August 2023. Cardiff Metropolitan University, Centre for Health, Activity and Wellbeing Research.

² Welsh Government (2023). National Framework for Social Prescribing [National Framework for Social Prescribing: December 2023 \(gov.wales\)](https://www.gov.wales/national-framework-for-social-prescribing)

³ Welsh Government (2022). Developing a national framework for social prescribing. <https://www.gov.wales/developing-national-framework-social-prescribing>

DELIVERY AND RECOMMENDATIONS FRAMEWORK FOR NATURE-BASED WELLBEING SUPPORT PROGRAMMES (2023)

The proposed person centred model of social prescribing for Wales (Figure 1) provides a context for community based support in nature. The 'location' where WSWS sits within the model is highlighted by a red circle below, from a section of the All Wales Model (see Figure 2).

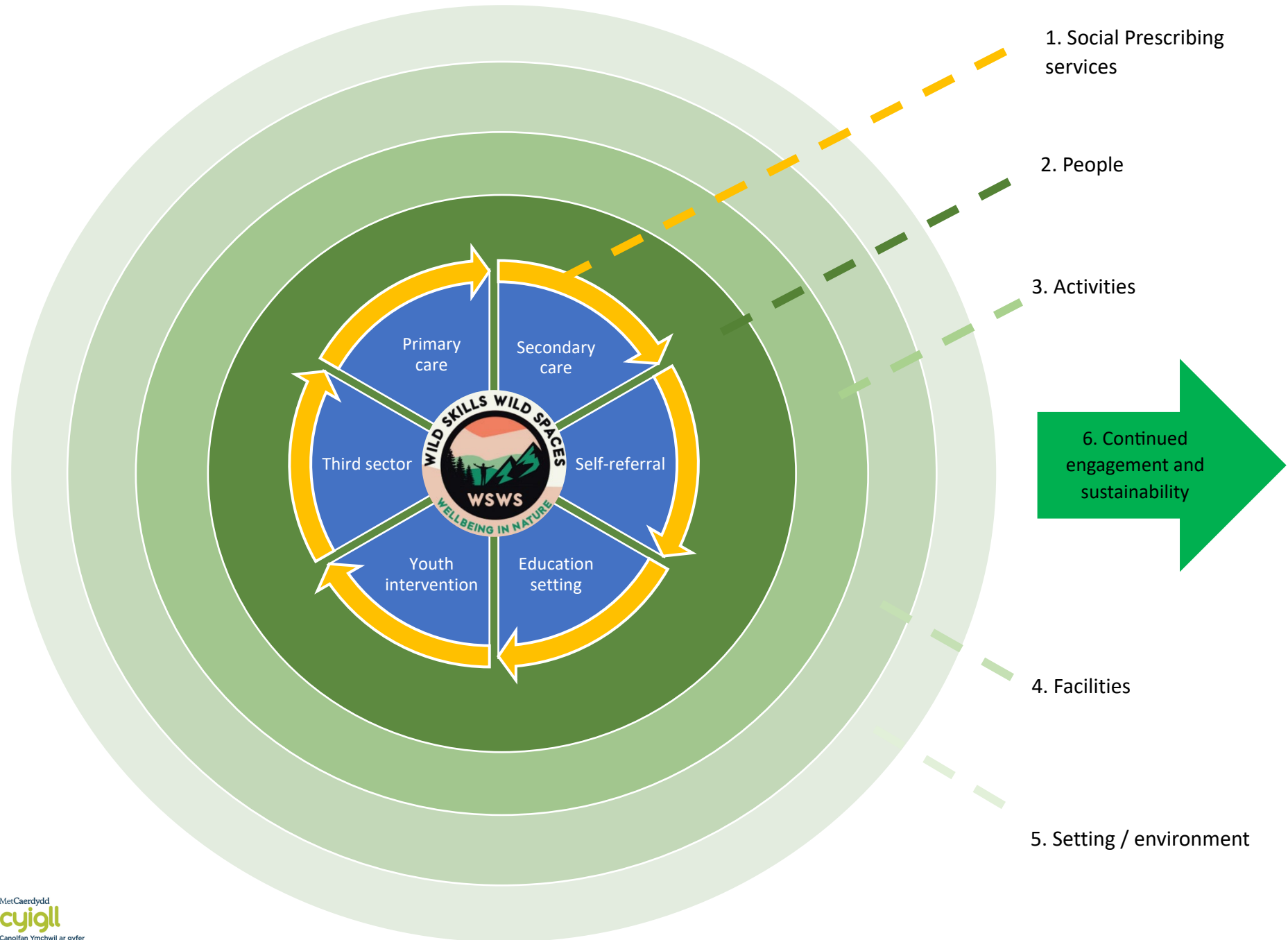


Figure 2: Community based support in nature, adapted from the proposed 'person centred' model of social prescribing for Wales

The Delivery and Recommendations Framework for Nature-based Wellbeing Support Programmes (2023) (pp. 5-9) includes a diagram and six tables. The diagram reflects the central image of the proposed person centred model of social prescribing for Wales with additional rings added that are specific to the recommendations for community-based support in nature identified. The six tables provide the written recommendations or guidelines for nature-based programmes and relate to each of the aspects covered in the Delivery and Recommendations Framework diagram, which include:

1. Social prescribing services
2. People (programme staff and support network of those engaged in programmes)
3. Activities
4. Facilities
5. Setting / environment
6. Continued engagement and sustainability.

Delivery and Recommendations Framework for Nature-based Wellbeing Support Programmes (2023)



1. Social prescribing services

#	Guidelines
1.1	Nature-based programmes should be included within inclusive social prescribing models to support community health and wellbeing.
1.2	Long-term funding mechanisms/streams are required to enable sustainable nature-based programme support for community health and wellbeing.
1.3	Development and maintenance of effective communication strategies between prescribers and deliverers is required to ensure optimal participation engagement from the community.
1.4	Programmes should have information pertaining to mental health and wellbeing services to enable sign posting for participants if required.
1.5	Administrative support role(s) should be included as part of the programme team.

2. People (programme staff and support network of those engaged in programmes)

#	Guidelines
2.1	Deliverers should have knowledge and experience of nature and wildlife. <i>E.g., Previous employment and/or volunteering experience; qualifications.</i>
2.2	Deliverers should have knowledge of and be understanding to mental health problems and their manifestations. <i>E.g., Training and/or courses such as Mental Health First Aid training, suicide prevention; qualifications.</i>
2.3	Deliverers should have knowledge and awareness and/or experience of working with people living with mental health problems including knowledge of relevant mental health support services.
2.4	Programmes should actively encourage recruitment from people with lived experience of mental health problems and from diverse backgrounds for programme roles.
2.5	Support networks contact details should be held for all participants.
2.6	Deliverers should have relevant safety training to support them and the participants. <i>E.g., First aid training.</i>
2.7	Support should be in place to help deliverers to manage the associated psychological demands they may experience when supporting others' living with mental health problems. <i>E.g., online counselling; organised peer support.</i>

3. Activities

#	Guidelines
3.1	Natural environments should be used throughout programme delivery to promote optimal physical and mental health benefits.
3.2	Activities should be meaningful and incorporate a sense of belonging for the participants.
3.3	Participants should be provided with choice when participating in nature-based activities.
3.4	Prior to activities commencing, appropriate and required risk assessments should have been taken to reduce any risk to individuals involved, and subsequent actions from these assessments adhered to. Risk assessments should be considered for, but not limited to: fire-safety, travel arrangements, use of woodwork tools, foraging, staff and participant safety, and emergency services communication links.
3.5	Safety of all individuals must be paramount and be in line with established health and safety, risk assessment and safeguarding protocols.
3.6	A register should be taken prior to and at the end of session to account for all participant whereabouts during their time at sessions, and to enable attendance tracking for evaluation purposes.
3.7	Time for social interaction should be embedded into programme planning and delivery.
3.8	Activities should be informed by evidence-based frameworks to promote physical, mental, and social health. <i>E.g., Five ways to wellbeing.</i>
3.9	Nature-based programme activities should align with climate change agenda and similar policies and should promote reusing and recycling resources when possible. <i>E.g., Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act, 2015; Environment (Wales) Act, 2016.</i>

4. Facilities

#	Guidelines
4.1	Accessing programmes in nature should be supported for all including consideration and adaptations being made to enable people with different needs to participate in programmes.
4.2	Accessible toilets should be available.
4.3	To enable year-round nature-based activity provision, dry and warm areas should be provided.

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- 4.4 All facilities used on programmes should meet relevant constructional and health and safety requirements and should be kept to a clean standard.
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- 4.5 To promote sustainability, any facilities developed should be built considering the future and their impact upon nature.
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- 4.6 Travelling to and from nature-based programmes is not possible for all, therefore access to transport option should be made available where possible.
E.g., Minibus provision; taxi allowance.
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5. Setting / environment

#	Guidelines
5.1	Programmes aiming to promote physical, mental, and social health should incorporate natural environments when/where possible.
5.2	Programmes should consider their impact on wildlife and nature, and the interaction with it for future generations. Where possible promote biodiversity and align with the climate change agenda and related policy. <i>E.g., United Nations Sustainable Development Goals – 13 Climate Action; Environment (Wales) Act 2016: climate change.</i>
5.3	Settings should be physically safe and align with associated guidelines from section 4. Facilities
5.4	Organisations leading programmes must have sufficient and appropriate policies in place to uphold the safety and care for all those involved in programmes. <i>E.g., Safeguarding and DBS checks of all staff</i>
5.5	Consideration should be taken to create a socially inclusive and psychologically safe environment for all engaged in the programme, and for deliverers of the programmes.

6. Continued engagement and sustainability

#	Guidelines
6.1	Throughout the programme, participants should be prepared for and supported to transition out of the referred programme, and supported/facilitated into appropriate community-based provision.
6.2	In addition to programme participation, participants should be encouraged to take part in independent engagement with similar activities away from referred programme where possible.

6.3 Prepare for potential drop-out during the programme, and when/if dropout occurs, ensure participants are aware of, and provided with, opportunities for re-engagement with the programme.

6.4 If deemed necessary and available, re-referral for further programme engagement should be considered, or referral to follow-on groups where available.

CONCLUSION

The Delivery and Recommendations Framework for Nature-based Wellbeing Support Programmes (2023) provides guidelines for people designing and delivering programmes in nature, aimed at enhancing physical, mental, and social wellbeing. The framework aligns with the proposed person centred model of social prescribing for Wales and incorporates six aspects: social prescribing services, people, activities, facilities, setting / environment, and continued engagement and sustainability. Overall, 36 guidelines are provided each of which should be considered in the design and delivery of nature-based activities aimed at promoting health and wellbeing of those living with mental health problems.

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