



Notes from Thrive LDN's Seventh 'Climate, Environment and Mental Health Action Forum'

7th May 2025 11am-12.30pm; online via Microsoft Teams

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1. Welcome

Introductions

Thrive LDN colleagues (Ben Rossington, Project Officer; Daniel Mercer, Project Manager) verbally introduced themselves, and lots of attendees introduced themselves in the Microsoft Teams meeting chat.

Ben introduced the Forum:

- Thrive LDN's Climate, Environment, and Mental Health Action Forum is a pan-London initiative that connects communities, multisector organisations, and individuals to co-develop responses addressing the intersections of the climate, nature, and mental health crises, with a focus on marginalised groups.
- Do look at [this webpage](#) on our website for the notes & resources from all previous meetings.

Breakout rooms

Ben opened optional 1-1 breakout rooms for members to talk to 1 other person for 5 minutes, perhaps using these prompts:

- Introduce yourself.
- How are you feeling today?

- How did you hear about the Climate Forum?

Feedback survey results

Ben briefly talked through feedback given from members about this Forum, thanking people for their contributions. Feedback was collected in an online survey shared in the March Forum session and left open for several weeks after that.

Please see the survey results in the document entitled *Climate Forum Mentimeter feedback, March-April 2025* that was sent out with these notes.

Ben made clear that the feedback has shaped our Forum session planning, including:

- The decision to continue holding most sessions online, with some in person.
- The decision to hold a panel discussion in this session on a topic people showed interest in – social prescribing.
- Reminding us to keep trying to include more people in the Forum, including ‘more leaders of ethnically diverse community groups’, and asking you for ideas on this as part of an ongoing conversation.

2. Panel on Green Social Prescribing

Time: 11:15 – 11:55

Jules Ford – National Programme Implementation Manager, Green Social Prescribing Programme, [National Academy for Social Prescribing \(NASP\)](#)

Green Social Prescribing Overview

- Green social prescribing supports people to engage in nature-based activities to improve their mental health.
- Jules Ford introduced NASP’s role in the national *Green Social Prescribing (GSP)* programme, which aimed to explore how connecting people with nature can support mental health.
- The programme, *Preventing and Tackling Mental Ill Health through Green Social Prescribing*, was a cross-government initiative funded by the Treasury and supported by the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, Natural England, NHS England, and Sport England.

Summary of the Programme

- It tried to answer the questions ‘Can nature prevent mental ill health or help resolve it?’ and ‘Can green social prescribing reduce the demand on NHS mental health services?’
- It involved people being referred to a specific (nature-based) activity, which is a bit unusual for social prescribing.

- Activities were pitched at people already struggling with their mental health.

Programme's aims

- Test and embed green social prescribing into communities and healthcare systems.
- Reduce health inequalities, particularly in areas most affected by the pandemic.
- Improve mental health outcomes, especially for people already experiencing poor mental wellbeing.
- Reduce demand on the health and social care system through preventative, community-based approaches.
- Strengthen the evidence base for green social prescribing, both quantitatively and qualitatively.

Programme delivery phase one (2021–2023)

- Delivered by VCSE organisations in seven 'test and learn' sites across England (a London site was not selected in the competitive process).
- Designed to build partnerships across health, environment, and voluntary sectors.
- Proactively reached into communities.
- Focused on health inequalities.
- Evaluated by Sheffield Hallam University and partners, with a focus on health outcomes, access, and equity.

Challenges the programme sought to address

- Securing sustainable funding and long-term commissioning models.
- Need for strategic system support, to grow provider network, and stronger governance structures.
- Difficulty tracking individual-level outcomes and impact across services.
- Concerns around how GPs and link workers know if interventions have worked.
- Gaps in workforce support and inclusion of service user voice in programme design.

Findings

- There were statistically significant improvements in mental wellbeing due to nature-based interventions.
- There were clinically measurable improvements for people with anxiety and depression.

- Rich qualitative feedback also indicated increased confidence, reduced loneliness, and improved connection to nature.
- More information: [NASP Green Social Prescribing Project Summary](#)
- Full programme evaluation: [DEFRA project page](#)

Next Steps

- DEFRA is funding an additional year of evaluation to explore cost-effectiveness, equity, and system-wide benefits.
- Toolkits and a practice report will be published in around 6 weeks, and a final evaluation report by the end of the year.
- Forum members were invited to join NASP's community of practice to share learning and help shape future developments – they value all voices (contact Jules for details: jules.ford@nasp.info)
- Momentum remains strong at the national level, with green social prescribing still in the government's plans.

Laura Brown – Higher Officer for Health and Environment, London at [Natural England](#)

Laura coordinates the [London Happier Outdoors Network](#) and the Happier Outdoors Festival.

The Network is made up of over 200 organisations across Greater London working at the intersection of health and nature. It's open to growth, particularly from groups representing minoritised communities.

Upcoming initiatives:

- 10-Day Happier Outdoors festival in March: Like the [Open House](#) festival, with free public activities led by member organisations.
- **Citizen Science Ambassador Project**
 - Focus on deprived areas with enough green/blue space to do related scientific activities but where people don't have the opportunity to do so.
 - Offering community members free training to lead science-based activities.
 - Currently in a scoping phase to see how people use the free course.
- **New working group**
 - First internal meeting scheduled, with external stakeholder involvement to follow (likely August).
 - Will explore nature and trauma, drawing inspiration from a similar model in Nagasaki, Japan.

In general, actively seeking collaboration with underrepresented groups (e.g., GRT communities, Orthodox Jewish, Trans, Non-binary, Intersex individuals). Email Laura to explore collaboration opportunities: Laura.Brown@naturalengland.org.uk.

Brian Kelly – Director, [OrganicLea](#)

About OrganicLea

- A workers' cooperative in Chingford offering food-growing activities as a form of social enterprise. Delivers some green social prescribing activities.
- Easier for people to access their activities (in an urban space) than if they were on a rural farm.
- Activities are to do with plants and not animals.
- Operated on these principles before formal social prescribing existed.
- Engages with social prescribing delivery through official and informal routes (e.g. Department of Work and Pensions, social services, self-referrals, partnership with other organisations).

Activity Overview

- Co-design activities with users.
- Partners with organisations including English as a Second Language (ESOL) providers and the London Forensic scheme.
- Offer training and activities to people in both the mental health and justice systems
- Run a bit of a patchwork of green social prescribing activities, rather than having a dedicated team.
- About 16–20 people a month are referred to OrganicLea for green social prescribing. Most come through some sort of health & wellbeing route. This includes:
 - Around 70 participants a year referred through forensic contacts.
 - About 40 ESOL learners a year referred through ESOL providers.
 - About 20 individuals yearly struggling with education attendance.
- Have 250 volunteers and 200 trainees a year who help run these activities. There are health and wellbeing benefits of delivering green social prescribing for these volunteers too.

Aspirations

- Desire for longer-term commitments and funding.

- Currently support a wider network of community gardens who would like to offer health and wellbeing activities to their communities.
- Email Brian to explore collaboration opportunities: brian@organiclea.org.uk.

Q&A with all panellists

Sam Longman – Transport for London (TfL)

- Interested in integrating social prescribing into TfL's staff wellbeing plans; Sam asked about whether other organisations have done this internally.
- Faces internal TfL risk-aversion to new initiatives and uncertainties about volunteering pathways.
- Laura said Natural England were open to collaboration on this, and that the Department of Work and Pensions also exploring internal referrals – email Laura for contacts (Laura.Brown@naturalengland.org.uk).
- Laura also mentioned that lots of social prescribers raise funds by doing corporate volunteering days.
- Brian mentioned that OrganicLea offers a 'back to work' scheme to support people returning to employment (e.g., after a break for health reasons); sometimes people cut down their paid work hours and spend a day volunteering (with OrganicLea) to help improve their mental health.

Shou Zhang – Royal College of Psychiatrists (RCPsych)

- Shuo co-leads the [Nature Matters](#) group at RCPsych; this includes running a quarterly forum, which is open to everyone with an interest in nature and mental health to share experiences, knowledge and support with getting ideas into action.
- Shuo is also part of a Lambeth-based GP food cooperative and highlighted the challenges of food growing on NHS estates.
- Asked how RCPsych can support the green social prescribing movement.
- Laura said that a public statement of support on green social prescribing from professional bodies (e.g., RCPsych) would help small organisations validate their approach.
- Shuo asked about whether there are green social prescribing initiatives for people with moderate to severe mental health difficulties.
- Laura mentioned the importance of avoiding rigid clinical categories for mental health (e.g., mild, moderate, severe) and instead focusing on community and marginalised groups' needs.
- Brian from OrganicLea welcomed hosting RCPsych for an away day at OrganicLea's site in Chingford. Brian said that could involve learning from colleagues to forensic mental health services, who were the first mental health professionals to reach out to

OrganicLea. OrganicLea have also hosted lots of occupational therapists from the University of Essex.

3. Partner updates

Information shared by Forum members about events, trainings, resources, and more.

Becoming a Force of Nature training programme

Hannah from [Force of Nature](#) (FoN) gave a short information about their work, which helps young people feel empowered in the face of climate anxiety by supporting them to develop skills to make a difference.

Hannah shared information about FoN's training opportunities (all of which are free), including their [Becoming a Force of Nature programme](#), which supports young people (16-35) to take climate & social justice action. Applicants for this year's Spring 2025 cohort closed on 12th May (with well over 500 applicants).

However, you can still join FoN's online community [here](#), find out about all their training offers, discover paid opportunities, and meet other young people online.

Please email Hannah at hannah@forceofnature.xyz if you want to find out any more information about FoN's work.

Climate Cost Working Forum – London Climate Ready Partnership

Sam Longman, Head of Sustainability at Transport for London and chair of the Deputy [London Climate Ready Partnership](#) (LCRP), shared information about an upcoming Climate Cost Working Forum on 4th July run by the LCRP, which will be held at [City Hall](#).

LCRP want to invite asset owners to come together and map put an introductory guide to climate mitigation. The Forum will last from 9am-5pm and food and drink will be provided.

For more information on the event, please see the document entitled *LCRP Climate Costs Forum 4 Jul 2025* that was sent out with these notes.

The event is invite-only so email Sam if you are interested in coming:
samlongman@tfl.gov.uk

Nature Matters – Royal College of Psychiatrists (RCPsych)

Shuo Zhang from RCPsych shared [this](#) webpage with resources about nature and mental health, and information if you would like to join their Nature Matters Forum / 'support group', which Shuo co-leads. This group is open to everyone with an interest in nature and mental health to share experiences, knowledge, and support with getting ideas into action.

Thrive LDN's Economic Wellbeing Forum

Daniel Mercer shared information about another of Thrive LDN's Forums – our Economic Wellbeing Forum. This Forum brings together partners from health, social care, and the voluntary sector to address the mental health impacts of financial pressures, particularly on marginalised and low-income communities.

The Forum holds quarterly meetings where we support collective learning, share best practice, and help shape public mental health responses to the cost-of-living crisis in London.

The next meeting is coming up on 17th June 10-11am online via Microsoft Teams. Email info@thriveldn.co.uk if you'd like to be involved.

Webinar – 'Climate Psychology for All'

Louise Edgington shared details of an upcoming webinar that will be held as part of [London Climate Action Week 2025](#). See event listing [here](#), and details below:

Understanding our human reactions and responses to the climate and environmental crisis is both the block and the key to meaningful climate action.

Join this lunchtime webinar to consider how you can use insights from psychology to help you personally and in your work. Topics covered:

- The psychology of climate stuckness (denial) and overwhelm
- The psychology of healthy climate action
- Tips for handling eco-anxiety and distress

After the webinar ends at 2pm there will be an optional 30 mins of Q&A or discussion.

Email info@climatedpsych.com with 'LCAW2025 invite' in the subject heading to be sent the invite.

National Lottery Climate Action Fund bid update

Ben shared an update from Thrive LDN on the positive progress of the bid we are leading with partners (many of whom are Forum members) for funding from the [National Lottery's Climate Action Fund](#).

We are progressing well through the application stages and will learn the final outcome by the end of June. We envision this Forum being a central advisory and engagement mechanism for our planned partnership. If we get funding, you will all have an opportunity to influence an ambitious, multimillion pound programme to increase climate and mental health action across London.

Webinar – 'The Nature Think Tank'

Kay Michael, CEO & Creative Director at [Letters to the Earth](#), shared information about an webinar that was coming up on Tuesday 13th May from 12-12.50pm. Called 'The Nature Think Tank', it was about exploring how building a relationship with nature can lead to more sustainable and regenerative cultures and systems within organisations. Find out more on Eventbrite [here](#). Kay asked for people to connect with her on LinkedIn [here](#) and/or email her: kay@letterstotheearth.com

In-person session – Public Mental Health Network

Rosa Treadwell, Public Health Strategist at the Association of Directors of Public Health (ADPH) London, shared information about an in-person session of ADPH London's Public Mental Health (PMH) Network:

9.30am-1.30pm, 8 May 2025

NCVO, Regents Wharf, 8 All Saints St, London N1 9RL








You could register for the event [here](#).

Rosa shared information on the [PMH Network](#) and other networks are [here](#) including networks focused on Climate, Immunisation, Asylum seekers and more.



Email Rosa.treadwell@adphlondon.org.uk with any queries.

Ben shared information about opportunities and event in the Microsoft Teams meeting chat – see the list immediately below.

Funding & research opportunities

- **Share Your Story: Climate Change Education & Mental Health (UK)**
The Climate Majority Project invites UK residents to share experiences of climate education and its emotional impact. Stories will help advocate for better support for students and educators, ensuring young people are mentally equipped to face climate challenges.
 <https://tally.so/r/nP4400>
- **Youth4Climate: Call for Solutions 2025 (Global)**
Grants up to \$30,000 plus mentorship and visibility at global events for youth-led (18–29) climate action projects. Focus: energy, nature, food, education, and sustainable cities.
 **Deadline: 26 May 2025**
 <https://community.youth4climate.info/dashboard/call-solutions-2025>
- **Green Fellows Program (Global)**
Fellowship for young sustainability leaders (18–35). Includes mentorship, project training, and a \$1,000 prize. Open to students and recent graduates worldwide.
 **Deadline: 31 May 2025**
 <https://greeninstitute.ng/fellows>
- **Roots & Routes Fund (UK)**
Grants up to £20,000 for youth-led groups (ages 18–30) in England advancing climate justice. Projects must be led by at least 55% people from marginalised communities.
 **Deadline: 5 June 2025**
 <https://www.blagravetrust.org/our-work/roots-routes-fund/>

Events and workshops (all free)

- **Generation Hope: Act for the Planet (London)**
Free week-long programme at the Natural History Museum, featuring workshops, talks, and wellbeing sessions led by youth climate leaders. Ages 16+.
 Took place **29 April – 3 May 2025** (catch up on some recorded events online)
 <https://www.nhm.ac.uk/events/generation-hope.html>
- **Climate Circles for Parents/Carers/Guardians (Online)**
A free, facilitated space by the *Climate Psychology Alliance* for parents and carers to share and reflect on their emotional responses to the climate crisis. Sessions are led

by trained facilitators and follow a “pay what you can” model. Spaces are limited, with a waiting list available.

Upcoming sessions: **20 May & 26 June 2025.** 

<https://www.eventbrite.com/cc/climate-circles-for-parentscarersguardians-4139813>

- **The Nature Think Tank (London)**

A creative and collaborative day-long event exploring how nature-based solutions can address climate and ecological crises. Held on **Friday 7 June 2024** at London's Coal Drops Yard, it brings together changemakers across sectors for workshops, talks, and networking. Open to all interested in nature, climate, and systems change.

 <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/the-nature-think-tank-tickets-1319746620669>

- **Great Big Green Week 2025 (UK)**

The UK's biggest celebration of climate and nature action, happening **7–15 June 2025**. Individuals, schools, and communities can host or join local events like clothes swaps, repair cafés, and nature walks. Free toolkits and resources available.

 https://www.greatbiggreenweek.com/get_involved

- **Global Climate and Health Summit (London)**

A free two-day event on **16–17 July 2025** at the QEII Centre, bringing together researchers, policymakers, and climate experts to address the health impacts of climate change. Organised by The Physiological Society with support from the Wellcome Trust. Travel support is available for early career researchers, with enhanced support for those from low- and middle-income countries.

 <https://www.physoc.org/events/global-climate-and-health-summit/>

4. Summary and next steps

Due to the limited time left, Ben decided to move the previously scheduled discussion on ‘How can we make this Forum more inclusive for London’s diverse communities?’ to the next Forum meeting, so that there’d be enough time to continue our conversations on this important topic.

Ben thanked everyone for coming to this session and for everyone’s great contributions.

Forum sessions will take place on:

- **Wednesday 18th June** (in person at City Hall) 11am-1pm
- **Wednesday 30th July** (online via Microsoft Teams) 11am-12.30pm.

Email benajmin.rossington@nhs.net if you want the meeting invites: