

Surrey to support nature activity for health

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A new countywide programme has been launched to help more Surrey residents improve their health and wellbeing through spending time in nature.

Surrey County Council has launched the Surrey Green Health and Wellbeing Programme in partnership with the Community Foundation for Surrey. Backed by a £170,000 investment, the programme will support voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations that provide nature-based activities and services across the county.

The programme which forms part of SCC's work to improve health and wellbeing, strengthen communities and help prevent poor health was officially launched on Wednesday 7 October at an event bringing together organisations from across Surrey to share ideas, make new connections and find out more about the support available through the programme.

Across Surrey, organisations already deliver activities such as community gardening, conservation volunteering, walking groups and outdoor wellbeing sessions. The new programme will help these organisations grow, work together and reach more people. More information on existing services is available on the Healthy Surrey website.

Mark Nuti, Surrey County Council Cabinet Member for Health and Communities, said: "We know that spending time in nature can have a positive impact on both physical and mental wellbeing. Across Surrey, local organisations are already doing fantastic work to help people connect with nature and improve their health."

"This new programme will help strengthen those organisations, encourage greater collaboration and ensure more residents can access the benefits that Green Health can provide. By investing in community-led solutions, we're helping to create healthier communities and a stronger, more connected Green Health network across Surrey."

The Community Foundation for Surrey will manage the new Green Health and Wellbeing Grant Fund, providing financial support to eligible VCSE organisations. The programme will also create a Surrey-wide Community of Practice, bringing organisations together through workshops, networking and shared learning opportunities.

Beccy Bowden, Chief Executive of Community Foundation for Surrey, said: "We are delighted to launch this new fund in partnership with Surrey County Council, helping more people across Surrey benefit from the positive impact nature can have on health and wellbeing. Together, we want to support local organisations to extend this important work, helping more residents connect with nature and access the benefits of green and blue spaces."

"By working alongside Surrey County Council and community partners, we can help improve health and wellbeing while strengthening people's connection with the natural environment around them."

The programme includes:

- A dedicated Green Health and Wellbeing Grant Fund for eligible VCSE organisations
- A Surrey-wide Community of Practice for organisations working in green health
- Workshops, networking events and opportunities to share learning
- Collaboration with partners to help shape the future of green health in Surrey

Information about grant funding opportunities and how organisations can get involved will be shared through Surrey County Council and Community Foundation for Surrey channels.

Surrey County Council

