

PROJECT INFORMATION SHEET

GreenME: A research project to understand the effect of nature-based therapies on mental health

What is the purpose of the study?

It is thought that urban green and blue spaces provide a range of benefits for people and nature. This GreenME study aims to find out more about the mental health and wellbeing effects of nature-based therapy programmes for adults with a mental health condition.

Who is undertaking the study?

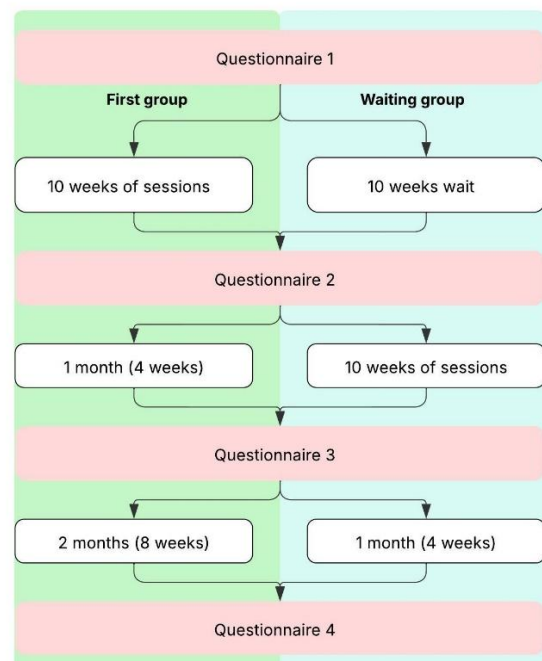
The GreenME study is being conducted by a team of researchers from the University of Salford, Edge Hill University, University of Kent, Social Farms & Gardens and Mind East Kent, as part of a larger European project in 7 countries. The data collection will be carried out by Northern Roots.

What does the study involve?

We are inviting you to participate in a research project which will evaluate the effect of the nature-based intervention provided by Northern Roots (growing and land-based activities). This will involve you completing a series of four questionnaires throughout your programme.

If you agree to take part in the study, a questionnaire will be given to you by Northern Roots staff. After everybody has done their questionnaire, we will make two groups. The two groups will receive the same nature-based intervention and complete the same questionnaires, but the timings will be different. Putting people into groups is necessary because Northern Roots can only cater for a small number of people at a time. The first group will get the nature-based intervention straight away, and the other group will wait. We will decide this randomly (like tossing a coin).

If you are in the 'straight away' group, you'll complete questionnaires at the end of the programme, 4 weeks after that, and then a final one 8 weeks after that (3 months after your programme finished). If you are in the waiting group, you will wait about 10-12 weeks, then you'll complete three questionnaires: one just before you start your nature-based intervention, at the end of your 10-week programme, and then a final one 4 weeks after that. Both groups will complete four sets of questionnaires in total.



These repeated questionnaires help us to understand more about how any changes you experience vary over time, and what other factors affect them. All questionnaires will ask you for some background information about you and your health and wellbeing, as well as your time spent in nature.

At the end of your programme, there may be an informal interactive session to ask about your experiences of the nature-based intervention. This will be voluntary and will be facilitated by a member of the research team together with project staff. All responses will be anonymous.

Do I have to take part?

No, it is up to you whether you take part in the GreenME study. It will not affect your participation in the programme at Northern Roots - i.e. you can take part in the intervention at Northern Roots and not be part of the research study.

Can I change my mind?

If you did choose to take part in the research and then changed your mind, you can ask to be withdrawn from the study at any time during your six-month involvement with the study. You can also ask for your

information and data to be removed from the study, up to two weeks after completing a questionnaire. After this time, it will be anonymised, and it will not be possible to locate your data.

What is the duration of the project?

Your participation in the research will span six months. It will begin with the initial questionnaire. The schedule and timings of the questionnaires is shown in the diagram on page 1, for the first group (column on the left) and the waiting group (right).

Are there any risks to taking part?

The GreenME study involves thinking about your mental and physical health and for some people this may be difficult. However, you can choose not to answer questions if you do not want to, and you can ask your project lead for support if you find anything distressing (Steph Wild StephWild@northern-roots.uk).

What are the potential benefits of taking part?

There are no direct benefits to you from taking part in this research study, but in the longer term, we hope that this study will contribute to the understanding more about the impact of nature-based interventions on mental health and wellbeing. If you would like to be informed about the results of the research, please write your email address on the consent form.

What will happen to the findings of this research?

We plan to publish the findings through a report to the European Commission, in academic journals and present them at academic conferences. We will share our findings to all the project partners involved in the research programme, so they can also be shared with participants and publicised on social media and will help inform future policy and practice.

How will my information be kept confidential?

Any personal details and information you provide will be kept strictly confidential and stored securely. Your personal details will be stored separately from the study data. Your name and any other identifying information will be removed so you cannot be recognised. You can find further details about how we will process and store your information by following the link at the end of this document.

Who has reviewed this study?

The questionnaires have been reviewed by people with experience of working with a range of mental health difficulties. The protocol and questionnaires have been approved by the Research Ethics Panel in the School of Health and Society at the University of Salford.

Who is funding this project?

This study has received funding from the European Union's Horizon Europe research and innovation programme under Grant Agreement No. 101084198.

Further information

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the project research team via the researchers. Any of them would be happy to talk through the study with you and answer any questions you may have. Please contact us if you feel there are any challenges in participating in the study but please note whilst contact numbers and emails are monitored there may be times when these are not checked frequently.

Professor Penny Cook, School of Health and Society, University of Salford, P.A.Cook@salford.ac.uk

If you have any further problems or concerns and wish to contact someone independent of the research team, please contact the Ethics Co-Chair on ethics@salford.ac.uk.

PRIVACY NOTICE

This Privacy Notice tells you what to expect when you participate in this study. For details of how your personal information is used in other ways, please see the other University Privacy Notices <https://www.salford.ac.uk/privacy/privacy-notice-research>.