

Natural
Environment



youth

How might the programme help you?



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I need
some space
to breathe!

I want to
get outdoors
more!

I want a
new hobby!

I want to
learn some
new skills!

I want to
feel
healthier!

What do we mean by “nature” and the natural environment?



youth

The word "nature" can mean different things to different people.

We humans are part of nature.

Nature can mean anything that is not made by humans.

Parks, woods and lakes are examples of natural environments.

Even a houseplant is an example of nature...



Why are we talking about nature?

Nature is good for us!

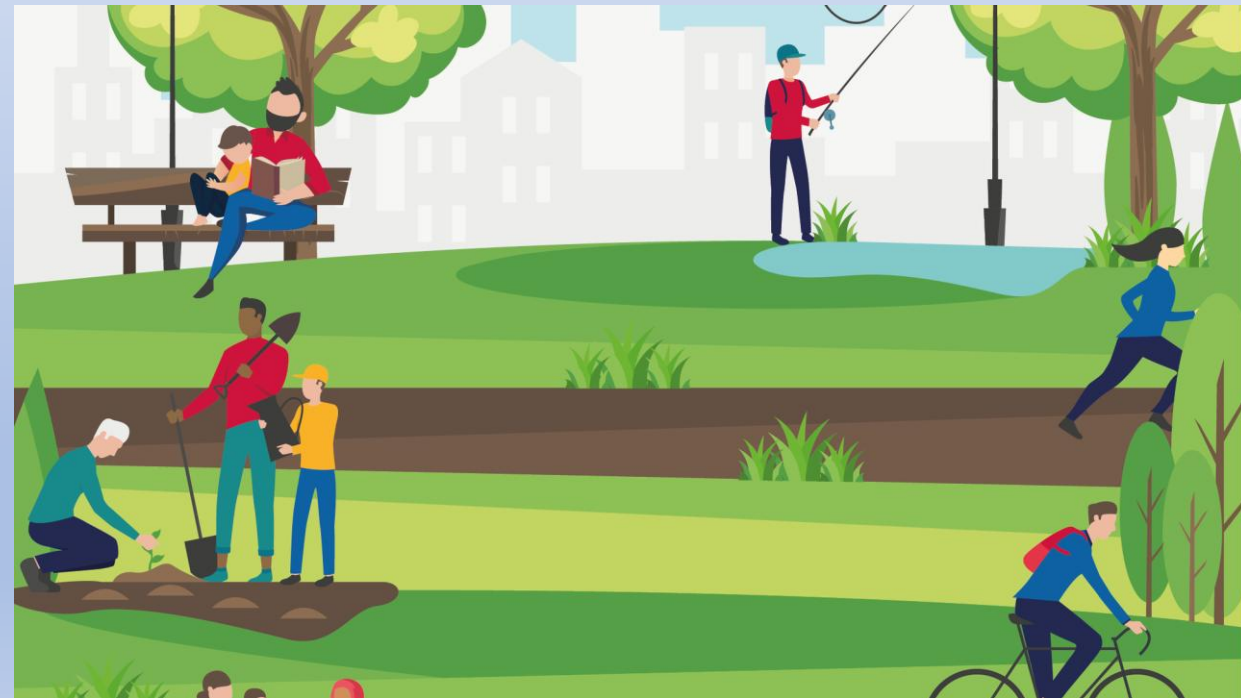
Research shows that people who notice nature and get out to natural places are:

- happier
- more satisfied with life
- feel that life is more worthwhile
- more likely to help the environment



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What's on offer?

The City of London looks after lots of natural spaces around London.

They include Hampstead Heath, West Ham Park and Epping Forest.

We want to invite you to come and enjoy these places.

You can learn new skills, have fun and just enjoy being in nature!



How will it work?

We offer lots of activities to do outdoors.

We can help your group to choose what you think you'd like to do.

“Light green” activities –
mostly about enjoying being in the natural environment.

“Mid green” activities

“Deep green” activities –
focus on learning about nature and how to protect it
and restore it.

We hope you'll pick a mix of activities.



Who runs the sessions?

I'm Nick. I live in southeast London.

I plan the sessions and make them happen!



What do I need?

You don't need any skills.

You'll be given whatever help you need to learn.

You don't need special clothes.

We have fleeces, gloves, coats and boots if you need them.

This is all you need...

- Try to keep an open mind
- Be up for trying new things
- Be up for trying to work with other people
- Follow safety rules



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So what's next?

- Take a look at the activities with your teacher or group leader
- Decide as a group what you might like to do
(Keep in mind that some activities need a particular place or time)
- Your teacher or group leader will plan the sessions with Nick
- We'll see you soon after!



The image features a light blue background with green leaves and branches framing the text. The text is written in a red, cursive font. The word "Activity" is on the top line, and "menu" is on the bottom line, both centered horizontally.

Activity menu

Stunt kites



What is it?

Learn to fly a basic kite. Learn to fly a stunt kite and do tricks. We just need a fairly windy day and a clear, open space.

What might I get out of doing it?

Kite flying is great fun. It can be relaxing, exciting or both – depending on the wind!

Find out more:

[HQ Symphony Beach Sport Kite – YouTube](#)
[Single Line - Bora Series - YouTube](#)

How long will it take?

It takes seconds to get the kite up in the air. After that, it's up to you how long you want to spend.

Categories:

#lightgreen #newhobby #wellbeing

Boomerangs



What is it?

A boomerang is something you throw which – if you throw it right – will come back to you. Famously, they were used by Indigenous Australian people for hunting, though boomerangs were also used in other places around the world. Learn to fly a boomerang so that it comes back to you – maybe you'll catch it!

What might I get out of doing it?

Flying boomerangs is fun, relaxing – and extremely satisfying if you manage to get it to come back to you!

Find out more:

[Sirius Bumerang # 1378](#)

How long will it take?

It's worth taking at least half an hour to try to master the skill. It takes perseverance!

Categories:

#lightgreen #newhobby #wellbeing

Slacklining



What is it?

A slackline is like a tightrope. You learn to walk along it while keeping your balance. You will be no higher than a chair, and you can have help if you want it. Once you can stand and walk along it, you can start to learn tricks! Slacklining is a popular sport.

What might I get out of doing it?

It's good fun. It's a great form of exercise – it works muscles that don't often get worked. It needs focus – so it can be very relaxing.

How long will it take?

It's worth spending at least 30 minutes giving it a proper try. After that, you may be addicted...

Find out more:

[LEARNING TO SLACKLINE - YouTube](#)

[What is Slacklining? - Much more than just walking between 2 trees! - YouTube](#)

Categories:

#lightgreen #newhobby #wellbeing

Archery

(with soft-tipped arrows)



What is it?

The arrows may have soft, suction-cup tips, but this is not for suckers! This archery set, with a full-size bow and arrows, requires all the same skills as professional archery.

What might I get out of doing it?

This is a fun way into the world of archery – an ancient art and sport that demands nerve, focus and self-discipline!

Find out more:

[GEOLOGIC Softarchery Kit - Discover Archery](#)

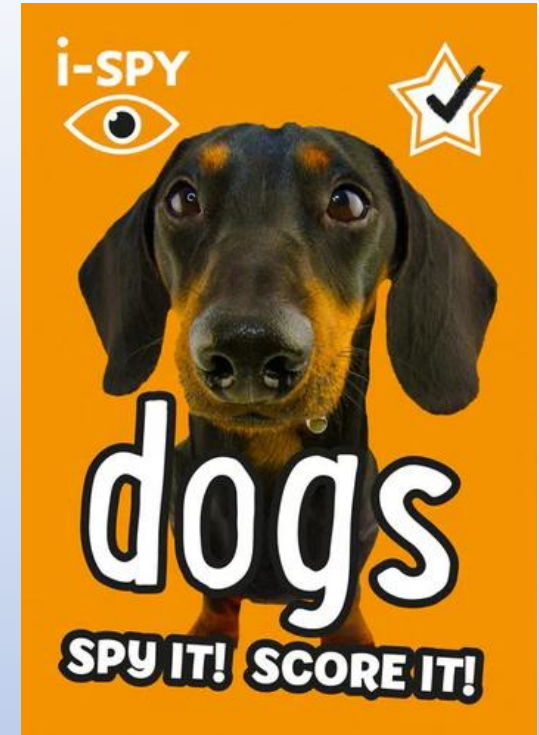
How long will it take?

It's worth spending at least 30 minutes giving it a proper go.

Categories:

#lightgreen #newhobby #wellbeing

Dog spotting



What is it?

Spotting dogs – how many different breeds can you see? Our sites are some of the best places to spot a huge range of dogs in London, if not the UK! Tick off each breed when you see it and see how many points you score...

What might I get out of doing it?

It's one way to make a healthy walk (even) more interesting. There's no need to go anywhere near the dogs if you don't want to.

How long will it take?

1-2 hours

Find out more:

Categories:
#lightgreen

Orienteering (with maps)



What is it?

Use a simple map and a compass to find your way to hidden objects. You'll be taught how to do it and you won't ever be far from help if you really need it!

What might I get out of doing it?

It's a useful skill, even if you only ever use maps on your phone. It sharpens your sense of direction and it's a great team challenge.

Find out more:

[@SBHSDofE Basic compass skills - YouTube](#)

How long will it take?

1-2 hours

Categories:

#lightgreen #newskills #bushcraft

Geocaching

(currently at Hampstead Heath only, though there are geocaches in Epping Forest)



What is it?

Geocaching is described as the world's largest treasure hunt. A 'cache' (the 'treasure') is usually a small, hidden box with a logbook in it, which you can sign. You can use any mobile phone with the Geocaching app. (This can be provided.)

What might I get out of doing it?

It's a fun way to practise your map skills. It's also a hobby which makes going anywhere more interesting!

How long will it take?

1-2 hours

Find out more:

[What is Geocaching? – YouTube](#)
<https://www.geocaching.com>

Categories:

#lightgreen #newskills #bushcraft

Orienteering (with GPS)



What is it?

GPS stands for 'global positioning system'. A GPS gadget uses satellites to help you find out where you are and where you need to go. You will learn just enough to use the gadget to find your way.

What might I get out of doing it?

It's a fun team challenge which tests if you can use technology that you may not have used before. It sharpens your sense of direction!

How long will it take?

2 hours

Find out more:

[Walk with an Outdoor GPS unit - Garmin eTrex 10 - YouTube](#)

Categories:

#lightgreen #newskills #bushcraft

Eco-art: Mud faces



What is it?

Slap some wet mud on a tree trunk. Then mould it into a face, using leaves, twigs and anything else you can find. Make a spirit of the forest, or something to scare off bad luck... It's messy, but you can wear disposable gloves if you want!

What might I get out of doing it?

It's a fun, relaxing thing to do!
You can get as creative as you want.

How long will it take?

30 minutes – 1 hour.
As with any art, you can do it for as long as you want!

Find out more:

[Forest School @home - Session 9 - Mud Faces – YouTube](#)
[Forest School Inspired Activity - Mud Faces - YouTube](#)

Categories:

#lightgreen #artandcraft #newhobby

Eco-art: Nature mandala



What is it?

It's a pattern made with leaves and other objects, spreading out from the middle. It is symmetrical (same on both or all sides). You can see similar patterns in snowflakes, flowers and spider webs. They also appear in religions, e.g. Hindu rangoli patterns.

What might I get out of doing it?

It's fun to do as a team. It's relaxing to go and find the leaves you need. And you can get as creative as you like.

How long will it take?

30 minutes – 1 hour.

As with any art, you can do it for as long as you want!

Find out more:

[Lesson 2: Nature Walk Mandala - YouTube](#)

Categories:

#lightgreen #artandcraft
#newhobby

Eco-art: Hapa Zomé



What is it?

Hapa Zomé is sometimes called Tataki-Zomé. It's an art form from Japan. You put leaves and flowers under cloth, then bash it with a rock or hammer. The shapes of the leaves and flowers then stay on the cloth to make patterns or pictures.

What might I get out of doing it?

It's a fun and easy way of making art.
Relax and let your creativity flow!

How long will it take?

30 minutes to 1 hour.
As with any art, you can do it for as long as you want!

Find out more:

[Create your own Leaf Print - YouTube](#)
[Hapa Zome, with Wildly Curious – YouTube](#)

Categories:

#lightgreen #artandcraft #newhobby

Team or individual challenge: Giant catapults



What is it?

Use wooden rods (80-100cm long) and rubber bands to make a catapult to fire acorns, conkers, etc at a target.

What might I get out of doing it?

It's a fun activity which will stretch your thinking and (if you do it in a team) will practise your teamwork skills. And it will be in the fresh air!

How long will it take?

1 hour.

Find out more:

Categories:

#lightgreen #teamwork #problemsolving

Team challenge: Egg tower



What is it?

Each team must design and build a structure to hold an egg as high as possible, using only what you've been given...

What might I get out of doing it?

It's a fun activity which will stretch your thinking and practise your teamwork skills. And it will be done in the fresh air!

How long will it take?

30-60 minutes.

Find out more:

Categories:

#lightgreen #teamwork #problemsolving

Team challenge: Tower of Power



What is it?

The Tower of Power is a challenging teamwork activity in which everyone works together as one. The aim is to build a tower of blocks using a hook controlled by strings. It works perfectly for 12 people but can be adapted for 6-24 people.

What might I get out of doing it?

It's a great test of teamwork, patience and determination!

How long will it take?

Allow about 30 minutes.

Find out more:

[Tower of Power - Metalog© training tool \[EN\]](#)

Categories:

#lightgreen #teamwork #problemsolving

Fire lighting



What is it?

Learn how to light a fire, using a fire steel. If you come more than once, you might get to use a flint and steel – a piece flint (stone) and a piece of steel. We'll follow some rules to keep us safe.

What might I get out of doing it?

It's a fun skill to learn. It's a skill that can keep you warm and give you something to cook food on! Sitting round a fire is very relaxing.

How long will it take?

1 hour. 2 hours if you want to cook on it or just enjoy sitting around it.

Find out more:

[How To: Start a Fire using Swedish Firesteel BIO from Light My Fire – YouTube](#)
[How to use - Swedish FireSteel 2.0 & Swedish FireKnife - YouTube](#)

Categories:

#midgreen #bushcraft #newskills

Storm kettles



What is it?

Learn how to light a storm kettle. They are also known as survival kettles, Kelly kettles, Ghillie kettles or volcano kettles! It's a special kettle with fire underneath. You'll learn how to light the fire. We also have a Horizon rocket stove, which is similar.

What might I get out of doing it?

It's a fun and interesting challenge, best done with a partner or team. If you can do it you get a hot drink at the end!

How long will it take?

Under an hour.

Find out more:

[What The Heck Is A Ghillie Kettle? – YouTube](#)
[Anevay Horizon Stove Reel - YouTube](#)

Categories:

#midgreen #bushcraft #teamwork

Campfire cooking

(Hampstead Heath and West Ham Park only)



What is it?

Learn how to light your own fire and cook food on it. Popcorn, marshmallows, chocolate bananas, a whole meal... you choose! We'll follow some rules to keep us safe and to keep the food hygienic. Feel free to suggest what you'd like to cook...

What might I get out of doing it?

It's a fun skill to learn.
You can become a barbecue guru!

How long will it take?

1 hour minimum

Find out more:

[Cooking On A Campfire: A Beginners' Guide - Pitchup®](#)

Categories:

#midgreen #bushcraft #newskills #teamwork
#wellbeing

Shelter building



What is it?

Learn how to make a basic shelter, using sticks, leaves and whatever else you find.

As a team, try to make it as rainproof as possible...

What might I get out of doing it?

It's a fun challenge for teams.

It's also the most important survival skill!

How long will it take?

1 hour, or more if you want to make it truly waterproof.

Find out more:

[Make a mini shelter - YouTube](#)

[Bushcraft Shelters - The A Frame Shelter | TA Outdoors – YouTube](#)

Categories:

#midgreen #bushcraft #teamwork

Nature photography (with a phone)



What is it?

Photos of nature and wildlife can be so powerful. It could be a huge landscape or a tiny flower. Your own phone can do the job if you know how. Learn some simple tips and tricks to take better pictures of nature which you'll want to show off to others.

What might I get out of doing it?

It helps you to take in the tiny details and beauty of what is around us. You'll improve your skills and maybe discover a new hobby...?

How long will it take?

A 2-hour walk would be worth it.
But 30 minutes is better than nothing!

Find out more:

Categories:

#midgreen #newhobby #wellbeing

Bug search



What is it?

See what bugs you can find under logs or in the bushes. (Invertebrates is the scientific word!)
Use a bug box, a magnifier and a sweep net. See if you can work out what they are with an ID sheet.

What might I get out of doing it?

It's fun, interesting and you can learn about how all the animals and plants live together.

How long will it take?

1 hour

Find out more:

[Go on a bug hunt – YouTube](#)

Categories:

#midgreen #natureknowledge

Pond dipping

(Spring, summer, early autumn)



What is it?

Dip a fishing net into a pond and see what you can bring out. Look closely and you might find water beetles, water snails, dragonfly nymphs and lots of other creatures. If you're lucky you might find a frog or a newt!

What might I get out of doing it?

Learn about the ecosystem of a pond – how all the animals and plants live together in a small area of water.

How long will it take?

30 minutes – 1 hour.

Find out more:

[Pond Dipping at Wicken Fen & National Trust conservation - YouTube](#)

Categories:

#midgreen #natureknowledge

Meet a tree



What is it?

Trees are the best! Get to know them a bit better with this game to test your sensory skills. A partner will blindfold you and lead you to a tree and back again - but will you be able to guess which tree it was?

What might I get out of doing it?

It's a fun, quick activity which can be surprisingly good for your well being. It may also help you to give trees the respect they deserve!

How long will it take?

30 minutes.

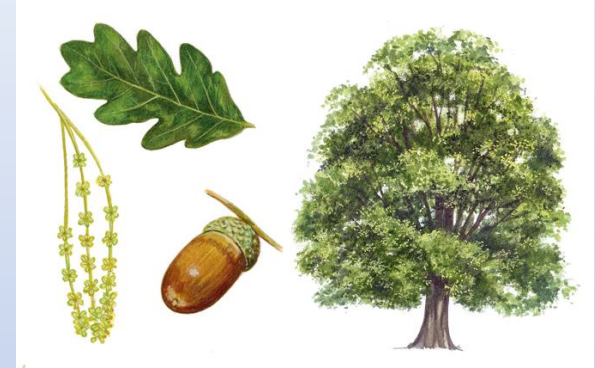
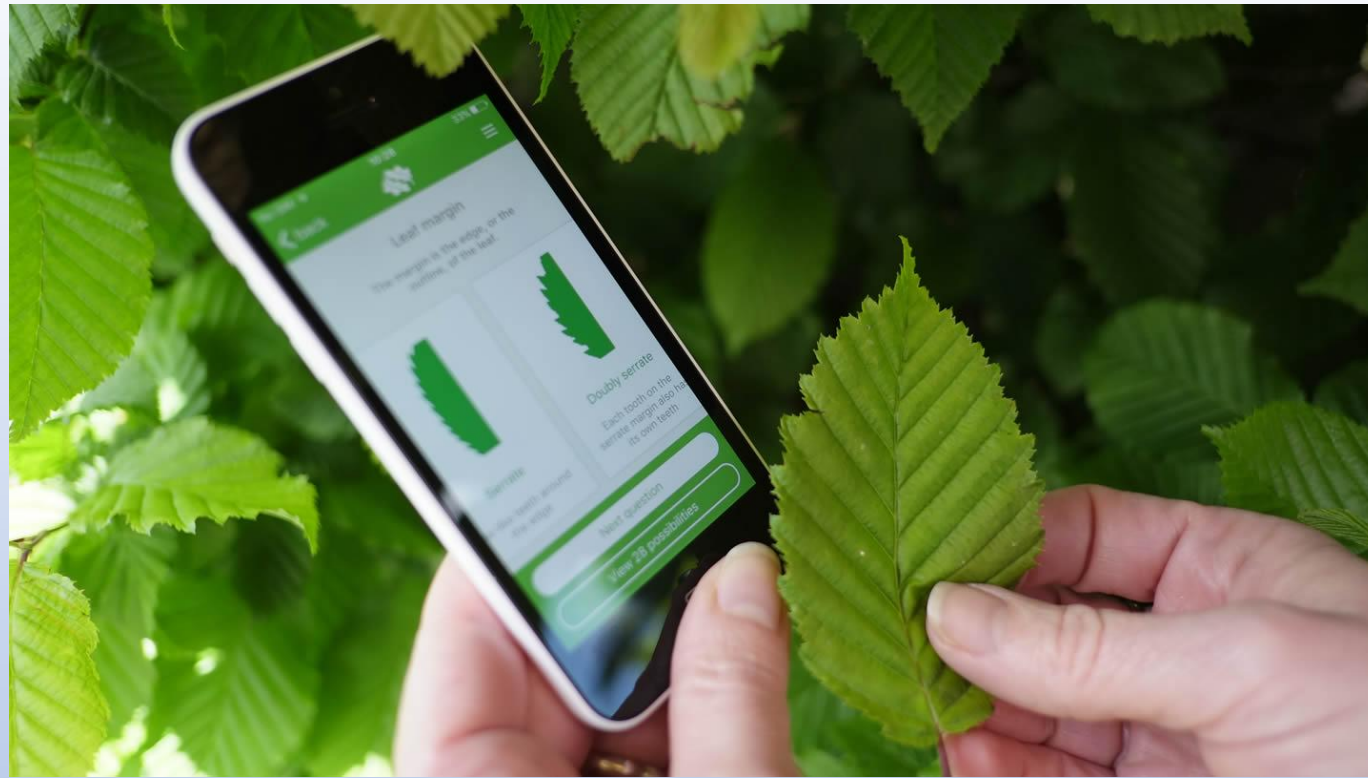
Find out more:

[Meet a Tree with Columbia Springs - YouTube](#)

Categories:

#midgreen #teamwork

Tree I.D.



What is it?

Go on a relaxing walk and learn to identify some of the most common trees around us. Look at the leaves, flowers, fruits, bark and branches. Get up close to these amazing beings and learn some fascinating facts about them!

What might I get out of doing it?

Noticing trees and nature can help us to feel better – science proves it! It can also make everyday life more interesting.

How long will it take?

30 minutes – 2 hours, depending on the length of the walk.

Find out more:

[Identify Trees with our Tree ID App - Woodland Trust - YouTube](#)

Categories:

#midgreen #natureknowledge #wellbeing

Bird watching



What is it?

Take a walk and look for birds and other wildlife. Learn about some of the species that live there and how they adapt to their environment. Enjoy the fresh air! You can use our binoculars to see close-up.

What might I get out of doing it?

It's a free way to relax, feel healthy and more in tune with what's around us – an easy way to better well being!

How long will it take?

2 hours plus

Find out more:

[The Art of Urban Birding – YouTube](#)

[Nature Dates: Jack Fincham Takes Chris Packham Birdwatching | FULL EPISODE | BBC Earth - YouTube](#)

Categories:

#midgreen #newhobby #natureknowledge #wellbeing

Citizen science



What is it?

'Citizen science' is where people like us can get outside and collect information for professional scientists. This helps them to answer questions, such as: How healthy is our air? How clean is our water? How healthy is our soil?

What might I get out of doing it?

It feels good to play a part in something important! It also practises good science skills. It might interest you in certain careers.

How long will it take?

2 hours.

Find out more:

[What is Citizen Science? – YouTube](#)
[Chris Packham on Citizen Science - YouTube](#)

Categories:

#deepgreen #jobskills #changemaker

Litter picking



What is it?

Use a litter picker to clear an area of litter. You'll be given gloves to protect your hands. Work as a team to make an area beautiful again – and safe for people and animals.

What might I get out of doing it?

It's surprisingly satisfying! It's also relaxing and good exercise in the fresh air. And people will thank you for it!

How long will it take?

1 hour (though even a few minutes makes a difference).

Find out more:

[Keep Britain Tidy ambassador Steve Backshall talks about litter #GBSpringClean - YouTube](#)

Categories:

#deepgreen #changemaker #teamwork

Gardening



What is it?

Gardening tasks keep our parks and open spaces looking beautiful. It can also be a big help to wildlife. Gardening could also mean growing and looking after fruit and vegetables.

What might I get out of doing it?

It's healthy exercise! You may learn how to grow your own food. Try out skills which might interest you in a career in gardening.

How long will it take?

Anything from 1 hour to a whole day.

Find out more:

[Corporate Volunteering with The Conservation Volunteers - YouTube](#)

Categories:

#deepgreen #jobskills #changemaker #newhobby

Conservation



What is it?

'Conservation' tasks help to protect and manage our natural places. Tasks could include cutting back plants, sawing branches or raking leaves.

What might I get out of doing it?

It's good exercise and it's great to know that you've helped nature! Try out skills which might interest you in a career in conservation.

Find out more:

[Health and Wellbeing with The Conservation Volunteers \(TCV\) - YouTube](#)

How long will it take?

Anything from 1 hour to a whole day.

Categories:

#deepgreen #jobskills #changemaker #teamwork

Adventure Clubhouse and playground (Hampstead Heath only)



What is it?

Hampstead Heath has a clubhouse and adventure playground for young people from 5-16 years old. It's free to use. No need to book – you just drop in whenever you want. (5-7 year-olds need to be with an adult.)

The clubhouse has a table tennis table and a snooker table. Activities such as arts and crafts are led by the staff.

Opening times:

Term times: Tuesday – Friday 3.30-5.00pm. Saturdays 10.00am-4.00pm.

Open Easter holidays and summer holidays, autumn half term and summer half term (10.00am-4.00pm). Closed during winter.

What might I get out of doing it?

It's a safe and fun place to relax and meet old and new friends!

How long will it take?

You can come and go as you please.

Your idea...?



What is it?

Do you have an idea for an outdoor activity that you would like to do? Tell us!

What might you get out of doing it?

How long will it take?

Find out more:

Categories:

Combo deals!

You could combine some of these sessions to make a themed programme. Below are some suggestions.

The programme could last for a whole day (e.g. 10am – 3pm), or it could be spread over several sessions.

(Keep in mind that some sessions need a particular place or special conditions. For example, flying a kite needs a windy day!)

Bushcraft survival

Fire lighting, storm kettles, campfire cooking, shelter building, orienteering...

Teamwork testers

Orienteering, Egg tower, Tower of Power, shelter building...

New hobby tasters

Stunt kites, slacklining, archery, nature photography, bird watching, eco-art...

Job skills tasters

Conservation, gardening (+ an introduction to outdoor education as a career)...

Nature knowledge

Pond dipping, bug hunting, bird watching, tree I.D., meet a tree...

Eco-art

Hapa Zomé, mud faces, leaf mandalas, nature photography...

Change makers

Conservation, litter picking, citizen science...

