



garden
needs

GROW MOTIVATE SUCCEED

www.gardenneeds.org.uk

socialadventures
trading for change

mind in Salford
for better mental health

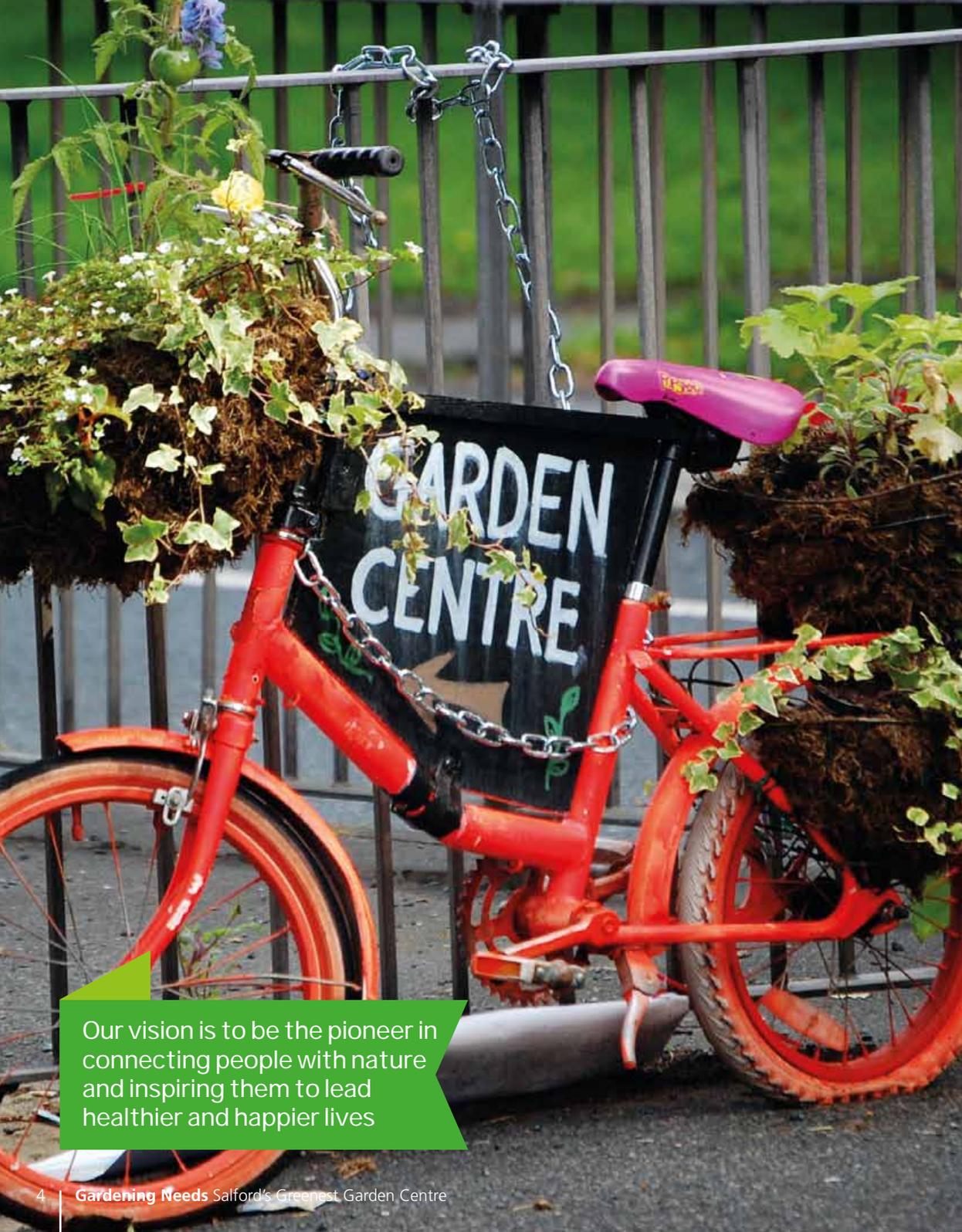
Ecominds
 mind
LOTTERY FUNDED



The introduction of 'growing spaces' in urban communities is now an accepted method to promote improved wellbeing and health.

Contents

Introduction	5
Our passion	5
The analytic process	6
Recommendations	9
Next Steps for Garden Needs	9
Staff Resilience and Wellbeing Programme	10
What does the programme look like?	10
The benefits?	10



Our vision is to be the pioneer in connecting people with nature and inspiring them to lead healthier and happier lives

Introduction

Garden Needs has been running as a community wellbeing garden centre since 2011, it's a social enterprise incorporated to provide a holistic setting for people to self-heal through peer support and a structured programme of outdoor activities or 'green therapies'.

The centre is located in Higher Broughton, Salford and is based on a partnership between 'Mind in Salford' and 'Social adventures'.

We are passionate...

about re-connecting people to nature to create a more sustainable future, we believe this connection brings healing, resilience, awareness and opens eyes to the magic that surrounds us all.

The effectiveness of Green Therapies

In 2012 Garden Needs engaged the University of Salford, School of Nursing, Midwifery & Social Work to conduct a service user evaluation of Garden Needs.

The experiences of the volunteers (services users) were explored through focus group and face to face interviews.

'The Holistic Value of Nature: A Qualitative Evaluation of 'Garden Needs' as a Community Well-Being Garden Centre, 2013'

'The key findings suggest that Garden Needs is a welcoming environment where plants and people flourish'

Through being active, learning new skills, connecting with others who have similar experiences, being aware of their impact, and own growth.

The findings suggest that this occurred through participating in an activity that supported personal growth, happiness and confidence in the people who took part.

The analytic process

The analytic process revealed four key categories that provided insight into the participant's experiences of Garden Needs.

'A space to grow'

The volunteers felt relaxed and able to select tasks that they felt comfortable with and make decisions independently.

These comments indicate that the environment at Garden Needs was conducive, promoted autonomy and, importantly, suggests that the volunteers felt connected with others.

"I am able to work on my own if I want to",

"you can be on your own or you can be next to people, depending on how you feel".

'Seeing the person'

The findings indicate that the person centred approach enabled volunteers to learn and grow in a supportive and person centred environment which encouraged volunteers to be involved in a way that suited the individual's needs.

"I can be open, be myself"

"It is about seeing you as people, rather than you coming along with something. You are an individual who likes gardening".

'Learning through flexibility'

The person centred approaches used appeared to be based on the way in which Garden Needs provided structured yet flexible activities that volunteers could make decisions about, selecting an activity from a 'to do' list.

The volunteers expressed how this meant that they could select an activity that best suited the way they felt on the day.

"It is decision making as well. We look at the list and we work out our decisions. We don't have to be told what to do, we don't want to".

'Connecting through a supportive environment'

This suggests Garden Needs helped volunteers to reconnect with others and encouraged them to reflect on their lives through a structured learning experience. For many, Garden Needs provided the space to grow in a world where there were accepted as themselves and one in which they felt comfortable to give their time and learn.

"We're not sat around in a circle with a name badge on", "I like the group, everything is gentle", "I miss it when I don't come"... "we all get on"



The volunteers felt relaxed and able to select tasks that they felt comfortable with



'Early interventions that promote well-being are advocated as one approach in reducing the negative life impacts of developing a severe and enduring mental health problem (DH 2011)'.

Recommendations

Three key recommendations have been developed based on the findings of this evaluation. These reflect the need to:

- ✿ Promote Garden Needs as an early intervention with Clinical Commissioning Groups and other agencies,
- ✿ Disseminate Garden Needs as an exemplar to other similar projects in Greater Manchester and nationally,
- ✿ Develop the evidence base through future research that will help reinforce the innovative ways in which health and wellbeing can be supported through green therapies'.

Next Steps for Garden Needs:

The work of Garden Needs will focus on the delivery of 3 key areas over the next 3 years – **The Volunteer Programme, The Abilities Programme and The Resilience and Wellbeing Programme.**

The Volunteer Programme

Progress and develop the programme for individuals providing volunteering and training opportunities throughout the year, aimed at people who are suffering or at risk of suffering from mental health issues.

The Abilities Programme

Deliver a diverse, interesting and exciting programme of activities focused around what people can do and aimed at individuals with learning difficulties.

Resilience and Wellbeing Programme

Early work place intervention programme based around accessing green therapy and mindfulness based stress reduction for employees suffering with stress, anxiety or depression.

For more information on any of these programmes please contact Garden Needs on 0161 792 5448.

The Resilience and Wellbeing Programme

We know that once a person is off work, on the sick, that their daily structure disappears, confidence and inter-personal skills fall, their ability to self-motivate to do the simplest task evaporates.

Employers are left juggling workloads and placing additional pressures on other team members. Garden Needs has developed a programme using the experience of volunteers to provide an early intervention approach for businesses and employees.

What does the programme look like?

- ❖ Release from work for 1 day or ½ day and 1 evening per week
- ❖ Volunteering at the Garden Needs Community Wellbeing Centre. The centre provides a tranquil setting, surrounded by trees and birdsong where volunteers can work on a wide range of tasks, some solitary, others as a team, some really physical and others more creative.

- ❖ Attending a 6 week Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) course delivered at Garden Needs. The course will provide people with the techniques to better manage stress and anxiety to improve their own wellbeing.

What are the benefits?

- ❖ Employees will have improved wellbeing, coping mechanisms and financial stability (as a result of staying in work).
- ❖ Reduced stigma associated with volunteering than with attending counselling or going off sick with mental health issues.
- ❖ Employer keeps staff in work, reducing the cost of staffing resources and additional impact on the wider team.
- ❖ Employer demonstrates a long-term commitment to looking after staff, improving their reputation as a good employer.

**Call the team on:
0161 792 5448
for more information**



The employer keeps staff in work, reducing the cost of staffing resources and additional impact on the wider team.



garden needs

Garden Needs
1 Radford Street,
Salford, M7 4NT

t: 0161 792 5448

Twitter: @gardenneeds1
e: info@gardenneeds.org.uk
www.gardenneeds.org.uk

www.socialadventures.org.uk
www.mindinsalford.org.uk

Find us on Facebook:
www.facebook.com/gardenneeds1

In Partnership with

University of
Salford
MANCHESTER