



YOUTH & COUNSELLING SERVICES

WILDERNESS FOUNDATION UK
(51.7659° N, 0.6674° E)
www.wildernessfoundation.org.uk

**THE WILDERNESS
FOUNDATION UK
HARNESSES THE
POSITIVE POWER
OF WILDERNESS
TO CHANGE LIVES
AND THE POSITIVE
POWER OF HUMANITY
TO SAVE WILDERNESS.**



Our Youth projects and therapy programmes have been developed to meet the needs of young people who are facing a number of challenges in their lives.

These can be within a school, family or other social settings resulting in them putting themselves at risk. This risk can come in many forms such as being excluded from education, being exploited, or becoming involved with the criminal justice system - all of which can contribute to them becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) and placing their futures in jeopardy. Many others come to us as a result of experiencing grief and loss, anxiety, depression, self harm, domestic violence and other issues.

The content of our projects and programmes aims to equip and enable these young people to acquire the skills from within themselves to navigate their futures safely and successfully.

Our use of nature and the outdoors enhances these outcomes in the form of increased resilience, self-esteem and other social skills.

Jo Roberts, CEO Wilderness Foundation



"It (TurnAround) made me the person that I am now... like I set myself bigger goals now than what I would have done, because I know that I'm more than capable, and this has helped me realise that I'm more than capable of pushing myself outside that comfort zone."

TurnAround participant

TURNAROUND

TURNAROUND

Youth ages 15–21 who struggle with family, social, grief and loss, mental health and personal problems find a new way of living through the Wilderness Foundation's six month long TurnAround programme.

Age range: 15–21 years

Project Location: Essex

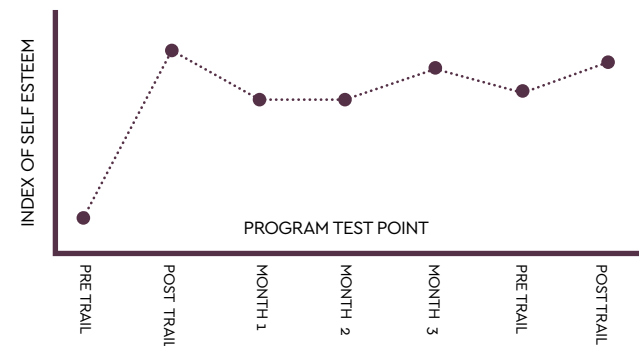
Programme outline: 6–9 months

2 week long Wilderness journeys— these produce the most significant and measured changes in the young people.

- Regular one to one mentoring
- Monthly workshops on personal change and resilience building
- Specialist employability workshop
- Monthly social events
- Nature based activities such as bushcraft, canoeing, horse riding, orienteering, rock climbing etc.
- Work experience and meeting people in business
- Family engagement/therapy as required
- Graduation and other community and family celebrations
- Continued mentoring for 3 months, support in accessing education, training, work experience, apprenticeships or employment.



Our success rate averages at 83% of our graduates entering further education or employment and sustaining this into the future. We remain in contact with many graduates on a regular basis.



A photograph of a campfire at night. The fire is burning brightly in a metal fire pit, with several logs and a large piece of wood on top. In the background, a person is playing an acoustic guitar, and another person is sitting on a chair. The scene is outdoors, with trees and a tent visible in the distance.

OUT THERE WILDERNESS ACADEMY

“Since the Out There project Beth’s* attitude has changed dramatically and when challenged with a difficult situation or scenario we will discuss the OutThere project and the skills that they learnt to enable them to make positive choices. ”

Pastoral Care Support Worker | *Participants name changed.



OUT THERE WILDERNESS ACADEMY

Out There Wilderness Academy is a transformational programme for youth ages 13–15 or specialist groups of other ages/disabilities. Most young people are struggling with their behaviour, mood and schooling. Others come to us in specialist groups to meet their specific educational needs. Six weeks of outdoor alternative education followed by one-to-one mentoring, if needed, help young people get back on track in school, at home, and in the community. We teach tools for life for them to use at the end of the programme.

Age range: 13–15 years

Project Location: Essex

Programme outline: 1 day a week for 6 weeks during term time *



71%

**of our participants
re-engaged
with schools.**

Out There is suitable for young people between the ages of 13–15 who are:

- struggling to engage and stay in school
- at risk of suspension leading to exclusion
- finding that behavioural and emotional wellbeing are big issues in their lives
- struggling with family and relationship issues
- finding boundaries to be a challenge
- experiencing low-level mental health issues, (e.g. depression or anxiety)
- engaging in risky behaviours
- getting involved with anti-social behaviours combined with low self-worth or aspirations.

The programme provides small group-based work outdoors, using a range of tools. Example sessions include bushcraft, camp cooking, walks, personal development exercises and a wide range of games with our outdoor facilitators.

This is followed by 1:1 mentoring for those who, with the referral agency or parents, need further help and support.

The cost per child for a 6-week programme is £420, or £70 per day, based on a minimum of 8 young people in each group.

Participants need to arrange their own transport to/ from our site.

Further information is also available at:
<https://wildernessfoundation.org.uk/out-there-wilderness-academy-3/>



Our track record to date shows positive and significant benefits to our participants with outcomes in school attendance improvement, reducing anti-social behaviour, increased self respect and respect for others, improvement in a connection to nature, amongst a range of others.

*Wilderness Foundation is a registered Alternative Provider of ECC

ONE-TO-ONE OR SMALL GROUP BESPOKE THERAPY PROGRAMMES



"I like coming to the Wilderness Foundation because the staff are open minded and do not judge me.

I can be the person that I want to be when I am here and work through some ideas that help me cope better when things get too much at home or at school. I love doing the activities and spending time outside really helps to make me feel calm."

Current bespoke client



**ONE-TO-ONE OR SMALL GROUP
BESPOKE THERAPY PROGRAMMES**

Age range: Ages 5+ Individuals and Families

Project Location: Essex and wider afield

Programme outline:

Our counselling services take place in the outdoors wherever possible, and we also offer online and telephone counselling services.

We also offer mental wellbeing and behaviour change programmes for individuals who require a more intensive programme of one to one engagement and those who find it particularly difficult to engage in a group, or have complex issues.

- Primarily nature based and can include fishing, nature photography and art activities, bushcraft, and conservation for example. These all interface with our therapeutic services, personal development and resilience facilitation methods.
- Most work is delivered on the 400 acres of Hyde Hall Farm surrounding our offices including woodland, meadows, streams, and agricultural fields or our 100 acre woods in Great Leighs.
- We make use of a small wilderness camp that supports our work and provides a base for activities and overnight programmes.
- We offer wilderness therapy camps throughout the year.



“Participants evidence significant improvement in self-esteem, mood, hopefulness and self efficacy in correlation to an increase in connection with nature.”

University of Essex



TREUN



"At first I was very nervous about attending, I hadn't been on many trips away from my family but the atmosphere felt like home. I loved every minute of it and found all of the activities we did incredibly interesting. It was great having such positive and supportive people around you. I took so much away with me including lots of new skills, also beautiful memories that will stay with me forever."

Eilidh – participant



TREUN PROGRAMMES

Age range: 14-16 years

Project Location: Scotland

Programme outline:

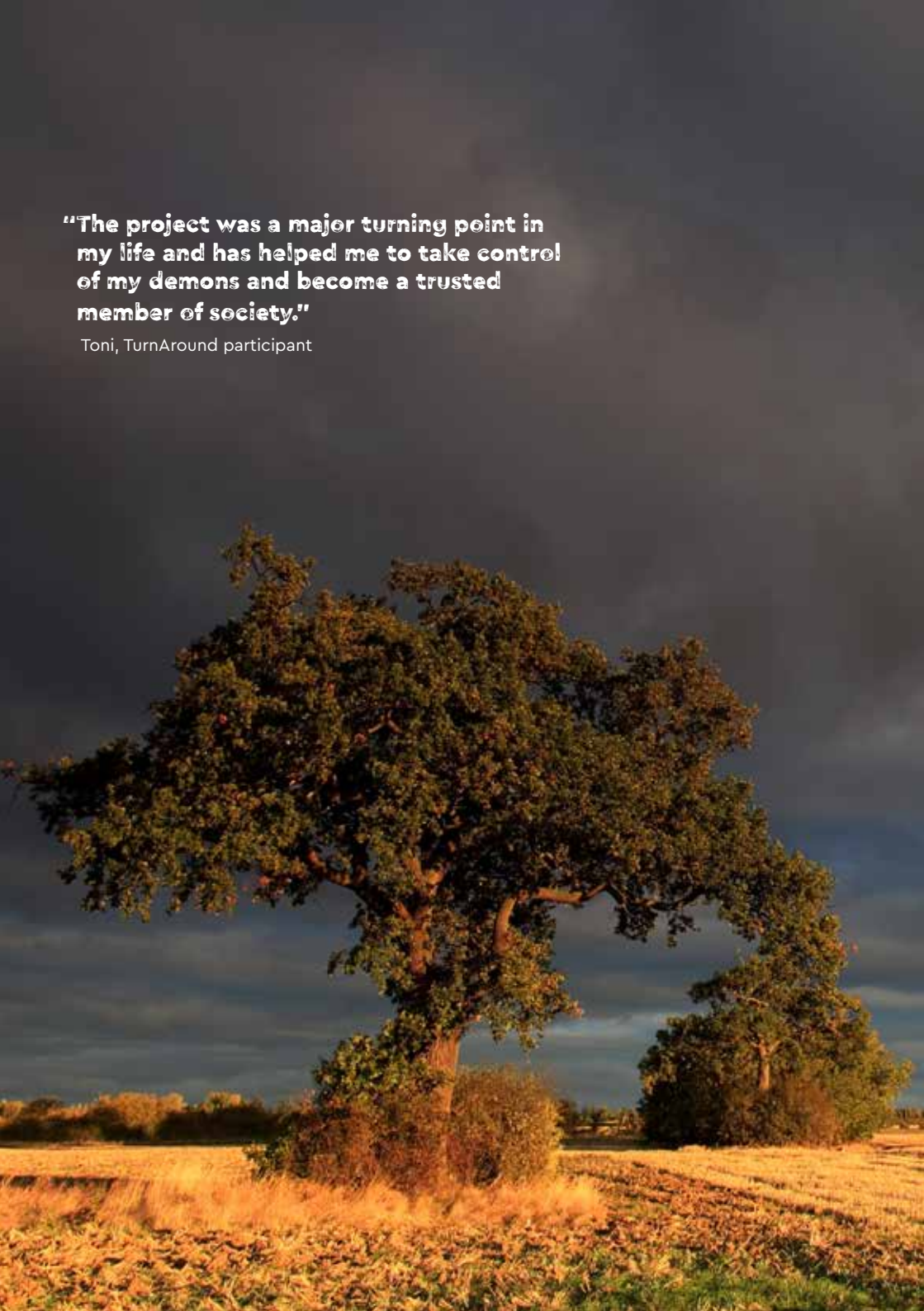
Treun is a week long therapeutic experiential learning programme in rural Scotland for groups of up to 8 young people. The programme features a three-day wilderness trail in Scotland's wildest countryside. Led by professional wilderness guides and therapists. Participants will:

- Learn camp craft by hiking, camping in tents, and cooking outdoors.
- Improve mental health, build problem-solving skills and grow their self-esteem by encountering and meeting challenges posed by the natural world.
- Practice conservation and Leave No Trace principles.
- Build resilience and coping strategies and learn to adapt.
- Experience the joy of volunteering.

Participants are inspired to preserve natural spaces and work on goals and pathways for their future. Aside from the many benefits to youth's social and physical well-being, Treun will improve young peoples mental health and in turn improve their employability skills.

In the course of the week-long programme, participants earn the John Muir Award and Leave No Trace certification. These recognitions enhance not only participants' self-esteem but also their employability.





"The project was a major turning point in my life and has helped me to take control of my demons and become a trusted member of society."

Toni, TurnAround participant

OUR PHILOSOPHY

Our projects and programmes are delivered using the following structure:

STAGE 1 — GETTING TO KNOW

STAGE 2 — PERSONAL & SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

STAGE 3 — TRANSITION

The work is given the time it requires to develop trust and to develop a relationship with the young person.

We work flexibly and spontaneously either one to one, in groups or with family members as required. Our work is often in response to what is presented by the young people, whilst keeping an eye on the wider outcomes agreed. Our therapists and facilitators all practice a person-centred approach as well as a range of therapeutic specialisms.

Our particular methodology and legacy is that we give time, kindness and patience, mixed with straight talking and honesty. We focus on young people learning about the value of their own choices, in directing a future they wish to have in their lives and understanding responsibility for actions taken. For younger clients it is often about learning skills to manage the realities of their lives, as much as is possible, as their choices for changing those circumstances are often limited.

Wherever possible we always try to communicate with others who are supporting the young people that we work with, whether this is family, social workers, teachers, or support workers. We attend meetings and signpost young people to more support outside of our services if needed.

As young people finish their time with us we make sure that they are engaged with other services and pathways.

We stay in touch with many of our young people who will often come back years later to let us know how they are getting on.

OUR CREDENTIALS

Our staff team has a combined experience of over 40 years of working in the socio-environmental sector, creating and delivering personal development projects for disengaged young people

- Our wilderness facilitators have many years of experience of working in the outdoors both in the UK and further afield
- All staff and volunteers are first aid trained, DBS checked and we are trained in mental health first aid
- We are members of the Institute of Outdoor Learning
- Approved alternative provider of Essex County Council
- £10 million Public Liability Insurance Cover
- Learning Outside of the Classroom Quality Badge
- Outdoor therapists are BACP or accredited by the National Counselling Society and are chosen because of their passion for nature and working with young people
- Covid guidelines in place

NEXT STEPS

Please complete the referral form available to download from our website.

The project coordinator will contact you to make the appropriate arrangements for the next stage.

If required (bespoke) a formal proposal is given to the referral agency. Once this is agreed we can then start work within an agreed space of time, accommodating the need for urgency in some circumstances.

We are delighted to welcome visitors to our site, by appointment only, to see first-hand where we work and how we deliver.

COSTS

We are a registered charity and are not profit driven, however like any business we have to make sure we cover our costs.

TurnAround

15–21 years old

(6–9 months engagement)

Grant funded with voluntary contributions from referral agencies, or commissioned places.

Out There

13–15 years old

(6 weeks engagement)

Available throughout the year
£420 per child.

TREUN

14–16 years old

(4–6 groups per year)

Open to young people from 40 partner schools across Scotland.

Bespoke

Costs vary depending on activities and specific requirements. Please enquire for further information.

CONTACT

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The Wilderness Foundation is a member of The Institute for Outdoor Learning.

Registered charity
No. 1118493
in England, Wales and Scotland
No SCO41697

