

# HORTICULTURAL THERAPY



**Learn more about the benefits of Horticultural Therapy and how you can use our to use our 122-acre country park at Blythe Valley to explore nature...**

The aim of our Wellness at Work campaign at Blythe Valley Park is to provide our park community with numerous ways to de-stress both at work and at home. One activity that many people find therapeutic is gardening (sometimes called horticultural therapy). Gardening and being outdoors/close to nature is not only beneficial for your physical health, but also for your mental health. Being outdoors and tending to plants can help you take your mind away from those pre-occupying thoughts about work and the like. Planting and watching things grow can give you a sense of achievement – which would make anyone feel happier! For some, just being closer to nature and away from the hustle and bustle of modern life, may create a more relaxed and peaceful easy feeling.

Thrive (one of Britain's leading charities in disability and gardening) is a charity that has been using therapeutic horticulture since 1978. Thrive's CEO, Kathryn Rossiter, says that

“ as well as the strong therapeutic value of gardening, it can also help people connect with others, reducing feelings of isolation. It makes us more active, gaining both physical and mental health benefits. ”

Studies carried out by the National Gardens Scheme (NGS) found that 39% of the people they questioned said that just being in a garden makes them feel healthier, and 79% believed that having access to a garden is essential for quality of life. More research looking into wellbeing, performance and the office found that levels of cortisol (a stress indicator) decrease significantly after 20 minutes in a more natural setting. At Blythe Valley, we would like you to experience the benefits of therapeutic horticulture, so we encourage our occupiers to utilise the 122-acre country park. We have footpaths, benches, lakes and rivers to explore.

We have also recently installed bug hotels, an otter holt and a barn owl box, which is great for the wildlife on site!

## REFERENCES

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/gardening/gardening-events/the-best-benefit-of-gardening--improving-our-mentalhealth/>

<http://www.thrive.org.uk/what-is-social-and-therapeutichorticulture.aspx>

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/gardening/10862087/Horticultural-therapy-Gardening-makes-us-feel-renewedinside.html>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3799530/>

