

Gardening: It's not just for gardeners!



BENEFITS

Mental Health

Gardening releases serotonin and dopamine, the feel good chemicals in the brain!

Physical Health

Physical activity and social interaction help you to get fit in an enjoyable way and sunlight can lower blood pressure and increase Vitamin D levels.

Wider Life Benefits

We can also help you to gain qualifications, write CV's, give you work experience and support for appeals or other legal situations.

Cynon
Valley
Organic
Adventures

Latest News

If you haven't visited yet you really should! Our lovely community garden has lots of flowers, trees and wildlife to enjoy all year round. It can be a peaceful escape or a fun way to socialise. Every day our team support each to chase our dreams through the creation of something special for our community.



Mike's Story

Mike was referred to us via his social prescription link worker last year. After decades of working in fabrication Mike had to leave his job due to ill health. This brought so many other concerns for him that when he came to us he was very low and could not see a way forward. He wasn't even sure if he could commit to coming to us as he had isolated himself since the incident.

What we saw when he came was his warmth, his non judgemental attitude, his skills and his huge heart. Everyone on site warmed to him instantly and as he began to come each day the other volunteers began to increase their days, to commit to the garden because of the support and guidance that Mike was able to offer them.

One year on and Mike with his side kick Andrew have managed to build a solar powered compost toilet, a garden café and kitchen, raised beds and polytunnels, he is a qualified tutor, has a level 3 in garden design, is qualified in emergency first aid and safeguarding and has set up Green Valley Wellbeing charity which brings in money for community wellbeing activities.

Green Valley Wellbeing is based on Cynon Valley Organic Adventures site and we all work closely as one big team to support our community through the provision of summer school, green gym and our programmes for disengaged youths.

Wellbeing and Education



By Gerd Simonsen

This year we have been working hard alongside Careers Wales to inspire engagement with young people on the I2A programme. The children have 1 to 2 day placements on site with us, working to improve wellbeing, engagement with learning and achieve Level 1 in Environment and Conservation Heritage. The difficulties some of these young people have experienced this year are exceptional and the strength and commitment that they have displayed have amazed us all.

The behavioural changes and attitude to learning have more than met our expectations and we look forward to watching these young people grow.

Get Involved

We welcome involvement all year round from other organisations who may wish to work together or lend a hand by way of volunteering.

Local community members are welcome to engage with us for volunteering, learning or wellbeing support either through asking their doctors to refer them through their link worker or contacting us on Facebook.

Who would benefit from being referred?

- People who are isolated
- People experiencing anxiety or depression
- People who need to make life style changes such as diet, widening social circles, building resilience
- People who need professional advocacy
- People wishing to gain skills or qualifications
- People who wish to improve general physical/mental wellbeing

Our volunteer placements incorporate the 5 ways to wellbeing-

- Connect-Feeling close to and valued by others contributes to a feeling of wellbeing and is a fundamental need
- Be active- Regular physical activity is associated with lower rates of depression and anxiety and when combined with gardening there is evidence of change of eating habits- leading to healthier lifestyle
- Take notice-Being present and learning to focus on and enjoy the moment can help relieve pain, lower blood pressure and improve sleep
- Learn- Continued learning through life enhances confidence and self esteem and is particularly beneficial for older people
- Give-Individuals reporting a greater interest in helping others are more likely to describe themselves as happy

We run a range of outdoors activities throughout the year advertised through our Facebook page.

We also run a range of courses for professionals including:

Level 4 in Managing Workplace Wellbeing

Level 3 in Education and Training

Level 3 in Delivery of Online Blended Learning

Our volunteer placements are available all year round for ages 14 plus.

For more information contact Janis on janiswerrett@cynonvalleyorganicadventures.com