



# The Green Hub Project for Teens

Volunteering – Connecting – Learning

## Adult Garden Volunteer's Welcome Pack



Helping teens to take care of their own mental health





# Hello and Welcome

## Thank you for choosing to join us in the garden.

By volunteering with us you are helping support the mental health and wellbeing of our young volunteers. We hope that you will feel supported, valued, and proud to be part of this Project.

This Welcome Pack explains the things you will need to know about volunteering with us.

It consists of three parts:

- This **Welcome** document, that outlines what we are all about.
- Our key **Policies** (three) that you need to read.
- The **Adult Garden Volunteer Commitment**, which includes: our Volunteer Code of Conduct, highlights of our key policies and a Volunteer Agreement which we would like you to return to us via DocuSign (*you will receive a copy from DocuSign where you can add an e-signature*).



Please take the time to read everything carefully. If you'd like further information do contact either of the Green Hub Co-Founders .

Enjoy your time with us!

Tone Tellefsen Hughes DC. BSc, FRCC (paeds) & Vanessa Lanham-Day FCIM

**Co-Founders of The Green Hub Project for Teens**





## Teen Well-being

**The teen years are some of the most exciting, fun, carefree times of someone's life.**

Let's face it though, they can sometimes be a bit tricky as young bodies and minds rapidly change and grow. Coupled with this is an increase in school and homework, exams, navigating friendships, relationships, sexuality, and social media. Add a pandemic, and your wellbeing may begin to fray!

In the UK it is now thought that one in nine children and young people has a mental health problem. This can range from anxiety and depression to rarer problems like schizophrenia and bipolar disorder.

- These problems often develop between the ages of 5-15 years
- 50% of all mental health problems are established by the age of 14
- This rises to 75% by the age of 24

Good mental health is important in ensuring that young people develop the resilience to cope with life's ups and downs and grow into well-rounded, healthy adults. Research shows that providing supportive environments early on is key to enabling this.

Over the next few years, the NHS plans to focus on children and young people's mental health. While this is welcome news, there are currently shortfalls in access to and provision of community-based mental health services for this age group.

**The Green Hub Project for Teens aims to provide just this type of resource by promoting the wellbeing of teenager's mental health in the sanctuary of a secluded walled garden and by offering talks and workshops aimed at empowering teens and supporting parents.**

<sup>1</sup> Kessler, R. C., Amminger, G. P., Aguilar-Gaxiola, S., Alonso, J., Lee, S., & Ustün, T. B. (2007). Age of onset of mental disorders: a review of recent literature. *Current opinion in psychiatry*, 20(4), 359-364.





# A Pathway To Health

## How can gardening promote wellbeing?

Have you ever noticed that when you sit in a garden, or go for a walk in a park, that you feel better? Well, you're not imagining it! Recent research shows that engaging in nature provides a wide range of benefits for our health and wellbeing.

Check out our website for more details of these amazing findings

<https://greenhub.org.uk/about-us/the-science/>

The process of using plants, nature, and gardens to improve physical and mental health, as well as communication, thinking and learning skills, is called Social and Therapeutic Horticulture. The list below highlights the many ways that being in nature can help to improve overall wellbeing.







## The benefits of being outdoors in the garden:

- Regular gardening keeps you fit and active.
- Volunteering with others gives you a sense of purpose and community.
- Taking steps to improve your health is empowering.
- Working alongside others reduces loneliness, enhances a sense of connection, acceptance and inclusion.
- Being outside is immune boosting – from the soil, sun (Vit D) and plant phytochemicals.
- Growing your own vegetables and fruit is satisfying and tasty!
- Volunteering can enhance your CV and can be used to work towards other volunteer-based award schemes e.g., Duke of Edinburgh.
- Gardening stimulates creativity and problem solving.
- Learning and developing new skills improves your confidence.
- Being in nature can boost your mood, restore and relax you and help with recovery from poor health.
- Gardening can improve the environment for everyone by creating habitats for wildlife.
- It helps you feel grounded and boosts your appreciation and connectedness to nature.
- Garden plants can also help with many illnesses, improve our environment and protect against pollution, all to the benefit of our health.
- Working with others enhances communication skills, self-confidence and self-esteem.





# The Green Hub Project For Teens

## A therapy-garden in action

Hidden away behind in Milford, is a quiet, walled Teen Garden, where we aim to help promote the wellbeing and mental health of local teenagers. We also have a developing site at Hydons Flowers in Hydestyle, near Milford & Godalming.

Currently, we're able to accept GP, school and youth agency referrals, or direct parent referrals, of teenagers with mild to moderate mental health concerns, aged 11–18 years (Year 7-13).

## The garden is the therapy

This project is not about offering counselling sessions or medical solutions. It's about giving young people a chance to get away from their worries and to enjoy the health benefits of gardening and nature! We hope to be an additional support to their wellbeing and mental health by offering them positivity and support within a peaceful garden setting.

## Providing non-judgemental, compassionate listening

In the garden, our skilled volunteers and teens work alongside one another and interact with each other, enjoying nature, while sharing and learning new skills. While we will never offer counselling, our volunteers are always on hand – if needed – to provide non-judgmental, compassionate listening.

## Working together in the garden

The gardening activities available are varied and will depend upon the weather and time of year. Examples of past activities include: clearing and tidying the garden, establishing vegetable and fruit beds, creating and planting new flower borders, and setting up a seating area. There is always a range of crafts for the teens to enjoy.

## Wellbeing-focused talks and workshops

In addition, **The Green Hub Project** also runs wellbeing-focused talks and workshops to empower teens and to support their parents/guardians. This way, we can reach more people, not just those attending the garden sessions.

## Parent Hub

Our **Parent Hub** is a support group for parents of stressed and anxious teens. Sessions are free – we meet once a month in Godalming and you would be most welcome to attend. Sign up is on our website.





## Background – how it came about

Tone Tellefsen Hughes is a paediatric chiropractor and owner of the chiropractic and health care clinic - Luck's Yard Clinic in Milford, Surrey. She is a Fellow of the Royal College of Chiropractors and was voted the Chiropractor's Chiropractor of the Year in 2018. The clinic was founded in 2007 and has since grown and doubled in size.

During this time, Tone also devoted much of her energy into working with her local community, offering lessons to state and private schools about health and wellbeing. Initially the focus was on the wellbeing of young people's posture and spine but has since developed into mindfulness around studying and how to build resilience and a positive mental outlook.

### The Surrey Teen Summit

In 2015, Tone co-created a local community group called the Surrey Teen Summit. This evolved out of the desire to support teenagers with positive workshops outside of school, in response to the rising teen mental-health crisis. Learning strategies are something Tone is now passionate about, as she has witnessed many students struggle with stress and anxiety around learning and revising.

### The birth of the garden

In May 2019, Tone had the opportunity to lease a piece of land, hidden away behind Luck's Yard - a beautiful and secluded walled garden - only accessible via the clinic. Tone was immediately inspired to offer this land for use as a local community project for teenagers.

Tone decided it was the right time to involve her long-time friend and local business-growth specialist, Vanessa Lanham-Day. Vanessa's skills are in developing structures and processes for a growing enterprise, as well as fund raising. Her role has been to develop Gren Hub as a recognisable 'brand' and to create momentum. The entire Green Hub is run as a secure – and green - 'online' entity with no paperwork whatsoever.

Since Vanessa & Tone joined forces, the Green Hub has gone from strength to strength. It has developed into a well-established and high-profile small charity for teens and parents in the Godalming and Milford areas.

We were delighted to welcome our first teens in the garden in July 2021.

The Management Board Members and growing team of volunteers have worked hard to create a safe, nurturing environment for teens to take part in social and therapeutic Horticultural activities – *over a 12 week period* – as an alternative to medical treatment for conditions such as stress, anxiety, depression, insomnia and loneliness.





## Our commitment To You

One of the aims of this small community project is to create a positive and uplifting experience for those who volunteer with us – adults and teens alike. To do this, we have established a set of commitments that will enable us to best support you.

### We, the Green Hub Project, will:

- Induct you, explain your role with us and provide any relevant support you may need to carry out the jobs around the garden and to enjoy its benefits.
- Keep you informed about the work of the **Green Hub Project for Teens**.
- Do our best to resolve any problems or issues promptly and fairly.
- Provide a safe environment.
- Provide adequate safety equipment and training as needed to carry out garden activities.

We feel it is important for you to know that you will be supported and trust that you will feel comfortable to approach us if you require any help.







# Essential Information

## 1. Who are we?

- The Green Hub Project for Teens is a Registered Charity in England & Wales, (No. 1203272) and is run entirely by volunteers.
- The Board Members who help run the Project and the adult volunteers who work alongside teen volunteers in the garden, have all successfully undertaken a Disclosure and Barring Check (DBS). In addition, there will be at least one trained First Aider in the garden at any one time.

## 2. Your time commitment

The time you commit is entirely up to you – we fully understand that you are doing this in your own time, and that you have other important pressures in your life.

- **Teen Garden Volunteers:** are asked to commit to an average of 1.5 sessions a month. In other words, try to commit to two, but accept that some months that won't work out due to personal stuff.
- **Garden Maintenance Volunteers:** are asked to commit to a programme alongside the other team members, working out when you are needed in a way that fits in with your diary.
- **Support / admin volunteers:** you are much more likely to be working on your own, at times that suit you. There are great benefits to this – but it can feel a bit lonely at times. We do our very best to keep you connected and part of our 'gang'. Please make sure you keep us informed with anything that's causing you a problem, or if you need help.

## 3. Health and Safety on site

- If you are attending one of the gardens, please ensure you sign in and out, at the beginning and end of each session or Induction.
- In an emergency, please follow the instructions given to you at induction and by the Garden Leader at the time. The emergency evacuation plans including the assembly point will be published on the garden noticeboard.
- If you see anything that you consider a risk to health and safety e.g., faulty or broken equipment, spillages, obstacles, or fire hazards, please tell the Garden Leader or other responsible person straight away.
- Please inform the Garden Leader of any relevant health conditions or allergies.





- Bags and possessions should be safely stored in the shelter. Mobile phones/essential medication can/should be kept with you. Please turn off phones during garden sessions.
- Please do not come to the garden if you feel unwell and especially if you have possible symptoms of COVID.
- During Induction or at the start of garden sessions you will be instructed on how to safely use and store garden equipment. If you are ever unsure about a task or the tools needed to complete it, please ask the Garden Manager for advice.
- Do help us to keep the garden safe and tidy by handling tools with care and putting them away when necessary and at the end of the session.
- Smoking (in any form) is strictly forbidden in the garden and clinic.
- Please do not bring in food or drink containing nuts.

## 4. Well-being

For your own (and others') comfort, health and well-being please ensure that you:

- are fit and well enough to attend your garden session.
- wear appropriate clothing/shoes for the garden, weather and safety.
- bring water with you (tea, coffee and water will also be provided in the shelter).
- bring in a snack (if needed) **that does not contain nuts.**
- bring in any necessary prescription medication e.g., inhalers, Epi pens.
- take sufficient breaks or rest when needed.
- inform someone if you:
  - are feeling unwell (Please fill in the Accident and Illness form).
  - have an injury or accident (Please fill in an Accident and Illness form).

**Please note: The bacteria associated with tetanus can be found in garden soil and can be harmful to your health. If you've never had a tetanus shot before or you're not sure about your immunisation status, please see your GP. It is recommended that you are up-to-date with your tetanus inoculation.**





## 5. Looking out for yourself and others

We want to ensure that everyone who volunteers with The Green Hub Project benefits from its safe, friendly and supportive environment. For this reason, we ask that you are always considerate of the needs of others around you by:

- Always being kind, polite and respectful, and treating people with dignity, free from harassment and/or bullying.
- Treating all conversations as confidential unless you have concerns for someone's safety and/or wellbeing.
- Letting the Garden Manager or a Co-Chair know if you are concerned for the safety or welfare of another volunteer/s so that we can take action to support the person/s at risk.
- Being conscious of other people's privacy, including, never taking photos or videos in the garden.
- Speaking to the Garden Manager or Co-Chair as soon as you have any concerns, issues or complaints.

Please help to support this project, yourself and those around you by acting in accordance with our policies, procedures, the Volunteer Code of Conduct, and the Volunteer Agreement, which you need to sign and return to us before your first session.

## 6. Well-being feedback

As part of this project, we would appreciate it if you would share your thoughts and experiences with us from time to time. This will usually be done via secure online questionnaires.

## 7. Garden Induction

All Teen Garden volunteers are required to take part in the Induction process, which is likely to be part of your first session. This is for your information, health and safety. The Garden Manager will be in touch with you to arrange this.

**The induction will include:**

- Walking with you around the garden and showing you where everything is.
- Showing you where the facilities are – to include:
  - the whiteboard with list of jobs and updates.
  - the names of everyone in the session.





- where the refreshment area is (for water and making tea and coffee).
- where the toilet is located.
- Describing some of the typical activities undertaken in the garden.
- Introducing you to the other Volunteers.
- Highlighting important health and safety measures, signing in and out, emergency procedures, where the First-Aid Kit is, and COVID precautions.
- Asking you if you have any special requirements in order to best carry out your role.

## 8. The garden sessions (for Teen Garden Volunteers)

### Who will be at the garden sessions?

At each session there will always be at least two Adult Volunteer. At least one will be first-aid trained. There will usually be no more than 6-8 volunteers per session.

At each session, everyone's names will be listed on the whiteboard.

### Outline of how sessions are run

- **Start:** Everyone to sign in. Get together over tea or coffee, sharing of garden news and events, discussion of shared tasks, jobs to be done and projects available.
- **Shared task:** not run every session, but a chance to do something together if you would like to e.g., planting seeds or making something. A n Adult Volunteer will show everyone what to do.
- **Garden tasks:** from the list or whiteboard teens can choose what they would like to do, working in small groups or individually but nearby – or maybe just sitting.
- **Crafts and woodwork:** on occasion there may be an opportunity to take part in a craft session to be led by Adult Volunteers with the skill or from external sources.
- **End of session:** tidy up, then get together over tea or coffee – time to chat about the garden, plan and share ideas and feedback.
- **Close: clean tools, wash up etc.** All volunteers are responsible for clearing up at the end of the session.
- **Everyone to sign out.**







## What to wear and bring to the garden

If your role is garden based, it is important that you are comfortable, safely and suitably dressed for the weather and work in a garden.

Here is a checklist that we've put together to help you.

Clothing or provisions to bring with you (weather dependent).	Tick
A mask for walking through the clinic.	
Trousers.	
Long or short sleeved shirt.	
Jumper and/or warm coat.	
Waterproof jacket.	
Sun hat or warm winter hat.	
Gardening gloves.	
Sturdy shoes such as walking boots or trainers. <b>No flip-flops or sandals please.</b>	
Water, healthy snacks if needed. <b>No nuts please.</b>	
Sun-cream and medicines e.g., inhalers, Epi pens.	





# Volunteering FAQs

## Who do I speak to if I don't know what to do or don't understand something?

If you are working in the garden, please ask the Garden Manager, or for other roles, contact either of the Co-Chairs. They will help you and answer any questions you may have.

## What do I do if I am not happy with my volunteering?

There may be adjustments that we can make, which will improve the situation for you. Please speak to The Garden Manager or either of the Co-Chairs.

## What do I do if I have concerns about the safety or wellbeing of another volunteer/s?

Please speak promptly with either of the Co-Chairs (see 'Safeguarding' in the Contact Details section below).

## What should I do if I am unwell or running late to a garden session?

Please let the Garden Manager know as soon as possible by email to [admin@greenhub.org.uk](mailto:admin@greenhub.org.uk). Should you know in advance that you won't be able to make it to a garden session e.g., a holiday, please do let us know. On the day, please contact the Garden Manager direct on 07563 195467.

## Can I claim any expenses?

If you need to buy anything for your Volunteering role, please agree the cost in advance with the appropriate person. Receipts are required. **Please contact [Finance@greenhub.org.uk](mailto:Finance@greenhub.org.uk).**

# Further Resources

For more information about The Green Hub Project, or Social and Therapeutic Horticulture visit the following websites:

## The Green Hub Project For Teens

<https://greenhub.org.uk>

## Thrive

Thrive uses gardening to bring about positive changes in the lives of people living with disabilities or ill health, or who are isolated, disadvantaged or vulnerable.

<https://www.thrive.org.uk>





## Feedback

We hope that you have found this Welcome Pack useful. Do let us know if you have any suggestions that would help us to improve it.

Thank you once again for volunteering with us.

## Useful Information

Please be considerate and call or text if you are running late or if you are not going to make your session.

<b>Make a note ...</b>	
<b>My Green Hub Project Garden Manager</b>	
<b>WhatsApp Group(s)</b>	
<b>My induction date is:</b>	
<b>My first volunteering session (if different from Induction) is:</b>	

## Contact Details

Please note that the **Green Hub Project for Teens** is run entirely by volunteers. We aim to respond to emails as soon as possible, usually within 3 working days.

**Email:** [admin@greenhub.org.uk](mailto:admin@greenhub.org.uk)

**Website:** <https://greenhub.org.uk>

**Safeguarding:** [tone@greenhub.org.uk](mailto:tone@greenhub.org.uk) Contact Tone Tellefsen-Hughes, Co-Chair using 'Safeguarding' as the subject.

**Other matters:** [vanessa@greenhub.org.uk](mailto:vanessa@greenhub.org.uk) Contact Vanessa Lanham-Day, Co-Chair

**Expenses:** [finance@greenhub.org.uk](mailto:finance@greenhub.org.uk)

