

GREEN RECOVERY WALES

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Justin Albert, National Trust Director for Wales, on why tuning into nature is good for us and the environment.



It's in our nature

“The need of quiet, the need of air, and I believe the sight of sky and of things growing seem human needs, common to all.”

A lot has happened in the 125 years since the National Trust was born, but founder Octavia Hill's words are as relevant and important today as they were in 1895.

Lockdown has clearly shown us that people want and need access to nature-rich green space near where they live. A poll commissioned by the National Trust has revealed how an increased relationship with nature appears to have helped people across the UK since the coronavirus pandemic outbreak in March.

Findings from our poll highlighted that more than two-thirds (68 per cent) of adults either agreed or strongly agreed that spending time noticing the nature around them has made them feel happy during lockdown.

Significantly, more than half the population (55 per cent) also agreed or strongly agreed that they plan to make a habit of spending as much time in nature once things go back to normal.

Nature has provided us with a level of comfort during these difficult times and the results of our poll suggest that people are valuing the natural world more than ever before, recognising the benefits it has on their mood.

There is mounting evidence that shows everyday connections with nature have a positive impact on our mental health and wellbeing. Earlier this year, the National Trust launched its Noticing Nature report into this area with the University of Derby.

Our research revealed that even simple, everyday acts of noticing nature result in a connection to nature which is linked to higher levels of wellbeing. Whether it's taking a moment to notice the shapes of the clouds, listen to the birds or watch butterflies and bees.



The most nature connected adults (the top 25 per cent) felt that the things they do in their life were more worthwhile (19 per cent higher than the rest of the population).

For children we found that they were more likely to report feeling happy if they engaged in meaningful activities linked to nature such as writing songs or poetry.



Tuning into the natural world is not only good for us, but the environment too. We know that those who make small, daily connections with nature are much more likely to take action to protect it.

So the fact that people are recognising how it has helped them during the coronavirus pandemic can only be a good thing for people, nature and wildlife.

As we start to look ahead, we want to see nature and green space placed at the heart of our nation's recovery from the immediate crisis.

Equal access to nature and fresh air is what the founders of the National Trust set out to achieve 125 years ago. It remains worth fighting for, today and always. We are for everyone, for ever.

You can see our full Noticing Nature report and tops tips on nature connection on the [National Trust website](#).

Our friends at Mind Cymru have also shared a guide on the mental health benefits of nature and tips and ideas to try. Find out more on the [Mind Cymru website](#).

Justin Albert, Director of National Trust Wales

