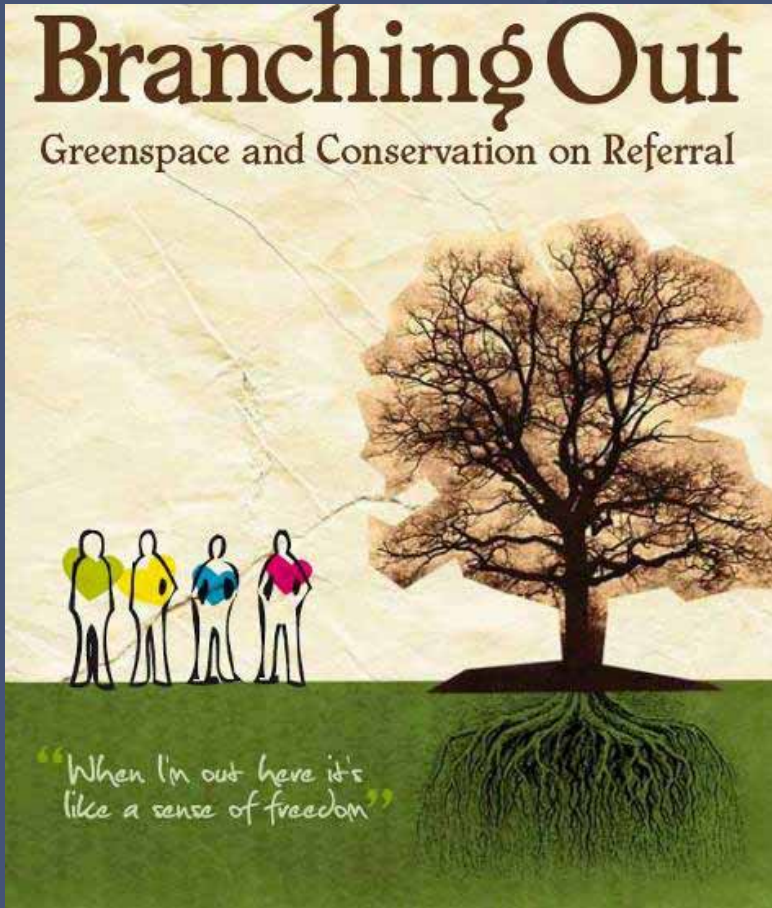


# Branching Out : Greenspace on Referral

Hugh McNish, Health Advisor, Forestry Commission Scotland



- Review the evidence base for greenspace mental health projects
- Develop effective partnerships between environmental and healthcare sectors
- Develop a structured programme based upon existing evidence
- Evaluate the benefits of participation in Branching Out

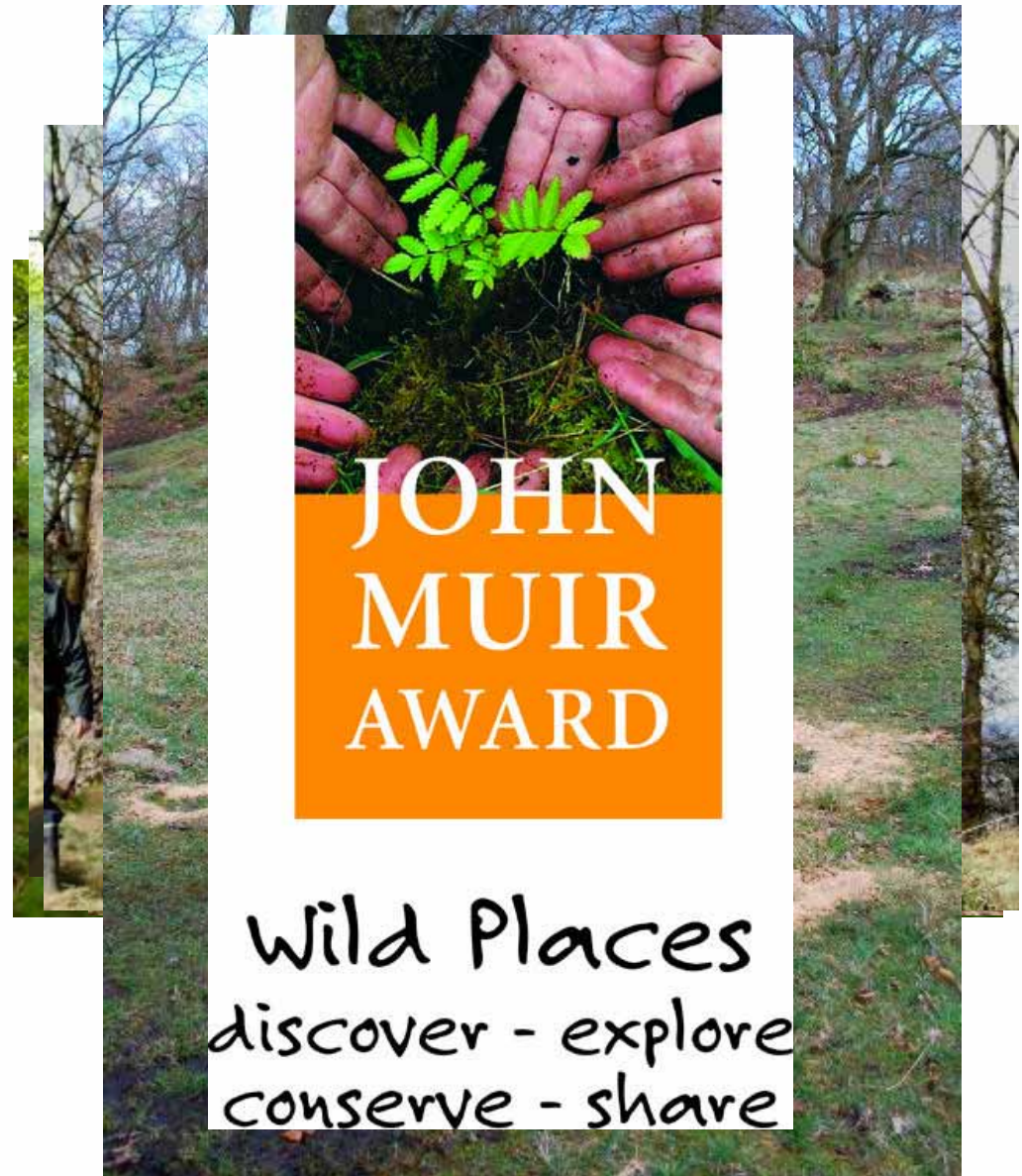


- 12 week programme plus awards ceremony
- 3 hours out on site
- Peri-urban woodlands
- Activities designed to increase physical activity, team building, social skills and tool use over time





- Physical activity
- Bushcraft
- Use of natural materials
- Learning
- Conservation
- Environmental art
- Photography
- Awards ceremony





- Community based mental health services
- Hospital based mental health units

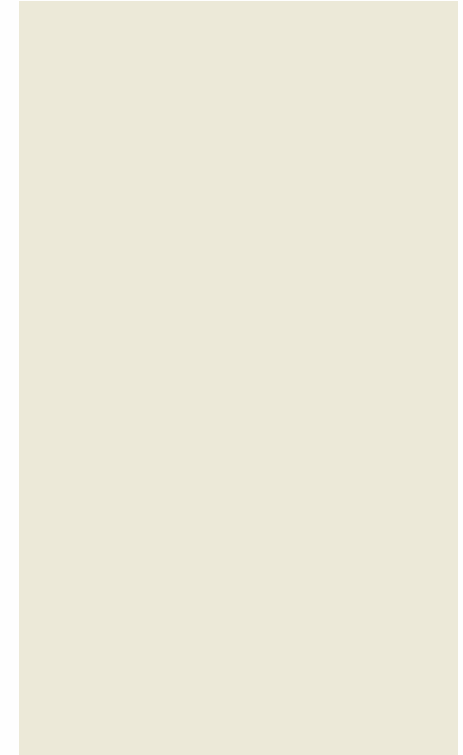


# Where is it Delivered?

## Cathkin Braes



## Muirshiel Centre



## Garscadden Woods



## Hermitage of Braid





Sessions led by a fully qualified staff.  
Working in a group helps develop social skills and creates a sense of unity.

## What is Branching Out?

Branching Out is an innovative referral programme of woodland activities for people using mental health services.

## What does it involve?

Three hours of woodland based activities once a week for 12 weeks. You will be part of a small group of no more than 12 people and have the opportunity to try many different activities including:

**Physical activity:** health walks and tai chi

**Conservation activities:** rhododendron clearance and coppicing

**Bushcraft:** fire lighting and shelter building

**Environmental art:** photography and willow sculptures

**Learning:** tree identification, John Muir Award.



## Do I need any special equipment?

No. You will be provided with a pair of wellie boots that will be yours to keep at the end of the programme. All the other equipment needed, including waterproofs, will be provided for you.

Transport will be provided from the mental health service or hospital to the woodland sites.

## How much does it cost?

Nothing. Just wear old clothing that you do not mind getting mucky, bring a pack lunch and we will provide the tea and coffee.

## How do I get referred?

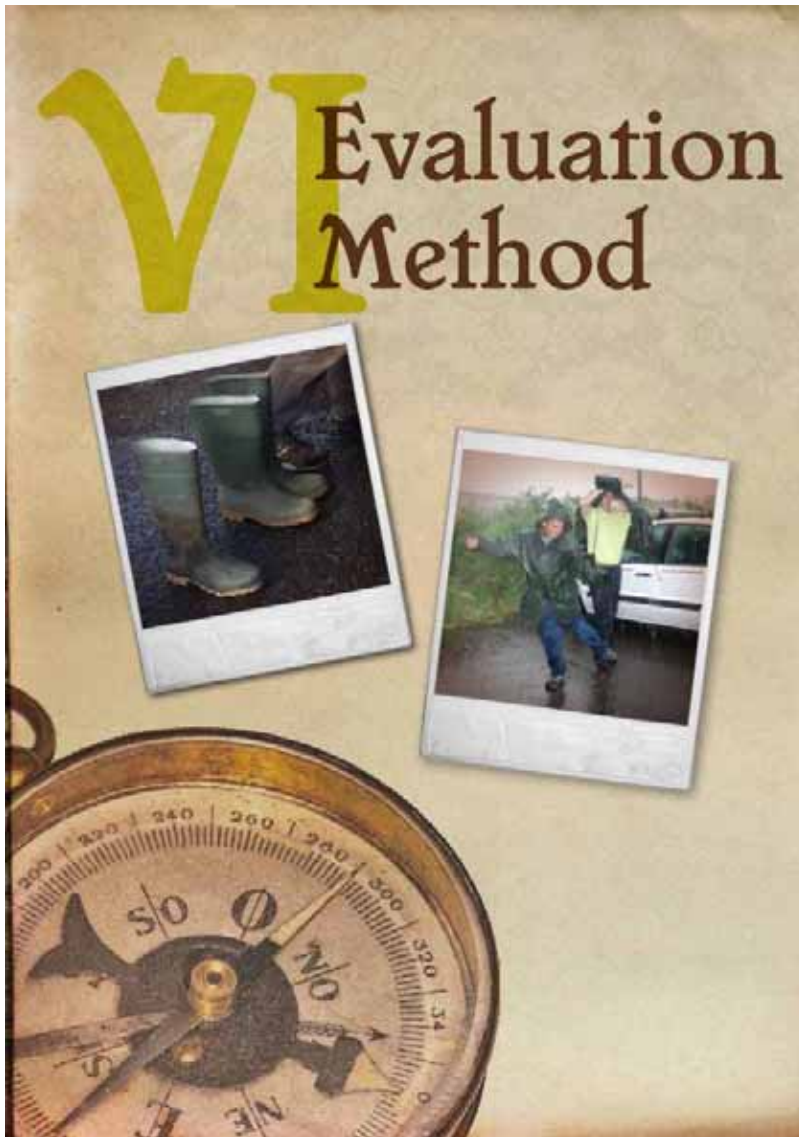
Branching Out is a group only referral programme, these can be from either community or hospital based mental health services. Speak with your nurse, occupational therapist or support worker and they will complete a referral form to get you registered on the programme.

*"It's helped me immensely, it's just unbelievable"*

*- All the different sights and sounds and smells are very different from the hospital environment that I am used to.*







- Pre and post measures
- Rosenberg self esteem
- Physical activity recall
- Service centre staff on site each week

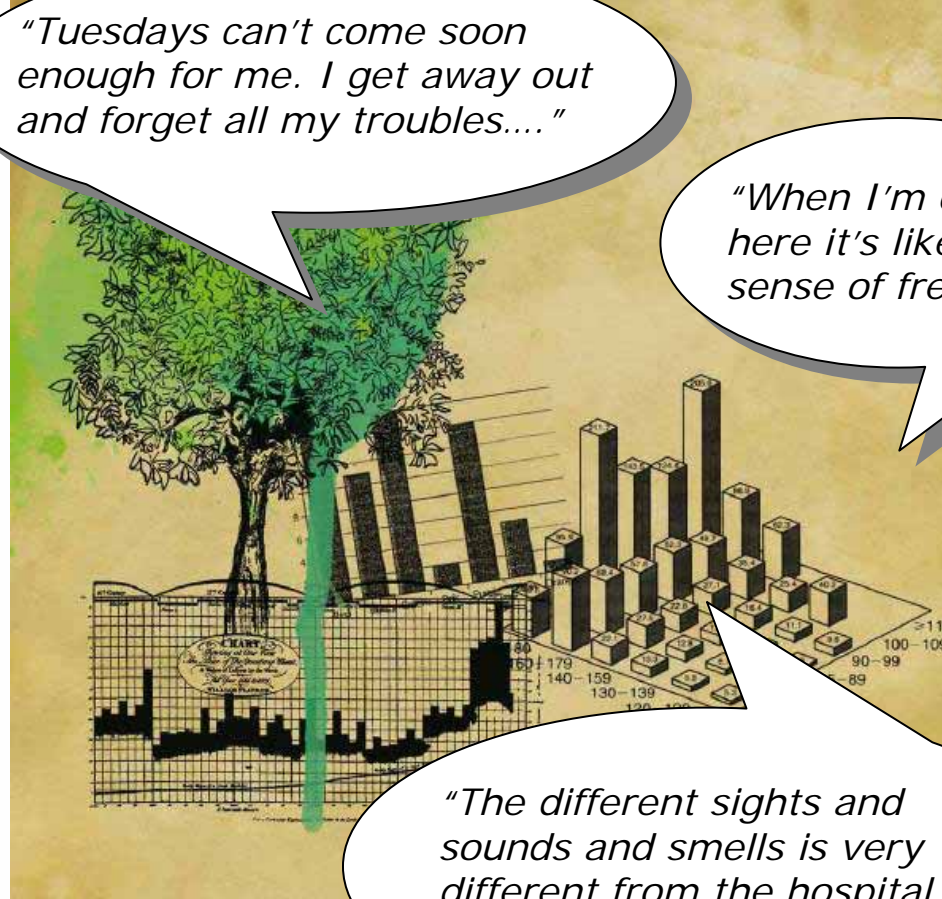


## Quantitative

- Low attrition rates
- Significant increase in physical activity

## Qualitative

- 5 key themes
- Powerful quotes & experiences





*"Tuesdays can't come soon enough for me. I get away out and forget all my troubles...."*

*"When I'm out here it's like a sense of freedom"*

*"The different sights and sounds and smells is very different from the hospital environment that I'm used to"*

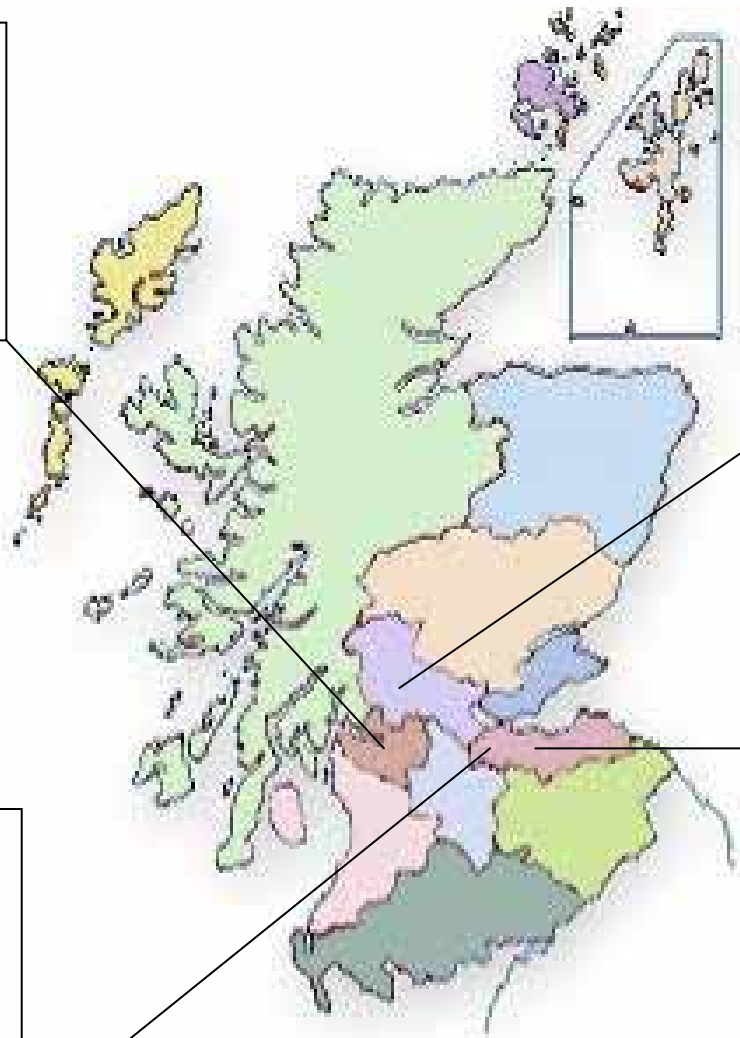
Original FCS Branching Out project - 9 groups per year since Sept 2007

Pilot Branching Out project starting Sept 2010 with NHSGGC.



Funding recently awarded to run Branching Out groups in 2011/12





Pilot Branching Out project starting Feb 2011 at Larbert Hospital

Three Branching Out groups running 2010/11

Developed in partnership with:



- For more information please visit:  
[www.forestry.gov.uk/branchingout](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/branchingout)

## **MULTI AWARD WINNER**

**UK Public Health Association 2010 Michael Varum Award**

**&**

**Best Green Healthcare - Scottish Green Awards 2010**