

Activities Guide for Stanmer Wellbeing Gardens Hires

Thanks for your interest in hiring space at the Wellbeing Gardens - our magical corner of Stanmer Park. Here you can slow down, tune in and connect in the great outdoors.

There are plenty of wonderful ways to spend time outdoors, whatever the season.

This activities guide includes ideas for:

- Connecting with nature & natural crafts
- Group gatherings, parties and celebrations
- Children's birthday activities
- Picnics under the parachute
- Cosying up by the fire & campfire cooking

If you have any more questions about booking the space, please get in touch.



Email: info@bhfood.org.uk

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Connect with nature

Stanmer's abundant wildlife and sheltered woodlands provide the perfect setting for your group to explore their wild side.

Bushcraft skills

Learn to build shelters, tie knots, and feel at home outdoors.

Wellbeing in nature

See how it feels to spend mindful time in the woodlands. Connect to your senses, to your body and to others in this safe space.

Natural crafts

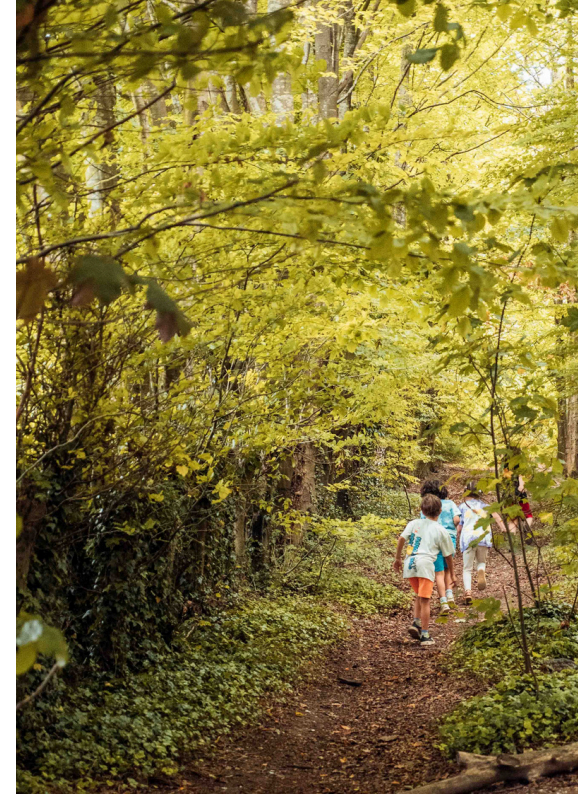
Let the space inspire your group to create. Previous groups have whittled spoons, carved wood and done nature painting here.

Nature walks

Explore the diverse wildlife and stunning landscapes of Stanmer. The Wellbeing Gardens provide a serene spot to relax and reflect. Or you can roam wider in the park, keeping the gardens as your base.

**The garden space that you book will be all yours.
A Food Partnership staff member will be in contact to help
you to prepare to make your Stanmer session a success.**

If you want extra support, we can guide you through the activity packages available, and connect you with local suppliers, caterers and activity leaders who have previously supported events on site. [More info.](#)



Natural crafts

From gathering leaves and wildflowers to press, to creating nature mobiles, there's plenty to find in and around Stanmer. Just make sure to leave more than you take.

Before touching any plant, read this important information. Afterwards, wash your hands.

Nature mobile

Nature mobiles are a great way to enjoy the treasures of nature in your own home.

They can be made throughout the seasons. Hang things you find from your mobile as a memento of your time in the Wellbeing Gardens.

What you'll need:

- 1 x large stick
- 3 x smaller sticks
- 3 x lengths of yarn (1 shorter than the others)
- 1 x length of ribbon for hanging

The larger stick can be horizontal, hanging other items from it. [Find out more about how to create a nature mobile.](#)

Nature crowns

A great party accessory that can be made entirely from recycled or natural materials. Bring pre-cut pieces of cardboard with you, around 8cm in width, and measured against you or your child's head for length.

Go on a walk to find sticks, leaves, and other natural elements to add to your crowns. Once you've gathered your accessories, lay out your pieces of cardboard flat, glue on your materials, and glue the ends together. Wear them to look the part in the woods.

What you'll need:

- Cardboard
- Natural materials (e.g. sticks, leaves, foliage, pine cones, etc)
- PVA glue
- Scissors

Flower pounding

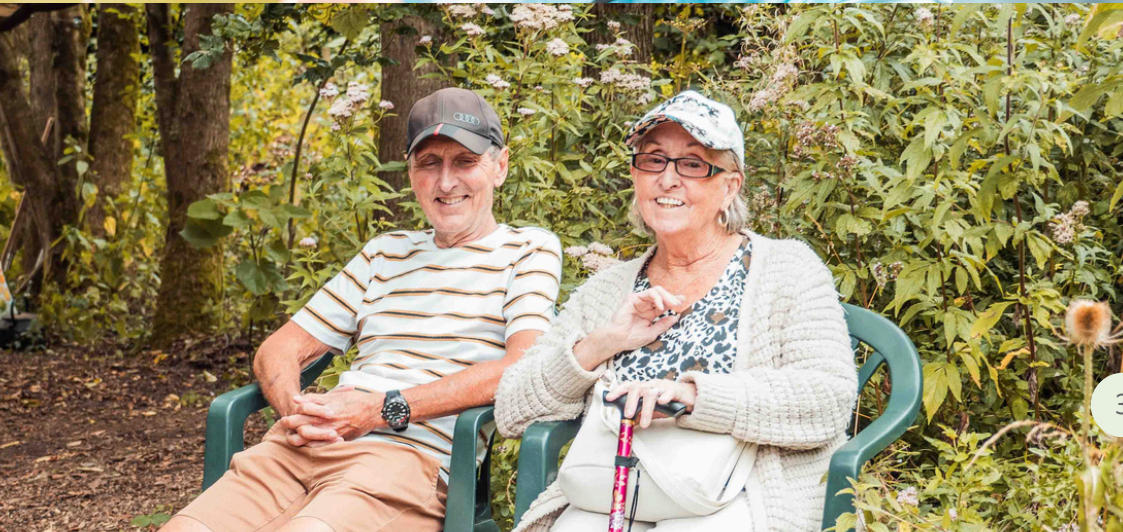
This energetic activity involves creating beautiful prints from flowers by 'pounding' them onto a piece of cotton or watercolour paper.

Best suited to older children who are comfortable using a rolling pin or rubber mallet. Take a small sample of flowers and leave the rest for the bees.

What you'll need:

- Fresh flowers
- Wooden block or hard surface
- Watercolour paper, parchment paper, canvas, or fabric
- Newspaper
- Paper towel

[More information about the process of flower pounding is available here.](#)



Group gatherings

The spacious gardens lend themselves to connection and community building activities.

Team building days

Our [outdoor team building sessions](#) are a fun day out that can boost team morale, improve communication, and enhance well-being.

Ceremonies and rituals

Memorials, solstice gatherings, full moon rituals and more have all been held by the fire at the Wellbeing Gardens.

Yoga, meditation and mindfulness sessions

Just bring along your mat or cushion. Slow down and tune in, accompanied by the chirping of birds and rustling of leaves.

Singing groups and choirs

Musical actives that don't involve amplified music are welcome.

Parties & celebrations

A birthday spent in the woodlands is a wonderful option for both children and adults. Choose an activity from this booklet to make the special day memorable.

Feeling energetic? Just 5 minutes' walk outside of the Wellbeing Gardens is an open field (opposite the Tea Rooms). It's a great area for rounders, frisbee, football, and more. Finish off with a picnic.

Children's activities

Building a bug hotel

Building a bug hotel is creative activity that can help kids learn about the importance of insects in our ecosystem.

It's all about imagining you are a mini-beast - what would your perfect place to stay be like? Build it!

You will want to scavenge materials like rocks, leaves, twigs, branches and logs. Look around for what you can take without disturbing bugs already living there.

Then, look for a suitable site that will not be disturbed or trodden on to be your location for your bug hotel.

Take your time to assemble your natural materials to make your home for friendly bugs.

Now, sit back, and wait for your insect guests to 'check-in'.

Pond dipping

The Pond Garden boasts an enchanting and beautifully biodiverse pond that is a firm favourite with children.

Pond dipping involves using a net to scoop up a sample of the wildlife that lives in the pond, carefully turning them out into a container filled with pond water.

Use a magnifying glass to look at the different wildlife from the pond up close. Can you see legs, tails or gills? What do you think this creature eats? Is it a baby creature which will morph into something else as an adult?

Once you're done, place the container under the pond's surface then gently tip. This will return the pond animals back to their natural habitat without hurting them.

[Read more information about how to hold a pond dipping session.](#)





Children's activities

Scavenger hunt

Stanmer Wellbeing Gardens is teeming with wildlife, and a scavenger hunt is a great way to get kids engaged imaginatively with nature.

A popular kids' activity is tree identification. You'll find beech trees, sycamores, oak trees, rowan trees, ash trees, holly, ivy, and much much more in the grounds around the Wellbeing Gardens

Taking a sample leaf (please only take one!) from each of these trees, show them to the children, explaining what each one is and how to recognise it. Give them a 10 minute challenge to bring you a leaf back from each of the trees you've introduced.

This can be varied seasonally, asking children to bring you back a selection of seasonal-appropriate things: scented blossoms in spring, wildflowers in summer, red leaves in autumn, tree cones in winter.

The Woodland Trust provides [more ideas](#).

Before touching any plant, read this [important information](#). Afterwards, wash your hands.

Making a journey stick

Making a journey stick is a fun and creative way to capture memories of your outdoor adventures.

To make a journey stick, you will need a sturdy stick, some string, scissors, and natural items such as leaves, feathers, petals, bark, and twigs.

First, take a walk and find a stick you like, that is about 20-30 cm long with no side branches. Then attach the natural items you find to the stick by wrapping or knotting string or wool around it. You can use paints to decorate and personalize the stick if you choose to.

Once you have finished decorating your journey stick, you can use it to help remember your walk and talk about it with your family and friends.

Picnics under the parachute

Fewer things in life bring more joy than eating delicious food outdoors in good company. Our parachute shelters in all three spaces provide a cosy setting for exactly that, come rain or shine.

There is a tap on site to refill water, although we suggest bringing your own so you have enough. One Garden, adjacent to the Wellbeing Gardens, also have a café serving food and hot and cold drinks.

Cosy up by the fire

Building a fire is an excellent way to learn about nature and survival skills while enjoying the great outdoors.

Build your own fire

You will need fuel wood, kindling and tinder. You can use dry bits of grass, pine, moss, lichen, and leaves as tinder.

Once you have gathered your materials, assemble the wood in the shape of a teepee in one of our dedicated fire pits, with the kindling and tinder inside the teepee shape.

Have fun patiently attempting to light your fire. You can try using a 'flint and steel', a traditional technique passed down over the centuries. Watch for a small flame that can then be gently fanned into a bigger one.

Sit back, enjoy the warmth and watch the flames together.

Hire our fire kit

Our fire kit has all the essentials you'll need to get a fire started:


- An instruction & safety guide
- A bag of firewood
- Campfire kettle and grill
- A pair of fire gloves and a bucket
- Lighter, eco fire lighters & kindling


Please book your fire kit at least one week in advance and we will have it ready for your session.



Campfire cooking

Sipping hot drinks and cooking over the fire is a great way to enjoy time together.

Remember to bring your own cups and consider preparing food beforehand for faster cooking. Aluminium foil is also useful for wrapping and cooking inside a pouch. 

Moroccan 'Fireside' Stew or the soup recipe below are warming meals perfect to share outdoors. Why not try baking easy flatbreads or fun bread on a stick with the kids? 

Bake inside a foil pouch

1. Place your ingredients in the middle of a large piece of foil, drizzle with oil or butter, and season how you like.
2. Fold and crimp the edges tightly to seal the pouch.
3. When the flames have died down, you can wear the heatproof gloves to put the foil pouch on the hot coals.
4. Cook for about 20-30 minutes, turning the pouch occasionally.
5. Open the pouch slightly (being careful of the heat and steam), to check if your food is done. If not, reseal and return to the coals for a few more minutes.



Onion, white	X2
Leek	X3
Potato, maris piper or similar	X4
Garlic	X6 cloves
Thyme sprigs	2-3
Parsley	Small bunch
Veg or chicken stock	2-3litres
Salt & pepper	To taste
Optional – carrots, celery, fennel	

Libby's chunky leek & potato soup (Serves 10)

1. Chunky chop all the veg apart from the parsley. About half inch pieces are best. The smaller the chunks are, the quicker the cooking time. And small pieces are easier to eat from a camping mug with a spoon!
2. Heat the pot with oil and add all of the veg, thyme sprigs & a sprinkle of salt (this helps reduce the risk of burning the veg). Fry off for about 5-10 mins. Add a little splash of water if the food starts to stick or if the pot gets too hot.
3. Cover with enough stock, put a lid on the pot and simmer until the veg is cooked through. Timing will depend on the strength of your fire and if you have been able to heat up the water for the stock before-hand. It will take from 25 minutes to an hour.
4. Check the seasoning & add the parsley before serving – enjoy!



Our venues

When you hire a space with us, your booking directly supports our community programmes. Our non-profit organisation is dedicated to empowering people to cook together, access nutritious food, grow their own, and reduce food waste.



The Clubhouse

Our new venue just a stones throw from Brighton, nestled in the heart of the Wilding Waterhall project in the South Downs. Offering stunning views and a tranquil setting, ideal for team away days, conferences, parties and club gatherings.

[More info](#)



The Community Kitchen

Our central Brighton venue, ready to host your exciting culinary experience. The large dining table and well-equipped kitchen area makes it easy to host supper clubs, dinner parties, community bake offs, team building or entertaining clients.

[More info](#)



Stanmer Wellbeing Gardens

Three woodland spaces available to hire for regular events at Stanmer Wellbeing Gardens, in the heart of Stanmer Park. Perfect for those looking for a stress-free way to connect with nature in beautiful surroundings with convenient facilities.

[More info](#)