



# COMMUNITY CALM

MENTAL HEALTH RECOVERY THROUGH NATURE

## The Lantern In The Snow

In a village wrapped tight by winter, the nights came early and stayed long. Snow softened every sound, and people moved quietly, as if afraid to disturb the cold. Many stayed indoors, believing they must endure the darkness alone until spring returned.

At the edge of the village lived a small lantern maker. Each evening, she lit a single lantern and placed it on her windowsill. It was not a bright light—just enough to glow warmly through the frost.

One night, a weary traveler stopped, drawn by that gentle flame. He warmed his hands and felt his breath slow. The next night, another passerby paused, then another. Soon, people began leaving their own lanterns outside—some flickering, some steady, all imperfect.

As the winter deepened, the village no longer seemed so dark. The snow reflected hundreds of small lights, turning the long nights into something bearable, even kind. And so the villagers learned: winter is not a punishment to survive in silence. It is a season that asks for gentleness, shared warmth, and the courage to keep a light burning—especially when it feels small.

Spring always comes. But until it does, no one needs to walk through the cold alone.





Hello and Welcome  
With Love,  
Meena  
and Sora



This winter has reminded us just how powerful kindness, connection and nature can be — especially during the most challenging months of the year. Community Calm exists because of the trust and openness of our members, and the support of our NHS partners, community organisations and funders.

Thank you for walking together.



*“I don’t know where I would be without this group. The kindness and connection has been life-changing for me and my family.” -L.*



# IN BRIEF...

Our sessions are designed to meet members where they are, supporting wellbeing through choice, safety, and connection to nature.

Recent months have brought challenges, including site transitions of Heroes Berkshire, the closure of our Windsor Great Park location, and engagement difficulties in Slough. Despite this, Community Calm has continued to find solutions, grow and move forward positively.



Community Calm, Project Salama and Utulivu have successfully transitioned to our new site at Woolley Firs, Maidenhead, in partnership with The Wildlife Trust. Under the guidance of Senior Learning Officer Claire McClafferty, members report feeling happy, settled, and looking forward to attending. Activities have included guided nature walks and creative sessions using natural materials, wreath making and looking forward to discovering more at this magical site in 2026 and beyond.

Despite challenges at our Slough site we are now seeing an increase in numbers due to regular physiotherapy sessions, nature walks, new volunteer recruitment and plans to collaborate with Friends of Herschel Park.

CMHT teams have spoken positively about the flexibility and variety of engaging garden activities offered at our sites.



# ANIMAL THERAPY

Heroes Berkshire has successfully transitioned to a new site. Over recent months, additional sessions have also been delivered at Holyport War Memorial. From the New Year, regular extended visits to the farm will resume, responding to member feedback highlighting how strongly participants value animal-based activities. Plans are also underway to introduce forest school sessions at Braywick Nature Reserve, expanding access to nature-based wellbeing interventions.

Animal interaction continues to demonstrate a positive impact on mental and emotional wellbeing. Participants show increased engagement during sessions, including improved social interaction, peer connection, reflective conversation, and emotional awareness. These sessions support regulation of mood and promote a sense of calm and safety within a supportive group setting.

A reptile-handling session delivered at Holyport War Memorial further contributed to confidence-building, curiosity, and positive risk-taking in a safe, facilitated environment. For many participants, this was a first-time experience and supported increased self-efficacy and confidence. Participants reported surprise at their own ability to remain calm and engaged around animals they would never think of holding !

Activities such as these provide participants with a temporary break from distressing or unhelpful thought patterns. This pause, combined with peer support and gentle facilitation, supports emotional regulation, resilience, and recovery, aligning with social prescribing outcomes around connection, confidence, and improved wellbeing.



“Thank you really enjoyed my time at the session. Was struggling when I arrived. But left feeling happy. Could you please send the photo of me and the goat. See you next Monday” -L.



# SLOUGH WELLBEING GARDEN

The introduction of physiotherapy, meditation, reflexology, and horticultural therapy has strengthened engagement at the Slough NFER site and enhanced the non-clinical social prescribing offer. Complimentary sessions delivered by Surita, an NHS physiotherapist, and Caroline, a reflexologist from Thames Hospice, alongside facilitated horticultural activities, support wellbeing, self-management, and engagement with existing care plans. Feedback has been positive, with improved attendance and retention.

Following an initial review of access and referral pathways, Community Calm strengthened joint working with New Horizons and CREST, hosted NHS site visits, and improved referral processes. This has increased PCN confidence and resulted in over 20 new social prescribing referrals in Slough over the last three months. Partnership working with Hope Recovery College is developing, with sessions planned in the new year.

Delivery is supported through access to the Herschel Park site, with thanks to the National Foundation for Educational Research and The Bentley Education Centre, and ongoing collaboration with The Friends of Herschel Park and Slough Borough Council.

Community Calm provides a trauma-aware, community-based intervention aligned with PCN and green social prescribing priorities, addressing wider determinants of health and reducing isolation.

We have also welcomed a new volunteer, Mei - please do come along and say hello to her.

"It was a lovely session this morning  
I enjoyed the exercise and the walk and tree hugging " - M.

\*\*"It has been so tremendously helpful to me to be able to attend and be part of this group. On a personal level, it is supporting my healing — particularly with grief and the stress of life events.

I find the coming together, the friendships we are building, the connection with nature, and the weekly activities — alongside Meena's gentle leadership — truly invaluable, and I am deeply thankful. Thank you to everyone who attends the group for being so welcoming and supportive. " - L.



# CULTURAL AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community Calm actively supports the social, emotional, and cultural wellbeing of its members. Recently we were asked to lead an art class for the Asian Carers' Group, led by Pushpa Karbhanda. Creative activities, including art sessions with our resident artist Stef, promote self-expression, engagement, and creating friendships. Stef has a special way of making art accessible to all and we are very grateful that everyone leaves confident in being able to express themselves in their own unique way.

Our cultural and educational outings—such as visits to Windsor Castle, Diwali celebrations with clay diya lamp-making, and participation in the Brahma Kumaris Winter Solstice event have demonstrable outcomes: members report increased confidence, improved public speaking skills, and a stronger sense of belonging. These experiences foster social participation, cultural awareness, and emotional resilience. Some of our members shared that despite always living in Windsor they have not had the chance to visit the castle and through our trip they have gained the confidence to make it with support.



# END OF YEAR ACTIVITIES

Through generous funding, we were able to offer all our members the opportunity to enjoy either an end-of-year lunch or dinner, both of which were very well attended. This time of year can be particularly challenging for many, especially for those who find social situations difficult, have painful memories of Christmas and New Year or complex family narratives. These gatherings provided a safe, welcoming space for connection and celebration with team leaders.

We were also extremely grateful to the customers of Dunelm and the Community Champion, Jemma White for supporting us through the Joy of Giving programme, ensuring that every member received a gift. Experiencing such generosity has a meaningful impact on wellbeing, particularly for those who may be feeling low. As Jacqui from Project Salama wisely reminded us—we all deserve nice things—and this gesture beautifully reinforced that sentiment, bringing joy and a sense of inclusion to our members.

“Thank you for such a lovely evening, great company and delicious food. Also thank you for our gifts.” - E.

**We ended the year with a trip to the local garden centre and a visit to the Falconry Centre. We understand that long gaps between sessions can be challenging, so we have worked to minimise extended breaks in our service**



“Thank you for a lovely evening, the food was lovely and the staff too. It was nice to get to know the group in a different surrounding.” -M.



# LOOKING AHEAD TO 2026

Community Calm is the only dedicated Green Social Prescriber in Slough and the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead (RBWM), offering bespoke nature-based interventions that complement NHS personalised care and social prescribing pathways.

We are proud members of the Social Prescribing Innovation Network (NASP), sharing best practice, evidence, and innovation in social prescribing. ([NASP Innovation Network](#))

In 2026, we will continue to strengthen NHS and community partnerships, deepen links with social prescribing link workers, and expand our trauma-informed, inclusive, nature-based programme to improve mental health, reduce loneliness, and enhance wellbeing — particularly for individuals at risk of social isolation and living in deprived or urban areas with limited access to green space.

## Local Context

- Slough (population ~160,000) experiences high levels of deprivation, poorer health outcomes, and limited access to private outdoor space. Residents face higher rates of mental health need, obesity, and social isolation.
- Windsor & Maidenhead (population ~151,000) generally has better health outcomes and greater access to green space, though pockets of social need remain, particularly for those experiencing loneliness or social disconnection.

## Service Offer

Building on our established sites at Heroes Berkshire, Woolley Firs, and Slough, we are expanding our green social prescribing activities to include:

- Forest school and horticulture programmes to build confidence, resilience, and practical skills. Forest School does not have to end in childhood !
- Educational and wellbeing nature visits to Berkshire College of Agriculture, Kew Gardens, Cliveden, and coastal locations, build and rediscover a love of learning, social engagement, and restorative experiences.

## Impact & Outcomes

Our interventions are designed to increase social participation, confidence, and engagement with the natural environment, with measurable improvements in wellbeing and reductions in social isolation. By targeting both high-need areas like Slough and more advantaged areas like Windsor & Maidenhead, we ensure equitable access to nature-based support. Through rigorous evaluation and alignment with NHS social prescribing outcomes, we will demonstrate how green social prescribing enhances mental health, develops practical skills, and strengthens community cohesion.



“I’m very grateful for everything you have done for Community Calm. It is one of the most positive groups I have ever joined. Your kind and caring attitude makes us feel at home and loved.” - S.



# OUR STAFF

Our staff are very special to Community Calm. All our staff are working professionals in their field and offer their own time to the service. Their kindness, integrity and compassion to every member has been felt throughout this year. Thank You !



I had a really lovely time and it was so nice to meet other members from Community Calm and hear their stories." "It really has been a pleasure volunteering over the last few months... thank you for the opportunity and I would happily contribute in the new year." - Surita



"It's been a privilege to work with you. Last night was lovely and I look forward to what 2026 brings for the group."  
-Caroline



"Thank you. It's been amazing and I have loved every minute of delivering workshops for such a beautiful bunch of people! I've seen members' confidence grow so much—sometimes they arrive a little apprehensive, but helping them discover themselves through art in gentle, manageable ways has been an absolute privilege."

-Stef

# HELP

## Mental Health Services

Do not struggle alone. There is help if you need it.

No one is going to think you are a nuisance.

Having good mental health is just as important as having good physical health so please take care of yourself.

### NHS

Call 111 and select the mental health option (this is new service by the NHS)

Always Open

### Samaritans

116 123

Always Open

### MIND

0300 102 1234

9-6pm Mon-Fri

### Bucks MIND/ Safe Haven

01494 218098

6pm-Midnight 7 Days

### SHOUT

Text "SHOUT" to 85258 to contact the  
Shout Crisis Text Line.

This is 24/7 text support for those who may feel more comfortable/convenient texting than speaking

“Thank you very much for organising the Windsor Castle trip yesterday. I am sorry that I was not really up to it but I enjoyed meeting the other people and I would really like to be part of Community Calm next year – it is a great organisation.

“I hope that I will be in better shape when we next meet but you and the others were very kind to me.” - F.



# THANK YOU

A special thank you to all our members who generously donate to us. All your kind donations go towards funding our vital work.

Thank You !



**Berkshire  
Buckinghamshire  
& Oxfordshire**  
Wildlife Trust

*The Louis Baylis*  
CHARITABLE TRUST



sloughcvs  
[www.sloughcvs.org.uk](http://www.sloughcvs.org.uk)



#OneSlough



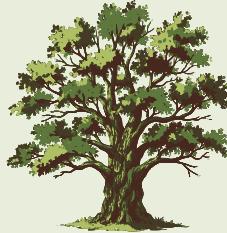
 The Climate  
Partnership



**Utulivu  
Women's  
Group**



Open Communication  
Integrity  
Compassion  
Principles Before Personalities



To Make a Referral Contact Us;  
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Take Good Care  
and see you outside.

*Meena x*  
Community Calm CIC



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