The Academy of Wide-Hearted Living CIC

TREE TREASURE TRAIL

Family-friendly creativity day

Presented By:
Melissa Noble

Project report
20/06/2026

2026

www.wideheartedliving.com

Wintering Well

Executive Summary

Tree Treasure Trail is our offering towards the international Arts Festival ‘If Trees Could Talk’. The festival aims to promote interconnection with the natural world, showcasing creative ways for people to connect with their local trees. In Devon, the festival has been championed by Catherine West of Significant Seams. She has curated a wonderful programme of events and it has been a joy to be included.

We set out to create a Tree Treasure Trail in Forde Park, Newton Abbot. Working in partnership with Our Pavilion Cafe CIC, who provide work opportunities for people with additional needs.

The Trail was designed to appeal to all ages. We also created a path-based version to try and make our trail as inclusive as possible.

> It made me fall in love with that park, and its trees. I will definitely return!

Tree Treasure Trail

Project Overview

Summary of the project

We created a map highlighting different trees in Forde Park. We produced a booklet to accompany the map. Each highlighted tree had an activity suggestion. Some of these were purely playful and imagination based. Others encouraged people to consider how their interaction with the trees was making them feel. Others invited people to consider life from the perspective of the trees.

The aim was to create activities that would have a broad appeal. To up the fun element, we invited people to collect stamps as they proceeded around the trail, with a full-stamp card being exchanged for a try on our LUCKY DIP hat.

The path-based trail included slightly different activities. This trail has its own map and booklet.

We sought feedback on the day, inviting trail visitors to respond to a simple 'would you recommend us to a friend'. We also offered people a feedback card. The response was overwhelming positive. We also created a more comprehensive feedback survey. At the time of writing, this is still open for responses.

> I loved its playfulness and variety, how well thought out it was and how open and free it was to engage with however you wanted to

Tree Treasure Trail

Marketing

How we got the word out

We promoted the programme through displaying posters in various places locally. We set up a facebook event and this got picked up by One Magazine. The local paper also shared information about the event online and in print.

We also told our newsletter readers.

We had just the right number of visitors on the day. It was relaxed and there was plenty of time to chat and connect with everyone.

On the day, people told us where they had found out about the trail. All the different marketing routes were mentioned, which goes to show the value of marketing across a range of settings.

We came as a family and had a wonderful time. Lots of fun, thoughtful and enjoyable activities.

Tree Treasure Trail

Organisational Overview

The Academy of Wide-Hearted Living CIC

The Academy's mission is to support "Changemakers" - people who want to make a positive difference in the world, including those currently held back by personal circumstances. We also aim to support people who WANT to make a difference but are not sure how to do it.

Organisation's aim and experience:

The Academy's aims are to improve wellbeing, foster connection, and increase joy through creative, inclusive programming.

In 2024 Melissa delivered two workshops at Into the Wild festival. In 2025, she ran an outdoor workshop at Together Drug and Alcohol's summer festival. In a former life, she ran a pub and co-ordinated a day-long football tournament and many theme nights, so is used to organising events both inside and out! She has recently recieved lottery funding to deliver an online wellbeing and coaching programme, and is working in partnership with Together Drug and Alcohol services to build a creative recovery community.

Tree Treasure Trail

Facilitator's credentials

The Academy of Wide-Hearted Living CIC

This programme was led by Melissa Noble, founder of The Academy of Wide-Hearted Living CIC. Melissa is a creative facilitator with extensive experience in trauma-informed practice, wellbeing-focused programme design, and community engagement.

Qualifications

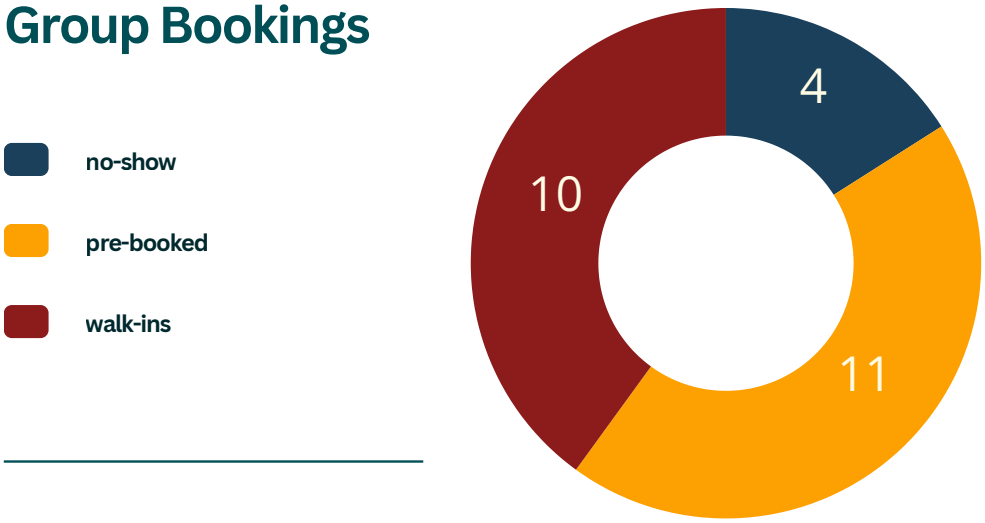
2024: CMI Coaching and Mentoring
2019: BACP Counselling Skills (Level 3)
2017: City & Guilds Creative Techniques (Level 2)
2008: CIPD Certificate in Training Practice (Level 3)
1993: BSc Applied Social Science (Health Studies), 2:1

Tree Treasure Trail

Numbers

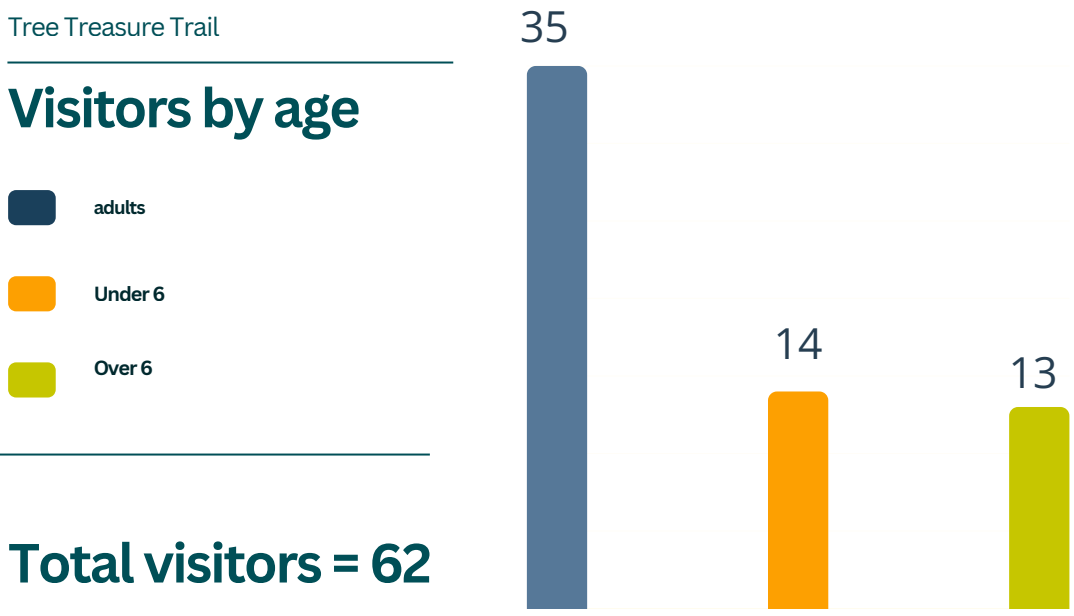
Tree Treasure Trail

Group Bookings



Tree Treasure Trail

Visitors by age



Total visitors = 62

Wintering Well

Feedback

So much joy!

I wish I'd brought others/friends with me too, it would have been nice to share.

It was also really lovely to see and interact with others who were enjoying it.

It felt so well prepared, with an excellent map and booklet.

It was such a lovely trail to complete! The activities are fun and me and my two teens (15 + 17) all enjoyed collecting the stamps

What a lovely time we had as a family! Thank you

Tree Treasure Trail

Impact

100%

Of end-survey respondents said that they would recommend the programme to a friend

> It was fascinating to consider what these trees, many decades, even hundreds of years older than me, had seen, having not moved in all that time. It's a different world, but they remain, following the same cycles, rooted to the same spot, continuing to convert co2 into oxygen.

> **Beautiful! Thank you.**
> **I loved the invitations to creativity, writing and drawing.**

Tree Treasure Trail

Lessons learned

The Wishing Tree and the Hug Me tree were the most popular!

Suggestions for improvement from attendees:

- It would be great to show the names of trees and maybe even a little info about them

Our experience ...

- We didn't do any inclusion monitoring
- We don't have any way of knowing which of the individual activities were most popular
- Explore ways of making more durable Tree activity signs

Tree Treasure Trail

Future plans

'Tree Treasure Trail has the potential to develop in a number of ways ...

- Run again in Forde Park, reaching more people
- Bolt on workshop-activities to deepen ecology angle
- Workshop with people with additional needs, to make the trail more accessible to more people. Continue to develop the relationship now established with Our Pavilion community cafe.
- Workshop with Older People who already use the park, using the path-based trail to build community and reduce loneliness and isolation
- Workshop with people in recovery from Drug and Alcohol addiction
- Develop and offer the trail in other parks
- Create kits so people can set-up their own Tree Treasure Trails for birthday parties etc

This melding of creativity and nature practices makes my heart sing and I can't wait to do more of it.

Next step: Work out which avenue to explore first!

This is just the beginning. Exciting times ahead.

Melissa

KEEPING SAFE ON THE TRAIL
START
1 Watch out for bees!
2 Watch out for ticks
3 Watch out for rain - one of these showers every so often so one little drop of rain will stop us collecting leaves
4 Dart and the crocodile
5 There are owl pellets in this box, but don't touch as it's messy, don't be put
Donations

Imagine...
One of these trees has a hidden doorway. It is so tiny. You can't actually see it. Imagine that you find it! Open it! What do you find on the other side?