

# *The Nature Effect*

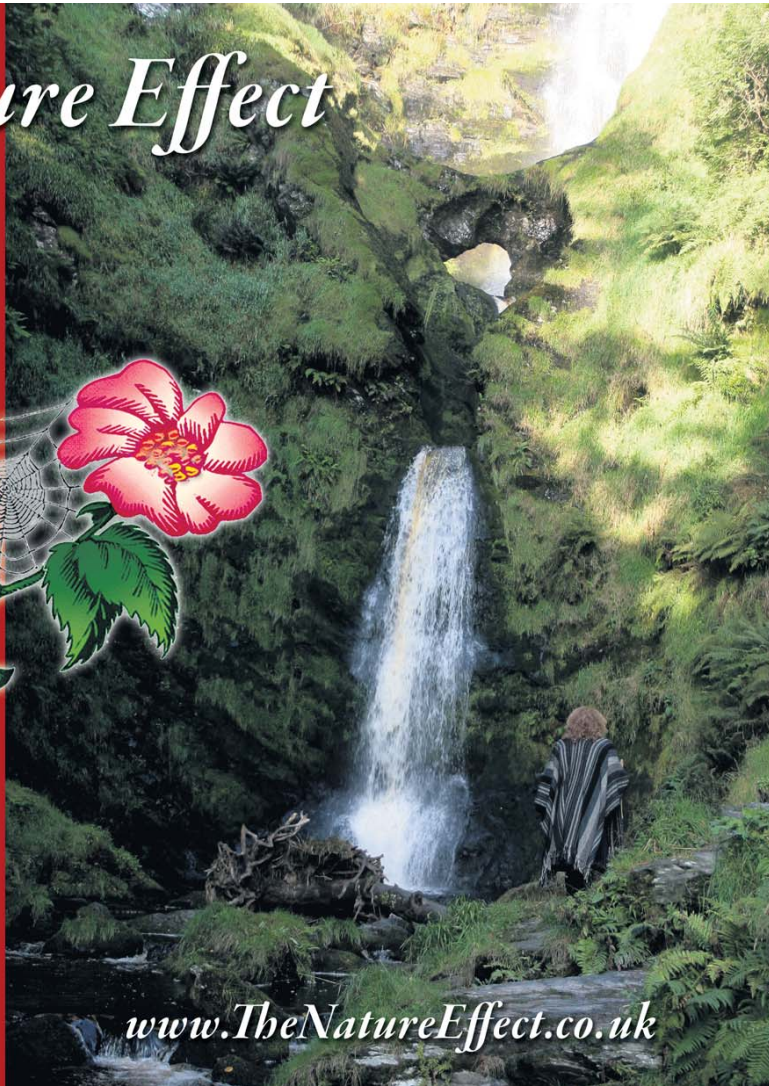
*Personal, professional &  
community development  
connecting people to  
their earth*



## **Overview**

*Our other pamphlets include:*  
**Personal Development**  
**Community Development**  
**Professional Development**  
**Early Years Projects**  
**Schools Projects**

*[www.TheNatureEffect.co.uk](http://www.TheNatureEffect.co.uk)*



# Overview

## Introduction

The Nature Effect Community Interest Company (CIC) was born in 2011, inspired by current work and new thinking in science, the arts and social change movements worldwide. Increasing research evidence supports the need for us to spend more time in green spaces and with plants, trees and animals to support our mental health, to be physically well and active, and aid our concentration and focus. We believe in working for a radical shift in values, to counterbalance the current pressures within dominant global educational, political and economic systems that are creating unsustainable and unhealthy conditions for all life on earth.

Our call is to influence as we can the values that underpin personal, professional and community development. We work with teachers, children, communities, organisations and individuals, using new and traditional tools that support transformation, learning from each other and from the natural systems that give us life and enable us to thrive.

*“What will you do with your one wild and precious life?”*  
Mary Oliver

*“Look deep into Nature and you will understand everything better.”*  
Albert Einstein

## Overview Contents

Introduction	2
Our logo	3
Journey so far	3
Key areas of work	4
Triple Bottom Line	7
Who we are	8



*In April 2013 we introduced children to outdoor cooking at Grandpont*

*While there are overlaps between our many activities, we decided to present our work in a series of pamphlets, which include:*

### Personal development

Wellbeing,  
Creativity and  
Transformation

### Community Development

Creativity,  
Collaboration and  
Connection

### Professional Development

Action Learning,  
Peer Group Enquiry  
and Mentoring

### Schools Projects:

Bread, Butter &  
Soup

### Early Years Projects:

Playing with the  
Elements

*These can all be downloaded from our website: [www.TheNatureEffect.co.uk](http://www.TheNatureEffect.co.uk)*

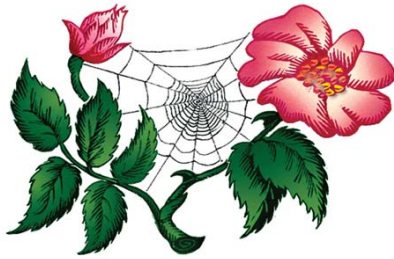
Our activities and projects are varied and resourceful. Our approach is experiential and integrated, using head, heart and hands; with attention to soil, soul and society, and ‘earth mindedness’.

Our principles are based in social and ecological justice, inclusivity and intergenerational understanding. We are essentially hopeful about the possibility of transformation, greater connection to self, others, community and the wider ecological world.

## Our logo

The wild rose and the spider's web are part of nature's beauty commonly found in our native gardens and hedgerows. Both have become embedded over thousands of years into our culture and heritage – in folklore, in medicine, in art. The rose represents beauty, vulnerability and resilience. It gives protection in hedges, and grows in all kinds of terrain.

It supports wellbeing through its medicinal properties, is a potent nutrient as well as a perfume, and inspires poetry and art. The web also represents beauty, vulnerability and resilience. It supports life and is a symbol of interconnection. It has inspired perhaps the most influential communication invention of recent times – the world wide web. Thanks to Hugh Dunford Wood for the logo design.



## Journey So Far

We occupy space between mainstream education and 'new alternatives', offering a mixture of commissioned projects, events and action learning for schools, local authorities and the voluntary sector, events which people book to attend, and community events that people can attend for free. Some of our Directors and Associates work with individual clients through coaching, mentoring or therapeutic work. Our communication web consists of a mailing list, a facebook page, a website, and community interest company legal infrastructure for finance and insurance purposes. We doubled our turnover in our second year of business, and have benefitted from a lot of good will. Rather than a traditional business model we see the enterprise as a great playground or laboratory to test new ideas, to collaborate with others.



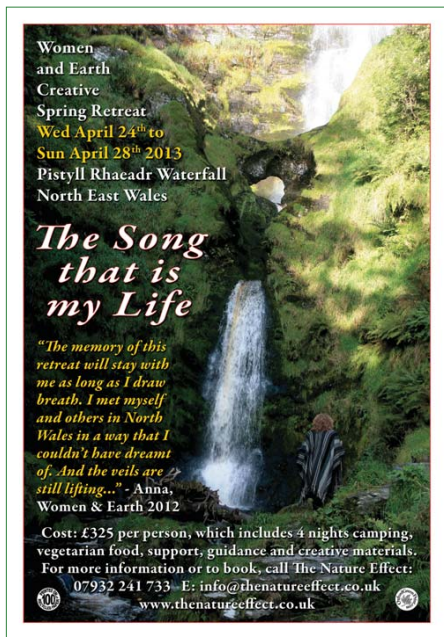
*Intergenerational learning in action, at BLCG in 2012*



## Key areas of work

We have three strands to our work: Personal, Professional and Community Development.

Each of these is described in more detail in our other pamphlets. We also work with teachers, parents and children together and there are two pamphlets which showcase some of the projects we have undertaken to date.



Women and Earth Creative Spring Retreat  
Wed April 24<sup>th</sup> to Sun April 28<sup>th</sup> 2013  
Pistyll Rhaeadr Waterfall North East Wales

*The Song that is my Life*

*"The memory of this retreat will stay with me as long as I draw breath. I met myself and others in North Wales in a way that I couldn't have dreamt of. And the veils are still lifting..." - Anna, Women & Earth 2012.*

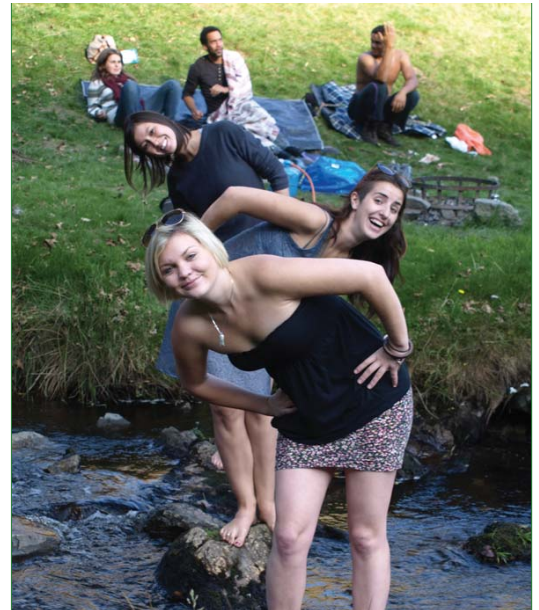
Cost: £325 per person, which includes 4 nights camping, vegetarian food, support, guidance and creative materials.  
For more information or to book, call The Nature Effect: 07932 241 733 - E: [info@thenatureeffect.co.uk](mailto:info@thenatureeffect.co.uk)  
[www.thenatureeffect.co.uk](http://www.thenatureeffect.co.uk)

4

## 1. Personal development

### *Wellbeing, Creativity and Transformation*

We offer retreats and time out in Nature simply to be still and listen away from the complexities of everyday life. We invite you to consider what seeds you want to nurture or prune in order to gain the yield you need or desire. We offer tools for you to learn and use to create resilient growth, core purpose, learning and transformation. We are keen to engage with more male associates and reduce the current gender bias in our community of Directors and Associates.



Overview for 2011 - 2013

## 2. Community Development

### Creativity, Collaboration and Connection

Much of our community development work centres around Barracks Lane Community Garden (see their website here: [www.barrackslanegarden.org.uk](http://www.barrackslanegarden.org.uk)) where we have offered creative days using natural materials abundant in nature, such as sticks, wool, fire, water, rock, sand to make things together and create in community. We have facilitated people of all ages from a wide range of communities to spend lovely days in sun and in rain. Further afield we have taken our approach to festivals, including locally at Hill End Family Festival and Wood Festival.

The Oxford Upcycling community is an offshoot of The Nature Effect born out of a passion for caring for the earth's resources through reuse and renewal. See their new website: [www.upcyclingoxford.co.uk](http://www.upcyclingoxford.co.uk)



Meeting a lamb at 'Wool Day', a family-friendly event at Barracks Lane Community Garden

The Nature Effect

[www.TheNatureEffect.co.uk](http://www.TheNatureEffect.co.uk)

Barracks Lane Community Garden & The Nature Effect present:

# Bonfire & Stories

## A Magical Celebration

2pm - 7pm  
Saturday  
2nd Nov 2013

Café: Soup with bread from our wood fired oven + drinks & cake.

2pm - 5pm: Willow, paper & glass lantern making (bring glass jam jars), charcoal making, fire building & pumpkin carving (bring a pumpkin!)  
5.30pm - 7pm: Bonfire & Story telling with Jackie Singer

Outdoor & cosy indoor space provided.  
FREE - donations to support the garden welcome. Suitable for all ages. Children must bring an adult. Everyone is most welcome - come and join us!

Logal Food  
LOTTERY FUNDED

Barracks Lane Community Garden  
Barracks Lane  
(off Churchfield Road)  
Oxford  
OX4 2AP

Contact: Joseph  
Tel: 07739 616143  
[www.thenatureeffect.co.uk](http://www.thenatureeffect.co.uk)  
[www.barrackslanegarden.org.uk](http://www.barrackslanegarden.org.uk)  
Email: [barrackslanegarden@btopenworld.com](mailto:barrackslanegarden@btopenworld.com)



## UPCYCLING

with The Nature Effect at BLCG

6.30 - 9.30pm  
on each third  
Thursday of  
the month.

**Upcycling**  
...is the action of taking something that would normally be recycled & turning it into something else beautiful or useful.

**Homemade Jewellery**  
Thursday 18th July  
Demonstration by Di Christian of *Straw & Cord* in *Details*  
[www.natureeffect.co.uk](http://www.natureeffect.co.uk)  
No Upcycling session in August  
September: Reusing Furniture  
Demonstration TBC

**Informal & Friendly Drop in sessions**  
Learn useful new skills  
Share what you know  
Chat over a cup of tea  
Bring your own projects

with [thenatureeffect.co.uk](http://thenatureeffect.co.uk)

**Make new, repair or repurpose**  
We help each other fix things and sort out stuff we treasure. Share tools, ideas, materials and sewing machines. With the occasional speaker and demonstrations. Experienced knitters, sewers, and complete beginners welcome! To get you started, if you are stuck for ideas, you can buy a low cost starter kit.

**£5 (£3 conc.s) per session**  
Under 12s need to bring along a responsible adult

Supported by Community Energy

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

For info & directions to BLCG visit [www.barrackslanegarden.org.uk](http://www.barrackslanegarden.org.uk)

Barracks Lane Community Garden  
Barracks Lane  
OX4 2AP, 193, 194 and 195

For more info call Helen on 07950 608 249 or email [thenatureeffect@gmail.com](mailto:thenatureeffect@gmail.com)  
Join us on our Facebook page: Upcycling Community Oxford

[www.thenatureeffect.co.uk](http://www.thenatureeffect.co.uk)





*Action Learning for Social Change, 2013-14*

### 3. Professional Development

#### *Action Learning, Peer Group Enquiry and Mentoring*

Our Directors and Associates offer workshops, individual support and peer mentoring, including asking good questions, helping you map 'what's in your field' and learning from and with nature. We work with people interested in gaining new perspectives, clearing entanglements, testing out plans, ideas and solutions. We work with practitioners and leaders primarily working in the fields of education and social change. We seek to facilitate 'communities of practice' through peer group enquiry, action learning and interesting workshops and events.



*Teacher training at Grandpont, South Oxford*

#### **Some of our partners and clients:**

Grandpont Nursery School and Children's Centre  
 Slade Nursery School and Children's Centre  
 Edinburgh City Council  
 Brighton City Council  
 Eastwood Nursery School and Children's Centre  
 Oxfordshire County Council Early Intervention  
 Early Education (Oxfordshire Branch)  
 Blackbird Leys Children's Centre  
 Marston Children's Centre  
 Donnington Doorstep Children's Centre  
 Larkrise First School  
 John Henry Newman First School  
 Oxford Spires Academy  
 Ace Children's Centre

#### **In 2014 we have also worked with:**

- Learning through Landscapes:
- Western Area Childcare Partnership Londonderry
  - National Day Nursery Association Wales
- Centre for Research in Early Childhood. (Masters in Outdoor Learning and Early Years with Jan White)

We also offer teacher training and joint work with children and teachers. See the Projects pamphlets:

**Playing with the Elements** (for early years)

**Bread, Butter and Soup** (for schools)

## Triple bottom line

### People

The Nature Effect's most valuable asset is our Associates who currently number around 20. Anyone doing work with The Nature Effect is automatically eligible to become an Associate and there is currently no charge for this. We hold Associate's meetings about three times a year and see ourselves as a community of practice of people involved in personal, professional and community development connecting people to their earth. We seek to share ownership and start up of new ventures, and act a potential umbrella organisation for freelancers and lone rangers. We use local skills in our wonderful artwork designer Stig and Greenprint, our local ethical printer. We have engaged Oxford University students as consultants and supported local volunteers of all ages.



The Nature Effect

[www.TheNatureEffect.co.uk](http://www.TheNatureEffect.co.uk)

### Profit

We refuse to be driven by any particular business model, wanting to grow organically in response to the needs and seeds that present themselves. In particular we want to enjoy our work together and not feel driven or fall into any of the common traps of small social enterprises. Our Directors do not get paid for being Directors and much of the administration and development work is done pro-bono as part of the Directors' roles or, in 2013, by our insightful intern Mina Katouzian. We have an egalitarian approach to pay for face to face work. Our turnover for the first two years was £9,040 and £18,814 respectively. The Community Interest Company Registration ensures an 'asset lock' and should the company fold any assets would transfer to Barracks Lane Community Garden, our named beneficiary and sister charity.

*"Our challenge isn't so much to teach children about the natural world, but to find ways to nurture and sustain the instinctive connections they already carry."* Terry Krautwurst



### Planet

Our fundamental principles all come back to care of people and planet. We support and use Barracks Lane Community Garden and try to use materials that are abundant in nature or are reused or recycled wherever possible. Connecting people with their earth takes many forms – supporting them to ground their professional practice, nourish their personal wellbeing or play and learn together in community in the great outdoors.

## Who are The Nature Effect?

The Nature effect is led by four Directors:

### Annie Davy

Annie worked as a playworker, teacher, lecturer, inspector and a Head of Service in Children's Services Oxfordshire before going freelance. She is a published author, trainer and key note speaker with a focus on the impact of changing lifestyles on children, parents and professionals that work with them and the value of first hand experience of nature to wellbeing and learning. She has an anthropological and spiritual interest in learning from nature and native traditions. She has participated in and facilitated wilderness and nature retreats in a variety of forms. She works as a freelance coach, mentor and action learning facilitator for leaders in education, community development and social change

### Polly McAfee

Polly's background is in group facilitation and events management. She is passionate about expanding her group work to focus on engagement with the natural world and how we can deepen our relationship with it and with our changing ecological landscape. In 2002, she co-founded The Funding Network (TFN), an organisation devoted to enabling ordinary people to financially support social change pioneers. As a facilitator, she runs groups on women's sexuality and integrative psychosexual therapy. Since 2004 she has lived at Grove House in Iffley, Oxford, and used the Rotunda as an venue for events including wedding celebrations, eco-psychology workshops, pizza-oven building, permaculture courses, theatre and music performances and some really great parties.



Annie Davy, Polly McAfee, Kirsten Baker and Helen Osborn, in April 2014

### Kirsten Baker

Kirsten is a midwife, baker, upcycler and teacher who occasionally takes part in triathlons. Her day job is as a midwifery lecturer at Oxford Brookes University where she engages students' minds and bodies in exploring issues around pregnancy and birth. She runs a midwifery theatre group, Progress Theatre ([progresstheatremidwives.com](http://progresstheatremidwives.com)) which uses forum theatre to unpack dilemmas and difficulties faced by midwives. Kirsten can be seen from time to time in fields and gardens cooking pizzas in her free-standing wood burning pizza oven. She lives in Oxford with her partner and any combination of their four children who happen to be passing through.

### Helen Osborn

Helen has had a varied career, successfully spanning primary schools teaching, complementary medicine and administration within the not for profit sector. She was for many years treasurer of the Parasol Project ([www.parasolproject.org.uk](http://www.parasolproject.org.uk)) and also for the Big Green Gathering, one of the leading and most successful UK festivals promoting ideas for a sustainable lifestyle and future of the planet. She also trained as a Forest School leader developing sustainable schools activities and supporting outdoor learning. She was a committee member on the British Massage Therapy Council for two years, developing professional standards for massage. Helen is also a founder member and Director of Barracks Lane Community Garden Project [www.barrackslanegarden.org.uk](http://www.barrackslanegarden.org.uk).

## Associates

All our work is delivered and supported by a 'dream team' of Associates including facilitators, artists, teachers, bush crafters and social entrepreneurs who come together for particular pieces of work or a project – and also meet a few times a year to exchange ideas and support each others' work.

They include:

**Hannah Fenton**  
**Phil Pritchard**  
**Jackie Singer**  
**Emma Hood**  
**Stuart Turner**  
**Ally Stott**  
**Stig**  
**Tania Salender**  
**Tania Fletcher**  
**Zoë Bicât**  
**Johnny Wild**  
**Hilary Kneale**  
**Mina Katouzian**  
**Milly Sinclair**

If you are interested in becoming an Associate or finding out more, contact: [thenatureeffect@gmail.com](mailto:thenatureeffect@gmail.com)