



 **A Prescription
For Nature**



**EMPLOYEE
ENGAGEMENT
TOOLKIT**



What is a daily dose of nature?

The UK is experiencing a mental health crisis. From stress in our daily lives and at work, to anxiety over global issues like climate change, we all need a little help looking after our wellbeing.

That's why WWF is inviting the nation to get their daily dose of nature.

Being in nature for just 20 minutes a day is enough to improve our mental wellbeing.¹ Nature is so powerful that even seeing it through a screen can help improve how we feel. It can boost our mood, help us cope with stress, reduce anxiety, and even raise our confidence. And the best part? It's all free!



What's the benefit of helping employees get their daily dose of nature?

The impact of poor wellbeing and stress isn't only affecting people on a personal level. Work-related stress is costing British employers 70 million working days a year.²

Mental ill health and stress are reported to be some of the key contributors to the rise in work absences, especially over the long term. In a recent study, around 63% of individuals reported that mental ill health was a cause of long-term absence in their workplace.³ In the same research, 76% of people reported stress-related absences in their organisation in 2022.⁴

What if as an employer, you could help employees be more productive and feel more positive throughout the day – all by introducing a little nature into their work time?

Nature is a powerful ally in protecting our mental health. 89% of Britons say that spending time in nature has a positive effect on their mental health⁵ and 49% of people say that being close to nature helps them cope with stress.⁶

In the workplace, people with 'high exposure' to nature (taking more frequent breaks to spend time outdoors in green spaces) reported significantly higher work engagement.⁷

The good news is that we don't have to be in the countryside to get the benefits of engaging with nature. We can experience nature near our homes and offices even in urban environments and even if we're short of time.

In this guide we hope to offer ideas and inspiration to help people get their daily dose of nature wherever they live or work.

How to help your employees get their daily dose of nature

Our busy lives and long working days mean that making time for nature can be tricky. Too much time working or studying is one of the biggest reported barriers to being close to nature.⁸ It can be even more difficult if we can't get to green spaces easily or feel nervous about being outside.

But imagine if all 30 million employees in the UK could make a daily dose of nature a part of their everyday work routine.

As an employer, you can help colleagues by creating the time, space, and the opportunity to get a daily dose of nature. Think how powerful this would be for mental wellbeing. Just 20 minutes a day has a significant impact on how we feel.

This is why we've created this campaign and this guide - to help businesses bring nature into the workplace.

If you're concerned that you're developing a mental health problem, you should speak to your GP or call 111 for advice. If you need urgent help, call 999 or go to A&E.



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What's in this guide?

We've put together a wealth of ideas to help the nation get their daily dose of nature during the working week. This guide contains a range of initiatives and activation ideas for Sustainability Teams, Internal Comms, HR or People and Culture teams to engage and support employees to get their daily dose of nature during office hours. We have also included some practical ways employees can personally interact with nature during the working day.

Here are some ideas on how to get started:

1. How does your organisation regularly communicate with its employees? Is it the company intranet, regular emails, internal blogs, all-staff meetings, internal TV screens or notices in the canteen? Select the channels you think will work best and use our plug & play resources to help your staff get their daily dose of nature.
2. Talk to Internal Comms to see if they can help spread the message and add a segment on nature and wellbeing. Use the stats, facts and ideas from our campaign to help colleagues understand the beneficial link between nature and wellbeing.
3. Make use of our downloadable resource pack with its digital images, posters (digital and print), nature-themed screensavers, and other assets which you can use to engage your workforce.

Nature gives us so much. So, while we let nature work wonders for our wellbeing, let's remember to support our amazing natural world in return. **Because when we restore nature, nature restores us.**

Dates for your calendar

It can be useful to tie internal initiatives to awareness days. Here are just a few key dates that you could consider for your calendar:



Downloadable assets

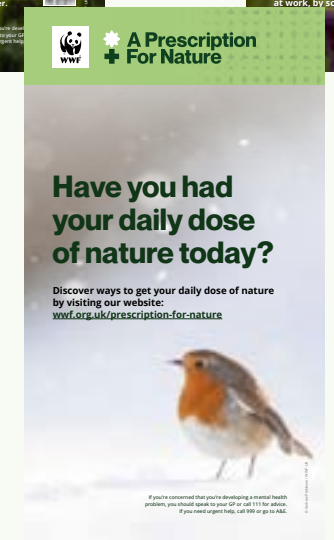
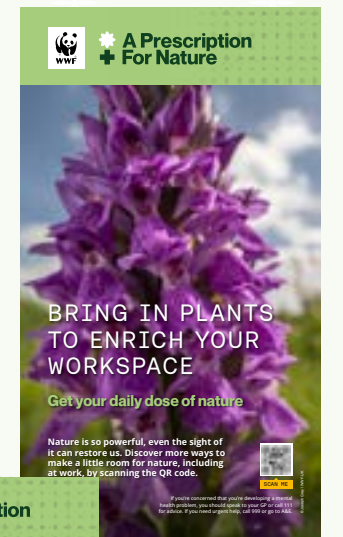
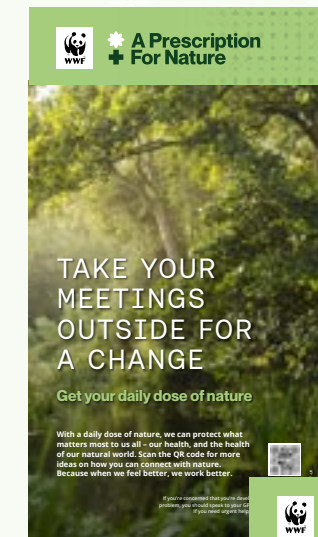
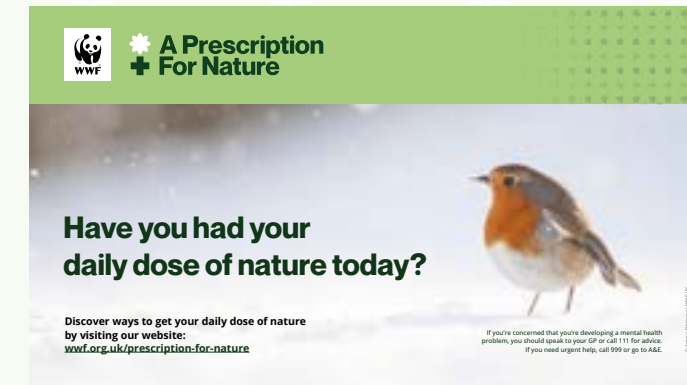
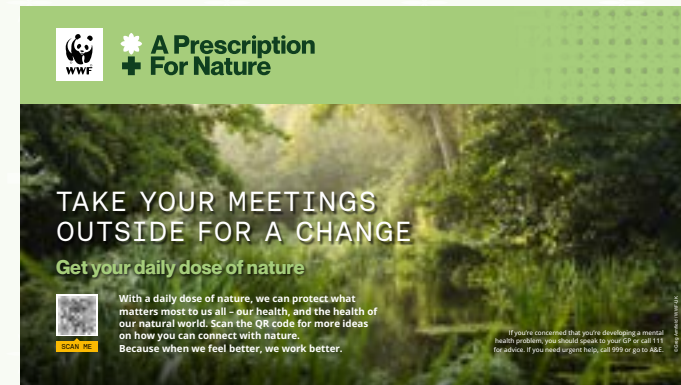
To help you promote a daily dose of nature in your workplace, we have created a range of assets (posters and other images) in assorted sizes and formats (digital and printable). Use these across your comms channels, on digital screens around your office in canteens, lifts, or the main work area. Alternatively, print them out and use as posters around your office (don't forget to use recycled or FSC certified paper when printing).

To help kick off getting a daily dose of nature, we have created four screensaver images that you can ask your IT team to load on employee desktops. **All the assets are available on this [Trello board](#).** You can download whichever assets you like and use them interchangeably to support your comms.

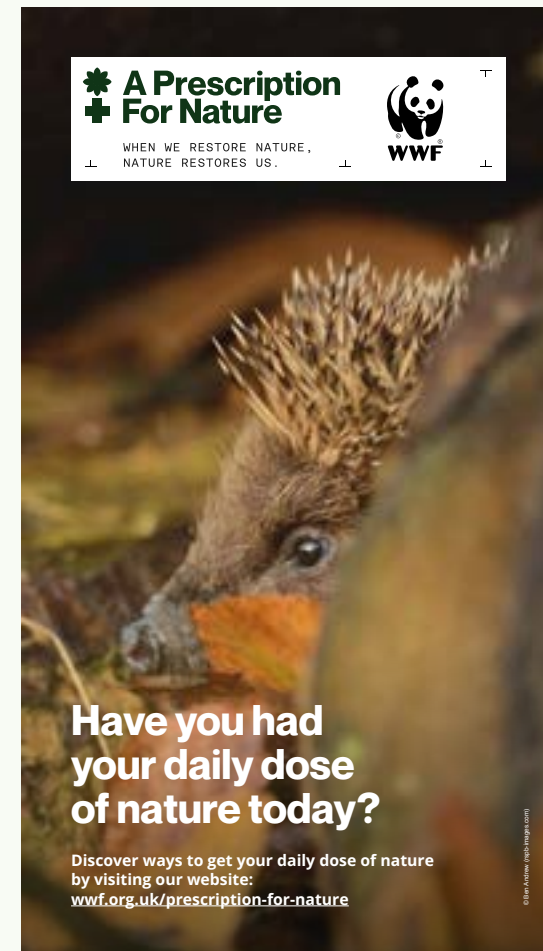
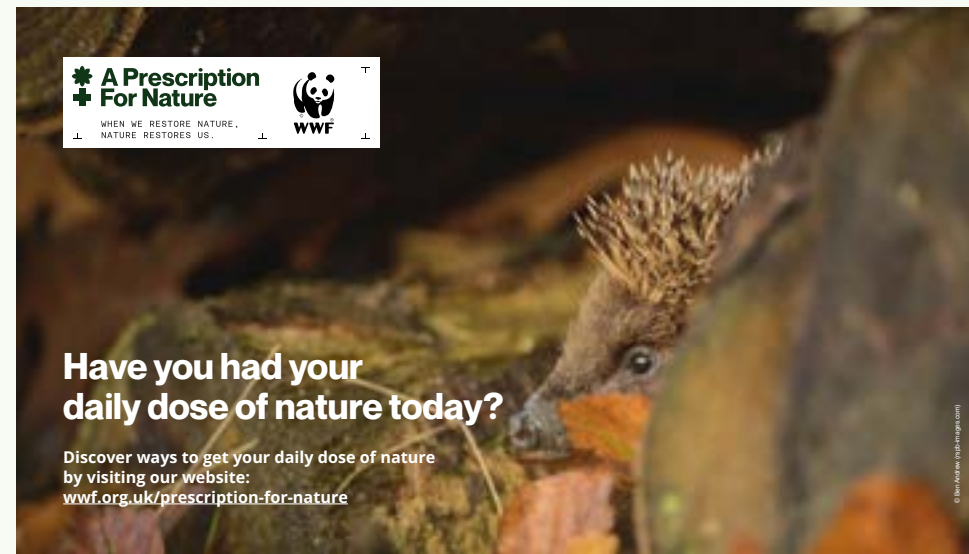
SCREENSAVERS 16:9



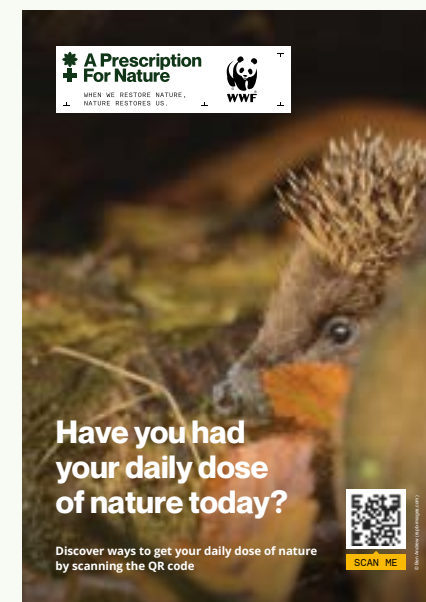
ACTION POSTERS 16:9, 9:16, A3 and A4



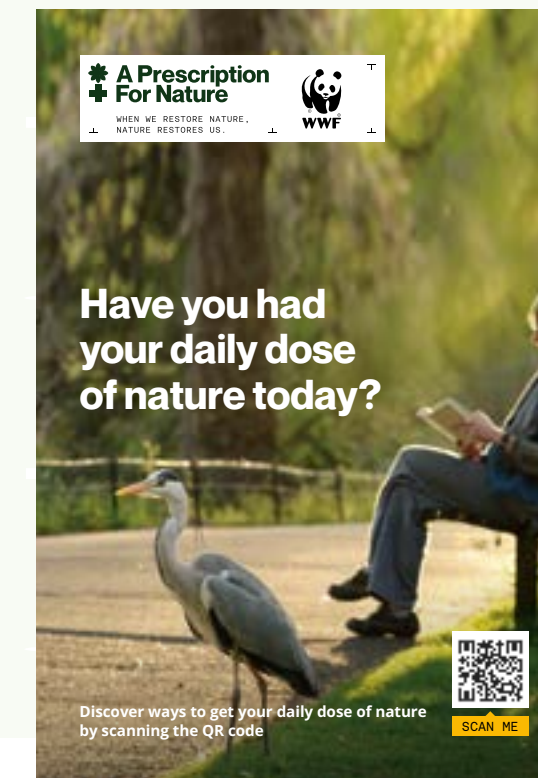
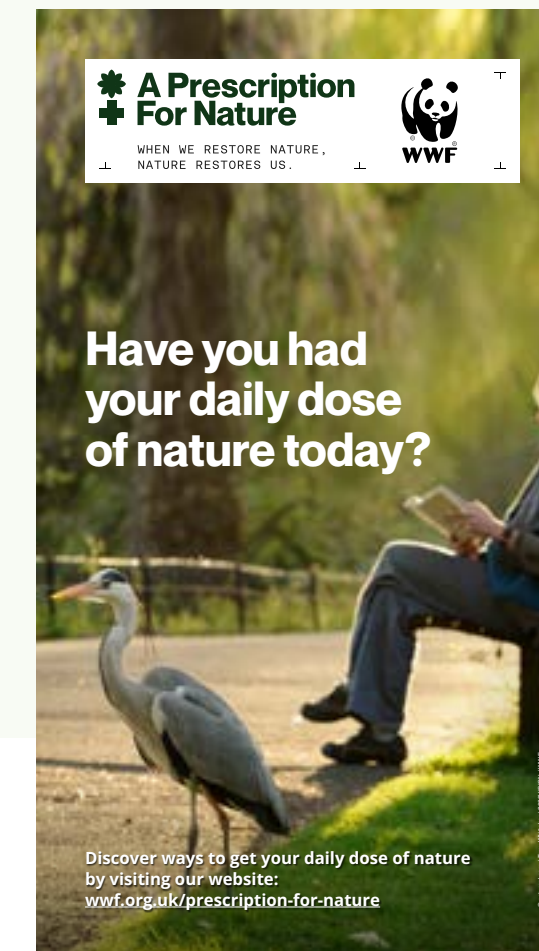
DIGITAL AND PRINT IMAGE - HEDGEHOG
 16:9, 9:16, 1080px square, A3 and A4



DIGITAL IMAGE - DEER
 16:9, 9:16, 1080px square



DIGITAL AND PRINT IMAGE - BIRD IN PARK
 16:9, 9:16, A3 and A4





As normal as five a day

Just as health experts recommend eating at least five portions of fruit and veg a day, internal departments across your organisation can support colleagues to get a regular dose of nature while at work. In this section, we've suggested some ideas that internal teams can put in place to support the whole workforce.

Make it part of the work routine

Work with senior managers and other teams to bake in a daily dose of nature as a core company policy to help employees experience the positive wellbeing impacts that we know can help us.

Giving employees just 20 minutes in their working day to get their daily dose of nature could increase satisfaction levels and help their resilience, so how might you offer this? Perhaps you could pre-set 20 minutes of wellbeing time in calendars or give people the flexibility to choose the time they take.

For example: WWF-UK gives staff one wellbeing hour a week to spend how they choose to prioritise their mental and physical health.



Create a positive culture

Create a work culture that normalises and celebrates getting time to engage with nature during the working week.

- **Get people on board.** Brief executives and senior leaders, ask them to share their time spent in nature and how it made them feel. Action inspires action and this way staff will feel confident to get their own daily dose of nature.
- **Snag a spot in an upcoming all staff meeting** or town hall to discuss nature and wellbeing. Invite an expert or coach along to discuss wellbeing and health and make time for a Q&A.
- Send an email or **add a 20-minute daily dose of nature reminder** to calendars.
- **Use our nature themed posters around your office** and load our screensavers to employee desktops to remind everyone to connect with nature.
- **Create space to share examples** of what people did to get their daily dose of nature. Build a community around this to motivate each other and connect. Try a Slack or Microsoft Teams channel or create a physical space in your office.
- **Spotlight employees who have found their wellbeing enhanced by nature.** If appropriate, feature their stories internally to inspire others.
- **Engage senior managers** and ask them to keep nature on the agenda by giving staff reminders, having honest discussions, and openly encouraging their teams to get a daily dose of nature.
- **Consider ways you can be as inclusive as possible** when designing your plans to help all colleagues benefit from nature-time equally. See page 12 onwards for ideas you can do inside the office to help with this, then talk to colleagues on how the organisation can further help all colleagues enjoy some nature time.



Activities for employees outside of the office

Encourage your workforce to use their volunteer days and not let them slide.

- If your organisation doesn't have a policy on **volunteer days**, look at local councils or nature charities to select a volunteer plan for everyone. This way, employees can get out in nature and do something to help our natural world. It's also a great team building activity.
- **Help with a local conservation project** like wetland or peatland restoration. November to March is the typical tree planting season in the UK, so why not see if the council or charities like your local Wildlife Trust offer volunteer opportunities?
- **Organise a litter pick or clean up a river bank near you** – this gets colleagues outside and is a positive action for the local environment.

Helping employees get outdoors.

- **Think about team days or team-building activities out in nature.** Check out Citizen Science projects available near you.
- **If you haven't got an outdoor space for employees to use, can you make one?** Or, could you **help fund a community garden** to give back to your area. This can double up as a space for people to develop a green thumb or spend time outside.
- If you do have the space, **create wild flowerbeds by planting native plants** and build bug hotels in unused areas, office balconies or secure rooftops.

Everyone loves a prize

Create nature competitions to get more people involved. Ensure the prizes are nature-friendly like native wildflower seed packs, a book on nature, or reusable and sustainable keep cups.

- Ask employees to **share photos of the nature they spot** while getting their daily dose. Have others upvote their favourite image to pick a winner.
- **Host a nature photography/art showcase.** You could display this on your intranet, or in the office lobby.

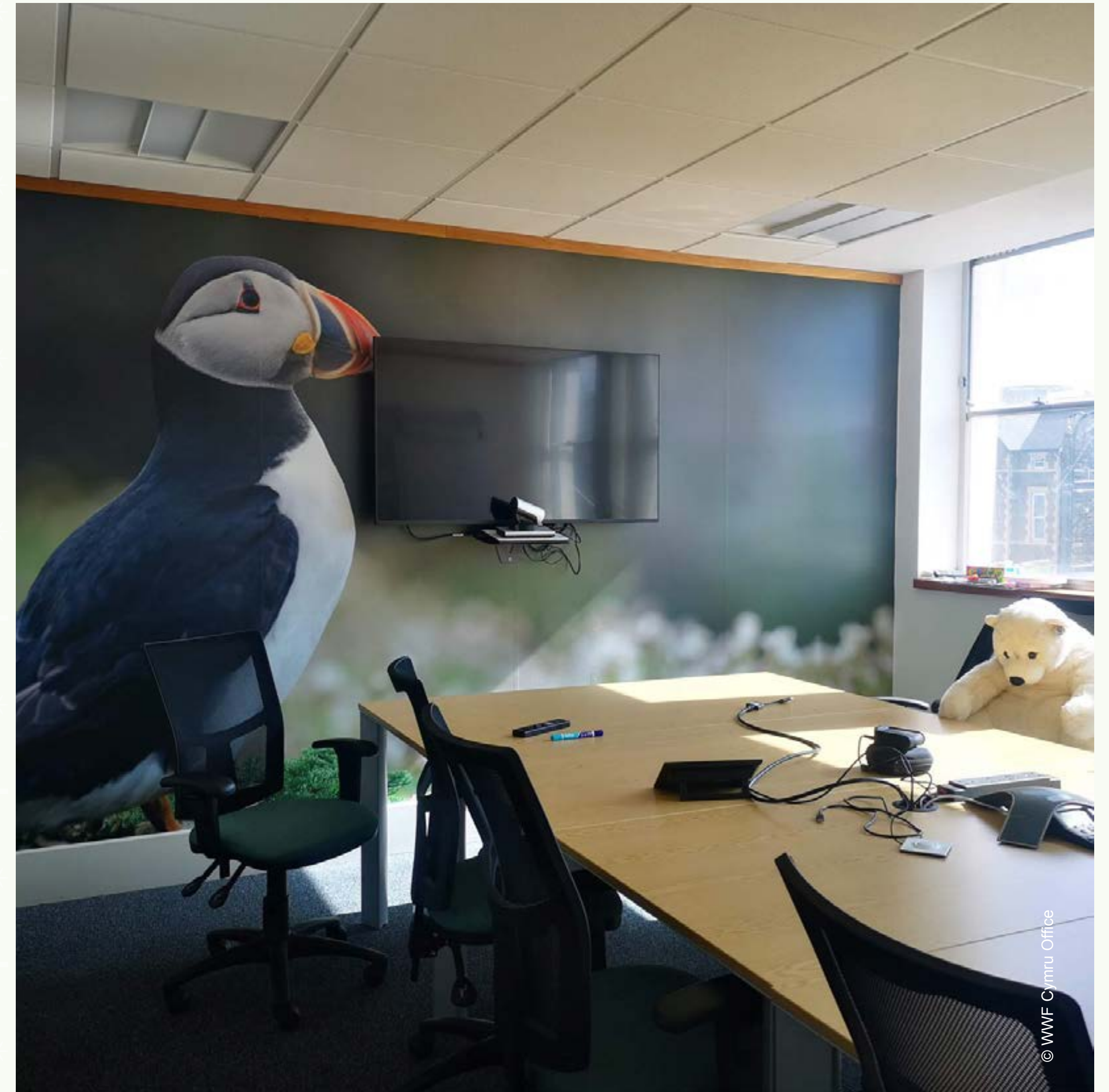


Bring the outside in

Sometimes employees may not be able to get outside to enjoy nature for a variety of reasons. We recommend bringing nature into your office to help with this.

Here are some ideas:

- Give departments a budget to **buy plants for the office to enrich workspaces** and give nature a spot indoors. Make sure all purchases have peat-free compost.
- **Replace standard corporate photography** around the office with nature-based imagery. You can do this by picking from the ones we have created for you or by creating your own. Sprinkling nature imagery around the office, in elevators, canteens or hallways will give people a lovely pick-me-up throughout the day.
- **Why not consider making a feature wall in meeting rooms.** Add a large wildlife or landscape mural – perhaps you have a talented artist among one of your teams who could help. Have employees upvote their favourite image or design.

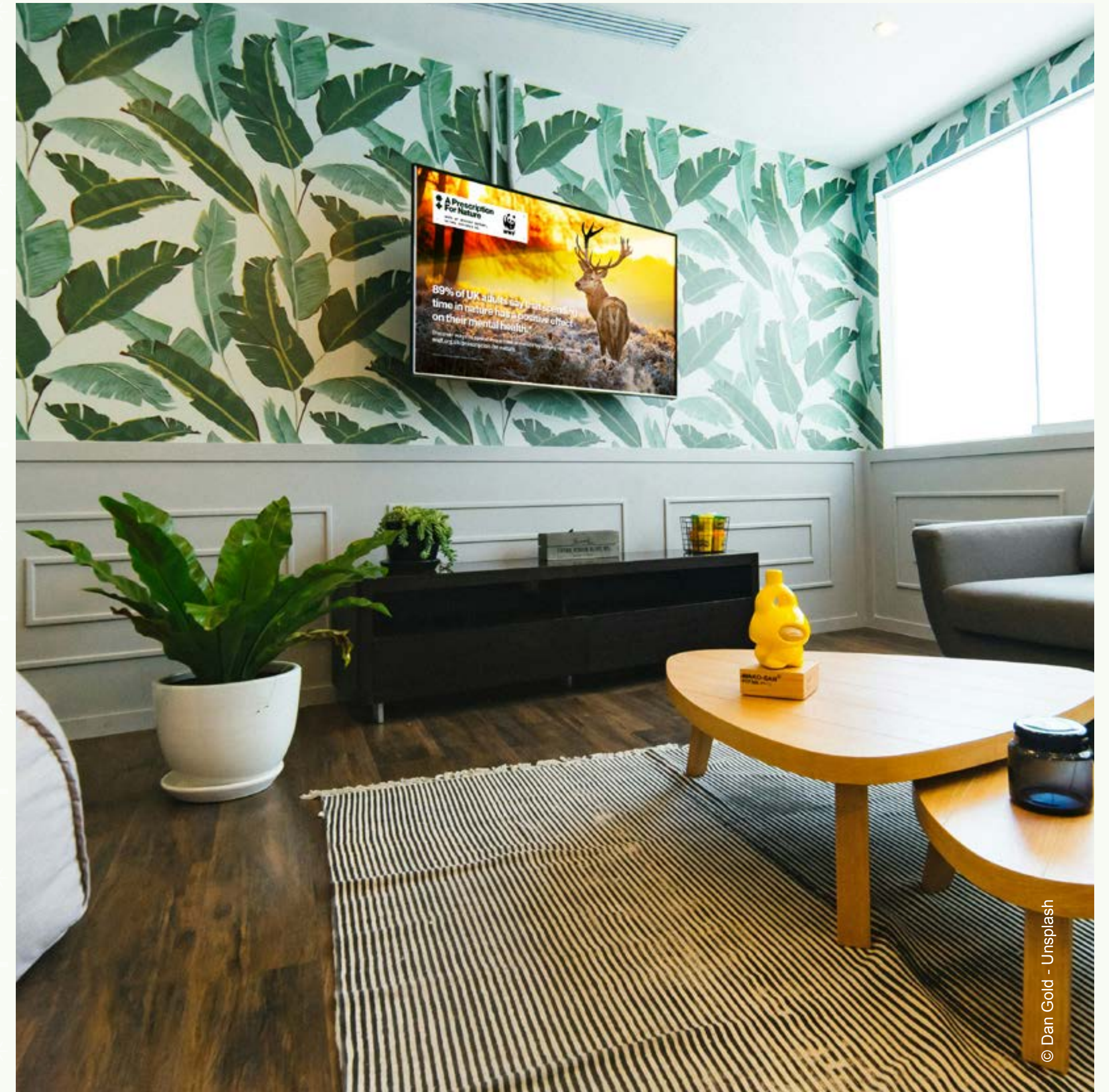


Create an office 'den'

Take over a specific area - a meeting room or a staff room, where colleagues can go to take a break, recharge, and get their daily dose of nature.

To bring these ideas to life, get teams involved!

- **Redecorate this room** by painting, adding a mural or using wallpaper.
- **Fill it with real plants** (with peat-free compost). Add pots or hang them around the room.
- Could you add a speaker to **play the sounds of nature**, like jungle noises, whales, or birdsong?
- **Fill the room with scents of nature** – add a diffuser with scents of florals, sandalwood or perhaps pine to create a really immersive experience.
- Pick a room that is south facing to **get the most of natural daylight** or a room that catches the sunset. Add a notice about the times the sun sets and invite colleagues to step away from desks to see the view.
- If you have a screen in the room, why not **show a nature documentary or film**: the BBC show *Wild Isles* is a great watch. You could do this over lunchtime too.
- Why not **create a bookshelf** where people can swap books that have a strong nature theme? We've included a few suggestions later in this guide.



Nature-themed clubs

Start a new nature themed club, here are some ideas:

- **Gardening club:** Focus on native plants and making space for pollinators and other important insects.
- **Mindfulness or walking club:** Get outside to spot the nature all around us.
- **Volunteer green group:** Bring like-minded people together to work through ways your organisation could be greener.
- **Seasonal cooking group:** Create delicious planet friendly dishes that celebrate our natural world and what it has to offer us.
- **Book club:** See our nature-themed recommendations on page 18.
- **Film club:** Pick a nature inspired film or TV show. Include planet friendly snacks to entice people in. Play the movie at lunchtime to allow more people to watch. We recommend the BBC's *Wild Isles* series on UK nature.



Ways your employees can get a daily dose of nature

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Giving colleagues practical ideas on ways they can interact with nature during the working day can complement the opportunities set up by internal departments. It will also give employees more freedom to plan this into their days and pick what works for them.

Use the ideas below and make them your own. Add them to your internal comms channels and share with your employee networks.

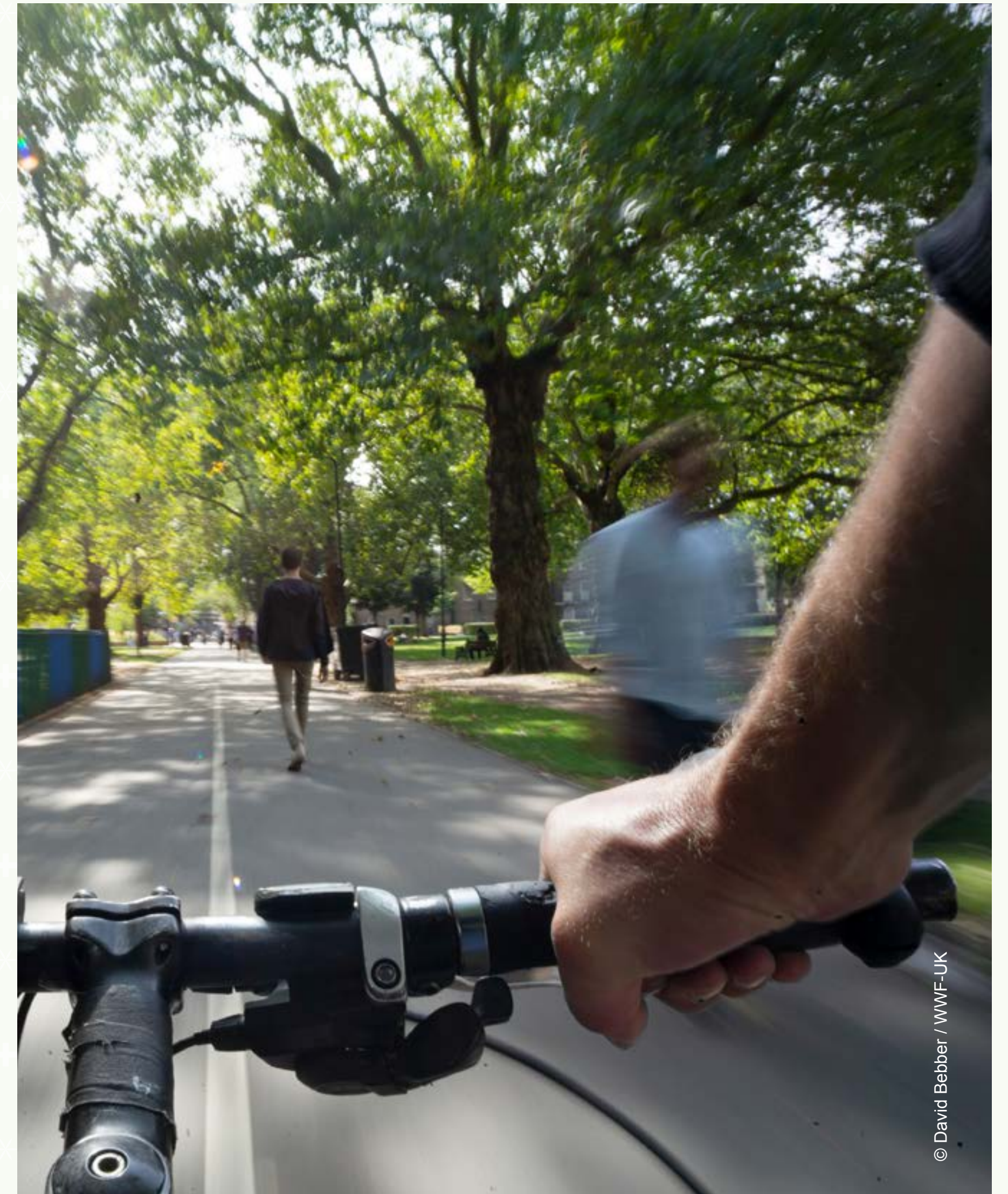
Share our website with staff so they can discover more ideas:
wwwf.org.uk/prescription-for-nature/business



What can you do each day

If you're in an urban area, it might at first seem challenging to find nature, but even in towns and cities it's all around us, from tree-lined streets, flower beds and planters, to birds in the sky and on rooftops.

- **Walk or cycle** for part or all of your commute. Meet up with a co-worker enroute to travel together.
- Get off your train or tube one stop earlier. **What nature can you spot that you haven't noticed before?**
- Got an afternoon of meetings? Why not grab your headphones and **take your call(s) outside**.
- Find a bench and **make your next in-person meeting outside**, weather permitting.
- **Take a break outside** and make use of outdoor office space, a balcony, or gardens near you.
- If you're working from home, **take a break in your garden or step outside** your front door for a few minutes.
- If you can't make it outside, spending a couple of minutes **looking for nature out of a window** can still make a difference.
- **Watch the sunset**. If you are in a high-rise office, check which way you face and watch the sun set over the skyline.
- If you are an early bird, **catch the sunrise** to start your day off well.
- **Inspire each other**. Take a picture or send a message to let your team know that you got your daily dose of nature.



Make getting outside a team effort

- **Spend a lunch time break outside** with your coworkers – why not make it a monthly event to catch up with colleagues?
- **Take your meetings outside.** If you have a suitable green space or office garden, hold the meeting there.
- Get some **quality team time in the fresh air.**
- **Booked your volunteer days?** Get all your team involved to do something positive for nature and boost team spirits at the same time.
- If you are a manager who is planning some team-building activities, **consider an outdoor activity**, like litter picking or volunteering for a local conservation organisation. Always talk to your colleagues on how your organisation can be more inclusive, giving access to nature to all employees.

Remember, accessing nature might not be as easy for some colleagues as it is to others. Always talk to your colleagues about how your organisation can help with access and inclusion to make it possible for everyone to get their daily dose of nature.



Making nature accessible

Sometimes it's tricky to balance work and home life, and some employees may find it challenging to find time for their daily dose of nature. Here are a few simple ideas to make nature as accessible as possible.

- **Listen to the sounds of nature** while working from home, at your desk or on your commute.
- Update your screensaver on your computer or mobile phone to a **nature image**. We've created some for you, find the link to the images on page 6.
- **Bring a plant to keep at your workspace**, at home or in the office. Make sure it is peat-free.
- **Take a pause to appreciate the weather and awaken your senses** – bask in the sun's rays (don't forget your sunscreen), feel the sensation of raindrops falling on you, listen for the noise they make when splashing on your umbrella or simply take notice of the breeze around you. This can help ground us and take our mind off daunting tasks. It can also unblock our minds and help us find solutions when dealing with something complex.
- **Note down a daily gratitude** about what you have seen in nature that made you feel happy, keep a journal, or add a note on your phone. Maybe you can notice the changes of the season, or birds that nest in your area?

Read a book with a nature theme or tune into a nature podcast on your commute or at break time:

Reading recommendations:

- *Wild World: Nature through an Autistic Eye* by Alfie Bowen
- *An Atlas of Endangered Species* by Megan McCubbin
- *Flock Together* by Nadeem Perera and Ollie Olanipekun
- *Around the World in 80 Trees* by Jonathan Drori

Suggested podcasts:

- [Call of the Wild podcast | WWF](#)
- [BBC Radio 4 - Ramblings](#)
- [BBC Sounds Forest 404](#)
- [Forestry England podcast](#)

We hope these ideas will help you support your employees and make it easier for them to get their daily dose of nature to improve their wellbeing. These are just jumping off points and you can choose what works best for your colleagues and organisation. For more ways to get a daily dose of nature outside of work, visit our [website](#).

Want to know more about our natural world?

Helpful resources for business

- **Screen any of our four [Save Our Wild Isles business films](#)** to help upskill colleagues on nature and how it affects your business. Make it a lunch & learn session and get expert speakers in to support discussions.
- **Use [Nature's Workforce](#) as a tool to help you start and support important conversations** with colleagues. As an employee, you have a powerful voice which can initiate changes internally. With workshop ideas and conversation starters, use this tool to help you embed nature throughout your organisation.
- We've put together a **[Sustainable Office Guide](#)** to help introduce you to the topics most workplaces can get started with.
- Check out **[examples of our own travel, procurement and catering policies](#)** to see how WWF does it.

Ways to engage with WWF

- **Get involved with our annual campaigns** [Earth Hour](#) and [World Wildlife Day](#) which both happen every March.
- **Sign up to our business newsletter** to hear the latest news about our work with the private sector.
- **Run, walk, or cycle and raise funds** for WWF's vital conservation work. We have a range of events you can participate in. Check out our events [calendar](#).
- Reward colleagues with something from **[our sustainable shop](#)**.
- WWF works in **strategic partnerships with a number of businesses** to address the big environmental issues facing our world and raise funds for our conservation work. **Find out more about [our partnerships](#)**.

References

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7. Mental Health Foundation, *How connecting with nature benefits our mental health*, 2021. Available at: [MHAW21-Nature-research-report.pdf \(mentalhealth.org.uk\)](#)
8. Mental Health Foundation, *How connecting with nature benefits our mental health*, 2021. Available at: [MHAW21-Nature-research-report.pdf \(mentalhealth.org.uk\)](#)

To check out the research behind the campaign, read our [evidence base](#).

