

Fresh Air & Friendship Report April - December 2025



Supported by:



London Borough
of Hounslow



HOUNSLOW
health and care
Working together for a healthier community

Introduction to Let's Go Outside and Learn CIC

Who are we?

Over the past decade, Let's Go Outside and Learn has supported hundreds of community members, nurturing a love of nature and promoting wellbeing through outdoor engagement.

Founded in 2015 as a grassroots initiative, we have grown into a trusted partner for Local Authorities, the NHS, schools, charities, and community organisations.

Our Vision

A world where everyone feels connected to nature and benefits from being together outside.

Our Mission

To offer inclusive access to nature for urban communities, promoting health, wellbeing and belonging.

Introduction to Fresh Air and Friendship project

Project context

The Fresh air and Friendship programme has been operating successfully in Hounslow since 2015.

From 2024, the programme was funded through an NHS pilot named “Let’s Go”. The focus was to receive client referrals from the Community Recovery Service within LB Hounslow (but expanded to include the Enhanced Dementia Care Service and Bone Health and Falls recovery Service in 2025).

Individual clients received one-to-one walking support from an LGOAL team member and, if appropriate, after 8 sessions they were signposted to Fresh Air and Friendship to continue with outdoor exercise and social engagement.

There was additional recruitment to Fresh Air and Friendship through existing networks of social care organisations in Hounslow and GP’s.

What we did

Project participants met twice a week to explore parks in Hounslow. The activity consisted of a stroll in the park appropriate for the client group, a nature-based activity and social time over refreshments. The project was delivered by 2 experienced project leads and supported by 3 Volunteer Nature Buddies trained in befriending, safeguarding and often originally referred to the project, so have a good understanding of participant needs.

Locations visited were sited across the borough chosen because they were accessible by public transport, physically accessible for participants with limited mobility or using walking aids, and most of them with access to toilet and refreshment facilities.

This report considers the feedback and impact of the activities on the participants over the period of April 2025-December 2025.

The project ended in December 2025 as funding came to an end.

Project aims

Fresh Air and Friendship aims to:

- Provide group access to nature to support improved health and wellbeing
- Show the benefits that spending time outdoors offers to health and wellbeing
- Introduce people living in an urban and built-up environment to the natural environment around them
- Bring people together in an accessible space.
- Encourage participants to feel part of the wider community
- Break down barriers for people who might not normally access parks to come together in a safe space
- Encourage everyone to learn about nature and the natural environment in a way that is appropriate to them
- Encourage people to explore, discover, enjoy and learn about nature on our doorstep

Outcomes were monitored through feedback forms, anecdotal evidence and case studies. Participants were asked to score from 1 to 5 (5 strongly agree) the following outcomes for the project:

- I've been feeling connected to my community
- I've been feeling physically well
- I've been feeling cheerful
- I've been confident managing my health
- I've been confident that I will not fall and hurt myself
- I've been feeling confident about handling daily situations
- I've been able to make up my own mind about things
- I've been feeling close to nature.

We also asked:

How has the programme helped you? What did you enjoy? What could we have done better? and any other comments

People and Nature Survey for England

The outcomes for Fresh Air and Friendship are supported by recent research by Natural England

[People and Nature Survey for England](#) (PaNS) by Natural England recently reported for the 5th year in 2025.

- 91% of people agree being in nature benefits their physical health
- 90% say it helps their mental wellbeing
- 85% of adults say nature boosts their happiness
- The report concludes that nature helps us feel less stressed, more energised, and more connected

Dataset from April 2024 – March 2025

REASONS FOR VISITING GREEN SPACES

Getting fresh air and physical health and exercise were the main reasons for people taking a visit to a green and natural space*



To get fresh air

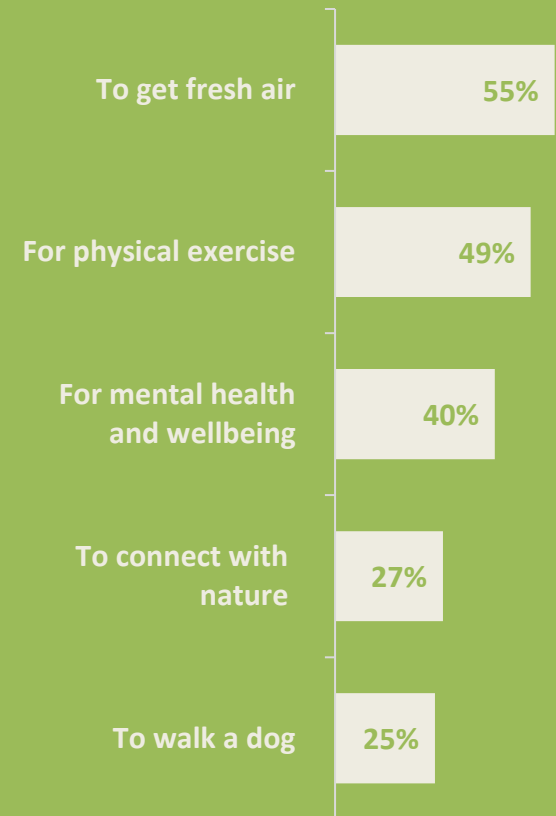


For physical exercise

*Sample size 4,859 (April 2024 to March 2025)

†Respondents were asked to select the main three reasons for taking this visit. Answer options subset of the top 5 selections: For physical health and exercise, To get fresh air, For mental health and wellbeing, To walk a dog, To connect to nature / watch wildlife.

Reasons for visiting green and natural space†



Attendance Fresh Air and Friendship April 2025-December 2026

Total sessions : 56

Total Number of Attendances : 457

Average Session Attendance: 12

Unique Registered Participants : 54

Fresh Air and Friendship Signposting from Let's Go Project

By the conclusion of the funding in December 2025, Fresh Air and Friendship had added 5 referrals to the Let's Go programme. The benefits to them are reflected in comments :

Client A	Client B
"A" was unable to get out of her flat due to lack of confidence in her ability to walk independently. She was given 3 session of individual walking before joining the group.	"B" came as a referral but joined Fresh Air and Friendship immediately. Within four weeks she had brought along a friend who was socially isolated and who was really pleased to have found the group.
"A" told us that she benefited from attending: <i>"Everyone is so friendly – a lovely group. I learned a lot about Hounslow and the buses through coming to this helpful group.</i>	"B" told us: <i>[I have a] Better understanding of the benefits of the natural world throughout the year.</i>
<i>I have enjoyed meeting new people. I have enjoyed everything-I couldn't walk before joining this group, now, with my stick, I am going everywhere, changing buses,</i>	<i>Great to meet and enjoy the company of so many people.</i>
<i>Getting outside-learning about nature-learning something new. Being part of a community."</i>	<i>I feel that I belong to a valuable group in terms of health and wellbeing."</i>

Case studies

Khadija

Dr Khadija was discharged from hospital unable to walk independently. She had lost confidence in her ability to go outside on her own. She had recently moved to Kew from Central London and was unfamiliar with the area and away from friends.

After 3 one to one walks with the Let's Go project her confidence had been regained and she joined Fresh Air and Friendship.

She quickly became a regular and valued member of the group. She said that she enjoyed everything, particularly making new friendships and discovering all the local parks and new areas which she accessed by bus independently.

She was very sad to hear that the project was ending as this would mean the end of her independence and a return to her previous ill health which had been improved by the opportunities to walk in a supportive and friendly group.

Jo

Josephine joined Fresh Air and Friendship after being referred through the Let's Go project. She lives alone and suffers from poor physical and mental health. She is a vulnerable older lady in need of the care that such a group of friendly , caring people can provide.

She very much enjoys being part of the group and has made strong friendships within it which she depends upon. Walking has helped her physical and mental health, and she was devastated to learn that the group was not continuing.

Without support she will be more reliant on her GP and A and E department which will not be a viable substitute.

Case Study - Chris

Chris was referred to the Let's Go project due to having fallen down her stairs at home and receiving a hip replacement. She lacked confidence to go out alone and was feeling socially isolated. At the end of the individual sessions, she was given the F&F programme which she promised to try out.

After a few weeks Chris appeared at the Wednesday sessions. She was made to feel really welcome by the participants and group leaders and has been a regular attendee ever since.



Chris attended the last session on 17th of December and told the group how much she would miss coming along to the sessions and seeing everyone who has made her feel so welcome as well as helping her gain confidence in her walking ability!

Fresh Air and Friendship Client Feedback

Client N : “Thank you, I have learned so much from this group, enjoyed venturing out to different places, it’s given me so much confidence and happiness over the years.....I’m hopeful new funds will appear soon.”

Client G : “It’s been fun meeting people and strengthened our interest in nature. I’ve found interesting new green spaces I did not know existed. Thanks Fiona and Mairi I do hope we can continue in some way.

“Great memories of a special day with special friends.”

Venues visited since April 2025

Hounslow Parks
that we visited on
a regular basis :

Redlees Park
Inwood Park
Hanworth Park
Heston Park and
Brentford Riverside



Somewhere Special Visits :

Richmond Riverside
Kew Gardens
Marble Hill
Richmond Park
Kneller Gardens
Radnor Gardens
Shot Tower Nature Reserve
Old Isleworth
Kew Archives
Chiswick Kitchen Gardens
Boston Manor Park
Bushy Park Woodland
Gardens
Gunnersbury Museum and
Park
Syon Gardens
Strand on The Green
Osterley Gardens
York House
Teddington Lock
Hampton Court Riverside
Bridge House Pond
Sunbury Walled Gardens
Northcote Nature Reserve
and Meadway Orchard

Cuppa and Chat Tackling Social Isolation

Where possible, each session normally concluded with a visit to a local café for a chance to undertake an activity and have a chat and a cuppa. This part of the session was invaluable as it enabled the group to help each other discuss and solve day to day problems

The group loved to play games, make things from natural materials and draw and paint as well as learning about the natural environment



Wellbeing survey- Project impact

Regular project participants were asked to fill in the health and wellbeing for to track project impact and outcomes. The data compares outcomes from April and December 2025.

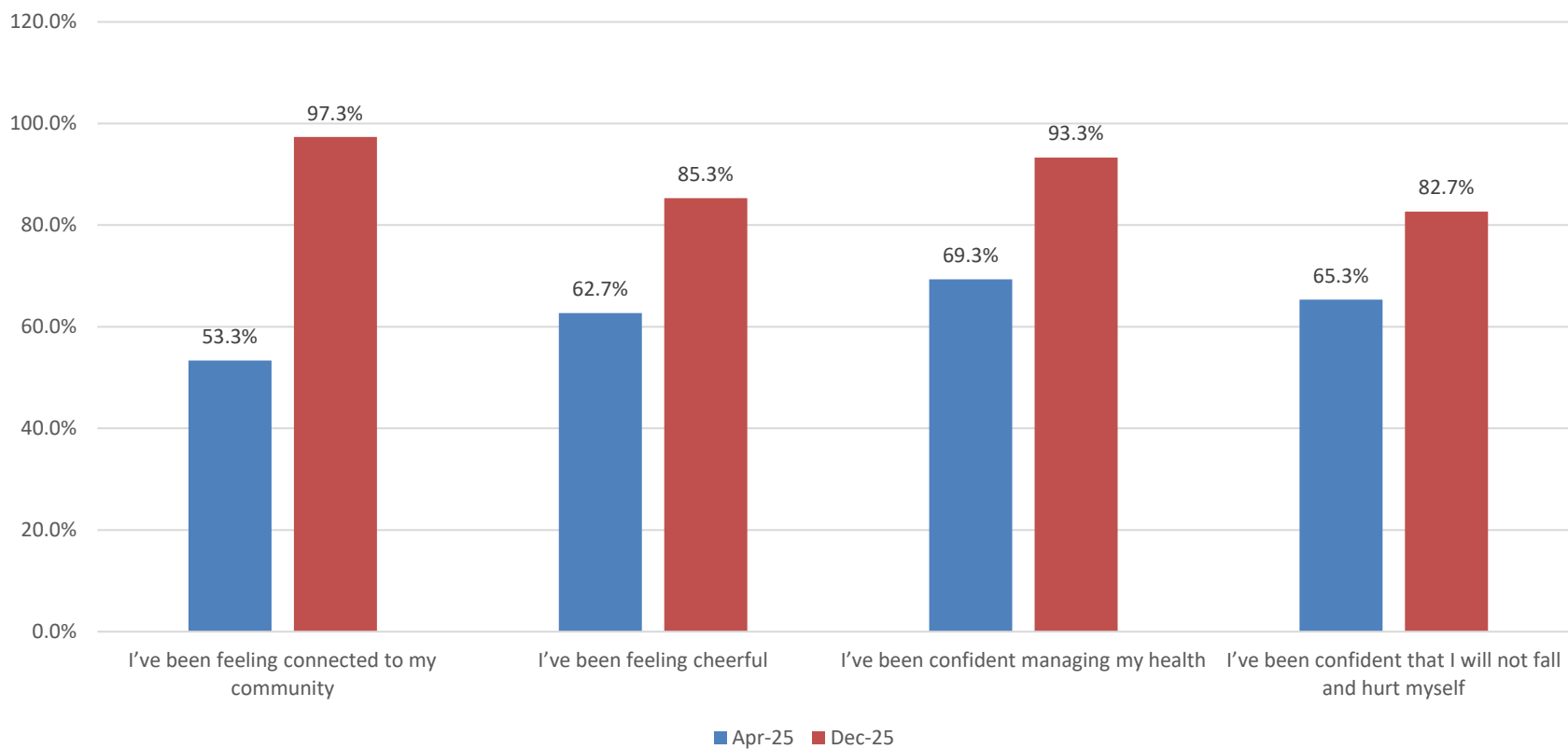
15 PARTICIPANTS
COMPLETED THE
WELLBEING
QUESTIONNAIRE

OTHER FEEDBACK WAS
COLLECTED TO SHOW A
SNAPSHOT OF BENEFITS TO
PARTICIPANTS.



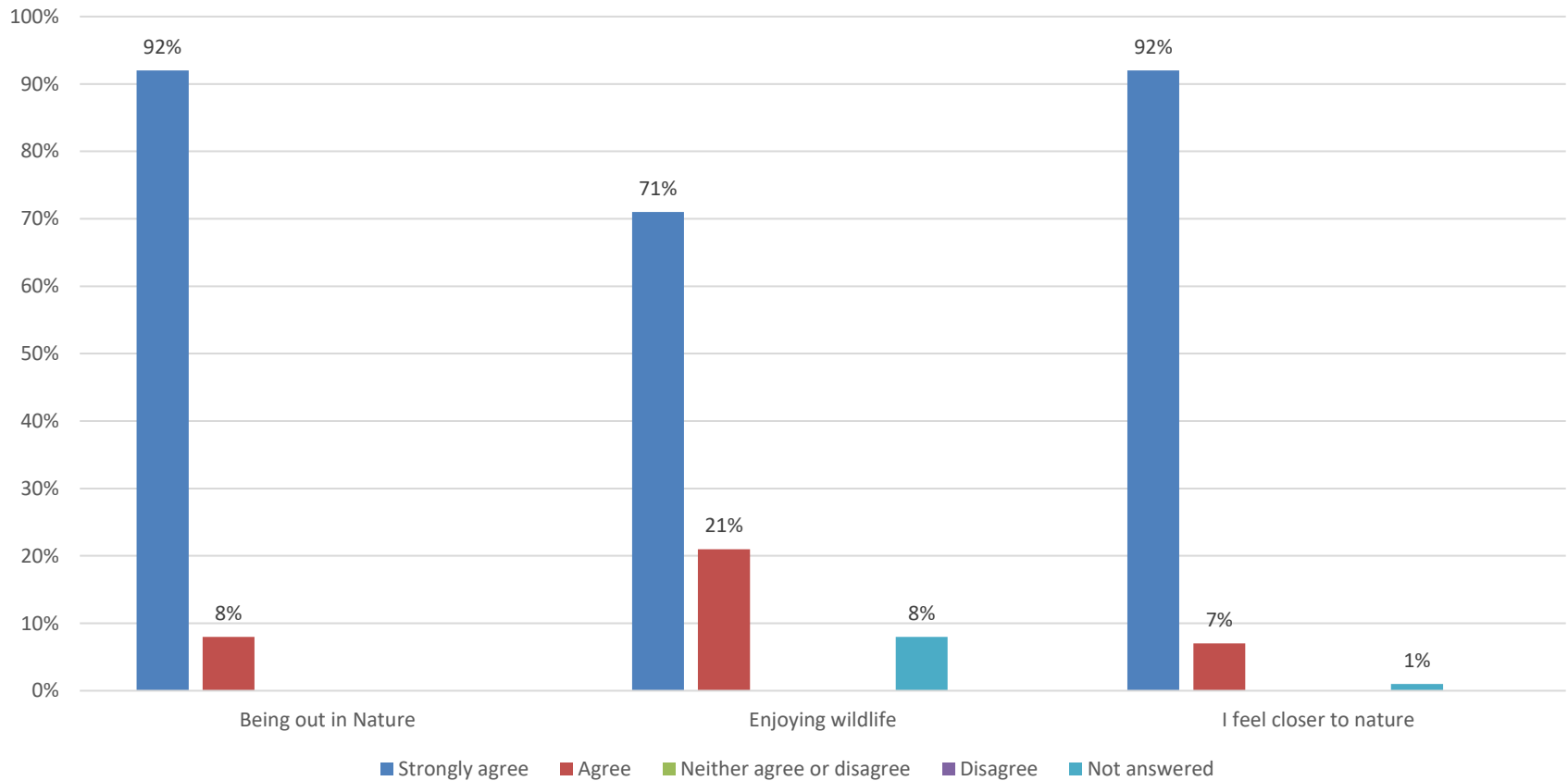
Health and wellbeing outcomes

% change in health and wellbeing outcomes
n=15



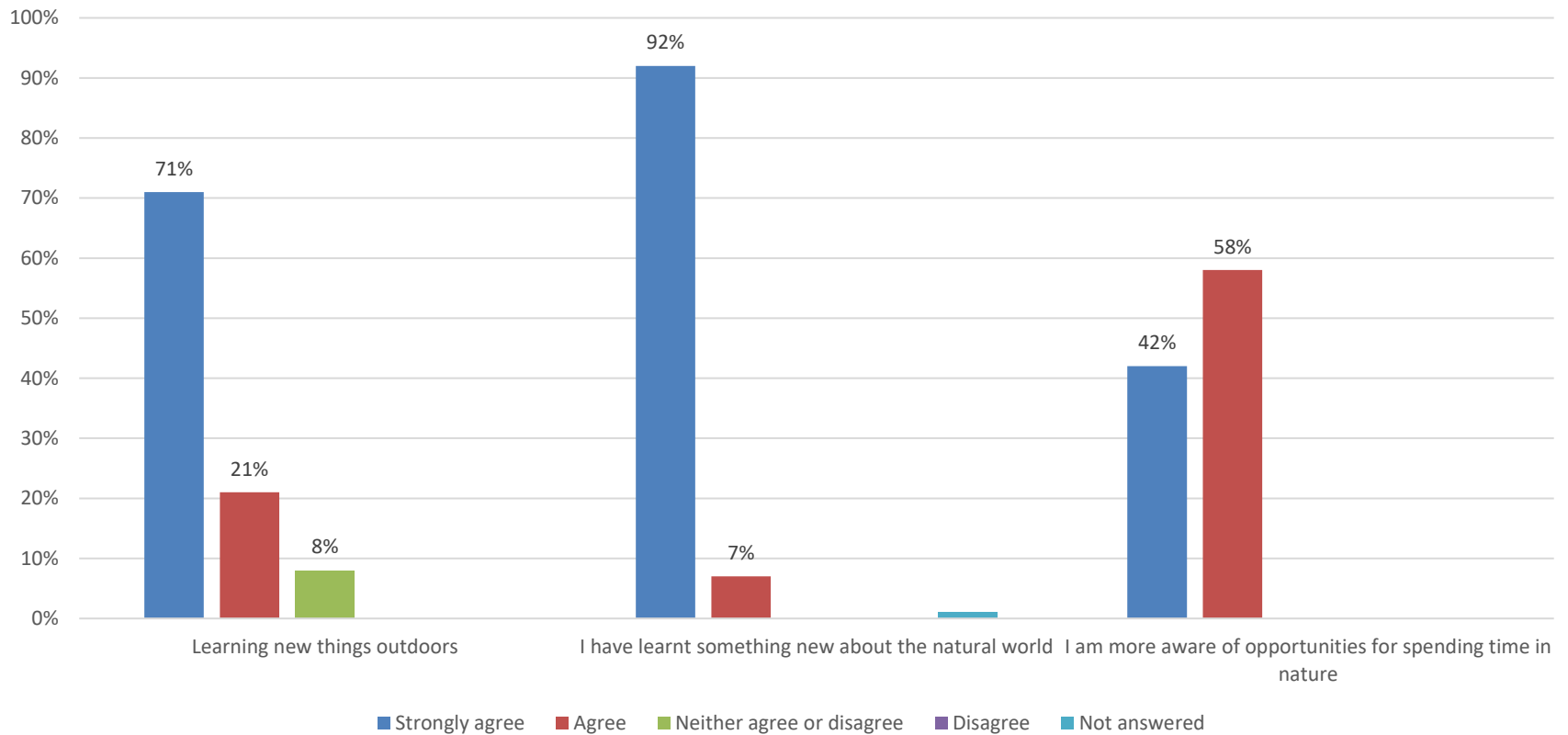
Outcomes

What do you like about the project? - Wildlife



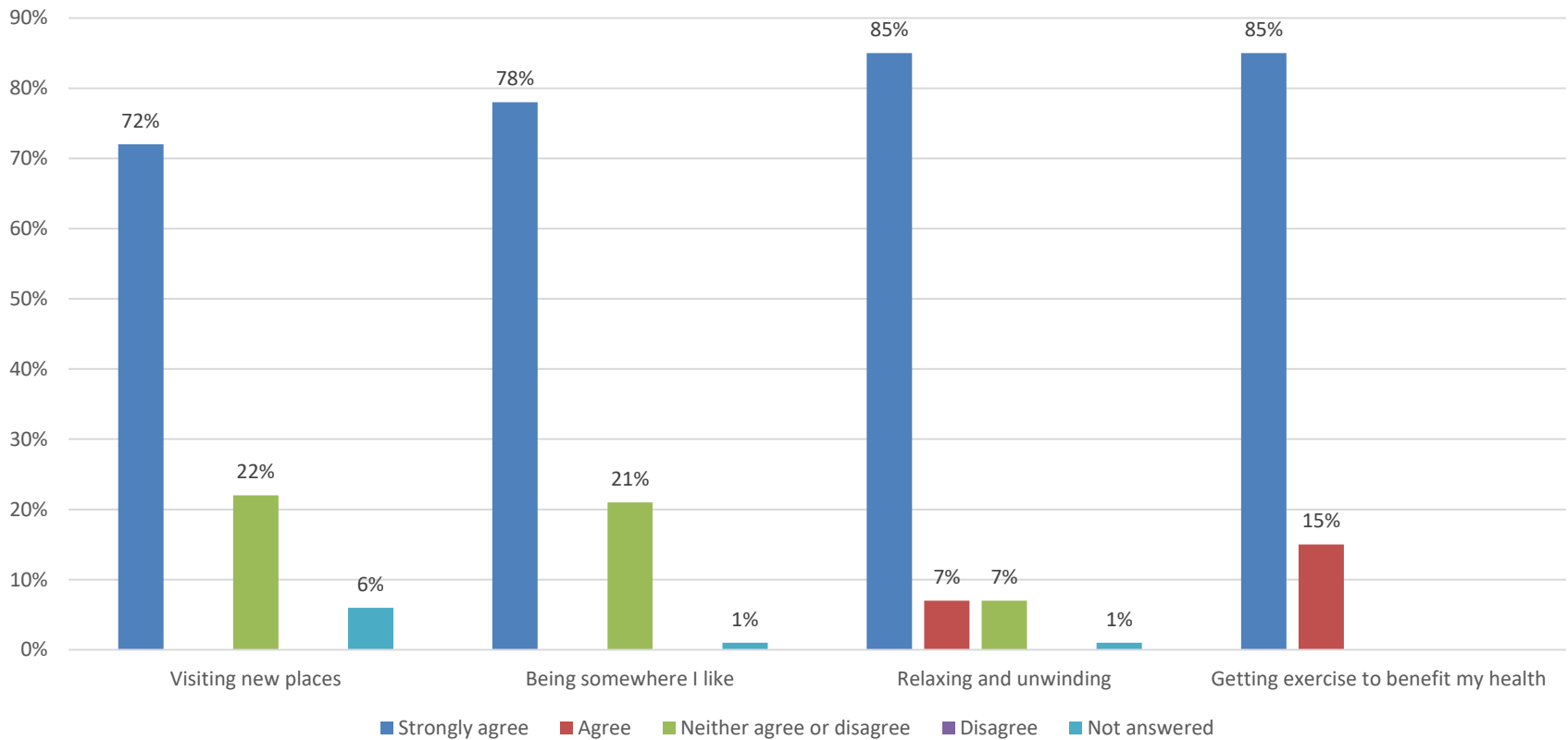
Outcomes

What do you like about the project?
Learning



Outcomes

What do you like about the project?
Health and Wellbeing



Project End

Participants and volunteers have voiced their concerns about the end of the support that they have been receiving. The participants have been signposted to other activities that might offer some support:

Jo	Khadija	Volunteer J
<i>"I just can't believe it. You have helped me so much been so kind and helped me with my mental health. I appreciate nature more than ever did before and the places you've shown which I never knew existed until I joined the group and of course the lovely coffee. If it's allowed, I feel soo strongly I want to contact my MP and get a petition up. If allowed, I WILL DO IT!"</i>	<i>"Yes, this group is great, today I was invited by our group at Imperial college. I went early to ask about funding. They are saying it should be through the council or the NHS. Someone said maybe the Prince of Wales charity. I am new to walking group but found it very beneficial. Meeting nice people, walking in fresh air, change. The important issue is that it is for people of different (origin, sex, age, capabilities and interests) I learned a lot about Hounslow and the buses through coming to this helpful group. Let us all think about how to get funding. According to what I am hearing funding is difficult but not impossible."</i>	<p>Volunteers also voiced their concerns:</p> <i>"As a volunteer and latecomer to the group, I am like all of you deeply saddened with this news. I ditto everything you all have said about Mairi & Fiona and their efforts in making this group such a pleasurable experience each Monday and Wednesday. I am grateful to have met you all and hope and keep my fingers crossed that something in the future will happen to sustain the group. In the meantime, let's all stay positive and keep smiling and hopefully we will all stay in contact as both Mairi and Fiona have mentioned."</i>



A Snapshot Of Our Year





What next for Fresh Air & Friendship?

Whilst Let's Go Outside and Learn CIC will continue to support community members through other projects that promote wellbeing & nurtures a love of nature.

The participants of Fresh Air and Friendship have been signposted to other activities that may offer some support to individuals. The participants have also been encouraged to keep in touch through chat group apps which work for some of the group who have the technical knowledge to use this.

Many of the group participants lack the confidence to attend new groups individually and, there is a chance that they will become socially isolated once more. This may lead to emotional problems and ultimately poorer physical health as the opportunity to regularly walk with group leaders has ceased.

This group has formed a special bond together and it is crucial that this is not lost.

We are currently seeking funding that will enable us to continue the valuable engagement.

