

PROSPECTUS

THE WILDERNESS PROJECT:
REGISTERED AS A
COMMUNITY INTEREST
COMPANY -
TRANSFERRING TO A
REGISTERED CHARITY.

E-Mail:
info@thewildernessproject.
org.uk

Web
www.thewildernessproject.
org.uk

Contact:
Trevor Roach,
Board member
Phone:
07990 757365



The Wilderness Project is seeking to run the Wilderness Centre – we have until 4th May 2014 to place a bid with Gloucestershire County Council.

In May 2011, Gloucestershire County Council decided to withdraw from running the county environmental education centre, after 45 years of effective and valued service to schools and community groups. We are now seeking pledges of financial support to save this highly valued resource for our children and for future generations.



The best outdoor classroom in the west

The Wilderness Project is seeking to have the residential field studies centre transferred to the community under the provisions of the Localism Act 2012.

We have been encouraged by the County Councils own strategy for 2011-2015:

Helping communities help themselves (2014/15 update)

“The Council is at its most effective when it is helping people to live successful lives as independently as possible and helping communities to help themselves. We believe that if you give power to local people you get better results and achieve better value. Our approach will be to:

- Empower communities to do more themselves and giving them the tools they need for community action
- Recognise that some areas need more help than others and that, with a little support, they can get their ideas off the ground
- Support the transfer of buildings and other assets to community ownership so that they can become a hub for local activity - flexible and responsive to local needs.”

Schools, colleges and community groups want to save this centre:

A market survey in December 2013 of county schools and community groups shows that the demand still exists to use the centre to full capacity.

A remodelled staffing structure and an expansion of community courses and events will ensure that the centre is a self financing business by year 3 of trading.

With plans to develop the centre facilities and expand its operations we can double its capacity within five years, in so doing create an environmental resource of outstanding value and worth.

What we will acquire



The Wilderness Centre



Site resources:

The residential building (a country mansion dating back to the 17th century) with 45 bed spaces, dining facilities, communal rooms and two education labs.



Administration building with residential staff flat above.

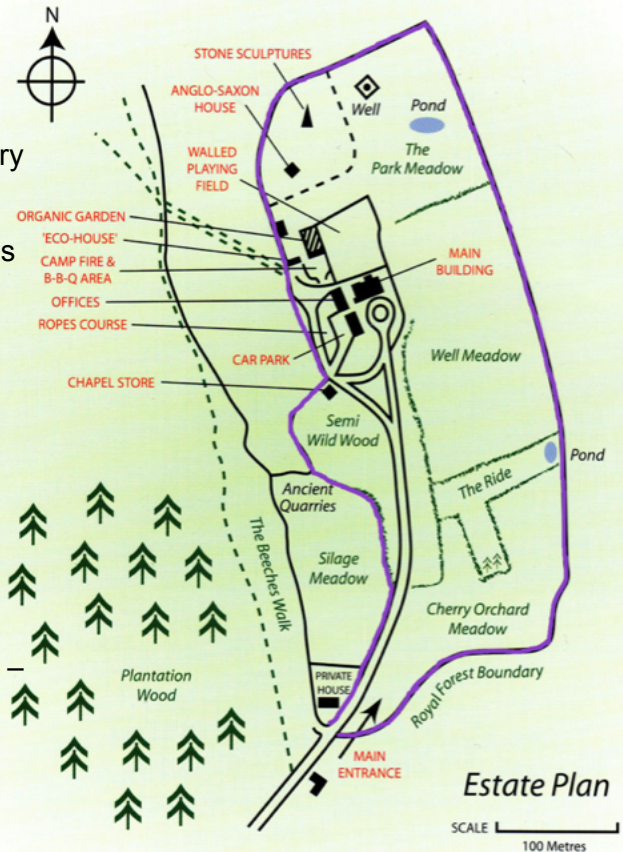
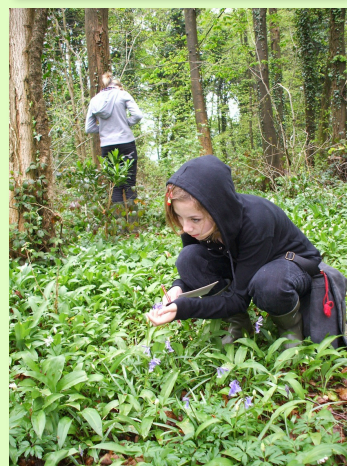
“Eco house” cottage and outhouse workshops.

Replica Anglo Saxon house.

Organic veg garden.

24 acres of wildflower meadows – designated a Key Wildlife Site.

4 acres of ancient semi-wild woodland – designated a Key Wildlife Site.



The Wilderness Project Mission

To establish a viable community enterprise that will be a centre of excellence, providing high quality environmental courses, workshops, training and community events for all.



The Numbers

Historic level of use up to closure - use per annum

County Schools, universities and colleges	134
Special Schools	12
Youth Organisations	29
“At Risk”, NEETs & vulnerable groups	24
Out-of-county youth groups and schools	16
Work Experience / Apprenticeships	12
Adult education sessions	258
Total young people attending per year	7600
School Staff trained	480

**Over 250,000 young people have benefitted
in the past 45 years**

New provision and added value after re-start

- consultancy work with schools, colleges and community groups
- holiday residential programmes for families and adult groups
- summer schools
- ecology courses for gifted and able students
- community events
- research into teaching and learning in the outdoors
- a five year centre development plan to increase capacity, provision and income.

A county wide service Schools survey December 2013 School support by district

Forest of Dean	30%
Gloucester	20%
Cheltenham	20%
Stroud	5%
Cotswolds	15%
Tewkesbury	2%
Out of county	8%



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Business Plan Outlined

Our business plan indicates that we will be making a trading profit by year three

Three years from now we will be...

- generating a trading surplus
- Receiving income from new revenue streams
- Providing a consultancy service to schools and colleges
- Providing day and residential courses to schools and colleges at full capacity
- Running weekend and vacation youth and community programmes
- Offering apprenticeship and intern places to young people
- Establishing capital investment through corporate sponsorship
- Working with national and international partners
- And.....
 creating new business opportunities with local business partners

A journey towards a sustainable future

Six years from now we will be...

- A recognised centre of excellence in environmental education working with national and international partners
- Providing lifelong learning experiences to...

13,000 people each year

A journey forward...

Now we must...

- Conclude asset transfer from Gloucestershire CC
- Work with Gloucestershire CC to benefit the community
- Raise £350,000 to refurbish and restart the Wilderness Centre
- Market the service
- Start bringing in business

*...join us
 on the journey...*



LIVING & LEARNING WITH NATURE
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