The Wellbeing Signage Installations were engraved with curated reflections from workshop participants specifically inspired by that location.

We are a part of nature, and we can ask nature for help. When we are in nature you're returning home.

We don't need to rush to live. Slow down. Breathe. Be in the moment.

Nature around us is an example of the cyclical nature of life. Something old that interferes with life needs to be let go. And then something new will appear that will make us happy.

Fresh air and birdsong renew my strength, and I feel 20 years younger. Don't stop and always move on.

I like to walk in the forest where the earth takes away things that don't serve us anymore.

For further information on the Nearby Nature Project Scan below:

HSE
Creative Communities
Rialtas Áitiúil Éireann Local Authorities Ireland
Clár Éire Ildánach Creative Ireland Programme
WEXFORD Mental Health Association
Healthy Wexford
Wexford County Council

Nearby Nature

Looking after your mental health and wellbeing is important for everyone.

Connecting with nature can support good mental health.

Nearby Nature is a participatory project grounded in the ethos of environmental visual art practices.

This project was developed by Wexford Mental Health Association, HSE Health Promotion, and Parable Garden's Education Centre and funded by Wexford County Council through the Creative Ireland Programme.

Workshops took place in the early months of 2024 in a range of outdoor areas in Enniscorthy, Wexford; Vinegar Hill, Promenade Walk, Borodale Woods, Peace Park, and Green Space by the Swimming Pool.

Participants explored their creativity and experienced the potential of local natural spaces to support their own well-being, that of their families, and the wider community.

The creative process was influenced by the current research available on the benefits of nature on health and well-being.

FIVE WAYS TO HELP OUR WELLBEING WITH NATURE

1. SEEK OUT GREEN SPACES

There is a lot of scientific research exploring the fascinating link between time spent in nature with a reduced risk of mental health problems, improved mood and reduced stress.

Whether you live in the countryside or in the city, nature can be found everywhere. From local parks, gardens, canals, or courtyards, it's worthwhile seeking out natural spaces near you.

If you're struggling to find a green area near you, why not try and bring nature to you. You could plant herbs or flowers in your garden, balcony or windowsill, or introduce houseplants into your personal space.

2. RELAXATION AND MINDFULNESS

Taking time to reflect in natural surroundings can be really positive for your mental health and wellbeing.
Shinrin-yoku is a Japanese phenomenon, also known as forest bathing. It's all about spending time in a forest or woodland engaging your senses, which can help to ease negative feelings and boost positive ones.

If you're not sure how to practice mindfulness, here's a good place to start:

Take your time to be aware of how you're feeling and your surroundings.
Think about what you can hear, smell, touch and see.

Focus on what you're doing in that moment, try to let other thoughts drift away.

3. STAYING ACTIVE

Everyone knows that all kinds of physical activity are great for our health and well-being.

Did you know that being physically active in natural environments can have extra benefits? Walking or running will give us an extra boost of well-being when we do it in a natural environment, reducing feelings of anger, fatigue, and sadness. Exercising outdoors for only 5 minutes can improve mood and enhance self-esteem.

4. INTERACTING WITH NATURE

Being around animals and wildlife can be beneficial for overall well-being. Even from your home, look outside your window and see if you can spot birds in the sky. If you can't see them, listen for them instead. The more often you look, the more you will see!

5. WILD INSPIRATION

Nature can be a great inspiration for creativity. This can be done through painting, drawing, crafting, photography, or writing—the possibilities are endless.