

Frequently Asked Questions
Programme: Rooted Minds by Bost
At the Green Wellbeing Hub in Southwark, SE1 1ES

Overview

This is the Frequently Asked Questions document for The Rooted Minds programme. It is a year-round, non-clinical therapeutic horticulture service delivered by Bankside Open Spaces Trust (BOST) in partnership with the South London and Maudsley (SLaM) NHS Foundation Trust. Operating every Friday from 1:30pm to 3:30pm at The Ecohouse in Borough (SE1), this highly supportive, culturally sensitive service maintains a 1:5 staff-to-participant ratio specifically for individuals referred by Southwark Community Mental Health Teams (CMHT).

Rooted in trauma-informed methodologies, each consistent two-hour session follows a predictable rhythm, combining a soft-start welcome, hands-on sensory soil tasks, social breaks, and reflective feedback, ensuring absolute choice and emotional safety. Rain or shine, participants garden alongside peer mentors with lived experience in an all-weather sanctuary featuring accessible raised beds and indoor respite spaces, with clear progression pathways available into mainstream volunteering and accredited *Future Gardeners* certification.

Who can be referred?

This service is specifically funded under the SLaM framework for individuals currently accessing Community Mental Health Teams (CMHT) in Southwark. It is optimised for individuals managing low-to-medium support needs (such as anxiety, depression, or stabilised complex conditions) who can safely participate in an open group setting.

Who is not suitable for this programme?

Because we are a non-clinical community service, we do not have medical staff, clinicians, or psychiatric crisis nurses on site. We strictly cannot accept individuals currently experiencing an acute mental health crisis, or those with high-risk presentation requiring active clinical oversight.

How long does the onboarding process take after a referral is submitted?

Our team reviews all secure digital form submissions within 3–5 working days. We expect participants to start within two weeks of the date of referral, subject to spaces available and waiting list times. Once a referral passes initial review. We then contact the client directly to invite them in for an informal, 1-to-1 tea and chat at The Rainbow Library. This session allows us to meet them, understand their access needs, and establish a comfortable support plan before their first group session.

When are the Rooted Minds session?

The sessions run every Friday, except over the Christmas and New Year period. The session starts at 1.30pm and runs to 3.30pm

What should the participant bring?

Suitable clothing for the weather that you don't mind getting dirty. Please layer up and wearing closed toe footwear.

Do I need gardening experience?

No experience required! We have facilitators that are also professional gardeners on hand to provide hands-on learning experiences.

What is the cost?

The service is completely free of charge to eligible attendees and referring teams. All adaptive tools, gloves, seeds, building materials, and safety equipment are fully provided by Bankside Open Spaces Trust. We recommend attendees wear comfortable clothing and sturdy footwear suitable for being outdoors.

What happens if the weather is bad?

Sessions run consistently rain or shine. If conditions are too poor for outdoor gardening in our raised beds, we move inside The Ecohouse. This is a purpose-built, climate-resilient space where we host indoor nature crafts, seed-saving workshops, or utilise our quiet Rainbow Library and nature Palludarium.

How are non-verbal clients or those with ESOL needs supported?

Our facilitation team has extensive experience managing communication barriers, including supporting neurodivergent individuals and refugee/migrant communities. We actively adapt our practice by minimising dense written elements, using Google Translate, providing multilingual guides where appropriate, and employing clear visual hand-gestures for real-time session feedback.

ISSUE OR QUESTIONS? GET IN TOUCH

If you have any issues or questions about referrals, please contact us on 020 7403 3393 or email us at info@bost.org.uk.