



Fun outdoor
activities around
Portland Basin
Museum

culture
Tameside

Let's go...

Exploring!



Nature is all
around you...

Why not go outside to play?

Make a den, make a nest, go on a nature hunt near where you live, do some leaf rubbings, look for mini-beasts, make a mud pie, see if you can make your own paint from mud, fly a kite, collect things, make a spider out of sticks and mud, make a giant spider web out of string, make a daisy chain, run around, make yourself dizzy, hug a tree, have a picnic, have fun!



Let's go...

Outdoors at Portland Basin

Portland Basin Museum sits right next to the canal network and the River Tame. This corridor of greenspaces weave through Ashton and provide some great opportunities for discovering the countryside.

There are lots of ways to discover the outdoors from Portland Basin.

Here you can get on your bike and join one of the cycle routes or you can follow canal and riverside trails towards Saddleworth, Cheshire and Manchester.

Why not follow the family friendly

'wild trail'

finding nature posts along the way. This 1km route takes you along the canal towpath with great activities for children to do along the way.



I spy...

Around Portland Basin



Discover...



Watch the birdie!

Binoculars are useful - but not as useful as eyes and ears!

Nature

You may be surprised who has already been in the woods - or who lives there.

Whether you're looking out for birds, squirrels, or something bigger - here are a few hints for successful spotting.

Hide away

True nature detectives blend in with the background...so wear natural coloured clothes and stand in shadows or peek from behind trees or rocks.

Listen up

You're more likely to hear something than see it.

- Make sure your mobile phone is on silent
- Avoid carrying anything that jangles or creaks
- Snack on soft sandwiches, not crisps and crunchy apples!



Read the tracks

Look for signs that creatures have been in or near a place. Munched leaves, nibbled nuts...even poo!

Rest up

Pause to look around. Sit down, make yourself comfy, keep still and look for movement. Sometimes 'still hunting' is the most successful, as curious creatures come out when it's really quiet.

Did you know...

there are over 20,000 species of insect in the British Isles!

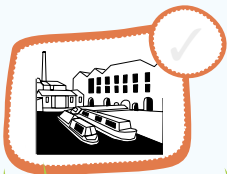
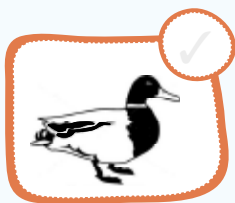


Discover...

Tick those
you have
found!

The Wild Nature Trail

See how many of the nature posts you can find. If you take some paper and a crayon with you, you can do a 'brass rubbing' from each post.





To avoid lots of steps...

Turn right from the wharf and follow the side of the canal past the tall chimney and over the bridge to the towpath.

Look out for wildlife on and near to the river and canal.

There are some good ideas for games and activities over the next few pages.



I spy...

How many
can you
spot?

Mini-beasts

Top Tips



Handle bugs gently

They are delicate, so only pick them up when necessary. If you put a bug in a jar to study it, don't keep it in the jar for too long, and don't leave it in the sun. Always put the bugs back where you found them.

Take a friend with you

Make sure you both know what to do in an emergency and can call for help if necessary. Young children should be supervised at all times.

Cover any open cuts

Wash your hands thoroughly afterwards.

Don't try to turn over any heavy stones or logs

Only move those that you can easily lift. Always put them back the way you found them.

Look out...

- Be careful around stinging nettles, prickles and thorns.
- Beware of sharp objects, e.g. broken glass.
- Bees and wasps occasionally sting in self defence. If you see a lot, there may be a nest nearby, so survey in a different area. Whilst most stings only result in minor pain and swelling, seek medical advice if stung near the eyes, nose or throat, or if stung multiple times.

What you will need...

- A bug pot
- Tray
- Plastic spoon
- Magnifying glass



Happy bug hunting!

Grasshopper



Earwig



Woodlouse



Centipede



Shieldbug



Caterpillar



Stag beetle



Snail



Harvestman



Ant



I spy...

How many
can you
spot?

Leaves

Leaves come in all sorts of colours, shapes, and sizes. Some have hidden scents, some make wonderful sounds and there are many different textures to explore.

Oak



Sycamore



Beech



Field Maple



Horse Chestnut



Ash



Holly



Birch



Rowan



Hazel



Hawthorn



Elder



Alder



Draw your favourite leaf shape here...



Playing safe

Part of the fun of playing in the countryside is about exploring and taking risks, but you must always play safe.

Tameside's countryside is there to explore... but it is possible to get lost in woodland and on remote hills. If you are going out exploring, try and stick near to paths and always tell someone where you are going and what time you will be back.

Tree Climbing

Grown ups... help children to work out which tree is a good one to climb and which is not. If a child needs help getting up onto the tree - it is probably too big!

Remember... always look at the branch you are about to sit or climb on.

Don't climb any tree or branch that is dead, or climb any higher if you can't work out how to get down.



Weather

Wear sensible clothes whatever the weather, and remember the weather can change quickly. Don't forget the sun cream or a waterproof coat.

Water safety

Some ponds and streams may look shallow but can be deep and rivers can be dangerous. If you want to watch wildlife near to water, find a safe, stable spot.

Don't lean down over steep sides and never wade or swim in the water.

Remember...

be sensible and watch where you are going. Look out for branches that can trip you up, be careful on slippery slopes and never climb high rocks.

Poisonous plants and berries

Some of the most yummy looking berries can be poisonous. Enjoy looking at the colours and shapes, but don't eat any.

Stings and bites

All the best explorers cover up. Wear long trousers to protect your legs from stings and bites... and stop itching!

If wasps, bees or horseflies come near you, stay calm. Try and watch what they are doing, rather than worrying about them stinging you.



Countryside and nature games

Play nature noughts and crosses

A game for two people. Make a nine square grid with twigs. One person uses pebbles, the other uses leaves. Take it in turns to place your object on a square. The first to make a row has won. Try it with other objects.



Tracks and trails

This is great fun if you and your friends make two teams. One team sets off and lays a trail of arrows and signs for the other team to follow. You can use twigs and stones or whatever is available. You can invent your own signs, but make sure everyone agrees them before you set off.

Make a nine square grid

With a friend collect six pairs of objects e.g. two stones, two leaves, etc. Make a nine square grid each out of twigs. Decide who is the boss. The boss picks up an object and places it in his/her grid and describes to the other where it is e.g. Top right, one to the left and two up. The friend must place the identical object in the same place on their grid. At the end, look at the grids, are they the same?



Bird survival hunt

This is a good game to play with a few friends. Imagine you are a small bird and must find enough food to survive.

Here is a typical menu...

Total score:

10-12 = Your sharp eyes and determination mean you will survive.

7-9 = You will probably survive.

4-6 = Your survival is doubtful.

0-3 = Oh dear! You haven't found enough.



Menu

- Small Spider
- Small creature on tree bark
- Caterpillar
- Centipede
- Ground beetle
- Pine cone
- Earthworm
- Small seed
- Flying insect
- Berry
- Maggot or grub
- Fruit tree bud

Use double sided tape on card to collect nature.

Fun with nature



Useful things to take...

A collecting bag
String
Scissors
Paper
Sticky tape

Conkers

These are the fruit of the Horse chestnut tree.

Why not organise a conker championship with your friends? All you need is a piece of string and something sharp to make a hole. An adult can make the holes in your conkers and once you have threaded the string through, you're away! The aim is to take it in turns hitting each others conkers until one breaks.

Wild wellies

Wrap a piece of sticky tape around the top of your wellies, sticky side out. See what sticks to it as you run through the grass.

Or why not cover them with leaves and twigs...or make long claws.



Remember...
never break
branches off a
living tree.



Den building

Making a shelter in the woods is great fun. Only use wood that has already fallen from a tree and dismantle and replace everything where you found it afterwards. You can have great fun time after time!

Use the space that nature has created... the space between two trees, or by a fallen log. Use leaves or soft grass for a floor.

Natures nibbles

Foraging for wild food like blackberries and hazelnuts is fun, but make sure you know what you are collecting, and don't eat anything unless you are sure it is safe.

Some berries and plants are poisonous.

Wacky woodland obstacle course

Invent your own obstacle course. Walk along a log, jump over a puddle, round the tree, through the gap, race your friends. Do it on one leg or with your hands in the air - or walk it backwards!

**Go creeping,
crawling, foraging
and discovering!**

**Run around...get out
of breath!**

Fun with nature



Create a mini world

Find a small area of grass or moss and 'fence it off' with sticks. Make a mini world inside. Use stones and leaves to make a house, a village, a theme park or a castle. Make flags with leaves, make creatures with twigs and pebbles. Make a mini garden, a fairy playground or a hobbit house.

Witches and Wizards ideas

Make a fairy crown

Find some bendy twigs and wind them into a circle that fits your head. Decorate with leaves, feathers and twigs.

Find yourself a wizard stick

Decorate it by rubbing patterns into the bark with a stone. Tie treasure to it with string.

Make a witches broomstick

Tie little twigs to a long stick with string.



Make a nest

Gather twigs, leaves, wool, feathers, or moss and make a nest on the ground. Imagine who would lay an egg in it.

Make a kite

Windy days are great for kite flying. Make your own or have fun watching things blown by the breeze. Try flying seeds from Sycamore trees, dandelion clocks or feathers.

Make a wind chime

Tie sticks on lengths of string and listen to them knocking together. Find a windy spot.

Mapsticks

Make a 'map' of your trip as you walk along. Collect interesting things that you find on your walk to remind you of the day. Tie them to a stick with wool or grass. Look for colourful leaves from a wood or clover from a grass field.



Make your coat your wings and fly!



Things i saw



earthworm  a squirrel 

flowers what colour flowers? _____

beetles puddles dead leaves

 animal holes a butterfly 

a stream dogs  litter

animal footprints seeds from trees 

birds do you know what type of birds?

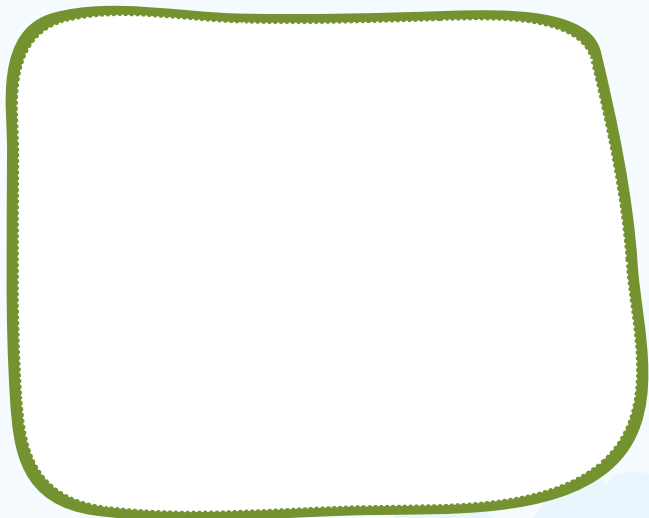
fungi  my friend who's your friend?

rabbits trees that were hollow inside

fox others _____



My favourite nature find



What's the best
thing you have
found outdoors?



Get arty

Nature is great for creating all sorts of art.

- Collect different shaped leaves and make leaf prints at home.
- Make pictures, shapes and patterns with leaves on the ground. Leave them there for someone else to discover...or take a photo.
- Make a strange creature out of fallen logs and twigs.
- Draw in the mud or soil with a stick.

Rock on!

Pile up the pebbles, how high can you go?

Write your name with them, make a face with them, create a pebble person!



Make a nature mobile

Collect nature treasures and turn them into a mobile!

Tie them at different lengths to a stick and hang it in your bedroom window.

Touch and feel

Write your name with leaves or twigs.

Find something prickly, hard, furry and bendy - make a texture picture on the ground or stick to card.





Natural paint

Try squashing berries or leaves or dandelion flowers to make 'Paint'.

Try mud paint!

Earth map

Make a map on the ground of what you can see out of natural materials. Use twigs, leaves, grass and stones.

Map the fields, hedgerows, trees, rivers, and buildings.

Muddy fun

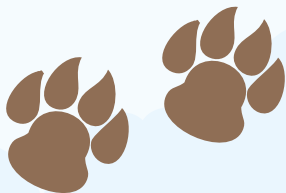
Some of the mud you may find is mostly clay.

Make a face

Take a lump in your hands, squidge it and squash it onto the trunk of a nearby tree. Add leaves, grass or berries to make face. Does it have a long beard? A pointy nose or big ears?

Make a mud cake

Decorate the top with leaves and berries.



Make monster mud Footprints



Tree word search

M J I S E L M I B S O P
A V X T S Q W F D Y A O
O U E K H A I Y H C K P
P Y W J P O L E E A E L
I S C H Z E L D M M I A
N P H W N H O L E O Z R
E R E S Y T W S Y R V A
W U S N X R J B E E C H
E C T Z A E Q N C N T J
B E N S A E W X L X D H
H F U K N S S L E P K H
M W T T E U W V Z G E B

Can you find these words?

Trees, Oak, Sycamore, Beech,
Elm, Willow, Alder, Pine, Chestnut,
Poplar, Holly, Spruce.



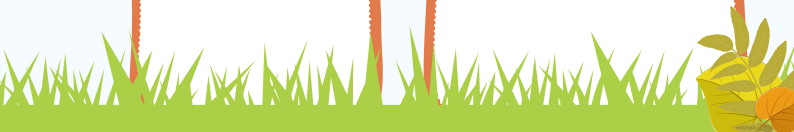
Our day out

We spotted...

We heard...

We played...

We made...



We'd love to hear about your adventures

Have you had an adventure in Tameside's countryside?

Maybe you have a favourite activity that you can share with us. We'd love to hear about it!

Have you been to one of the many events that Tameside Cultural Services organise throughout the year. If you have a favourite, let us know.

Perhaps you came to an event and didn't enjoy yourself... let us know why!

You can get in touch with the Outdoor Arts and Engagement Team through our website

www.tameside.gov.uk/culture

The Arts and Engagement Team, Tameside Central Library, Old Street, Ashton-under-Lyne, Tameside, OL6 7SG.

0161 342 4144



Why not join us on one of our events?

Throughout the year, and especially during school holidays, there are lots of events for families and children. Pick up one of our events leaflets, or visit the website to see what's going on, and come along.

We'd love to see you!

A series
of cycling routes
exploring the
countryside from
Portland Basin

Let's go Cycling



Pick up one of the
free cycle trails
from Portland
Basin Museum

Discover more about cycling in
Tameside and Greater Manchester

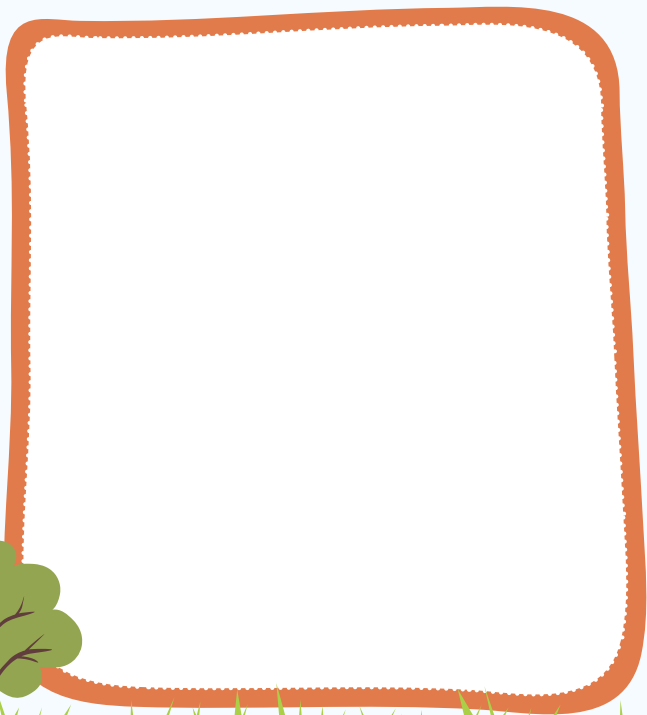
www.tameside.gov.uk/cycling

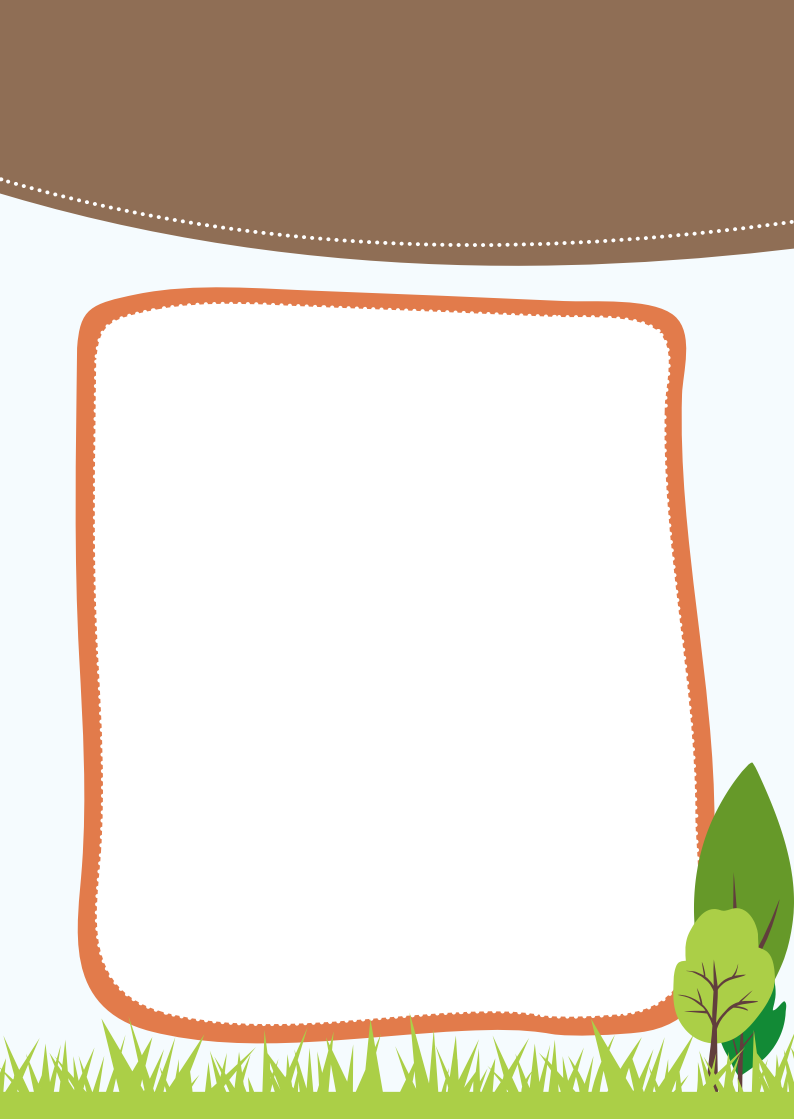
www.cycling.tfgm.com

www.goskyride.com



**Here's somewhere to jot
down your nature notes**







Why not join K.I.T.E

If you enjoy discovering the countryside and want to learn more about the environment and wildlife, join K.I.T.E, it stands for Kids In The Environment).

It's a group run by Tameside Cultural Service for 7-11 year olds and meets once a month to take part in lots of activities from wildlife watching to bird box building.

Portland Basin Museum

Portland Place,
Ashton-under-Lyne
OL7 0QA.
Tel: 0161 343 2878

