



The fathom Trust

CARING THROUGH CRAFT

Promoting health and wellbeing

Restoring life-giving connections to body, soul, nature,
and society through traditional craft skills



‘Fathom’ is an old English word meaning ‘to reach out and embrace’ and was used to describe the act of measuring the girth of a tree.

It alludes to our physical connection to the natural world, a sense of depth and inquiry, and the centrality of an embodied-relational approach to self-esteem.

The Fathom Trust aims to help those suffering mental illness by promoting recovery and emotional resilience through an evidence-based approach called ‘Fathoming’.

“Many of the ills we suffer as a society, it seemed to both Will and myself – and this was an impression confirmed during a life spent caring for those suffering mental distress – are either caused, or at any rate exacerbated, by a lack of any deep context to frame, ground, and give meaning to our lives.

Formerly, such a context was provided by a life lived close to the rhythms of the natural world, by a sense of continuity in learning and handing on skills and traditions, a thriving sense of community, immersion in practical work carried out with one’s hands, and a spiritual dimension to life.

All of this provided necessary depth, like the depth of earth into which a tree may sink its roots. By contrast our lives, it seemed to us, had become overly abstract, lacking context, and two-dimensional, no longer offering opportunities to find fulfilment or discover meaning. In other words, lacking depth.”

*Dr Iain McGilchrist MA (Oxon),
BM, FRCPsych, FRSA*

*(psychiatrist, former Clinical Director Bethlem Royal and Maudsley NHS
Trust, philosopher, Literary scholar, author)*

The Fathom Trust

Mission

To create opportunities for personal and social regeneration through a holistic community-based approach to managing mental illness and to promoting physical, mental, and spiritual wellbeing using traditional crafts to restore life-giving connections to body, soul, nature, and society.

Impact

We will create a financially sustainable social enterprise for Wales which will transform the lives of those who are stressed, disadvantaged, or suffering long-term mental and physical illness, with skills and relationships to help their recovery and regeneration.

Vision

To see individuals and their communities transformed by establishing a network of educational and therapeutic communities to create social and economic regeneration. By participating in heritage crafts and engaging with the natural world through conservation and farming, people can learn to live well by managing stress and illness and to stay well by learning to live in harmony with body, soul, nature, and society.



Photo courtesy of Thom Atkinson

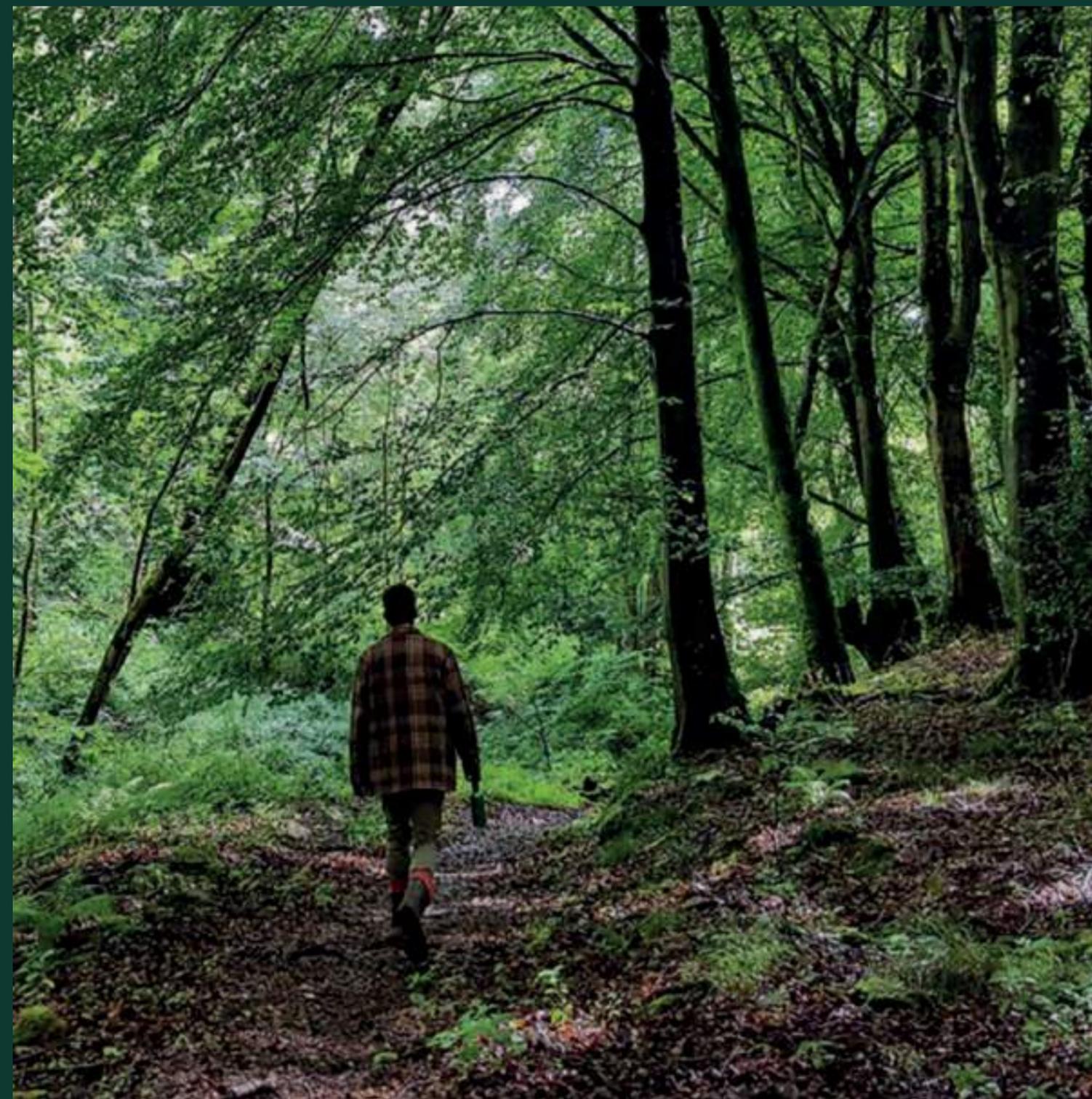
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Background

The Fathom Trust is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (Charity Number 1190352), based across a number of rural estates in Wales. The stakeholders involved in service delivery have been agreed and work is underway with local partners from the NHS. The Board of Trustees offer expert advice and oversight on operational matters, including safeguarding and patient safety. The Fathom Trust is looking for partners to help take this from a small-scale pilot to develop a full year's proof of concept. Details are offered at the end of the document.

The Fathom approach helps people re-evaluate their habits of self-perception and recover a sense of meaning and purpose by engaging in the practice of craft making and farming. By providing a model of integrated, holistic, and cost-effective social infrastructure, the Fathom Trust serves as a complementary partner to the NHS and as a positive and innovative response to the challenges of 21st century health care in Wales.

The Trust's activities will ultimately be financially sustainable, supported by paid courses for professionals who are at risk of mental or physical exhaustion, as well as the production of high-end hand-made crafts and agricultural products for the market. These income streams will subsidise the cost of outreach into schools and communities to provide care that is currently beyond the scope of statutory services.





“The idea is a revolutionary break from the usual pattern, and one which caters to the whole person – mind, body and soul. I believe it may hold the key to progress in areas where we have hitherto struggled; and bring richness into the lives of children of all ages, patients of many kinds, and those simply needing refreshment because of the burdens of their office. That would be my hope – our hope – and perhaps I may dare that it might be the hope of us all.”

*Dr Iain McGilchrist MA (Oxon),
BM, FRCPsych, FRSA*

*(psychiatrist, former Clinical Director Bethlem Royal
and Maudsley NHS Trust, philosopher, Literary
scholar, author)*



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Charitable Programmes

Pillar 1: Recovery

A 12-week 'fathoming' course comprising 24 half-day sessions for individuals who have been referred from primary care, community-based mental health, local authorities and schools. Participants have access to training in a number of traditional crafts and farming activities and are supported in their recovery through a programme of structured reflection.

Objectives

- A referral service for GPs, psychiatrists and local authorities
- Connections to nature, craft skills, and a community support network
- Access to educational and therapeutic support

Pillar 2: Resilience

A series of educational modules, called 'Fingertip Philosophy', will teach health literacy, natural philosophy, and craft skills. Participation starts in Year 9 (14yrs) and continues through a student's schooling. Evidence of personal development and civic participation is recorded in a digital logbook, improving access to employment or further training. Modules are delivered at scale through an online learning platform providing direct access to the Fathom therapeutic hubs.

- Physical, mental, and spiritual wellbeing
- Social connection
- An ability to practice a craft skill independently
- A support network for carers, teachers, and families

Pillar 3: Regeneration

Three-day income-generating courses caring for key workers in the health and social care sectors and others professionals at risk of burn-out. Participants have the opportunity to produce their own object, such as a ladder-back chair, under expert supervision. They receive tuition on topics related to health and wellbeing from subject experts and benefit from personalised psychological assessment and coaching.

- Participation in the conservation of natural landscapes, buildings, and intangible local heritage
- Stimulating a discourse on the nature of sustainable prosperity in the 21st century
- Establishing communities of makers and growers
- Creating jobs and skills in the agricultural craft sector



My name is Heather Dickens, and I am a professional basket maker living and working in the beautiful Brecon Beacons.

I started to learn the art of basketry, the year after my daughter Naina died. She was diagnosed with Osteosarcoma (bone cancer). After many complications with surgery and chemotherapy, then leg amputation, she died in May 2013. She was 13yrs old.

Two years later, in 2015, my son Samji suddenly died in an accident, he was 19yrs old and studying to be a professional musician at Bristol university.

After I attended my first basketry class, I realised that I had actually focused on something other than my loss. This gave me a huge sense of achievement, it felt as though I had unlocked my mind. The distraction and focus freed my mind and allowed my creativity to step in. It has had such an empowering effect on how I perceive things.

Each class that I attended brought feelings of well-being, friendship and a sense of belonging to something. Slowly but surely, I found myself able to discuss my losses with others in the group.

My passion grew week by week, I made shopping baskets, log baskets, egg baskets and so it went on.

I now teach my own classes and hold day workshops, the need to share what I have learned and how it has helped my recovery is a huge part of my life.



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The Need

The impact of mental illness on society is profound. It is the single largest cause of disability in the UK and costs the UK workforce 70 million days each year at a cost of £2.4bn (Mental Health Foundation, 2020). Three-quarters of adult mental illness starts in childhood. Reports of child and adolescent mental illness are increasing but the treatments available are insufficient to meet either the volume or complexity of the demand. For example, approximately 70% of depressed patients in UK primary care are prescribed antidepressant medication (Kendrick, Stuart, Newell, Geraghty, & Moore, 2015); however, adherence may be as low as one third (Bull et al., 2002).

Talking therapies are available but limited by long waiting lists. There are very few alternatives. There is a strong association between poor mental health and social and economic circumstances. Children are less connected with the natural world than ever before. Processes of automation, digitalisation, and the unfamiliarity of natural habitats have profoundly influenced the way young people live their lives. The COVID-19 pandemic has further highlighted the social determinants of mental illness. Early evidence from the Health Foundation indicates an associated increase in the burden of individual anxiety and depression, in burnout amongst the workforce, and in social isolation, all of which are likely to be exacerbated by the current economic recession.



Photo courtesy of Gavin Hogg



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Young Peoples' Mental Health

There has been a 100% increase in demand for Young peoples' mental health services in the last four years in Wales. Only 25% of people with mental health problems will receive support and over half of mental health problems start by the age of 14 and 75% by the age of 18.

(Mental Health Foundation, "Mental Health in Wales: Fundamental Facts 2016")

Depression

80% of people identified as having depression are managed in a primary care setting and the average GP will see at least one patient with depression during each surgery. Over 40% of those in their 80s are affected by depression. Around three in four cases of depression are neither recognised nor treated and depression accounts for at least 75% of suicides in England and Wales each year.

(Mind in Mid-Wales Strategic Plan 2018-2023)

Caring Through Craft



“Will Beharrell – the founder of Fathom – is a very special person. I have worked with him very closely in Afghanistan and amongst very vulnerable and challenged communities in London. He has a unique combination of wisdom, humility, and gentle humour – as well as a deep academic education. His fundamental insight –that living and creating in a craft community can be deeply helpful for mind and soul – seems entirely right. It’s often not an easy message to convey today. But each of us that has been lucky enough to find such moments of meaning can attest to its power. We are very lucky to have Will and this project.”

Rory Stewart

OBE FRSL FRSGS PC (former International Development Secretary, author, politician and diplomat)



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The Solution

The Fathom Trust provides safe, calm, and creative environments in which people can learn to focus on practical tasks that are mentally relaxing and which create opportunities for developing new skills, relationships and perspectives. This community-based approach integrates public, private, and independent partners and offers a practical and a more efficient use of resources.

The COVID-19 pandemic has reminded us of the importance of nature and working with our hands. There is increasing evidence that engaging with nature can help reduce mental health symptoms across a range of disorders. Neurobiological studies demonstrate the link between bodily awareness and emotion regulation. Traditional craft-making and farming require bodily engagement and mental focus and can be transformative for those suffering mental illness. They offer opportunities for developing self-confidence, emotional resilience, social connection, and environmental awareness and can teach us to re-evaluate our relationship with the natural world and to discover our place in it.

When immersed in nature a common response is of a connected fascination; this has been demonstrated empirically to be an active element in generating positive psychological affect. (Gonzalez M, et al, 2010).





Spoon Carving

Learn how to fashion a spatula and spoon from a billet of wood



Pottery

Learn how to mix clay and throw a ceramic bowl on a traditional kickwheel



Bread Making

Learn bread-making skills from award-winning local baker



Outdoor Adventure

Wild swimming, climbing, caving, abseiling, mountain climbing



Furniture Making

Felling an Ash tree, extracting it with a team of Ardennes horses, milling it. Learn how to make a table, chair or bench



Guided Nature Walks

An introduction to native flora and fauna in the Usk Valley and Brecon Beacons.

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Benefit

The Fathom Trust will transform lives by equipping individuals with skills and support to promote recovery, emotional resilience, and regeneration. In so doing, it will lighten the burden on statutory services by reducing the number of days lost to sickness in the health and education sectors and by reducing the number of children absent from the classroom as a result of mental illness. It will add value to the local economy by conserving traditional skills, creating local employment, and equipping young people with the vision and skills required to take care of themselves, their communities, and their environment. It will increase the social impact of businesses by giving them opportunities to contribute to the health of their workforce and their local communities.

Courses Include

Make. Do. Mend

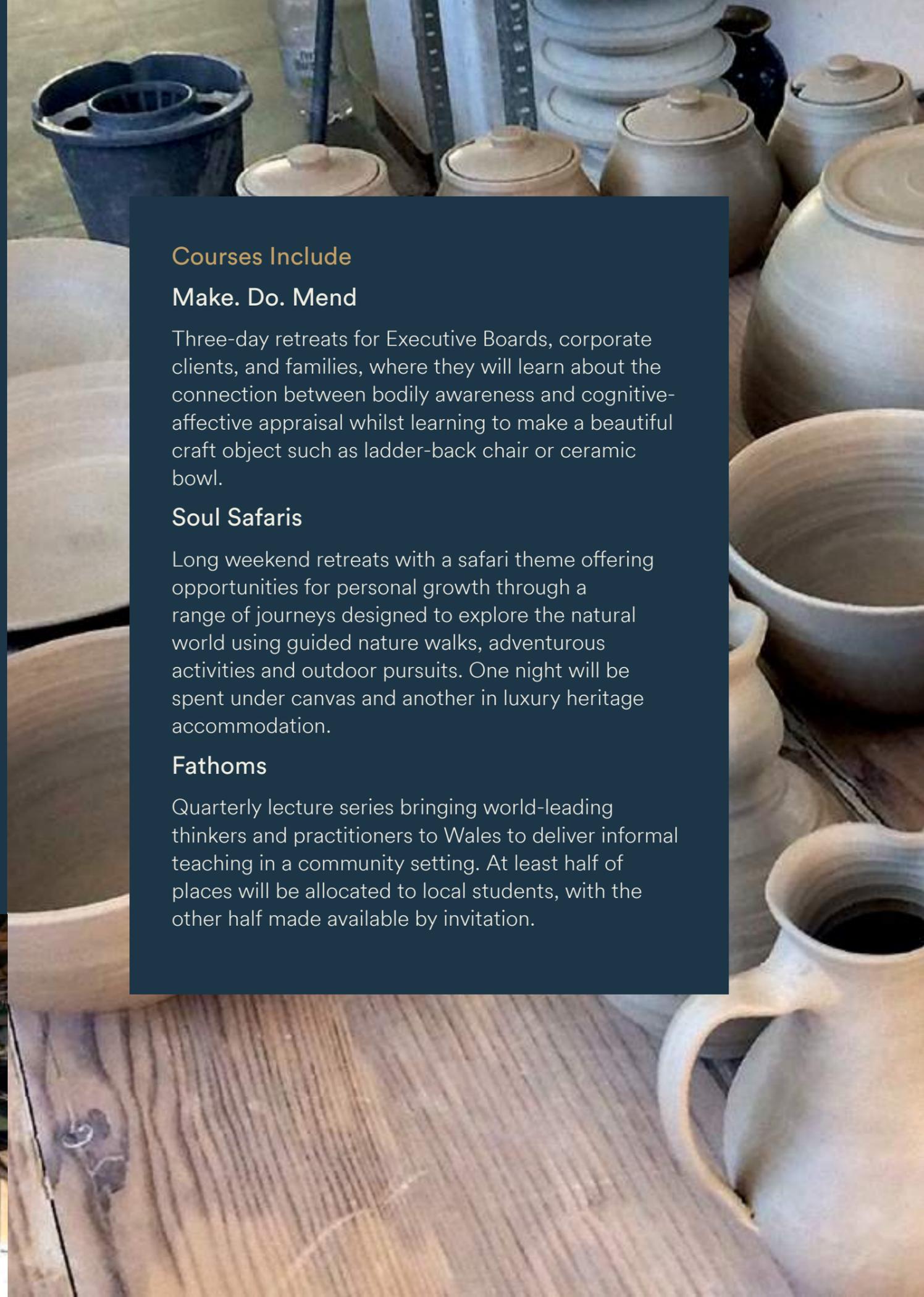
Three-day retreats for Executive Boards, corporate clients, and families, where they will learn about the connection between bodily awareness and cognitive-affective appraisal whilst learning to make a beautiful craft object such as ladder-back chair or ceramic bowl.

Soul Safaris

Long weekend retreats with a safari theme offering opportunities for personal growth through a range of journeys designed to explore the natural world using guided nature walks, adventurous activities and outdoor pursuits. One night will be spent under canvas and another in luxury heritage accommodation.

Fathoms

Quarterly lecture series bringing world-leading thinkers and practitioners to Wales to deliver informal teaching in a community setting. At least half of places will be allocated to local students, with the other half made available by invitation.





“As an advocate for the benefits of the natural world around me, it seems completely logical that mental and physical needs are inseparable and enhanced through our abundant world. Sadly we often experience a disconnect between physical and mental health. As a GP in rural practice I am so excited to see The Fathom Trust grow to help patients in their time of need and bring holistic care back to its core.”

*Dr Robert Powell,
GP partner, Llandovery*



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Budget and Funding Requirements

1 Year Pilot Programme

The Fathom Trust is seeking £300,000 to launch a pilot programme.

£150,000 will fund charitable outreach, and a further £150,000 will fund the development of a revenue stream to demonstrate financial sustainability.

Total funding of £1.2m will establish The Fathom Trust as a socially impactful and financially sustainable enterprise in Wales within five years.

The three pillars will include engagement with local schools, programmes for individuals (focusing on NHS referrals), and paid programmes for professionals and members of the healthcare, business, and government communities.

Further details are available upon request.

Charitable Programmes

Component	Description	People	Cost (£)
Fathoming	4 x 12 weeks courses	48	100
Fingertip Philosophy	Develop and pilot educational modules for Yrs 8 & 9 students	240	50
Total Cost			150

A three-day 'Fathoming' course for twelve participants will be offered to key workers, starting with NHS and care staff for a total course fee of £10,200.

Item	Unit Cost (£)	Total Cost (£)	Notes
Course Director	400	4,800	1 day per week for 12 weeks
Staff Costs	150	5,400	3 x assistants one day per week for 12 weeks
Craft Instructors	200	7,200	3 x instructors
Venue Hire	350	4,200	Including kitchen, meeting space, workshops
Course material	60	720	Tool sets, willow, wood, clay etc
Psychometric Testing	50	600	Strength Finders
Equipment costs	-	1,120	PPE, seating, tables etc,
Transport	-	960	2 x taxi-van day return
Total cost of 12 x one-day courses			25,000
Total cost of 12 x one-day courses per person			2,083
Total cost per person per day			174

£174 cost per person per day represents a saving of £50 per person compared to the average cost per bed day in the NHS (NICE, 2015) and is equivalent to the upper end of NHS day care for mental health patients in the community (Personal Social Services Research Unit, 2010)

'Fingertip Philosophy': an educational programme of health literacy and emotional resilience focused on personal and spiritual renewal

Item	Unit Cost (£)	Total Cost (£)	Notes
Course Director	400	19,200	1 day per week for 48 weeks
Education Officer	200	19,200	2 days per week for 48 weeks
Educational Consultant	500	10,000	20 days at £500
Materials		1,600	Printing, presentations etc.
Total Cost		50,000	

Educational content will be developed in partnership with two local comprehensive schools, reaching 240 students, based on four classes of thirty students in both year 8 and year 9.

Corporate Programmes

Component	Description	People	Cost (£)
Caring for Key Workers	10 x 3-day courses	180	100
Make. Do. Mend.	3 x 3-day courses	36	30
Soul Safari	3 x 3-day courses	36	20
Total Cost			150

Caring for key workers: a sample budget

Item	Unit Cost (£)	Total Cost (£)	Notes
Accommodation	100	1,200	1 night luxury B&B
Craft Instructors	100	1,200	Cost per half-day
Staff costs	800	2,400	Course director, assistant, visiting speakers' expenses
Course material	50	600	£20 per person per day
Equipment hire	75	900	Outdoor kit, transport
Venue hire	500	1,500	Workshops, catering, meeting space
Course prep	200	800	2 craft instructors for 2 days
Marketing		1,000	Brochures, photography
Psychometric testing	50	600	Strength Finders

Total Cost of 3-day course for 12 participants	10,200
Total Cost per capita for 3 days	850
Total Cost per capita per day	283

- £283 per person per day represents a 90% saving on the average per capita daily rates for executive coaching in 2019, which were £2000 - £3000 (low to average market rate) and an average hourly rate of £550.
- One-off capital expenditure of £4000 for tents, camp equipment etc.
- Soul Safaris delivered at a two-thirds of the cost due to higher staff-client ratios and reduced therapeutic input.

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Future Growth

In year 1, total funding of £300,000 will pay to develop all professional and charitable components. In year 2, we will double the number of people reached at an annual cost of £600,000.

Revenue generated from corporate programmes will represent an increasing percentage of total costs. In year 1, we will deliver these courses at cost. In year 2, revenue from these programmes will cover 25% of total costs. We plan to increase this revenue stream by 25% in years three, four, and five.

All charitable activities will be funded from revenue generated from courses for professionals within five years. We plan to extend our professional courses from the public to private sectors. The additional revenue generated by accessing a corporate market will enable The Fathom Trust to invest up to 75% of its resources in its charitable work whilst limiting its corporate work to a 25% share of total spend.

The Fathom Trust is seeking partners to support it through its first five years of activity with total funding of £1.2m. Together, we will will create a financially sustainable social enterprise with an estimated social return on investment of between £5 and £7 for every £1 invested.

Year	Charitable Costs (£)	Corporate Costs (£)	Total Costs	Revenue (£)	Revenue as % of Total Cost	Funding Gap (£)
1	150	150	300	0	0	300
2	450	150	600	150	25	450
3	450	150	600	300	50	300
4	450	150	600	450	75	150
5	450	150	600	600	100	0
Total 5yr Funding requirement						1.2m



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Future Impact

The Fathom Trust demonstrates an innovative approach to health and wellbeing by creating social infrastructure to increase civic participation in the foundational economy. In so doing, it seeks to bring together public, private, and independent partners to establish a platform for social innovation and demonstrate a social return on investment by creating the conditions for human flourishing and ecological harmony. This approach, which is grounded in civic education, aims to equip participants with the skills and opportunities to take responsibility for living well and to provide holistic care for those suffering illness or social disadvantage. The Fathom Trust is a practical application of the principle of parity of esteem between mental and physical health, to which the UK Government is committed, and a positive response to the Welsh Government's Wellbeing of Future Generations Act.

Near Horizon (2020-2025)

- Establish a therapeutic craft community
- Develop an evidence-based 'toolkit' to improve emotional resilience and recovery for those in mental distress
- Create an online platform delivering large-scale support for young people's personal development
- Help to establish social prescribing across Wales
- Deliver quarterly Fathom lectures
- Develop a premium hand-made in Wales brand based on high-end craft making

Far Horizon (2025-2050)

- Incorporate 'Fathoming' within school curricula
- Establish craft-centred therapeutic communities throughout Wales
- Export the Fathoming model to strengthen existing craft production in Afghanistan and the Middle East.
- Establish year-long taster courses for school leavers in a range of traditional crafts
- Establish formal apprenticeship schemes offering aspiring craftsmen and women the chance to work with leading designers and craft-makers.
- Demonstrate social and economic regeneration through a network of Fathom communities across Wales.
- Establish Fathom communities in England and Scotland.
- Establish a luxury hand-made brand co-owned by the Fathom communities, with profits being fed back into the charitable work
- Establish the Fathoming model alongside existing craft production in the Middle East, Central Asia, and North Africa.

Trustees

- Professor Sir Mansel Aylward CB MD DSc FFOM FRCP FLSW
- Dr Iain McGilchrist MA (Oxon), BM, FRCPsych, FRSA
- Professor Jonathon Gray FRCP, PhD MPH (Harvard)
- Dr Junaid Bajwa BSc, MSc, MBBS, MRCS, MRCP, MBA

We are inviting additional trustees to the board to strengthen aspects of governance and finance.

Biography

Dr William Beharrell



The Founder and CEO of the Fathom Trust, Dr William Beharrell is a medical doctor and founding member of HRH The Prince of Wales's charity Turquoise Mountain. In its first five years in Afghanistan he helped to run a programme to preserve traditional crafts, along with social and economic regeneration, which included setting up a primary health centre and primary school.

He has subsequently undertaken projects in Romania and Jordan with a focus on community development, heritage crafts, conservation and health. He has degrees in medicine from Cambridge and Arabic with Persian from Durham and has worked in Central Asia, Africa, and the Middle East.

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Iain McGilchrist MA (Oxon), BM, FRCPsych, FRSA
(author, "The Master and His Emissary")

"All my life I have believed in the centrality of our connexion with the natural world, and with a realm that lies beyond the purely material. Having nearly lived out my allotted lifespan, and watching with some trepidation the accelerating trend of the world, I have become only strengthened in my conviction. My personal path has been from academia, with a Fellowship, after graduating, at All Souls College, Oxford for 7 years, through literature and philosophy, to my devoting 14 years to train as a physician and ultimately as a consultant psychiatrist. I have written most of my life, and am best known as the author of *The Master and his Emissary*, a book that combines neurology, philosophy and the history of ideas in a critique of our current plight; and am hoping that a further book called *The Matter with Things* will be out next year – a critique, from a similar point of view, of reductionism and materialism.

"I am convinced that we cannot survive unless we reincorporate in our lives knowledge and wisdom we appear to have lost, and for the loss of which we are paying the price. The Fathom Trust is the practical expression of a philosophy I deeply believe in; I fervently hope it will thrive and grow. On such ventures depend both our individual and communal survival."



Professor Sir Mansel Aylward CB MD DSc FFOM FFPM FRCP FLSW
Chair, Life Sciences Hub Wales

Sir Mansel is Chair of Life Sciences Hub Wales. He is also Chair of the Bevan Commission, an independent expert panel to oversee NHS reforms in Wales and to provide expert advice to the Minister for Health and Social Services, as well as Chair of Respiratory Innovation Wales. He is Professor of Public Health Education at the Centre for Psychosocial and Disability Research at Cardiff University. He is also Professor of Prudent Health and Wellbeing at the School of Management, Swansea University. He was the first Chair of Public Health Wales NHS Trust, responsible for the delivery of public health services at national, local and community levels in Wales. He was a panel member of the Parliamentary Review of Health and Social Services in Wales. Earlier in his career he was Chief Medical Officer, Medical Director and Chief Scientist at the Department for Work and Pensions in London. He was knighted in the Queen's New Year's Honours 2010 for services to health and healthcare. In 2016, he was elected to fellowship of the Learned Society of Wales. He was made an Honorary Fellow of Cardiff University in July 2019.

"The Fathom Trust is a bold and positive response to the Welsh Government's vision for health and wellbeing – as set out in 'A Healthier Wales'. It is an exciting example of a social innovation enterprise which illustrates why this vision is so important for us all. In many ways, prudent and community-based healthcare is our future, and I am proud to see The Fathom Trust emerging as a leader in this field."



Professor Jonathon Gray FRCP, PhD, MPH (Harvard)
Director of Innovation and Improvement Cardiff and Vale UHB

Jonathon brings significant experience as director of local, national and international improvement and innovation, and as a clinician, academic, and most recently Executive Director of Transformation and Senior Responsible Officer for Ysbyty Calon y Ddraig (Dragon's Heart Hospital), a 2000 bed surge hospital set up in response to Covid-19. He is passionate about large-scale change in healthcare and has established and led an Innovation Institute in New Zealand, designed and co-led the 1000 lives Campaign in Wales, the 20,000 days Campaign in New Zealand and the Institute for Social Prescribing in England.

"Will's idea for The Fathom Trust reminds me of my favourite Maori proverb, "What is the most important thing in the world? It's the people, the people, the people." We are bringing together people from all walks of life, to share their experiences, their skills and their energy, building a stronger community for all."



Dr Junaid Bajwa BSc, MSc, MBBS, MRCS, MRCGP, FRCP, MBA

Junaid is the Chief Medical Scientist at Microsoft Research and a practising physician in the NHS. He has worked across primary care, secondary care, and public health settings in addition to acting as a payer, and policy maker within the UK, where he specialised in informatics, digital transformation, and leadership. Junaid completed his MBA at the Imperial College Business School in London and has studied health strategy and quality improvement at both Harvard and the Institute of Healthcare Improvement in Boston. He is a Clinical Associate Professor at University College London and Visiting Scientist at the Harvard School of Public Health. He hopes to help healthcare systems unlock the power of technology to help solve the healthcare challenges of today, whilst reimagining a better future for tomorrow.

"I am honoured to be joining the Fathom Trust as a Trustee, and I look forward to playing my part in supporting the Trust's overall mission to improve the holistic wellbeing and emotional resilience for some of the most vulnerable in our society."





THANK YOU