

# NEW FOREST HOTELS

## **The Natural Advantage: How Off-Site Meetings in Nature Boost Team Performance**

Off-site meetings surrounded by natural light, fresh air, and greenery are more than just a pleasant escape from the office – they're a proven catalyst for better productivity, creativity, and employee well-being. Modern research shows that people *thrive* in environments connected to nature. From brighter moods and sharper focus to enhanced creativity and team morale, taking your team out of the fluorescent-lit boardroom and into a setting with sunshine and scenery can supercharge outcomes. In this blog, we explore the evidence-based benefits of meeting in nature and explain why New Forest Hotels offers the perfect nature-inspired retreat for productive and inspiring corporate gatherings.

### **Natural Light and Fresh Air: A Productivity Booster**

There's a reason natural light is often called the *number one office perk*. In a survey of employees, access to daylight and outdoor views was ranked as the most desired workplace feature – above cafeterias and fitness centres. When people get ample sunlight, they feel more alert and less fatigued. In fact, workers in daylight-rich environments reported fewer cases of eyestrain, headaches, and fatigue during the day. These improvements translate to clearer minds and higher productivity. Similarly, *fresh air* and good ventilation have a dramatic impact on mental performance. Improving indoor air quality has been shown to cause cognitive function scores to soar on problem-solving tasks. In short, a meeting space with open windows and clean, oxygen-rich air helps keep everyone alert, focused, and thinking at their best.

New Forest Hotels capitalise on these natural advantages. Their meeting rooms are designed with large windows that flood spaces with natural daylight. Many rooms even feature doors or windows that can be opened wide to let in the *fresh forest breeze*. Instead of the stuffy air and harsh lighting of a typical office, attendees enjoy an environment that naturally keeps energy levels high. It's a recipe for sharper focus and productivity: bright sunlit rooms, plenty of fresh New Forest air, and perhaps even birdsong in the background.

### **Creativity and Innovation Blossom Outdoors**

Stepping into nature doesn't just make people feel good – it actually helps them think differently. A famous study on creativity had participants take a test after spending time in nature. The group immersed in nature showed a significant improvement in

creative problem-solving scores compared to peers who hadn't yet started the trip. The findings underline a *“real, measurable cognitive advantage”* to time in natural settings. Nature seems to clear mental clutter and open up the mind, allowing fresh ideas to flow. As cognitive psychologist Ruth Ann Atchley explains, modern life overloads us with stimuli and stresses that sap our creative resources, whereas *“nature is a place where our mind can rest... We have resources left over – to be creative, to be imaginative, to problem solve.”*

Bringing your team together in a green setting can spark new ideas in ways a sterile meeting room cannot. The scenery, the sounds, even a short walk among trees during a break can stimulate curiosity and imaginative thinking. Many great ideas surface when people are relaxed and mentally refreshed by their environment. Outdoor breakout sessions or walking meetings on New Forest trails can thus become incubators for innovation. Surrounded by greenery and away from ringing phones and email alerts, your team has the *mental space* to brainstorm boldly and solve problems collaboratively. If multi-day creativity retreats in nature yield big results, imagine what even a single day's off-site in the New Forest could do for your team's innovative thinking.

### **Boosting Mood and Well-Being**

It's well documented that time in nature is a powerful mood-booster and stress reducer. Engaging with natural environments can reduce stress and anxiety, restore mental focus, and improve mood and life satisfaction. Just 20 minutes in nature is enough to significantly lower cortisol, the body's primary stress hormone, with the steepest drop occurring within 20–30 minutes of outdoor relaxation. Teams that meet in a peaceful garden or forest setting are likely to feel calmer, happier, and more positive. Instead of the tension that can build up in a cramped office, colleagues in nature often experience lower heart rates and a relaxed alertness – the ideal mindset for productive discussions.

Crucially, these mood and well-being benefits aren't just “nice-to-haves” – they directly influence workplace outcomes. Happier, less stressed employees tend to collaborate better and maintain higher engagement throughout the day. By choosing an off-site venue immersed in nature, you signal to your team that you value their well-being. The fresh air and scenic views at New Forest Hotels naturally lift spirits – morning meetings might start with energized, upbeat participants rather than groggy, coffee-dependent ones. And as the day goes on, a quick stroll in the garden or a gaze out a window at grazing ponies can recharge everyone's mental batteries. This well-being boost not only makes the meeting more enjoyable, it can also improve team cohesion and morale long after the off-site is over.

### **Aligned with Sustainable Values and Corporate Appeal**

Choosing a nature-based meeting venue isn't just good for employees – it's also good for a company's image and values. Sustainability and employee wellness have

become top priorities in the corporate world, and off-site meetings in green environments support both. Many firms are looking to partner with venues that reflect their environmental and social responsibility goals. By hosting your team in an eco-conscious setting like New Forest Hotels, you demonstrate commitment to those same principles of sustainability and well-being.

New Forest Hotels embraces eco-friendly practices and community-minded values. They source locally and seasonally for their catering, support regional suppliers, and strive to minimize environmental impact in daily operations. For companies aiming to reduce the carbon footprint of their events, this kind of venue is ideal. Moreover, connecting employees to nature can deepen their own sense of stewardship. Research shows that the benefits of bringing employees closer to nature extend beyond just sustainability metrics – it leads to *“positive effects on employees’ well-being and how they perform their jobs.”* In short, a green meeting venue boosts your team’s wellness and sends a strong message about your brand’s values. Clients, partners, and employees alike will appreciate a meeting hosted in a place that is as environmentally responsible as it is inspiring.

### **New Forest Hotels: A Natural Meeting Haven for Businesses**

New Forest Hotels provides an *ideal setting* to harness all these benefits of nature for your next corporate meeting or retreat. Each of their four hotels in the New Forest offers unique spaces and services that make business events both productive and rejuvenating. Here’s why New Forest Hotels are the perfect corporate retreat locations for teams of any size:

- **Naturally-Lit, Flexible Meeting Rooms:** Venues feature abundant natural daylight and adaptable layouts. Large windows with forest views (and the option to open them for fresh air) blur the line between indoors and outdoors, keeping participants energized and engaged. Rooms come equipped with all the modern amenities – high-speed Wi-Fi, large screens, and audio-visual equipment – to ensure your meeting runs smoothly.
- **Outdoor Breakout Areas & Garden Access:** Instead of being confined to one room, teams at New Forest Hotels can step directly outside during breaks. Each property has beautifully landscaped gardens and mapped forest walking trails on-site, encouraging delegates to take quick strolls for reflection or informal chats. These fresh-air breaks stimulate clear thinking and creative discussion, embodying the idea that *“fresh air fuels fresh ideas.”*
- **Tranquil Yet Accessible Location:** Your team can truly disconnect in the peaceful heart of the New Forest while remaining conveniently close to major routes. New Forest Hotels are nestled in tranquil countryside but are just minutes from the M27 motorway (for example, Forest Lodge sits only 4 miles from junction 1 of the M27). Ample on-site parking and easy access from

cities like Southampton and Bournemouth mean you get seclusion without sacrificing accessibility.

- **Wellness and Eco-Conscious Values:** Hosting your event here aligns with a culture of wellness and sustainability. The New Forest setting itself promotes relaxation and team bonding – whether it's spotting deer from a meeting room window or enjoying locally sourced farm-to-table meals together. New Forest Hotels' commitment to local sourcing and minimal environmental impact adds an extra layer of integrity to your event. Your company's green credentials are reinforced simply by choosing a venue that lives and breathes its natural surroundings.
- **Professional Service in an Inspiring Setting:** Despite the rustic charm, New Forest Hotels deliver fully professional conference services. A dedicated event manager helps plan and run the day, so you can focus on your agenda. From arranging seating and AV setup to providing stationery and refreshments, every detail is handled. The difference is *those refreshments might include a forest-inspired smoothie or a breakout might involve a guided walk among ancient trees!* It's a seamless blend of business and nature that makes for truly memorable meetings.

By choosing New Forest Hotels for your off-site, you're setting the stage for a meeting that leaves participants feeling inspired, appreciated, and recharged. The combination of clear-headed focus, creative energy, and well-being that nature provides can lead to breakthroughs that just don't happen in a conventional office environment. Teams return to work not only with actionable ideas and solutions, but also with a refreshed spirit and stronger camaraderie.

In summary, moving your meetings into a setting with natural light, fresh forest air and green surroundings is an investment in better outcomes. The evidence is compelling – from higher productivity and sharper thinking to enhanced creativity, improved mood, and health, and even alignment with sustainable business values. New Forest Hotels embodies all these advantages, providing *peaceful, eco-conscious venues* where your team can do its best work. If you're looking to boost your team's productivity and morale – and leave a lasting positive impression – consider taking your next strategy meeting or team off-site to the New Forest. In the dappled sunlight and fresh air of this unique environment, you'll find that great ideas *come naturally*.

Elevate your meetings with nature's touch, and discover the difference it makes when your team is "out of office" but more *inspired* than ever before. With New Forest Hotels as your partner, your corporate retreat will not only be productive and efficient, but also truly rejuvenating for everyone involved – a win-win for your people and your business.