



Countryside Recreation Network

**Natural Connections: the role of Green Space in connecting
people to their local environment**

2011 Seminar Proceedings of the
Countryside Recreation Network

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**Held at the Centre in the Park, Norfolk Park, Sheffield
2nd February 2011**

Published by CRN Countryside Recreation Network
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ISBN: 978-1-84387-335-8

Copies cost £20 and are available from:

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The aim was to identify the key drivers of change and to tell a story that illustrates how these will play out and the role of countryside managers in these new scenarios.

Introduction and Welcome by Chair

Marcus Sangster

At a time when budgets for attending training and CPD events are so constrained I was delighted by the turnout to this seminar and by the knowledge and positive attitudes of the participants.

Something strange is happening in the way that we think about the countryside. Television programmes about nature have never been so popular yet the institutions that manage the countryside are in decline.

Artificial distinctions between the funds used to maintain our natural environment and those used to subsidise farmers have led to a significant reduction in environmental management. Agriculture continues to consolidate and intensify, our rural birds, invertebrates, broadleaved plants and even our soils continue to decline. I am at a loss to understand why intense public interest in nature is not translating into intense public concern about the serious problems that countryside professionals have to face every day.

Another noticeable change has been in how people use the countryside.

Visits are shorter than they used to be; they are more purposeful and often visitors will 'sample' several different sites in a day's visit.

Activities such as children's play or a rural walk are now seen as having a functional purpose such as learning or fitness. Recreation alone is no longer an adequate reason for spending time in the outdoors.

What does all this mean for countryside professionals?

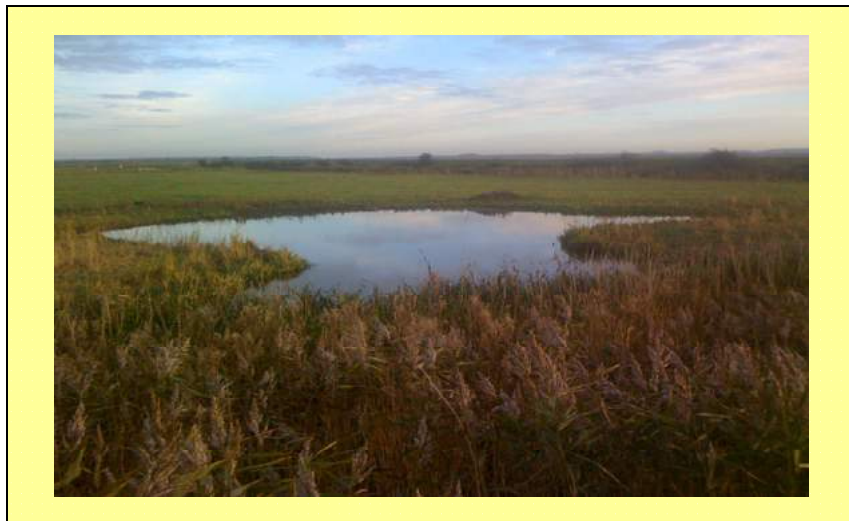
CRN's seminars are an excellent means for us to exchange ideas and learn from each other. They are full of interest, informed by the skills and knowledge of people - speakers and participants - who really care about their work. I have never attended one where I didn't come away more knowledgeable and thoughtful.

Social and Institutional Change: The Implications for Greenspace

Richard Worsley, The Tomorrow Project


CRN
2 February 2011

'People and greenspace'
Richard Worsley
The Tomorrow Project
www.tomorrowproject.net



Countryside and people

What state is it in?



THREATS AND PRESSURES

Changing

testatorrow



THREATS AND PRESSURES

Changing

Rapid decline

Wind farms

testatorrow



THREATS AND PRESSURES

Changing
Rapid decline
Wind farms
Natural threats
Housing
Farming behaviour
Climate change

tomorrow

COUNTRYSIDE MANAGEMENT

Countryside and government
Rural agencies
Land ownership

tomorrow

UK LAND OWNERSHIP

**Total acreage – 60 million acres,
made up of**

42 million is agricultural land

6 million urban/commercial land

**12 million forest, bog, marsh,
mountain**



Largest British landowners (in 000s of acres)

Forestry Commission	2,571
National Trust	630
Defence Estates	592
Pension funds	550
Utilities	500
Crown Estate	358
RSPB	321
Duke of Buccleuch	240
National Trust for Scotland	192
Duke of Atholl's Trusts	146
Total	6,100



LANDOWNER IMPERATIVES

Recognition of public interest

Fair and stable remuneration

Willing partnership

Balanced and informed regulation



PEOPLE AND COUNTRYSIDE

Purpose

Means/circumstance

tomorrow

AFFORDABLE HOUSING IMPERATIVES

Willing landowners

Housing association regime

Welcome by existing residents

Flexible planning

PEOPLE AND COUNTRYSIDE

Purpose

Means/circumstance

How perceived

Health and well-being

Identity

tomorrow

In conclusion



National policy

Accountable agencies

Local engagement

Evidence and expertise

Responsible ownership



'Play' in relation to communities and greenspace

Aileen Shackell, Trees for Transition

The world of Play: Past, Present, and Future



Presentation

Countryside Recreation Network

Wednesday 2nd February



Looking forward to taking part. Landscape architect since 1997 – worked for LUC and Groundwork – long enough to have done full spectrum from KFC to something more interesting! Now running own practice. Today will be taking a broad view of designing for play – including lessons learnt from recent work preparing design guidance for Play England, to be published this summer. 'Design for Play: a guide to creating successful plays spaces'.

What is play?

Photos: Stirling Council Play Services



'Play is what children and young people do in their own time, for their own reasons**

*Question: what about adults?!

**We don't stop playing because we grow old, we grow old because we stop playing".

George Bernard Shaw





Photos: Aileen Shackell

It takes many forms: doing nothing in particular; doing lots; being boisterous; showing off; being contemplative, alone, social, challenged, thwarted.... and overcoming difficulties

Most of the time it **doesn't** happen in designated 'play areas' and **doesn't** involve specially designed equipment



"We are never more fully alive, more completely ourselves, or more deeply engrossed in anything than when we are playing".
Charles Schaefer

Health benefits: play.....

Allows children to develop a sense of wellbeing

Allows them to develop physically, mentally and emotionally to their full potential

Helps them keep more active (and fitter)

Play is essential to the healthy development of children and young people



Photo: Library of Congress
Carnegie Playground, 5th Avenue - c. 1910

Play equipment has been around for some time....the early public parks often included purpose built equipment



Natural Connections: the role of Green Space in connecting people to their local environment



In war-time London many children played on bomb-sites and though now this would be seen as far too dangerous these places did offer freedom, challenge, the chance to manipulate their environment...all things which are missing from many of today's play environments


Photos: gettyimages.com



White Horse Adventure Playground, LB Tower Hamlets
Photo: Phil Doyle

"A junk playground in which children could create and shape, dream and imagine a reality." C. Th. Sorensen

The first adventure playground was built in Denmark during WW2. The adventure playground movement really took off in the 1970s and still continues today, especially in London....



White Horse Adventure Playground, LB Tower Hamlets
Photo: Phil Doyle



Natural Connections: the role of Green Space in connecting people to their local environment



Skelton's Lane Playground, LB Lewisham
Photo: Rachel Mooney

Away from the Adventure Playground world, playgrounds have become bland, boring places, an arrangement of catalogue items surrounded by rubber surfacing, usually encircled by bow top fencing: KFC places!*

Anxieties about safety combined with industry pressure to buy off the peg equipment has resulted in too many spaces which do not offer what children need.

*(Kit, Fence, Carpet – Helen Woolley, Sheffield University)



Playground, LB Croydon
Photo: Aileen Shackell

Colourful, un-fenced space....but how long will it keep their interest?



Playground, somewhere in the midlands
Photo: un-credited



Possibly a Section 106 scheme?



Natural Connections: the role of Green Space in connecting people to their local environment

- But meanwhile on the continent things have been changing.....with the introduction of play spaces which are treated not just as collections of 'stuff' but as landscapes, places in their own right
- Strong emphasis on use of natural elements and materials
- Planting, sand and water
- No fencing!
- Bespoke equipment
- Laid out to cater for mixed age groups



School Playground, Berlin
Photo: Aileen Shackell



Creative play with natural materials, allowing them to manipulate their environment, boys and girls playing together, no close supervision from staff



Playground, Berlin
Photo: Aileen Shackell

Sand used as safety surfacing is also a play element in its own right

Equipment made from especially tactile timber

No fenced boundary

Free flow between different areas

No age restrictions





Playground by Helle Nebelung, Copenhagen
Photo: Aileen Shackell

Bespoke equipment, to stimulate the imagination and provide scope for a host of different play activities



The Diana Playground, Kensington Gardens
Photo: Land Use Consultants



Case Study: Wyvis Street Play Space

- a new space for all the community to use



Wyvis Street Open Space, LB Tower Hamlets
Photo: Aileen Shackell



Natural Connections: the role of Green Space in connecting people to their local environment



Wyvis Street Open Space, LB Tower Hamlets: view towards Canary Wharf
Photo: Aileen Shackell

Small open space in residential area – low levels of usage – mostly just for local dog owners. Bleak and windswept.



Issues?

- dog fouling
- fighting dogs
- history of drug abuse on site

Wyvis Street Open Space, LB Tower Hamlets
Photo: Aileen Shackell



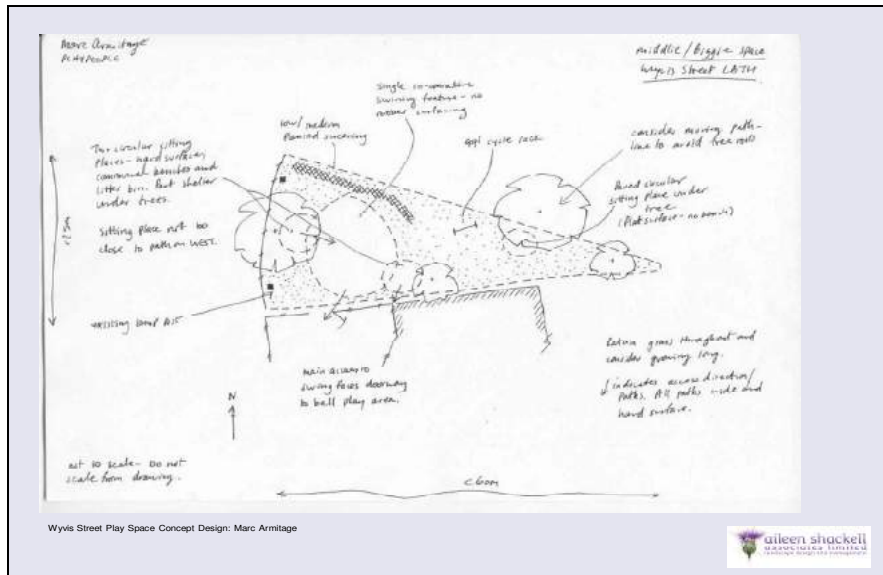
Wyvis Street Open Space, LB Tower Hamlets
Photo: Aileen Shackell



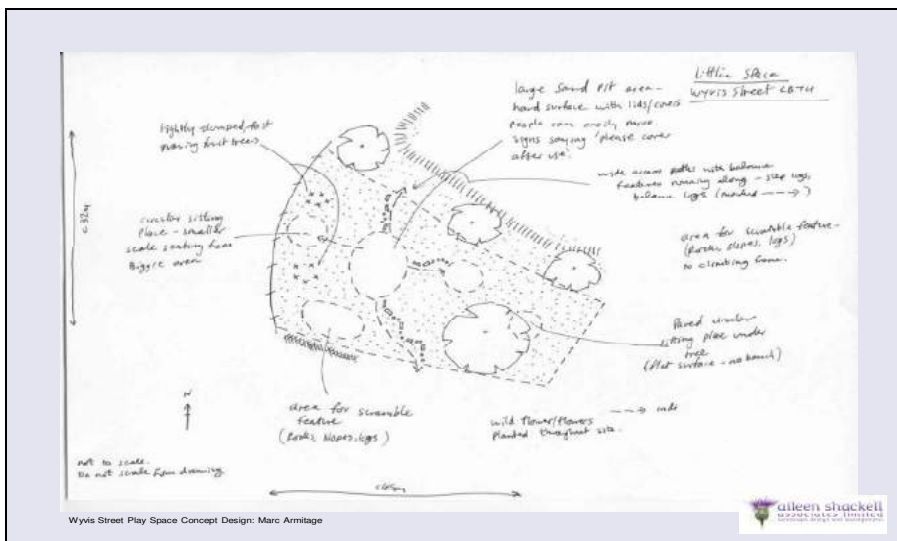
The playground design brief for Wyvis Street

- The whole site calls for an **'equipment light'** and **'fuzzy edged'** playground – the first means more reliance on landscaping and planting as a play thing; the second on little or no fencing.
- The majority age group in the area are the **13 – 18 years** group.
- The sitting areas with benches should provide **communal seating on a hard surface**. Litter bins in each area..... the areas of circular hard surface below trees are for sitting in warmer weather.
- The single cooperative swinging feature** should as first choice be a drop swing, or a cantilever swing (second choice), and scale swing as third.
- The littles area is made up of mainly **landscaped scramble features** – no fixed climbing frame.
- The main central space should be **one or more large sandpits with covers** that can easily be opened and closed. This is the first choice – more so than a pebble pit or anything.
- Paths leading to all main areas have **balance features** alongside. Flowers spread around whole of little site.

Marc Armitage – Play Consultant



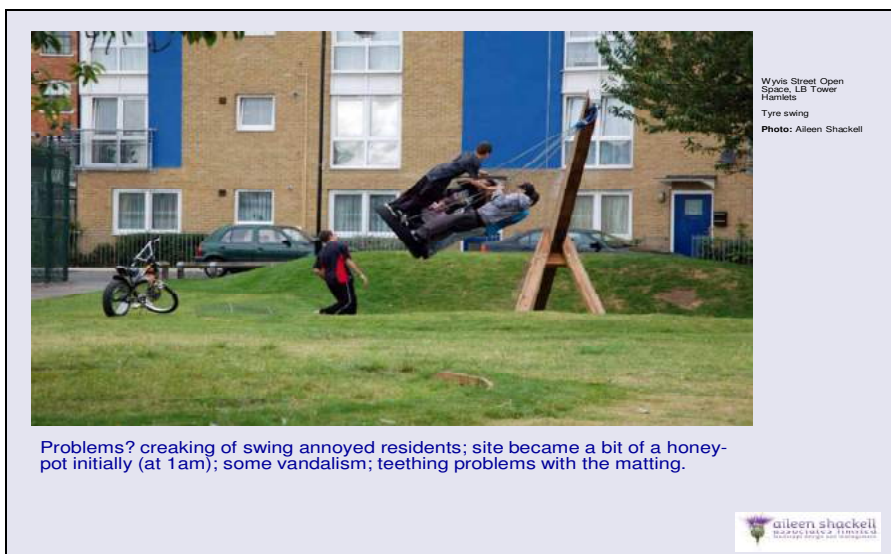
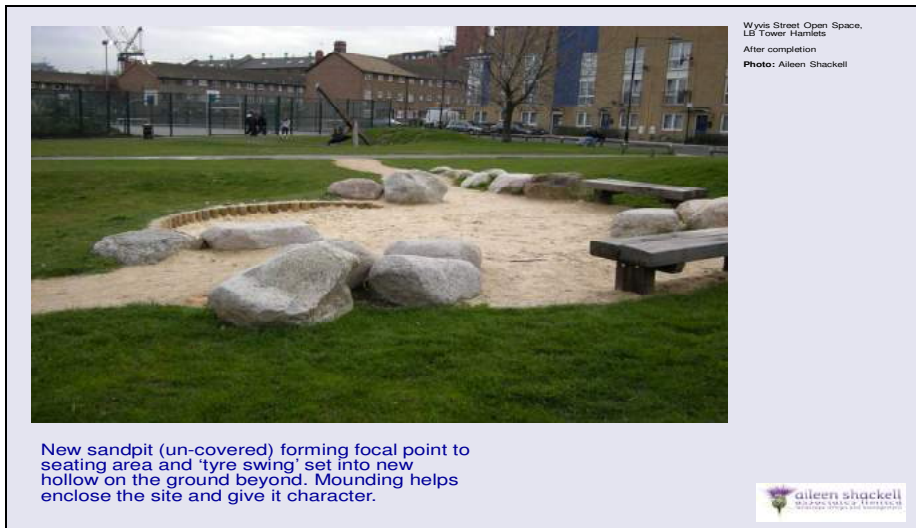
Wyvis Street Play Space Concept Design: Marc Armitage



Wyvis Street Play Space Concept Design: Marc Armitage



Natural Connections: the role of Green Space in connecting people to their local environment



Natural Connections: the role of Green Space in connecting people to their local environment



Wyvis Street Open Space, LB Tower Hamlets
Tyre swing
Photo: Aileen Shackell

Note the all-age use – site is in use all day long by different age groups throughout the day.
No fencing though surrounded by a road.



Wyvis Street Open Space, LB Tower Hamlets
Seating area
Photo: Phil Doyle

The seating area though nominally aimed at the younger age group – because of the sandpit being there – is also used by everyone, including the older teens, who use it as a meeting place late in the evenings, and office workers eating lunchtime sandwiches



Wyvis Street Open Space, LB Tower Hamlets
Seating area and sandpit
Photo: Phil Doyle

The sandpit was initially the focus of hostility but by working with the community and gaining their trust it was implemented successfully



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Wyvis Street Open Space, LB Tower Hamlets
Bulb planting
Photo: Phil Doyle

Insufficient money to do planting but the council agreed to alter mowing regimes and also offered ranger support in helping supply and plant bulbs



Wyvis Street Open Space, LB Tower Hamlets
Balance feature
Photo: Phil Doyle

'The best play area in Tower Hamlets' (!)

LBTH Ranger, 2009



So what should we be doing in the future?





Braithwaite Park Event
Photo: Aileen Shackell

Working with local communities more effectively.....



Forest School, LB Lewisham
Photo: Rachel Mooney



Re-connecting children with nature

More organisations (such as the NT?) helping to run Forest School-type activities on their sites




New park, Copenhagen
Photo: Aileen Shackell



Taking a more **creative approach to use of open space**, and not confining 'Play' to 'Playgrounds'.....




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....but not necessarily doing complex or expensive things, just making the most of what we've already got

Letty Wood, Wales
Photos: David Ball



..... and providing more shared space for everyone to enjoy.....
especially in less obvious locations, including city centres

Copenhagen City Centre
Photo: Aileen Shackell



Having the confidence to allow children and young people to change and manipulate their own spaces.....

Self-made BMX track, near Peterborough
Photo: David Ball





Den-building at Alice Holt Forest
Photo: Forestry Commission

.....and having more confidence in their abilities, even if this means having to assess Risks and Benefits and monitor the conclusions



Copenhagen Nursery
Photo: Aileen Shackell

Summary: health benefits from Play when it is done properly!

Enhanced physical, social and emotional development, generally

Higher levels of physical activity

Reduction in obesity and associated health problems

Better gross motor skills means better fine motor skills (if you can balance and climb, you will be able to wield a pencil)

Learning to love the outdoors as a child lays down good patterns of behaviour for adulthood

**"The opposite of play is not work. It's depression".
Brian Sutton-Smith**

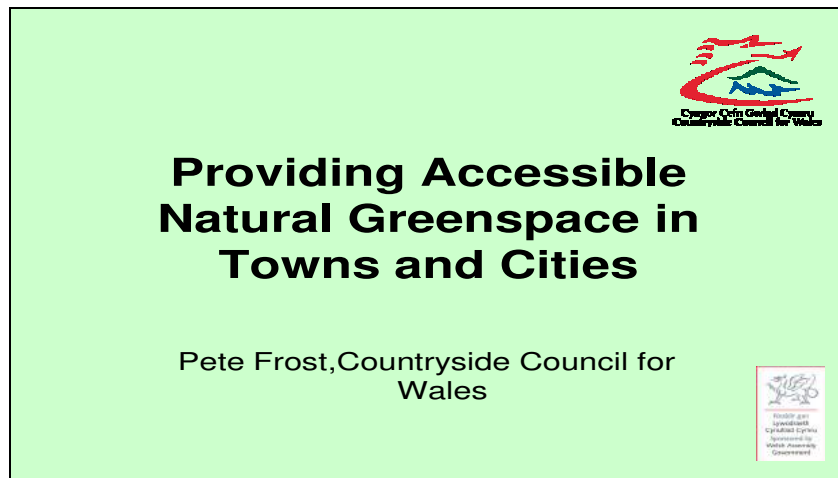


Balmaha Play Space: learning to fly.....
Photo: Striving Council

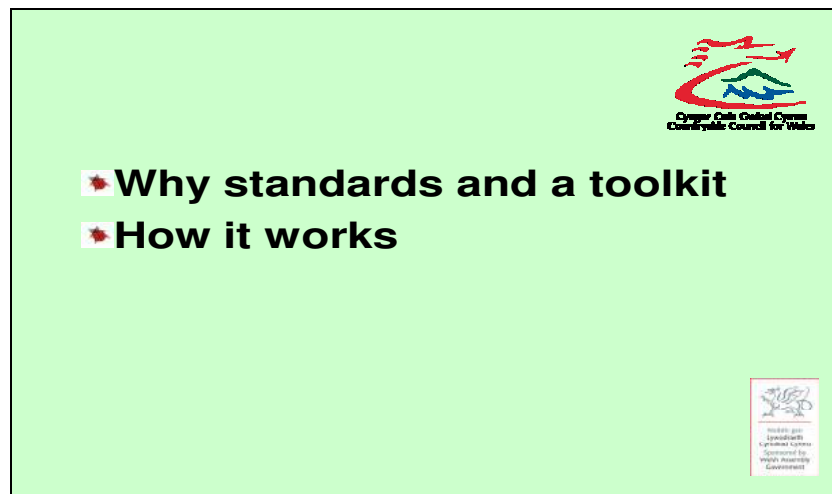
The end....thank you



Planning for Greenspace: The Greenspace Toolkit
Peter Frost, Countryside Council for Wales



I'm Pete Frost from the Countryside Council for Wales – and in the next 20 minutes I'd like to tell you about our toolkit for assessing the amount of accessible natural green space in Welsh towns and cities.



I'd like to explain to you

- Why we adopted standards for access to natural green space; and
- How our toolkit works ;



So, why did the **Countryside** Council for Wales get interested in access to green space in towns in the first place?

- Hands up if you think your organisation or department has enough money to do its job? (photo: www.public-domain-image.com/)
 - Well, if this is what most people think of as weekend recreation
 - Photo: www.fawbush.org/guitar_hero.html
 - And they think milk comes from factories
 - Photo: www.feelslikehomeblog.com/2009/08/overcoming-graces-fear-of-animals/
 - We've got a real problem to get them to
 - vote for politicians who will give us money for
 - Photo: <http://eleven.walesyearbook.co.uk/swingometer-2011/>
- Dirty old, bug-ridden nature. (photo: CCW)

We knew that people and nature were both losing out. So, we realised that we needed to do something to re-connect people and nature in a policy area that would be compelling for politicians.



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- Local green space is an emotive issue that has the potential to grab the attention of the media and elected members....

But beyond that, green space has multiple benefits that touch just about every policy area you can name...

Photo from: http://www.medwaylabour.org.uk/photo_gallery Any idea How many people die of Coronary Heart disease in the UK per year?

- 23% of premature deaths are caused by it, and it costs the UK economy £7.9billion!
- Exercise is of course seen as a key to preventing people becoming heart patients in the first place, but why not just send everyone down the gym?
- A review of literature on the promotion of physical activity found that “interventions that encourage walking and do not require attendance at a facility are most likely to lead to sustainable increases in overall physical activity.
- The British Trust for Conservation Volunteers discovered that conventional gymnasiums have a high drop-out rate, but that 70% of participants in their “green gym” conservation-based exercise scheme were still attending after six months!
- Whilst for older people, regular walking can help to strengthen the bones and therefore reduce the risk of osteoporosis and associated fractures. For older men, walking two miles a day can halve mortality.

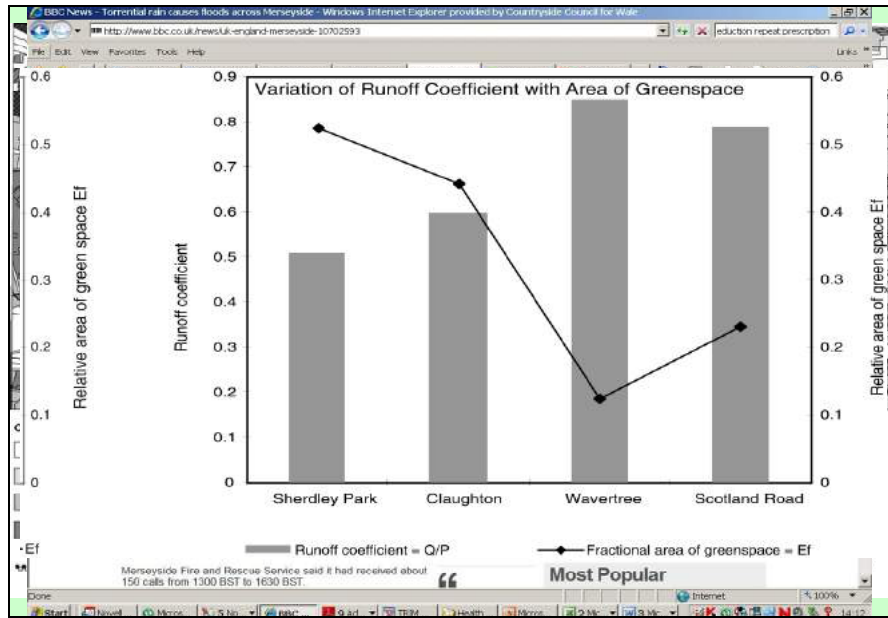


Any idea how many days work the UK economy loses to stress each year?

- Mental illness in England alone costs over £30 billion in lost output, and the overall cost to society comes to a staggering £105.2 billion!
- There is another way to promote mental well-being that doesn't require large amounts of money or the valuable time of healthcare professionals:
- The clinical signs of stress (e.g. forehead muscle tension, blood pressure etc) begin to measurably decrease after only three minutes in a suitable green space,

Natural Connections: the role of Green Space in connecting people to their local environment

- The even better news is that you don't need to spend long in natural surroundings to get lasting benefits. Those who are unwell show the greatest improvements and all of us can benefit from around ten minutes exercise in green surroundings.
- In fact the psychological effect of exposure to 'green' surroundings is so good at speeding recovery time after surgery that the Mount Sinai Hospital in New York was re-designed and re-built at a cost of millions of dollars to give patients views over Central Park – because it will save the hospital even more money by decreasing the amount of time people take to get well. (photo: www.panoramio.com/photo/20039056)



But local green space can prevent illnesses that aren't related to our immediate lifestyle:

- The British National Urban Forestry Unit showed that a woodland near the M6 motorway removes over fifty kilograms of dust pollution from the air per hectare per year!
- Do you remember the heat wave that killed over fourteen thousand people in France in 2003? This data from Munich shows on the left where there are vegetated areas – in the dark shades and on the right where the coolest parts of the city are – again in dark shades. There can be up to a fifteen degree temperature difference between built-up and wooded areas!
- And green space can help reduce the dangers of flooding
- This graph shows in Liverpool that areas with greater functional amounts of green space can reduce the amount of rainwater runoff – that goes into the urban area – or the urban area downstream! The Seattle Street Edge Alternatives Project cut storm water run-off by 98 percent over three years by increasing the amount of green space along their streets.



So, with all that lot in mind, we thought that if we could find a way to

- independently identify valuable green space against criteria that were
- intellectually sound,
- open and transparent,
- we could help communities argue for the green space they loved,
- help local authorities pre-emptively protect it in a way that was defensible in a public inquiry, and we could
- help developers decide which sites were OK to invest in, and how to make their proposals more likely to succeed.

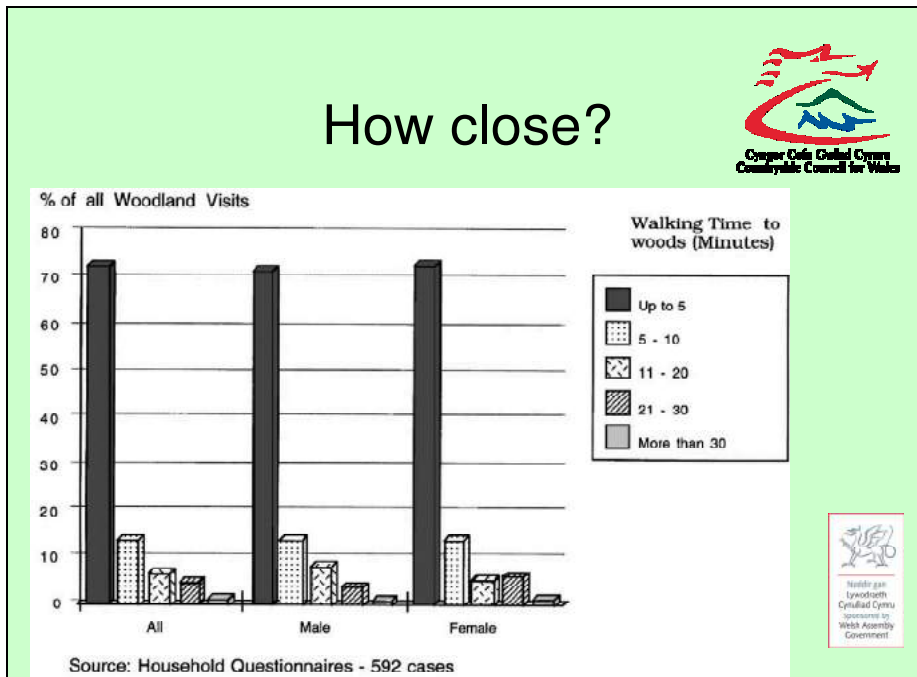


So, we know that green space is important for human mental and physical health, and we can provide evidence that green space is important to physically improve urban areas, but what advice can we give about its size, what it should be like, and where it should be?

- Sorry people, but size does matter, at least in green space terms.
- Larger urban parks, with a variety of facilities and features tend to be more popular, better known and more frequently visited.
- Most users of urban parks travel on foot.
- Given the prevalent car-culture in Britain, it is unsurprising that people don't walk that far to get to a park – either they won't abandon their own car for very long, or they walk in fear of being hit by someone else's.
- Green spaces have to feel
- Safe to get to and to be in. Going over busy roads or through scary-looking places into areas that look under-used or under maintained are real deterrents to access to green space.
-

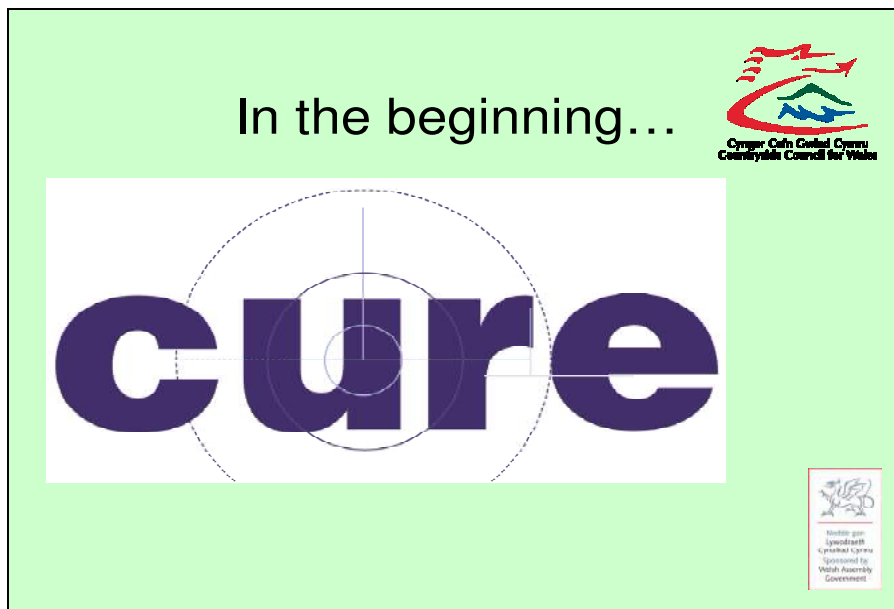


- Research on woodland suggests that a two hectare wood is the smallest that people wish to visit regularly.
- Obviously, for other habitat types, the area would need to be bigger to give the same feeling of 'naturalness' – and hence the ability to reduce stress.
- But in extremis, green walls, or a courtyard garden with ivy-covered walls – like one I saw recently in New York, or even
- A rooftop "Biosphere Reserve" like this one on top of the UNESCO building in Seoul, Korea, would be better than nothing.



There is clear evidence that distance from home is an important factor for greenspace use

- A distance of five to six minutes walk from home seems to be the limit beyond which the frequency of greenspace use declines sharply. So, whilst it is important to have big sites where people can really get away from the stresses of the world, the most important sites, if we are to do our twenty minutes brisk walk each day, are the ones on the doorstep.



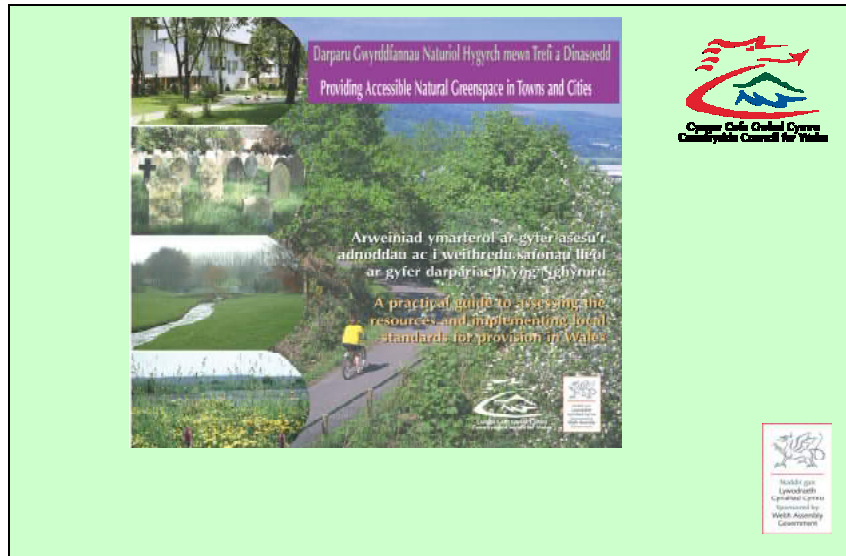
I wish I could claim that I'd come up with these insights myself, but greater minds than mine have been looking at this area of work for years:

- In 1993 the Urban Forum of the UNESCO UK Man and the Biosphere Committee produced a report about accessible natural green space in towns and cities with

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recommendations on the level of greenspace provision. The standards they recommended were adopted by our sister organisation ...

- English Nature but they never really caught on. In 2002 English Nature reviewed the situation and decided that they needed a toolkit to help local authorities implement the recommendations of that report. In view of the work going on in England....
- The Countryside Council for Wales engaged the Centre for Urban and Regional Ecology at Manchester University to independently validate the greenspace report for conditions in Wales. On finding that it was valid this side of Offa's Dyke we decided to produce our own toolkit for Wales.



- ...we consulted every planning authority in Wales on our standard and our toolkit to help them assess how well they were doing against that standard..
- Following the consultation and after Wrexham County Borough Council had tested it our Minister for Local Government and Finance launched the toolkit in 2006.

The standards

- ★ 2 ha per 1000 people
- ★ 6 minutes walk
- ★ 20 ha within 2km
- ★ 100 ha within 5km
- ★ 500 ha within 10 km

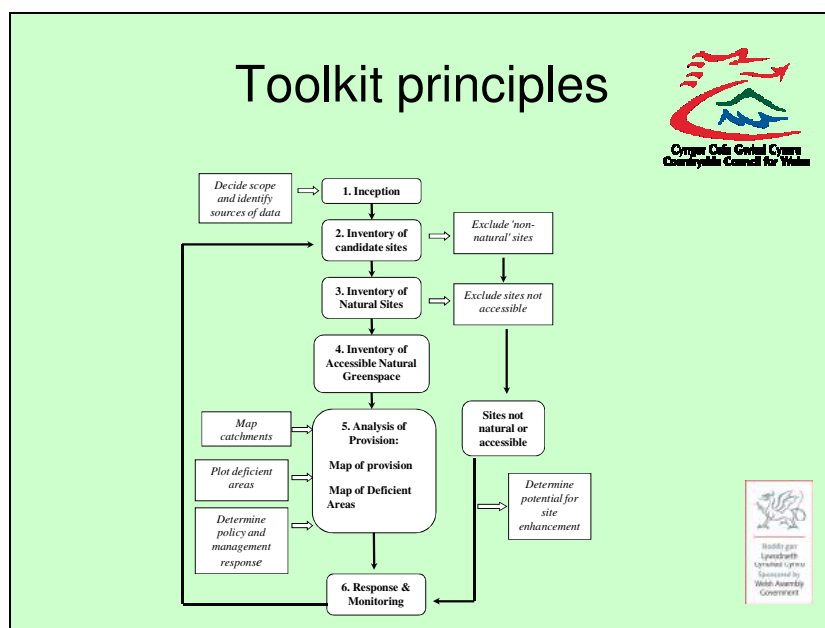


After all that: the standards that CCW advocates for access to natural green space are:

We recommend that provision should be made of at least 2ha of accessible natural greenspace per 1000 population – remember the minimum woodland size?

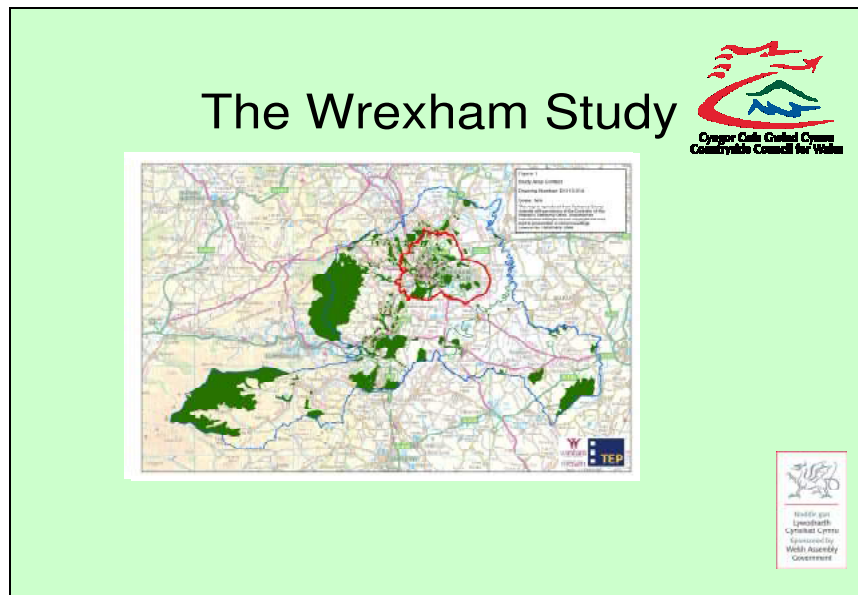
However, given that not all towns can accommodate 2 ha of woods every few metres, We suggest the green space target should be provided by a tiered system of sites of different sizes:

- no person should live more than 300m from their nearest area of natural greenspace – that is 6 minutes walk with a push-chair;
- there should be at least one medium sized site within 2km from home;
- there should be one large site within 5km;
- there should be one very large site within 10km.



Assessing a local authority area against our standard is a simple, systematic process

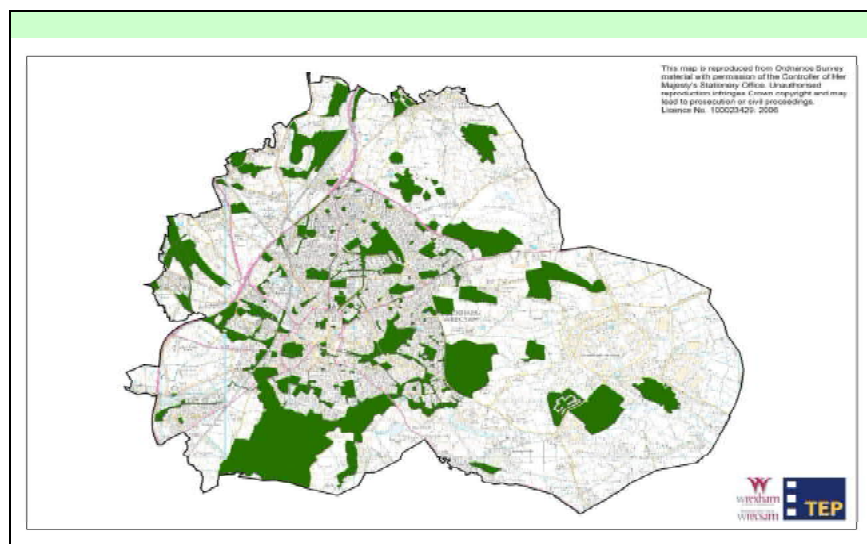
- Firstly, decide that you are going to assess your accessible natural green space
- Then decide the boundaries of your study area, and work out where you will get your data
- Then build up an inventory of every green site in the study area – regardless of what it looks like
- Mark the sites that are not natural
- Leaving you with an inventory of natural sites
- Mark the sites that people cannot get access to
- Leaving you with an inventory of accessible natural green spaces
- Then relate those sites to where people live
- Map the places where there is insufficient green space to meet the standards of provision
- And then
- Decide what you are going to do to correct any deficiencies
- Which means focusing on sites which aren't natural or aren't accessible; and
- Deciding if you can do anything to change them to be more natural or more accessible; before
- Checking how everything has worked out and going round the cycle again.



Wrexham County Borough Council kindly agreed to test out our toolkit in real life conditions, and they decided to concentrate their study on the area immediately around the town of Wrexham itself within this red line here.

Please bear in mind that Wrexham have since gone on to bigger and better things – I'm using their initial study as an example.

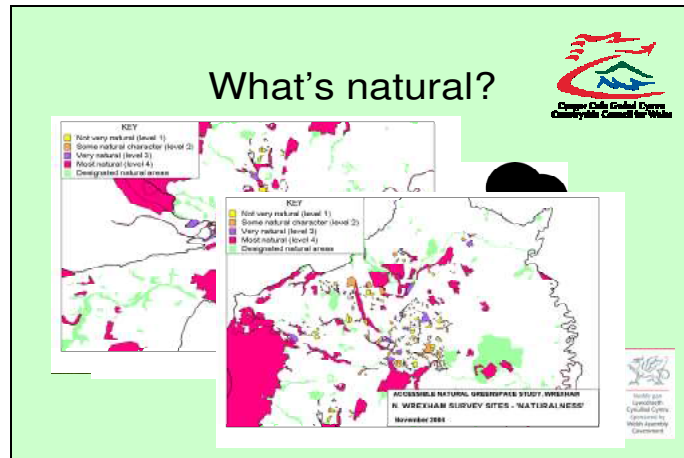
Even though Wrexham chose for experimental purposes to concentrate on the town, you'll see that they mapped all green space, and you'll be aware that even in a village, some housing estates might leave some residents over 300m from their nearest green space.



Once they had decided to start the project and set the boundaries of the study area, Wrexham used all the existing maps, aerial photos and greenspace inventories that they could find, to create a list of candidate green sites. It is worth noting that Wrexham contacted local communities and discovered a lot of 'unofficial' green space that did not appear on any previous inventory. I can't stress how important it is to contact local communities and to

harness their local expertise – that’s why we have bundled our advice on working with local communities with our greenspace toolkit on one CD.

When they had done all this, Wrexham created this map of all their green space.

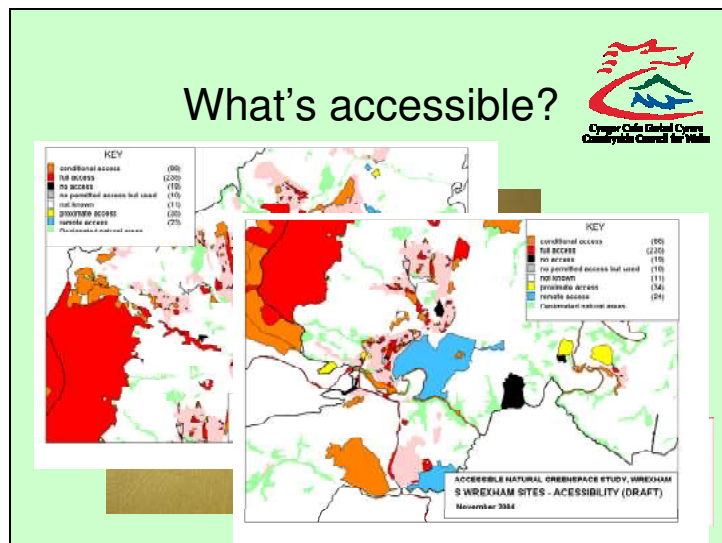


They then had to decide which sites were natural. CCW’s toolkit also helps users decide if a site looks sufficiently ‘natural’ to provide the required benefits. For example:

- Highly managed spaces normally don’t give as much benefit as
- more extensively managed sites.

In fact, research shows that every sign of human intrusion reduced visitors’ pleasure of experiencing nature in urban greenspace – with rubbish and signs of vandalism being particularly negative in this respect.

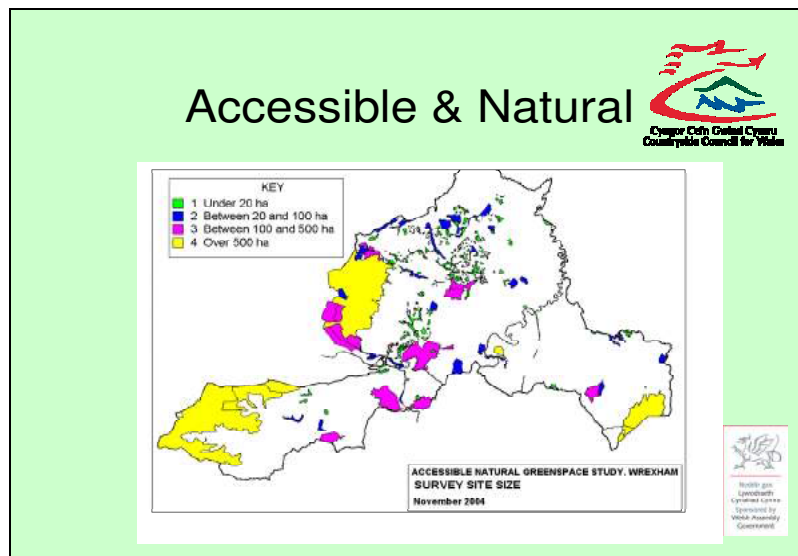
- The toolkit gives extensive advice, diagrams and picture examples to help guide you on how to decide what is ‘natural’ in this context, and what isn’t
- Wrexham’s natural sites map then looked like this in the north; and
- This in the south



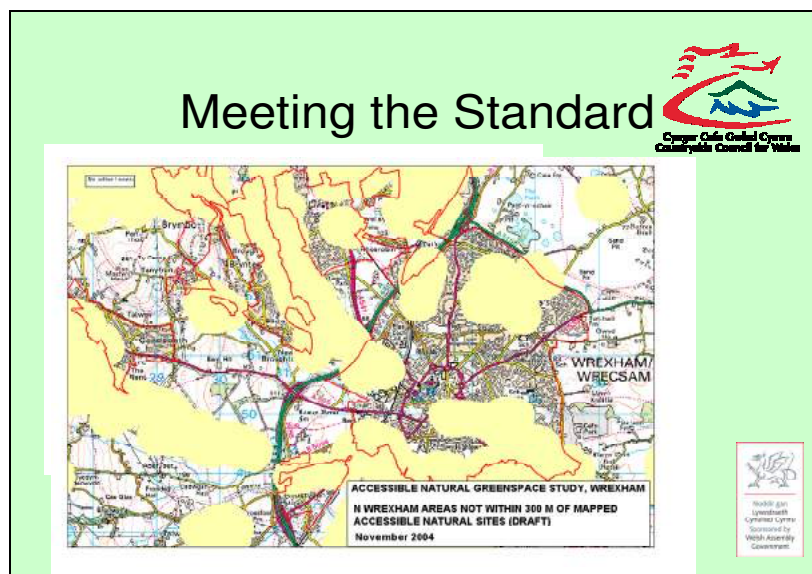
To provide the physical health and mental well-being benefits, green space has to be accessible to people when they need it. Wrexham then used the guidance in our toolkit to help decide which sites were actually accessible.

Natural Connections: the role of Green Space in connecting people to their local environment

- Some sites, whilst they might be good for absorbing pollution, rainwater or for giving a home for nature are not good for people because you can't get in! For example, some nature reserves don't count as accessible natural greenspace because you aren't allowed in! The toolkit helps users decide if a site is accessible: if you can only see into a site, we call it 'proximate access'
- Other places might not be fenced-off, but you wouldn't want to go there because of where you might have to pass through
- Or because they feel un-safe or uncared-for when you get there. We'd say these sites were only 'conditionally accessible'
- The toolkit gives guidance and definitions to help you work out degrees of accessibility -
- So, when they analysed their sites, Wrexham's accessibility maps looked like this:
- In the north; and
- This in the south

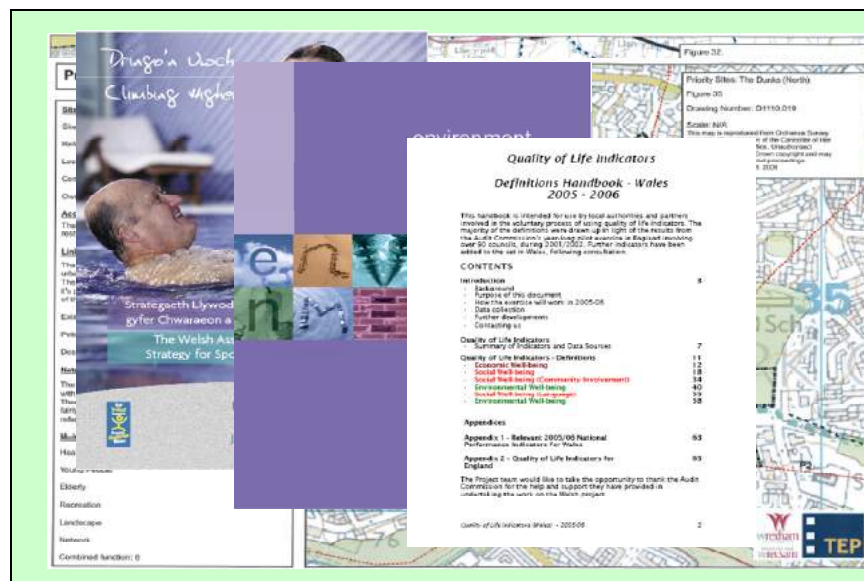


The final step was for Wrexham to put the data together to give an overall picture of where there was accessible natural green space in the study area. As you may be able to see from the key, they classified the green space by size to help them decide if they met the CCW standards for green space provision.



Wrexham then put all the data together to see how they met the four levels of accessible natural greenspace provision recommended by the Countryside Council for Wales. They found that:

- Most of the town was adequately within reach of very large sites
- A lot of the town had sufficient access to large sites
- Much of the town had access to medium sized sites, but
- Large areas of the north of the town had insufficient access to sites within six minutes walk – these areas of deficiency are those not covered by the yellow areas which represent a 300m 'buffer' around accessible natural greenspace sites. You will remember that these are the sites which are crucial when it comes to getting people to visit them every day to remain fit and well.



- Following their initial assessment Wrexham has gone on to survey all the functions of green space, including flood control and recreation. With this information they have decided to prioritise certain sites for improvement.
- These have been chosen very realistically to assist the largest number of people, and to ensure one site is in each ward within the study area – a rather pragmatic way to ensure continuing, cross party political support for this work.

Meanwhile the Countryside Council for Wales is working hard to ensure the greenspace standards are built into as many parts of Welsh legislation and strategy as possible in order to provide top-down, as well as bottom-up incentives for adopting them at the local level;

- They are in the Wales strategy for sport and recreation
- The Welsh Assembly Government's Environment Strategy; and
- The toolkit and standards are mentioned in the Quality of Life Indicators and should be built into them at their next revision.



Can I leave you with this thought?

It is very easy to forget that all this stuff with maps, plans, policies and politics is about making sure that these people get the chance to grow up healthy, with a love of nature and a determination to care for it so they can pass it on for the benefit of their own children.

Notes & references

Physical health

Heart and circulatory disease (cardiovascular disease or CVD) is the main cause of death in Wales. In 2007 it accounted for over 11,000 deaths: that's over a third of all deaths. CVD is also a major cause of premature death (deaths before the age of 75): a third (29%) of premature deaths in men and over a fifth (22%) of premature deaths in women. Source: Wales coronary heart disease statistics 2009- 2010: British Heart Foundation Cymru

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Case Study 1 - Forest Kindergartens

Karen Boyd, Forestry Commission

Forestry Commission Scotland
Coimisean na Coilltearachd Alba

FOREST KINDERGARTEN: NEW APPROACH FOR OUTDOORS



KAREN BOYD
CENTRAL SCOTLAND
EDUCATION ADVISOR

Forestry Commission Scotland
Coimisean na Coilltearachd Alba

WHAT ARE FOREST KINDERGARTENS ?

Forest Kindergartens are unique, as they offer young children frequent, regular opportunities to learn through play. Within a woodland and/or natural setting, providing regular visit's to the same site, throughout the year, in almost all weather.



Forestry Commission Scotland
Coimisean na Coilltearachd Alba

THEY ARE:



Child Led



Child Centred



Enhanced through exploration using multiple senses



Forestry Commission Scotland
Coimisean na Coilltearachd Alba

WHY ?

“There has been an increasing pace in the last three decades, approximately, of a rapid disengagement between children and direct experiences in nature this has profound implications, not only for the health of the future generations but for the health of Earth itself.”

Last Child In The Woods Interview by Claus von Zastrow,



Forestry Commission Scotland
Coimisean na Coilltearachd Alba

SOCIETY CHANGES

As our governmental agenda's change, as does the attitudes of educationalist's and society towards engaging with the outdoors. Therefore FCS looked at new initiatives that would address these ever changing elements, whilst re-connecting society, particularly young children with their natural heritage.



Forestry Commission Scotland
Coimisean na Coilltearachd Alba

SOLUTION

FCS development of Forest Kindergarten Project :

- Development of Forest Kindergarten Feasibility Study
- Identification of pilot Forest Kindergartens for each local authority
- Development & delivery of 12 week pilot projects.
- Sustainability of developed projects.
- Imbedding pilot projects into learning communities & other long term community projects.



Forestry Commission Scotland Comission na Coilltearachd Alba		BENEFITS :	
<u>Children</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Knowledge & Understanding• Health & Well Being• Motivation & Concentration• Language & Communication• Confidence & Self Esteem• Social Skills• Self directed learning	<u>Parents & Staff</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Re-connection with nature & own childhood• Personal ownership for their local woodlands• Social Inclusion• Health & Well Being• Child's holistic development• Re-connection with own child & parenting skills
<u>Land Owners</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Partnership working• Collaborative working in support of site management plan• Publicity/Awards• Identification of any site problems• Income/Grants	<u>Local Authority</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Leaders in innovative practise• Partnership working• Social Inclusion• Funding, publicity & awards• Inclusion with L.A vision & values

Forestry Commission Scotland Comission na Coilltearachd Alba	QUOTES
	<p>“What the kids did and how they leant all about the woods, even cutting the tree branches with a saw and making a campfire. She is always looking for little creatures now when we are out”</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Forest Kindergarten Participant's Parent</p> <p>“She is more willing to volunteer first for activities and take more of a leadership role now, i.e. making suggestions”</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Forest Kindergarten Participant's Parent</p>

Forestry Commission Scotland Comission na Coilltearachd Alba	MORE INFORMATION
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• FCS Forest Kindergarten Web Page : www.forestry.gov.uk/forestkindergarten• FCS & SLC Forest Kindergarten Project Film : www.youtube.com/watch?v=g8WWrRzf7ZU• Forest Education Initiative : www.foresteducation.org• For more information contact: karen.boyd@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

Case Study 2 - Greenspace for Health and Wellbeing
Richard Cass, Cass Associates

**RE-INVENTING GREENSPACE: NEW CHALLENGES FOR
PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT**

BEAUTY AND NATURE - GREENSPACE FOR HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Introduction

There is widespread evidence of the close relationship between our health and the environment in which we live. This applies to the provision of health care facilities such as hospitals and health centres, places in which we live and work, and communal places such as schools, streets, parks and transport systems.

In recent years there has been a major investment in health care services and facilities, including new buildings, especially hospitals. There is now increasing recognition that the design of buildings and both internal and external spaces can, in itself, make a significant contribution to health and well-being. Good design can improve health and reduce the cost of treatment, for example.

- “The cost of treating health conditions such as obesity, stress, and heart disease can be significantly reduced by changing people’s lifestyles, specifically their environment, their mobility and their sense of security and well-being. For example, physical inactivity is estimated to cost the UK over £8 billion a year; one urban park could reduce this by over £4 million, and a 3km footpath by £1 million”* (*Natural Fit Report; Dr William Bird, 2004*).
- “Stress levels, blood pressure, and post-operative recovery times can all be reduced if patients have experience of nature, garden spaces, plants and sunlight ...” (*Roger Ulrich 2002*).
- Staff sickness and stress can be reduced, and staff retention can be improved by providing a light, airy and attractive environment, including accessible landscape spaces.
- A welcoming and re-assuring environment can greatly improve the experience and reduce stress levels of relatives and patients using health care buildings/facilities. This results in higher satisfaction levels of the treatment received.

As well as the inherent benefits to society of an attractive environment, in an increasingly cost-conscious and competitive world, the financial and other advantages that well-designed places can deliver will be of growing importance.

Creating healthy places required an integrated, multi-disciplinary way of working, with planners, master planners, architects, landscape architects and managers working alongside each other. Each skill is important in itself, but it is a ‘holistic’ approach to place making which yields the best results.

Planning Impacts on Health

- Green infrastructure (eg. air quality, access to greenspace, climate change, local food supply, renewable energy).

Natural Connections: the role of Green Space in connecting people to their local environment

- Sustainable transport networks (location of, and access to public transport, footpaths and cycleways, reduce impact of road traffic, green travel plans).
- Land-use planning (location of community facilities in relation to housing, employment, open space and transport networks).
- 'Joined-up' decisions on investment in health, community, education, housing, transport and open space.

Master planning Impacts on Health

- Creation of safe, attractive and well-integrated masterplans, which have high 'permeability' and inter-connectivity.
- Create places which are not dominated by traffic, roads and car parking.
- Encourage walking, cycling and public transport and discourage car use by careful attention to location and density of development.
- Ensure that the masterplan creates a series of safe, attractive and easily accessible external spaces.
- Create space for trees, water, plants and wildlife in places where it can be enjoyed.
- Create opportunities to establish positive relationships between internal and external space.
- Do not allow external spaces and pedestrian routes to be dominated by buildings, roads and traffic.
- Once within the site, create a 'traffic-calmed' environment in which the pedestrian has the priority.

Impacts of Architectural Design on Health

- Have a clear understanding of the brief; research, test, and if necessary, challenge the client's requirements to ensure a clear and soundly based design programme.
- Involve users and managers in the design process if possible.
- Apply the principles of sustainable design from the outset and throughout, this applies to building location and orientation, massing, access and circulation, lighting, heating and ventilation, construction methods and materials.
- Aim to create buildings and spaces which are clear and attractive to be in, not confusing and intimidating, recognise that beauty and tranquillity make a direct contribution to health – and their absence can damage it.
- Create quiet spaces; a noisy environment is distracting, confusing and increases stress.
- Give people, especially those with restricted mobility, a view of attractive greenspace.
- Recognise the therapeutic value of sunlight and fresh air – to everyone, but especially the young and people with restricted mobility.
- Apply the principle of 'long-life, loose fit' to create buildings which are flexible and adaptable – health care is a fast-changing, dynamic field.

Natural Connections: the role of Green Space in connecting people to their local environment

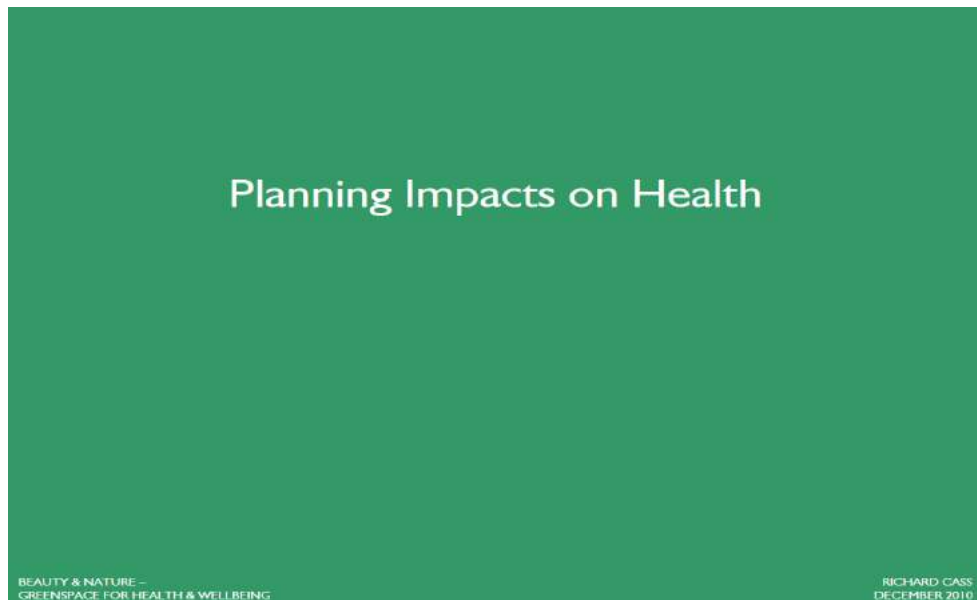
Landscape Design Impacts on Health

- Access to attractive greenspace is possibly the most important contribution that a person's surroundings can make to their health – the landscape designer's role is crucial; this applies not just to health care facilities but to all aspects of a person's normal everyday surroundings.
- "Well-designed hospital gardens not only provide restorative and pleasant nature views, but can also reduce stress and improve clinical outcomes ..." (*Roger Ulrich, 2002*).
- A well-designed, well-maintained landscape can assist in creating a positive, reassuring and welcoming impression for everyone, discouraging vandalism and anti-social behaviour, encouraging physical exercise, improving staff morale, and contributing to better health outcomes.
- Contact with nature has well-know therapeutic effects; the landscape designer has a key role in creating places where nature can be enjoyed.
- Landscape can make a significant contribution to the sustainability of developments, by reducing energy use, by reducing extremes of temperature, providing shelter and shade, using water features to reduce surface water run-off and flood risk, by improving air quality, creating wildlife habitats and providing local, healthy food.

These principles can be demonstrated using a number of practical examples:

- Broad Green Hospital, Liverpool
- Bold Health, St Helens
- Everton Park, Liverpool





NORTH WEST CHESHIRE FOREST STRATEGY CONCEPT PLAN



Masterplanning Impacts on Health

BEAUTY & NATURE –
GREENSPACE FOR HEALTH & WELLBEING

RICHARD CASS
DECEMBER 2010



Natural Connections: the role of Green Space in connecting people to their local environment





Impacts of Architectural Design on Health

BEAUTY & NATURE –
GREENSPACE FOR HEALTH & WELLBEING

RICHARD CASS
DECEMBER 2010

Natural Connections: the role of Green Space in connecting people to their local environment



Natural Connections: the role of Green Space in connecting people to their local environment



Natural Connections: the role of Green Space in connecting people to their local environment



Landscape Design Impacts on Health

BEAUTY & NATURE –
GREENSPACE FOR HEALTH & WELLBEING

RICHARD CASS
DECEMBER 2010



Natural Connections: the role of Green Space in connecting people to their local environment





Natural Connections: the role of Green Space in connecting people to their local environment



Case Study 3 - Schools and the natural environment: is the connection broken?

Jim Burt, Natural England

Jim Burt

Natural Connections – for happier, healthier children

The change needed

Evidence shows that our children are increasingly disconnected from the natural environment and 'becoming entombed in their homes'. This is contributing to major challenges facing society today – including the rise in childhood obesity and mental health issues; the struggle to build a sense of place and community; and the need to address climate change and develop pro-environmental behaviours.

Evidence also shows that enabling children to play and learn in natural environments can help address all these issues. Yet the likelihood of children visiting local green space has halved in a generation and the area around their home which they know and use has fallen by 90% in 20 years. So the case for reconnecting children with natural environments is compelling and we believe it would deliver major educational, health and environmental benefits - and financial savings - to society.

The most crucial green spaces are those close to where children live. So by natural environments in this context we include all the accessible outdoor green spaces where children can play, the spaces that enable childhood discovery and learning, adventure and escape, or simply to experience the seasons changing. Likewise the scope of these spaces is much broader than just those set aside for nature conservation or for getting 'close to 'nature'.

The rationale

To enable targeted interventions and evaluation we have chosen to focus on supporting schools as the catalysts for local action and local delivery. There is widespread agreement that schools are well placed to engage large numbers of children, and to bridge school and leisure experiences, classroom and family, and to build community capacity in this area. Evidence also highlights that learning outside the classroom (LOtC) in natural environments can transform individual and school performance by increasing the standards of teaching and learning, allowing innovation and excellence in curriculum delivery and increasing motivation and attainment etc.

In April 2010, the Children, Schools and Families Committee (now Education Committee) published its Report on *Transforming Education Outside the Classroom*. In responding, Government confirmed its support for LOtC but rejected recommendations that ran counter to the principles of the Big Society and instead challenged the sector to work better together in supporting schools locally and more directly. Natural Connections is responding directly to this by facilitating the natural environment sector to work in new ways to significantly increase the quantity, quality and impact of opportunities to learn outside the classroom, to make it easier for schools to use their local green spaces as active learning environments, and to enable progression of experience within and beyond school boundaries.

To help identify the most effective interventions, Natural England commissioned King's College London to analyse the evidence on the barriers to LOtC in natural environments (November 2010.) This confirmed that schools are not prioritising (valuing) LOtC and found that this is down to local issues such as teacher confidence, competence and capacity. Furthermore it stated that these local barriers underpin - and hence are more significant than - the barriers the sector has traditionally focused on such formalisation in the Curriculum, fear of litigation and cost etc.

The analysis has highlighted 3 priority areas for action if we are to remove the barriers for schools:

1. To provide schools with a compelling rationale for LOtC in natural environments that sets out the evidence for impact and shows how barriers, both institutional and individual, can be overcome.
2. To support staff in schools locally to develop their capacity to integrate activities and resources that promote LOtC in natural environments within their vision of effective education.

3. To develop working practices that provides schools with coherent and effective services for LOtC in natural environments, which overcome barriers and facilitate collaboration between providers as well as reflecting local needs and opportunities.

Progress

Natural England working with the Council for Learning Outside the Classroom have established a Natural Connections Management Group. The Group represents the most significant and extensive partnership of networks ever brought together to address this challenge: including the Learning Outside the Classroom Sector Partnership Groups, Volunteering England, GreenSpace, Keep Britain Tidy Group and Sustainability and Environmental Education; plus other key organisations recruited for their additional skills or scale including King's College London, The Wildlife Trusts, The National Trust and Royal Botanic Gardens Kew.

The Management Group share recognition that the sector(s) involved need to provide more coherent, effective and compelling services for schools and is now actively shaping the best ways to address the 3 priorities identified above. For example King's College London is now leading a piece of work to articulate the value of LOtC in natural environments (including educational, environmental, health and other social benefits and some groundbreaking research to begin to quantify the economic value of these benefits.)

All interventions are being designed so that they:

- draw on the existing assets, skills and experience from across the sectors with an interest in this area, and to add value to the wealth of resources and support that is already available to schools but that currently fragmented and under-used;
- demonstrate the cost-benefit to schools
- enable local community support for schools in opening up more local green spaces for children, thereby developing the voluntary and social capital around schools.

Actions being assessed include a simple online gateway to signpost schools to all the existing resources and support, and engaging a network of local people to work with schools to broker relationships with local providers. We are, and will continue, to work with schools to ensure that the proposal meets their needs.

Natural Connections has been very well-received and is gathering momentum. It is increasingly being seen by partners, and relevant parts of Government including the DEFRA teams working on the Natural Environment White Paper and Big Society, as perhaps one of the only interventions on offer that will address many of the challenges in the Government's response to the Select Committee Report. We aim to ensure solutions are reflected in the emerging Natural Environment White Paper and thinking around the Office of Civil Society's work on the Big Society.

Challenges and opportunities for Natural Connections partnership going forward

Developing new, collaborative ways of working

Improving practices and services for schools

Developing a schools-based revenue model to support the programme.

Identifying new challenges and opportunities resulting from the Education White Paper

Strengthening collaboration between Government Departments in driving improvements in the provision of learning outside the classroom services for schools.



Natural England remit – enable others to facilitate access to the natural environment.


- Provide and improve facilities for the understanding of the natural environment
- Promote access to open spaces
- Contribute to social wellbeing through management of the natural environment

Do so for current **and future** generations

Success in the long term = future generations having connection with natural environment.

Focus of talk - *what we as a sector could/should do to connect children (as our future) to the natural environment.*

This session will look at:



- **Benefits** of children learning in natural environments
- **Evidence** for (dis)connection, and implications
- **Barriers** to engagement
- **'Natural Connections' proposition** and role of schools
- **Discussion**

- What are the benefits of children having a connection to the natural environment?
- Evidence of connection/disconnection – what does this mean for us
- Where can we best target our effort – role of schools
- What are the barriers to engagement – are these challenges for

Natural Connections: the role of Green Space in connecting people to their local environment

- schools or
 - natural environment sector
- 'Natural Connections' project = partnership proposal facilitated by NE and LOTC, to explore and address issues



What **evidence** is there that connecting children to the outdoors is important?

There is a huge amount of research which shows that experiences in natural environments deliver a wide range of benefits around

- Health – physical, mental, well-being
 - research shows feelings of anger, anxiety and boredom are reduced through outdoors learning
- Life skills – and self confidence
- Learning benefits - including more intangible things like trust between teachers and pupils
- Environmental – longer term benefits to the environment from better understanding of its importance

Some of the evidence



- **CRN (2005)** A Countryside for Health and Wellbeing: the physical and mental health benefits of green exercise
- **OFSTED report (2008)** Learning outside the classroom: how far should you go?
- **Sustainable Development Commission (2009)** Every Child's Future Matters
- **Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency (2010)** The aims of the curriculum
- **RSPB (2010)** Every Child Outdoors
- **English Outdoor Council (2010)** Time for change in Outdoor Learning
- **HoC Select Committee Report (2010)** Transforming Education Outside the Classroom
- And many more

Weight of evidence is huge – here are just a few of the key papers:

CRN report

“substantial evidence that links the natural environment with good physical health and psychological wellbeing”.

OFSTED report:

“quality learning outside the classroom contributes significantly to raising standards and improving pupils’ personal, social and emotional development.”

Sustainable Development Commission – children need greenspace for their learning and emotional development, and that to tackle twin problems of obesity and climate change children must be able to connect with nature in green and natural spaces”

And many more

HoC Select Committee Report - called on sector to promote educational and social benefits of learning outside the classroom; and Government to provide back-up and leadership

Evidence is good but news is bad – despite the evidence of benefits the trends are going the other way

Is the motivation there at school ?



- 85% of children want to take part in countryside activities with their school
- 97% of teachers believe it is important for children to learn about the countryside
- 90% of head teachers state that learning outside the classroom is part of the ethos of their schools

BUT

- Less than half children (5-16 yrs) went on a school visit to the countryside in 2008

And at home

Is the motivation there at home ?



- 79% of today's children want to get outside more (National Trust)
- 89% of parents want their children to play outside more and to understand more about the natural environment.

But

- Likelihood of children visiting local green space has halved in a generation
- Home range has fallen by 90% in 20 years
- One third of 8 to 10 yr-olds never play outside without adult supervision.
- in 1990, 80% of 7 to 8 yr olds walked unaccompanied to school, now 5%
- More children are now admitted to British hospitals for injuries from falling out of bed than falling out of trees

Furthermore



Recent survey of 2,000, 8-12 year olds found:

- 49% believe cows hibernate in winter
- More could identify a Dalek than an owl
- 21% have never been on a farm

Children are in danger of becoming "Entombed in their own home"

(House of Commons Select Committee report 2010)

LOtC Manifesto and Quality Badge have done great work in raising the profile of learning in the outdoors, but

82% of teachers say school is not making best use of the resources available

Changes in children's contact with nature

NATURAL ENGLAND

Direct contact with nature	→	abstract and virtual reality
Immersion in community	→	isolated individualism
Independent contact with nature	→	increasing adult supervision

'Extinction Of Experience'
Reduced access to nature leads to reduced attachment, disaffection and alienation. (Robert Pyle, 2002)

These trends are closely linked to a range of challenges facing society today, including childhood obesity and mental health, anti-social behaviour, and lack of environmental awareness and action.

Are things changing ?

NATURAL ENGLAND

- 2005 - English Leisure Visits Survey suggested that people's interest in the natural world was in slow, steady decline.
- the English love affair with the countryside extinguished by busy lives; catch up TV; and instant wonders of the web.

Glimmer of hope !



Natural England's research of people's use and enjoyment of the natural environment found:

- 2009 - slight increase in outdoor visits -up by 7%- reversing the downward trend of the past decade. Some of the biggest rises were seen in the 16 and 24 age group.
- 90% of the population with some sort of connection to the natural world.
- Playing with children ranked third highest motivating factor behind walking but well ahead of all other traditional outdoor activities such as visiting attractions, wildlife watching, fishing etc.

Lots of useful statistics. A few relevant headlines

3rd top motivation for visiting the countryside is to "play with children"

Two thirds of visits were within 2 miles of home

Two thirds of visits taken on foot

MENE gives us an insight into existing use of the outdoors which therefore has an influence on Natural Connections

Where do we experience the outdoors ?

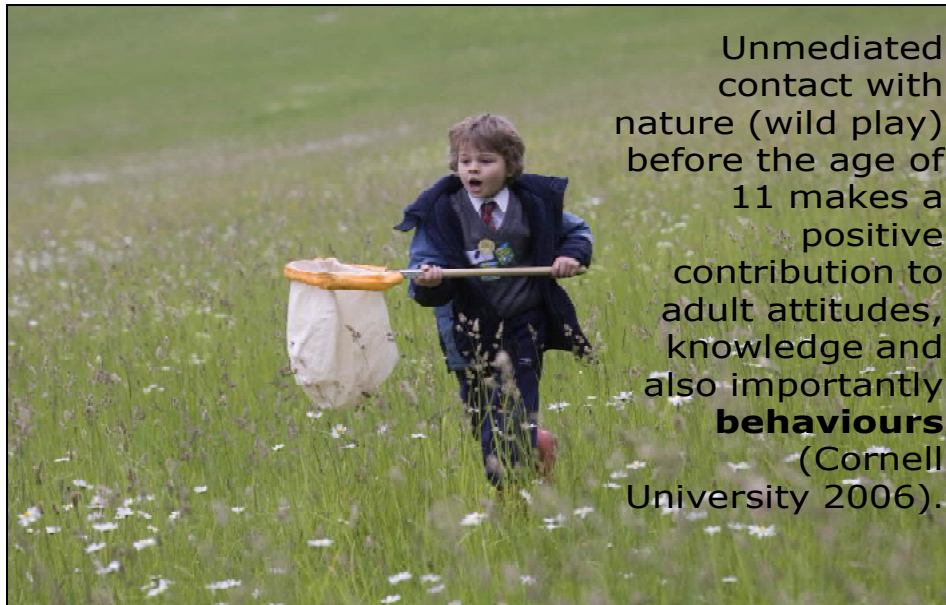


- half of outdoor visits were to locations in the countryside, further 40% in green spaces around towns and cities.
- two thirds of all visits take place within 2 miles of home.
- 90% of the English population live in urban centres, highlighting importance of city parks and the urban fringe countryside as the places with the most intensive use of the natural environment.

Monitoring Engagement of the Natural Environment

– Annual report from 2009/10 published September 2010

Available on Natural England website, at
www.naturalengland.org.uk



Important to engage children whilst young

Implications for

- future of individuals AND
- what does this mean for the next generation's approach to the natural environment?

NE research in Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment (Sept 2010)

- reveals interesting implications for adults' connection with the natural environment (population generally, not just children or schools)



Schools as catalysts for local action



Schools can play a critical role in connecting children to nature.

Natural Connections: the role of Green Space in connecting people to their local environment

They are well placed to provide opportunity for quality, safe means to reach greenspace and start to build that connection
- and to begin to bridge experiences between school time and leisure time.

Natural Connections project

Aims to enable schools to become catalysts in their local communities - to help more children have the chance to explore and enjoy the natural environments on their doorsteps.

Lots of opportunities out there for schools.

But – despite efforts, only fraction of natural environments on our doorsteps are being used by schools.

90% of heads saying outdoor learning is part of the ethos of their school
BUT – as we saw, less than 50% of children had a visit to the countryside through school in 2008

Why?



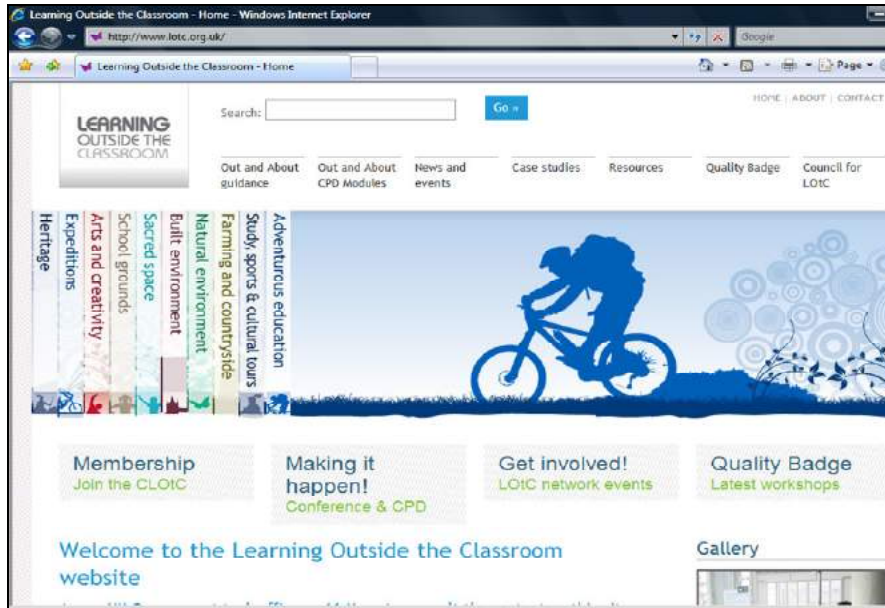
King's College London recent report on the barriers to learning outside the classroom:

Lack of common vision of the value of learning in natural environments and tendency to work in isolation

Support for schools is too fragmented – evidence shows schools are

- unaware of the local places they could use,
- unaware of the support already available to teachers

Natural Connections: the role of Green Space in connecting people to their local environment



LOtC – concept set up in 2006 and launched as a charity in 2009

Aim – “to champion learning outside the classroom and encourage young people to get out and about” – because research shows that children learn best through real life experiences

Operate through 10 ‘Sector Partnerships’

Learning outside the classroom can take place in

- school grounds
- immediate area
- further afield/residential


Main feature is the Quality badge – award focuses on the way the outdoor learning is prepared and delivered rather than issues about the site and its facilities.

E.g. Quality of the learning package, preparation with teachers, feedback etc

Aspiration is

- sites offering outdoor learning can apply for the badge; if they pass the assessment - then promoted to schools as offering good quality learning.

Just some of the networks represented



- GreenSpace
- Volunteering England
- Eco-schools
- Learning Outside the Classroom (LOTC)
- Farming and Countryside Education
- Wildlife Gardening Forum
- Sustainability and Environmental Education (SEEd)
- Group for Education in Museums
- Expedition Providers Association
- Historic Houses Association
- Heritage Lottery Fund
- Commission for Architecture & the Built Environment
- The UK Association for Science and Discovery Centres
- Botanic Gardens Education Network
- English Outdoor Council
- National Council for Voluntary Youth Services
- Bristol Natural History Consortium
- Access to Farms Partnership
- Federation of City Farms & Community Gardens
- British and Irish Association of Zoos & Aquariums
- Religious Education Council of England & Wales
- Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel
- DEFRA's England Biodiversity Strategy Group on Education and Public Understanding


representing hundreds of ;

- Specialist NGOs incl. RSPB/National Trust/The Wildlife Trusts etc.
- National and local government bodies
- Media
- Research bodies

Just a snapshot of networks represented. There are more represented through CLOtC

I hope this has given a flavour of the challenge and how we are looking at tackling it at this early stage.

Challenges and actions



- 1. stimulate demand** for outdoor learning opportunities -
Action: create a compelling rationale for schools and policy makers highlighting the relevance and value of learning in the natural environment through their communications.
- 2. enable teachers** to take up outdoor learning opportunities -
Action: provide direct face to face support for teachers and parents to build awareness, understanding and capacity
- 3. stimulate the supply** of quality outdoor learning opportunities -
Action: provide a larger, more **coherent** outdoor learning offer to schools through online market place for schools, parents and providers

Need to:

- Articulate why this is an essential part of learning
- Help schools make connections
- Facilitate providers of LOtC to come together to offer an easy way for schools to select the most appropriate opportunities

Natural Connections: the role of Green Space in connecting people to their local environment

Natural England and CLOtC working with a Management Group made up of key networks and umbrella orgs

Natural Connections Management Group have adopted these challenges.

Opportunity to influence the Government's white paper!



There is a lot on offer to schools but there is a lot more for us to do.

Identified areas where improvement can have the most impact

Through Natural Connections programme we are hoping to tackle some of the issues but it is early days

Welcome your feedback

APPENDIX A



Countryside Recreation Network

**Natural Connections: the role of green space in connecting people
to their local environment
2nd February 2011 - Sheffield
Programme**

09:30 Registration and Refreshments

10:00 Introduction and welcome by Chair

Section 1: Reinventing green space: what does society expect from the outdoors?

10:15 **Social and Institutional Change: The Implications for Greenspace** Richard Worsley, The Tomorrow Project

10:45 **'Play' in relation to communities and greenspace**
Aileen Shackell, Trees for Transition

11:15 Refreshments

11:45 **Planning for Greenspace: The Greenspace Toolkit**
Peter Frost, Countryside Council for Wales

12:15 *Lunch*

Section 2: Case studies: new agendas for the natural outdoors

13:00 **Forest Kindergartens**
Karen Boyd, Forestry Commission

13:30 **Greenspace for Health and Wellbeing**
Richard Cass, Cass Associates

14:00 **Schools and the natural environment: is the connection broken?**
Jim Burt, Natural England

14:30 Refreshments

Section 3: Workshops - Scenarios and key drivers of change

15:00 Workshops: The aim will be to identify the key drivers of change and to tell a story that illustrates how these will play out and the role of countryside managers in these new scenarios. Workshops will be facilitated by Richard Worsley and Marcus Sangster

15:45 Workshop feedback and key points from Richard Worsley and Marcus Sangster

16:15 **Close**

APPENDIX B



Countryside Recreation Network

Natural Connections: the role of green space in connecting people to their local environment

Biographies of Speakers

CHAIR

Marcus Sangster - Forestry Commission

After a career in forest management Marcus Sangster is now responsible for the Forestry Commission's land-use and social research programmes. He has played a large part in the development of community forestry in Britain and has a particular interest in exploring how forests and the wider countryside can contribute to contemporary life.

SPEAKERS

Richard Worsley - Tomorrow Project Richard is one of the two co-Directors (with Michael Moynagh) of the Tomorrow Project, which they founded in 1997, and which supports organisations and individuals in thinking about the long-term future of people's lives.

His background is:

- in large companies (Group Personnel Director of BT, Head of Personnel of British Aerospace)
- in public policy (Director of the Carnegie Third Age Programme, Social Affairs Director at the CBI, Chairman of the Better Government for Older People programme) and
- in the voluntary sector (currently trustee of several charities and chairman of one).

He has written several books (about the future, ageing, Lord Nelson and Norfolk) and his home is on the North coast of Norfolk.

Aileen Shackell, Trees for Transition

Aileen Shackell is a landscape architect and runs her own practice in west Dorset. Much of her career has focused on the field of landscape restoration and she has worked on a large number of Heritage Lottery Fund projects. Recently she has developed a specialism in Play and Aileen was the principal author for the UK's first design guidance on play, published in 2007 by Play England – *Design for Play: a guide to creating successful play spaces*. Currently she is working on new guidance which will help the NHS use outdoor spaces for therapeutic purposes, which will be published by the Forestry Commission, later this year.

Peter Frost -Countryside Council for Wales

Pete Frost is the Countryside Council for Wales' Senior Urban officer. He works to ensure there are enough green spaces of the right kinds in the right places to make Wales' towns and cities better places for people and nature. Pete helps local authorities plan for accessible natural green space, supports Local Nature Reserve managers, and encourages people and institutions to manage their gardens to attract wildlife. Pete chairs the Green Flag Wales Steering Group and is a member of the UK Green Flag Advisory Board. He led CCW's work on the project which led to the modernisation of the Dyfi Biosphere Reserve to meet the latest UNESCO standards. Pete is a member of the UNESCO UK Man and the Biosphere Committee and is a Fellow of its Urban Forum.

Karen Boyd - Forestry Commission

Karen previously worked within her local authority early years sector for 13 years, working at ground level educating pre-school children. In spring 2009, she joined Forestry Commission Scotland as their Forest Kindergarten Officer to head up the newly commissioned Forest Kindergarten Project, across the Glasgow and Clyde Valley Area. Karen develops and oversees all aspects of the project, taking it forward with a range of responsibilities from implementing its feasibility study and developing its on-going mid term evaluation, to providing continuing professional development educational courses and project evaluations. The largest aspect of this initiative involves the development and delivery of Forest Kindergarten sessions, which entails working with a wide range of individual early year's establishments and children, within a diverse range of local woodland environments. The woodland environments range from FCS woodlands, to local authority sites and private woodlands, and engages not only the children and staff, but also their parents and the wider community, with their natural heritage through working closely with landowners to support, and help take forward, its overall initiative.

Richard Cass - Cass Associates

Richard Cass is founding partner of Cass Associates – a multi-disciplinary planning and design firm based in Liverpool. He is also a CABE Commissioner, where his responsibilities include public space. Qualifying initially as an architect and landscape architect, he has been concerned with the importance of greenspace to human health and well-being throughout his career, for both individuals and communities. As a designer he has made a close study of what makes successful greenspaces. Amongst many awards for his work, the Liverpool Garden Festival project was given the Landscape Institute's Jubilee Award as the most significant UK landscape project of the last 50 years. A central theme in his work is the relationship between the 'designed' or cultural landscape and our relationship with nature, which he believes has a vital role to play in human health and well-being.

Jim Burt - Natural England

Jim Burt grew up and started his working life as a marine biologist on the west coast of Australia, but has spent the last 20 years working on nature conservation policy, communications and public engagement, in the UK and more distant countries such as Papua New Guinea and Pakistan. Jim was Head of Campaigns at Natural England before taking up the role of Outdoor Learning Programme Manager, a move that reflects his long interest in public engagement and passion to help re-connect children with the natural world. Jim lives in Helpston, a small rural village on the edge of Peterborough, with his wife, 3 children and 6 chooks!

APPENDIX C

Delegates List

Geoff	Hughes	Countryside Recreation Network
Malcolm	Marshall	Derbyshire County Council
Jim	Burgin	Wychavon District Council
Jim	Langridge	Jim Langridge Countryside Consulting
Simon	Pedley	Kirklees Metropolitan Council
Stefan	Wathan	The National Trust
James	Ogilvie	Forestry Commission
Belinda	Sinclair	London Cycling Campaign
Clare	Proudfoot	Blaby District Council
Alan	Leather	National Forest Company
Caroline	Schofield	GreenSpace Yorkshire and the Humber
Philip	Turner	Blaby District Council
Steve	Barringham	Derbyshire County Council
Kerry	Morrison	University of Salford
Andrew	Harding	
Sue	Thurley	Cumbria Wildlife Trust
Carol	Morris	University of Nottingham

APPENDIX D

Workshop Session Notes

Flip Chart Transcriptions

Workshops 1 & 2

COUNTRYSIDE RECREATION NETWORK
Natural Connections: the role of Green Space in Connecting People to their
Local Environment -
Workshop Feedback

What will future generations want from the countryside and green areas?

- Places to potter and play.
- Local food.
- Allotment spaces
- Dog walking
- Recreation = high energy running and cycling
- Community = build a safer inspiring community spirit.

What will be the priorities for institutions and professionals responsible for the countryside (in meeting the expectations)?

1. Multifunctional space - help other professionals get to grips - planners, social workers, police etc
2. Infrastructure - advocates and deliverers (help them to get it - use buzz words to engage people)
3. Enable and co-ordinate brokering role.
4. Take a strategic overview
5. Enabling future generations to make an informed choice (needs/wants)
6. Effective and complete control
Use six assessment criteria:
 - Age
 - No refusals
 - Mental health assessments
 - MC Assessment
 - Eligibility
 - BIA

A few comments to finish with:

- Money is tight - we are going to feel more isolated - it will be hard to organise days like our events in the future.
- Uncertainty - will there be a Forestry Commission in five years?

Natural Connections: the role of Green Space in connecting people to their local environment

- In Scotland, Wales - mergers will happen.
- Time of rapid change.
- Events like this are important to network and they help us to realise there are other people like us who are passionate about what we do.
- The operational aspect is crucial
- Struggle with future - will everything stop?
- Children are entombed in their own houses. As opposed to the Forest Schools project being an outstanding/inspiring - liberate the engagement with the outside.
- Potency of seeing things getting done and therefore inspiring people to replicate.
- The will to engage local people but also getting local people to give their time to volunteer.
- Balance between risk/reward.
- Children learn by taking risks - climb up that tree - dealing with Health and Safety Issues through liaison with Local Authorities..
- Young people and parents need to be engaged