

Health and Nature



A Collaborative approach

- There is a disconnect between us and nature
- This is bad for our health and the health of the environment
- If we address this we can improve both!

What is connection to nature

- The extent to which an individual's view of nature is incorporated into their perception of their own sense of self
- *'One of the greatest causes of the ecological crisis is the state of personal alienation from nature in which many people live.'* (Pyle, 1978)

Current state of the environment (could be better!)



Current health of the nation (could be better!)

- 62% adult population overweight
- 35% children ages 2-15 overweight
- Lifestyle illness costs the NHS at least £15 billion a year
- In 1990 – 9 million prescriptions for antidepressants a year
- 2016 – 65 million
- Cost of £266 million

Healthcare costs

- In Devon
- Healthcare budget £1.2 Billion
- Mental health costs £112 Million

- In North Devon
- NDHT - £120 million
- Primary care - £23 million

Thought for the day!

Of the £9 billion currently spent on troubled families nationally, £8 billion is spent on reacting to, rather than preventing problems.

(Devon-Joint-Health-and-Wellbeing-Strategy-2013-to-2016)



How does the environment benefit our health (apart from keeping us alive!!)

- Living in greener environments is associated with reduced mortality
- Exposure to natural environments has been shown to reduce levels of stress, fatigue, anxiety and depression
- Exposure to green spaces leads to maintenance of a healthy immune system and a reduction in inflammatory based diseases e.g. asthma

People who do regular physical activity have:

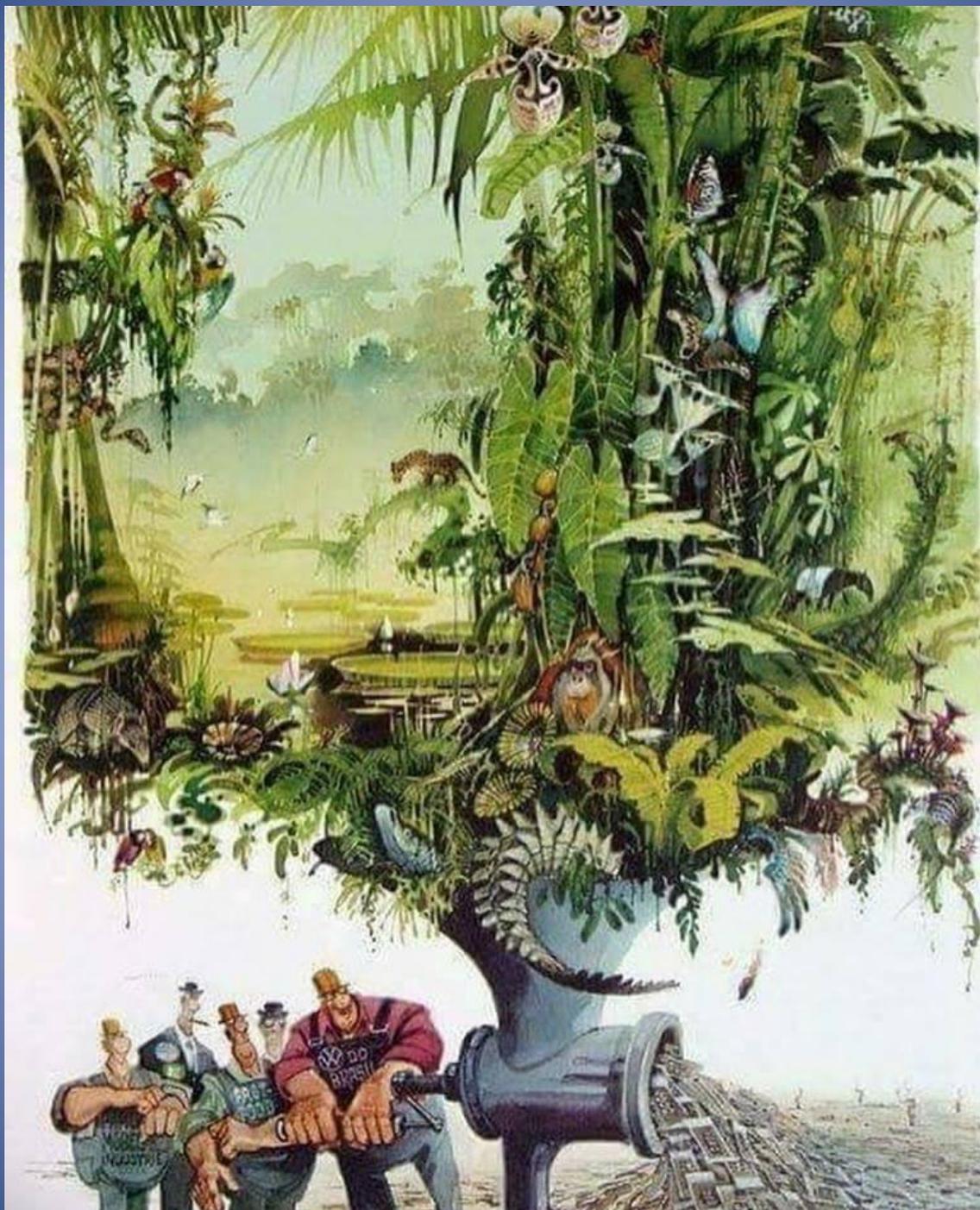
- up to a 35% lower risk of coronary heart disease, stroke and dementia
- up to a 50% lower risk of type 2 diabetes
- up to a 50% lower risk of cancer
- up to an 83% lower risk of osteoarthritis
- up to a 30% lower risk of depression

How does this link with the governments 25 year environment plan?

- Recognises link between environment and health and wellbeing
- Vision:
 - Help people improve their health and wellbeing by using green spaces
 - Encourage children to be closer to nature, both in and out of school
 - 'Green' our towns and cities

How is the current state of our
health and that of the
environment linked

Both are a symptom of our values



A blue-tinted underwater photograph showing the tail and head of a whale. The tail is on the left, and the head is on the right, both appearing to be in motion. The water is clear and blue, with some light rays visible. The text is overlaid on the lower right portion of the image.

In our modern world we teach our children to value money above happiness, see nature as a commodity to be traded, believe infinite growth is an entitlement and seem to have lost our sense of wonder and respect for the beauty that surrounds us

- If we can reconnect people with the natural world they will value it
- As they get to know it they will want to spend more time enjoying it
- That will improve their activity levels which directly improves physical and mental health
- Once they value it they will want to protect it

- In Devon we have relatively high rates of deprivation, an ageing population and fairly low wages
- But we do have...





Kate Hind

SWEEP

- SWEEP is a multi disciplinary programme led by Exeter University with Plymouth University and PML
 - Working on a range of projects that aim to deliver transformative regional impact using a natural capital approach
 - Exploring ideas to support using green space as a valuable tool to improve well being
- sweep.ac.uk



Research and evidence

Recreational physical activity in natural environments and implications for health: A population based cross-sectional study in England



M.P. White ^{a,*}, L.R. Elliott ^a, T. Taylor ^a, B.W. Wheeler ^a, A. Spencer ^b, A. Bone ^c, M.H. Depledge ^a, L.E. Fleming ^a

^a European Centre for Environment & Human Health, University of Exeter Medical School, Knowledge, Spa, Royal Cornwall Hospital Treliske, Cornwall, TR1 3HD, United Kingdom

^b Health Economics Group, University of Exeter Medical School, South Cloisters, St Luke's Campus, Exeter EX1 2LU, United Kingdom

^c Public Health England, Environmental Change Department, 133-135 Waterloo Road, London SE1 8UG, United Kingdom



European Centre for
Environment & Human Health

[News](#) [Events](#) [Contact](#)

Search



[Home](#)

[About us](#)

Discover the drive
behind the Centre

[Research](#)

Take a closer look at
our science

[Business](#)

Explore opportunities
to work with us

[People](#)

Find out more about
our staff and students

'Green exercise' in England brings £2.2 billion in health benefits

Posted on 22nd September 2016

Physical activity in natural environments, or 'green exercise', is estimated to provide health benefits of £2.2 billion a year to the English adult population, according to new research published in the journal Preventive Medicine.

Researchers from the University of Exeter Medical School and Public Health England analysed data from the world's largest study on



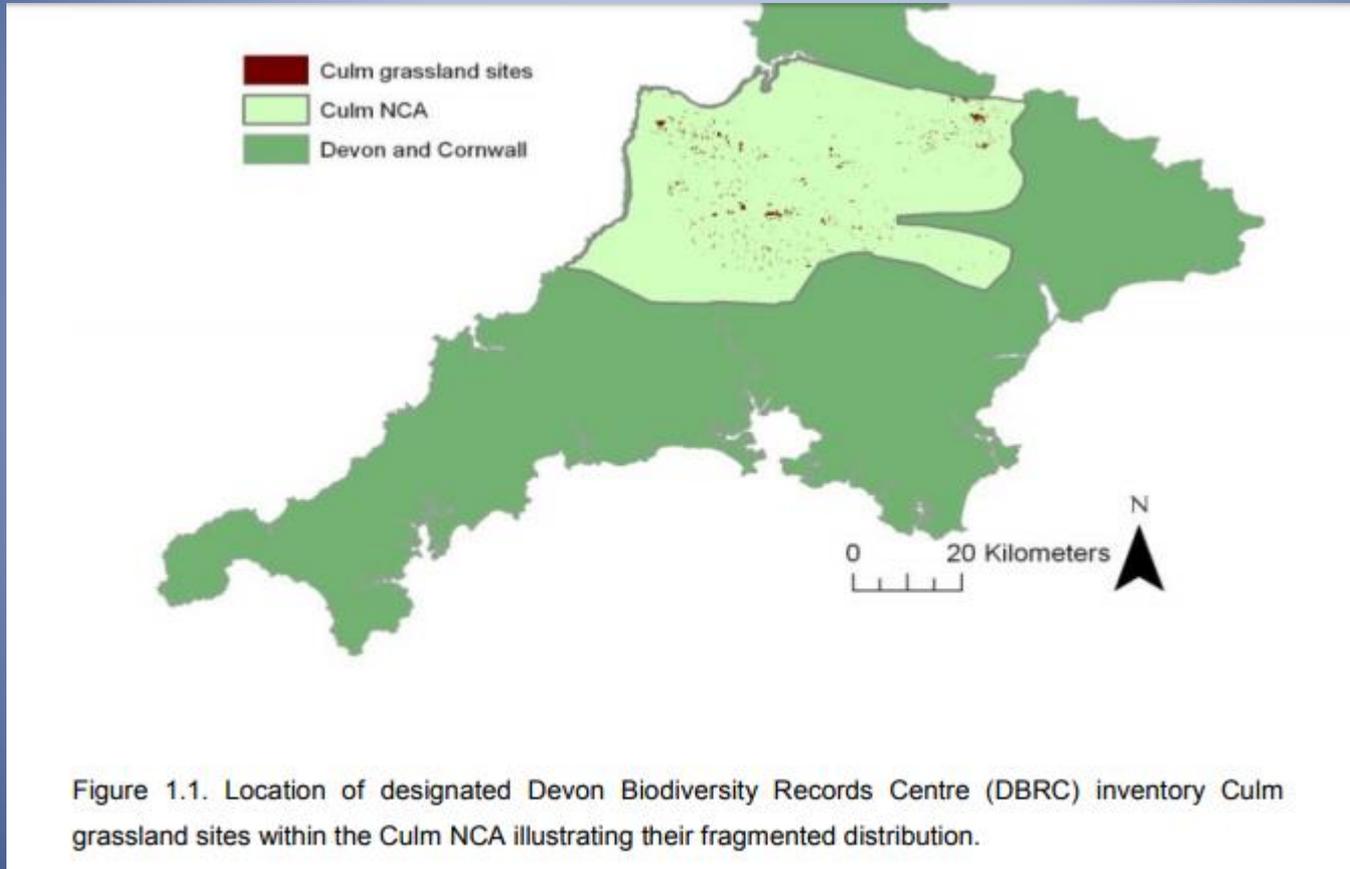
Long term environmental loss and degradation in Devon

Despite best efforts...

- The environmental landscape is being lost or degraded and is facing various threats

Culm grassland

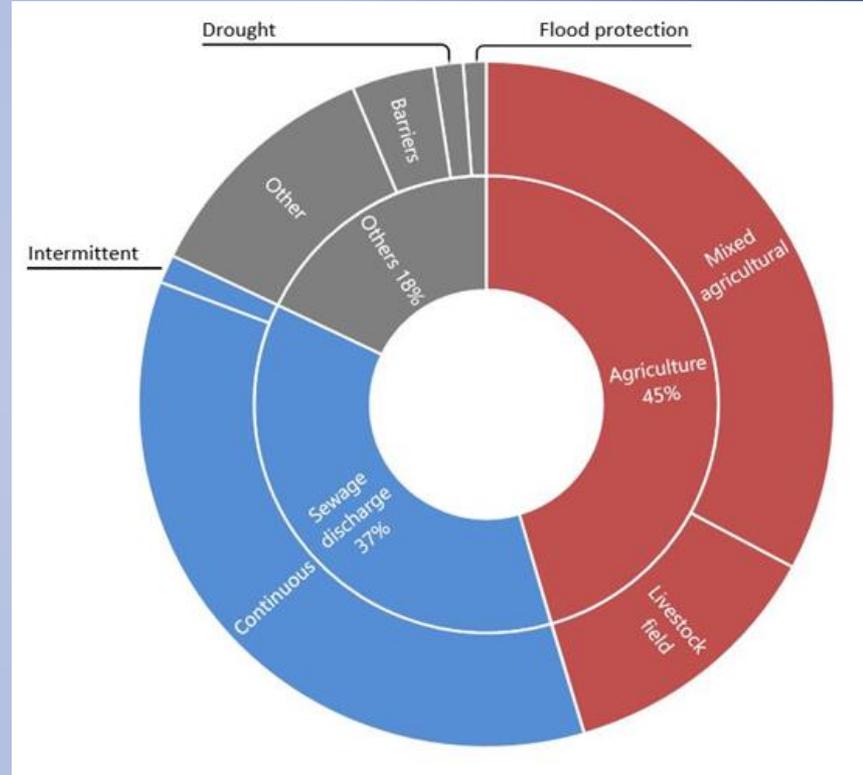
Culm is an important ND habitat - degraded due to intensification



Woodlands



Water Quality



Air Quality

Braunton an Air Quality Management Area designated after Nitrogen Dioxide high levels



Mike Southon, North Devon Journal

Existing interventions linking health and nature

Case study : The Wave Project



Case Study: Exercise on prescription

Exercise prescription pad

Patient name-
Date of birth-

Date-



I recommend that to benefit your health you should:

Go for a brisk walk for 10-30 minutes each day

And/ or (including condition specific advice):

Book a free physical activity telephone consultation with one small step on

01392 908 139

Plus strengthening exercises 2 times per week

Date For review Signed (GP or health professional)

Case Study: Walking for health

Braunton Walking For health



walking for health

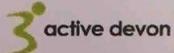


Come join our FREE friendly walk

When: Every Tuesday
Where: Meet in Caen Street car park, EX33 2AA, outside Lloyds Pharmacy
At: 10:15am for a 10:30am start
We offer Grade 1, 2 and 3 walks on the day depending on the ability of the walkers who attend and the available walk leaders

Level 1: Tarka Trail, 30 minute walk, approx. ½ mile
Level 2: Allotment, 40 minute walk, approx. 1 mile
Level 2: Buckland Wood, 1 hour, approx. 2 miles
Level 3: Church Street, 1.5 miles, approx. 3 miles
Our walk leaders can help you decide which walk is best for you
Hope to see you there!

For more information contact Ruth Tyler on ruth Tyler@hotmail.com or Charlotte Broadhead on charlotte.broadhead@activedevon.org

www.walkingforhealth.org.uk 

Projects in the pipeline

Connecting Actively with Nature (CAN).

Partnership project with LNP+Active Devon

Connect 3000 over 55's with nature to benefit health.

£750k funding from National lottery and sport England

Devon Citizen social prescribing project - bid going in through governments life chances fund

The Challenge

- We know these interventions are good for us
- We know they are good for the environment
- We know they make economic sense

- How can we make them accessible to all

The local challenge

- In the short term, how can health and environmental organisations best work together?
- How can we link up with what is already available?
- What is the future of nature based 'social prescribing' initiatives in North Devon?
- Long term, how can we work together to foster a population-wide re-engagement with our natural environments?

What next?

We are looking for your general support for these principles and on-going work streams

We are looking for support to deliver the “green intervention” arm of the social prescribing proposal that:

- Specifically targets deprived population in North Devon
- Delivers via a “community connector”
- Ensures agencies offering a menu of activity for patients are supported
- Is monitored scientifically by our partners



Thank you for listening