



Utilising Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards in Practice

Chris Gordon, Recreation Specialist



Natural England



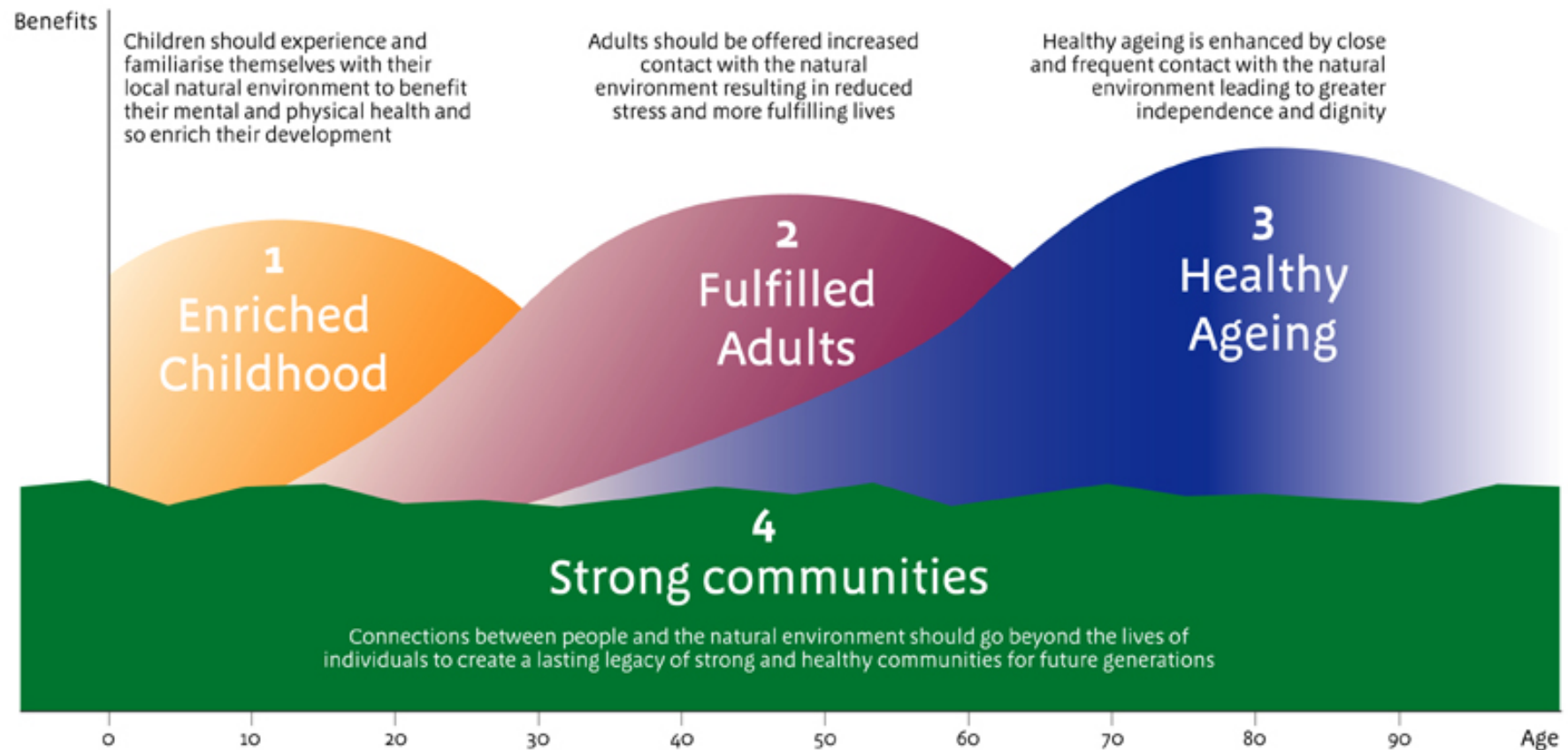
- Natural England's purpose is defined in legislation :
 - To ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, there by contributing to sustainable development
 - People are inspired to value and conserve the natural environment

ANNEX 2

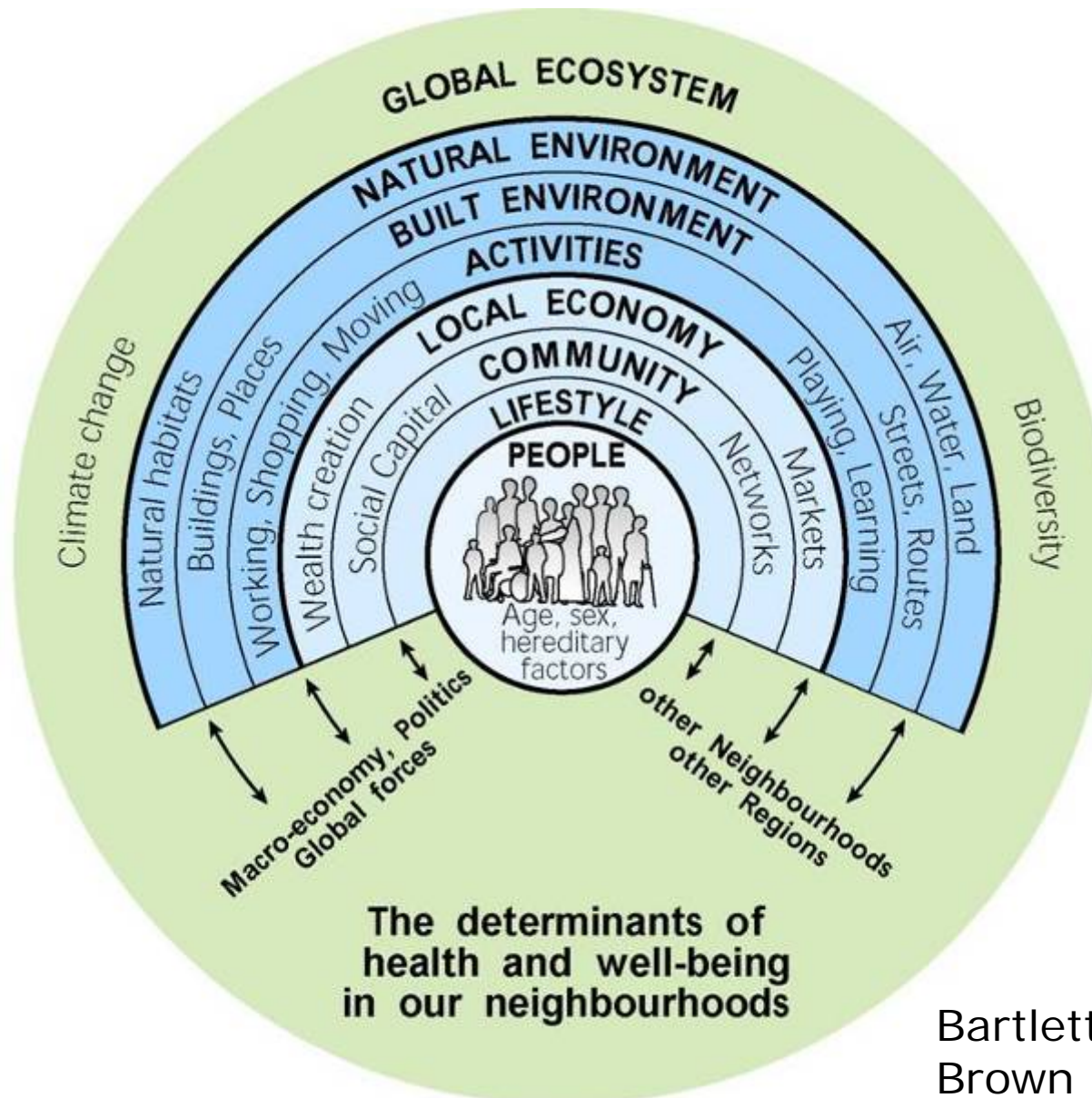
Natural England's Health & Wellbeing Policy

Contact with the natural environment helps create strong and healthy communities with more active and less stressed individuals

NATURAL
ENGLAND



There are also two transition periods, at teenage and retirement, where people face specific challenges, so different approaches to promoting contact with the natural environment may be needed



Bartlett, Grant & Brown (2006)

Natural England Draft Access Policy



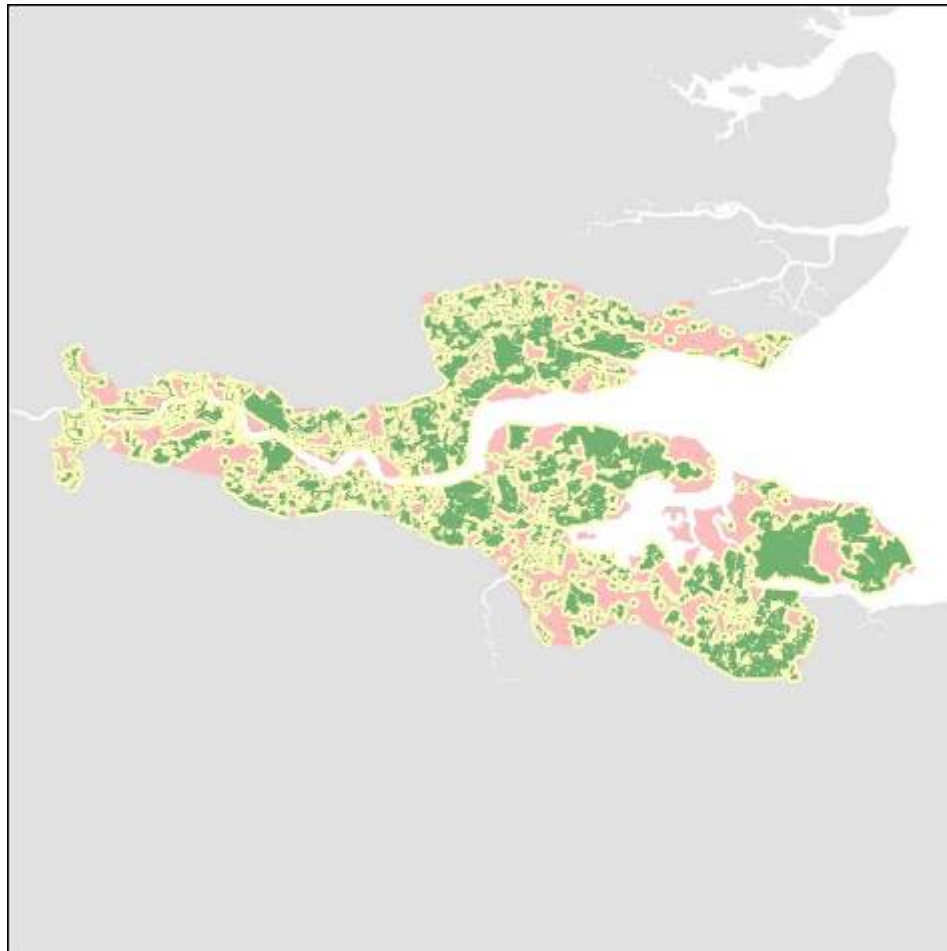
- Our overall approach to access will prioritise outcomes that:
 - provide the widest range of opportunities for people of all abilities, ages, ethnic groups and social circumstances to actively engage in, value and enjoy the natural environment;

ANGSt Model



- **Every home should be within 300 m of an accessible natural green space of at least 2 ha, plus:**
- **At least one accessible 20 ha site within 2 km**
- **At least one accessible 100 ha site within 5 km**
- **At least one accessible 500 ha site within 10 km**
- **Provision of at least 1 ha LNR per 1000 population**

Thames Gateway



Thames gateway pilot
mapping of ANGSt
(2007)

ANGSt Pilots



- **Improving accessibility**
- **Connecting people with the natural environment**
- **Improving naturalness**
- **Ensuring Greenspace Quality**



London Pilot Projects

- West Ham Park, Newham
- Whittington Park, Islington
- Peckham Rye Common, Southwark
- King George's Park, Wandsworth
- The Warren , Sutton
- Paddington Recreation Ground, Westminster
- Barham Park, Brent
- Margravine Cemetery, Hammersmith and Fulham
- Weavers Fields, Tower Hamlets
- Spitalfields City Farm, Tower Hamlets
- Hilly Fields, Lewisham
- Hackney Downs , Hackney
- East and West Reservoirs, Hackney (Project managed by the London Wildlife Trust)
- Neighbourhoods Green (several sites Project managed by the London Wildlife Trust with Registered Social Landlords)
- Websters Land, Newham
- Crayford Marshes, Bexley
- Belmont Rec Ground Haringey
- Norwood Park, Lambeth



| Site | Location |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Barham Park | Wembley, London |
| Whittington | Tuffnell Park, London |
| Margravine Cemetery | Hammersmith, London |
| Hilly Fields | Greenwich, London |
| Peckham Rye | Peckham, London |
| Hackney Downs | Hackney, London |
| Cromwell Bottom Nature Reserve | Near Leeds |



Pilot Studies: Baseline data Phase 1

- There were 2 main objectives:
 - Measure people's perception of nature and connectivity with nature
 - Gain an understanding of what people want from their local green space



Research

- Tree Market Research & Data consultancy

Treelondon

<mailto:info@treelondon.com>



- **Stage 1 - Qualitative**

- To explore people's perception of connectivity with nature
- To gather their opinions on their local green space
- 7 focus groups with 8 respondents per group

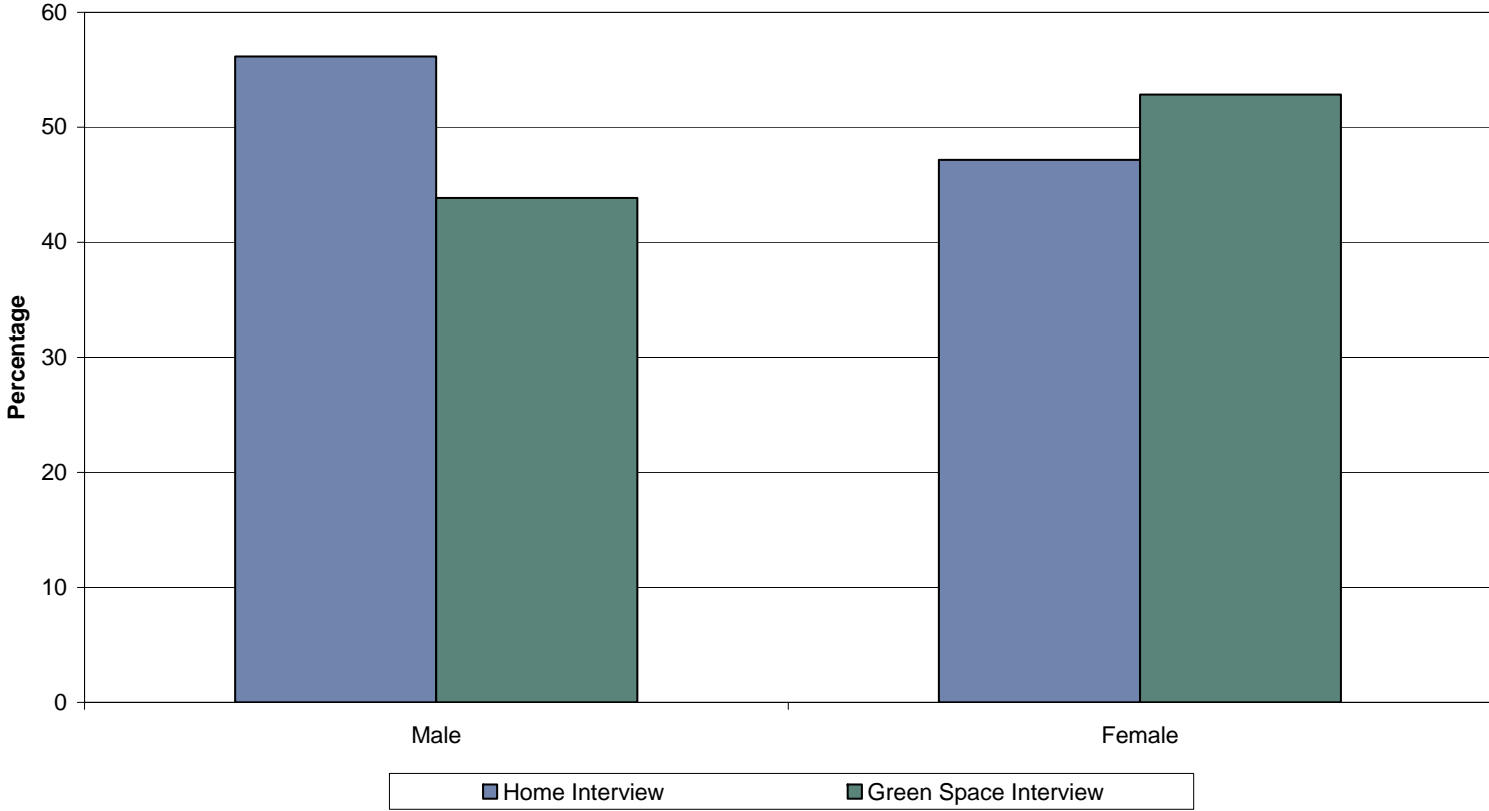
- **Stage 2 – Quantitative**

- To verify these findings and add demographic insights

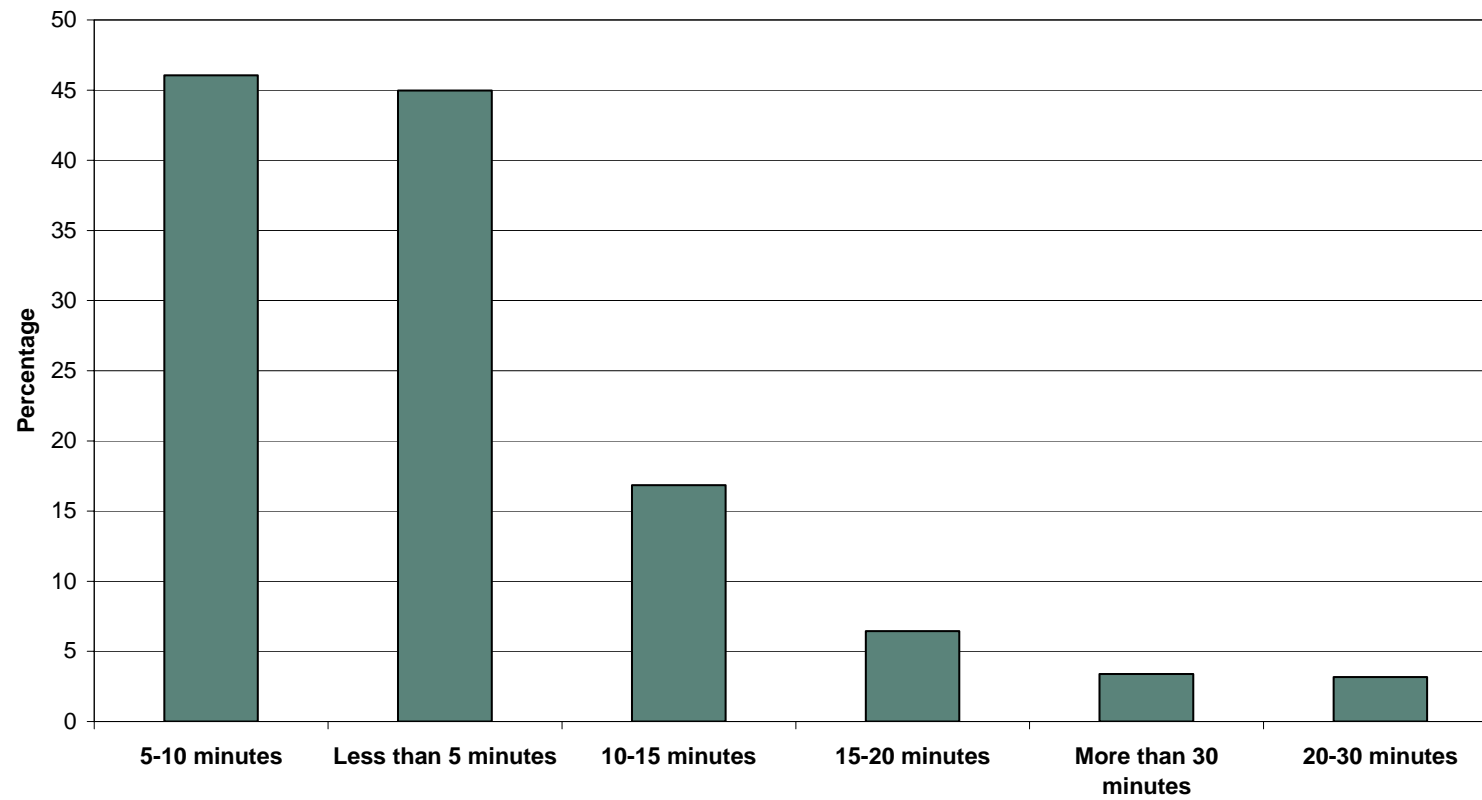
The People.....



Interview Type per Gender



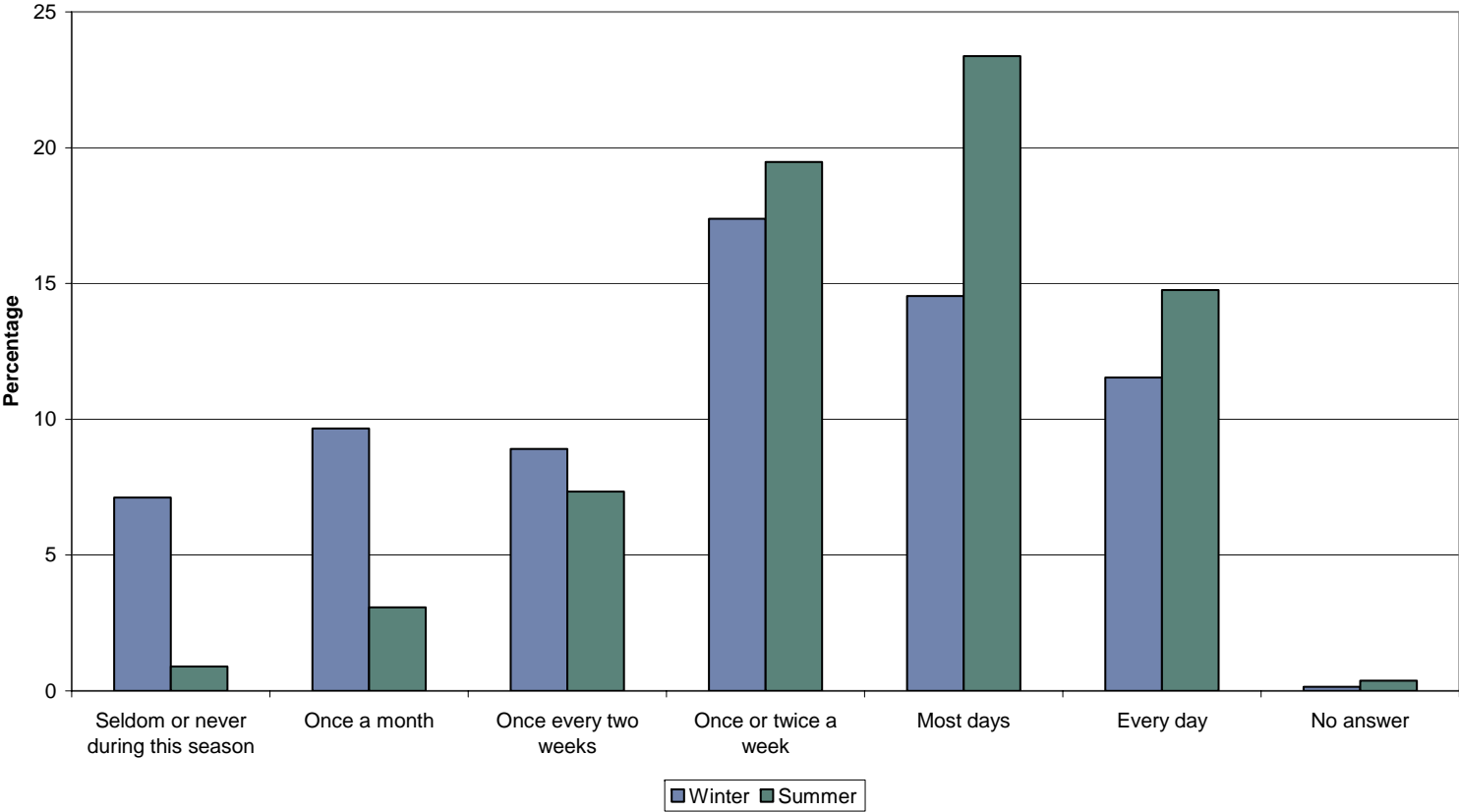
How long does your normal journey take?



Using the Spaces



How often do you visit?



Local green space

3 core visitor typologies who use local green space:



Passive
E.g.. thinkers



Sociable
E.g.. family
playtime



Active
E.g.. dog-walkers

Visitor typologies breakdown

Passive

- Enjoy flowers/trees
- Get some fresh air
- Enjoy the beauty of the surroundings
- See birds and wildlife
- To relax
- For peace and quiet
- To think

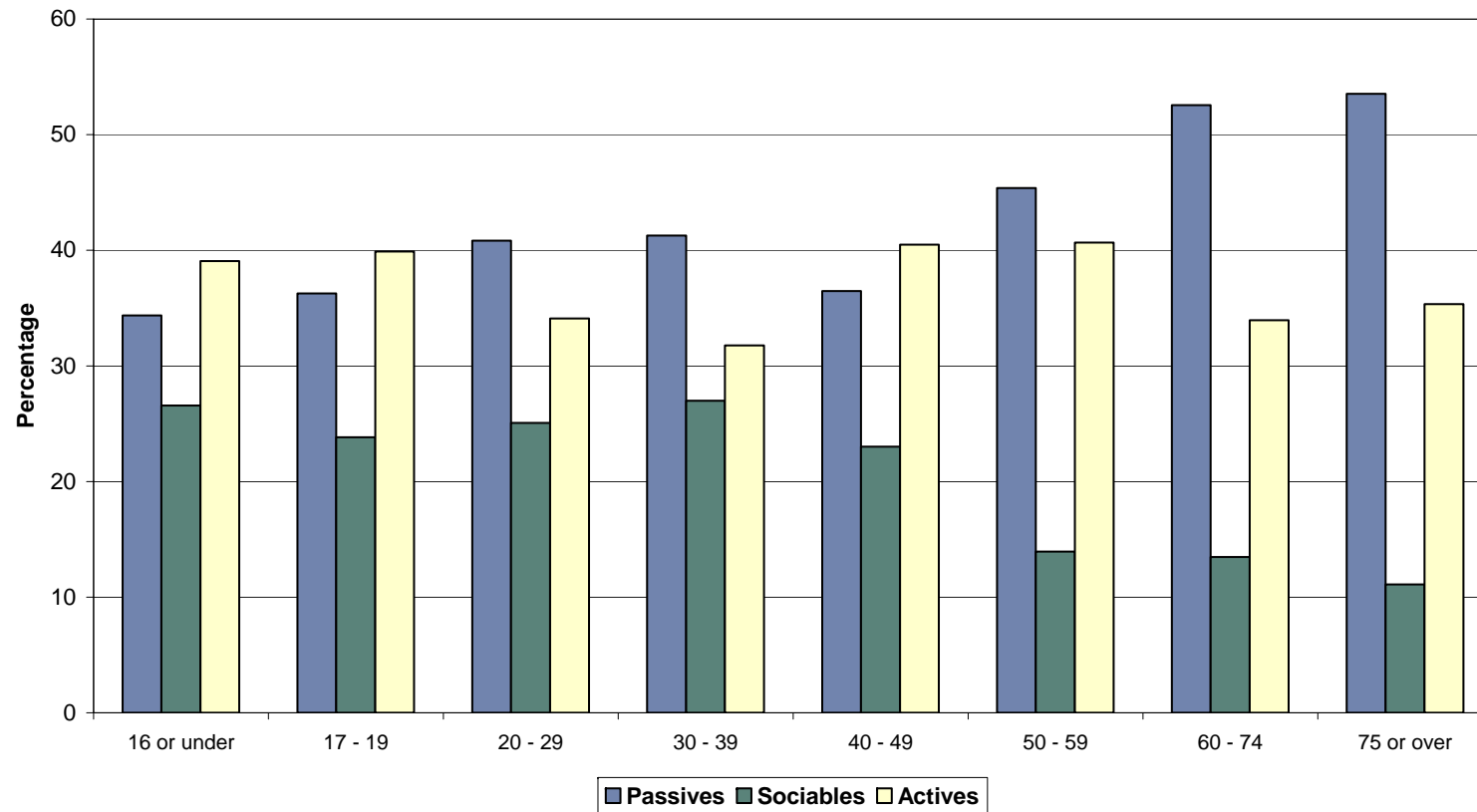
Sociable

- Children/family outing
- Meet friends
- Visit the children's playing area
- Enjoy entertainment/events
- Watch sports or games
- Picnic/ barbeque
- To eat/drink

Active

- For a walk
- Play sports or games
- Take a shortcut
- Walk the dog
- To keep fit
- Feed the birds/ducks
- Organised educational visits
- Guided walks and talks
- Ride a bike

By age



Connection with Nature



- Respondents mostly defined their idea of ‘nature’ as more wild and open spaces
- Real passion and appreciation of spending time in natural landscapes as opposed to the ‘concrete jungle’
- People’s preferences seems to be based on familiarity



Why do you need greenspaces?

- Nature was perceived to give perspective to life
- Conducive to detachment and escapism from their daily lives
- This connectivity was felt to be linked to our animal instincts
- Without access to green spaces, respondents felt there would be an increase in aggression, anger and stress in their lives



What do they want from greenspace ?



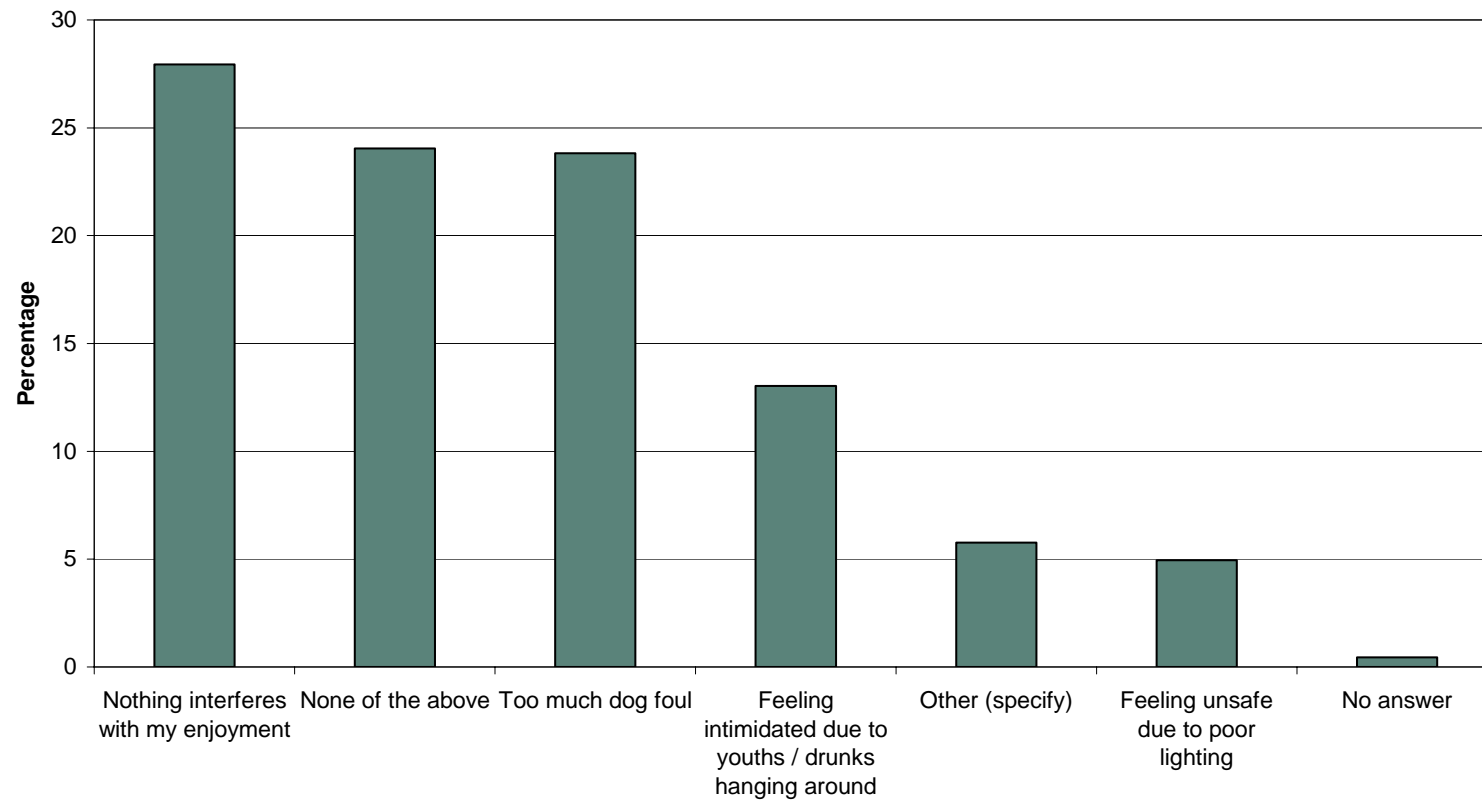
- Variety
- Less structured and 'wilder' environments
- Colour



The Place



Which, if any, of the following interferes with your enjoyment of the park?



Site Specific Findings



Positives:

- A good **variety** of areas /Diversity
- Good place for children/playgrounds
- Other facilities/features
- Well maintained
- Feel safe
- Variety of trees/old trees
- Spacious
- Separate dog walking area



Less positively:

- Considered “too manicured” in parts
- Lack of facilities
- **Lack of variety**
- Poor maintenance/ management
- Poor lighting
- Drunks in park
- Dogs – fouling & security
- Low awareness
- No signage
- Lack of colour / no flowers





- Greenspace is good for you
- It is important it is close to home
- ANGSt is a tool for identifying where there are gaps in access
- Quality and naturalness are important
 - but what are they
 - Spatial conditions (size, type, layout of greenspace) that promote beneficial effects of nearby nature



- Staffordshire University – Conference networking information
- Bristol University/UEA – relationship between proximity to greenspace and levels of physical activity/obesity. Reporting 2008.
- Lancaster University – qualitative research into motivation for use of greenspaces.
- Salford University – PhD research into distribution & quality of natural greenspace.