

SuDS, Green Infrastructure and Public Health

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Health benefits of Green Space

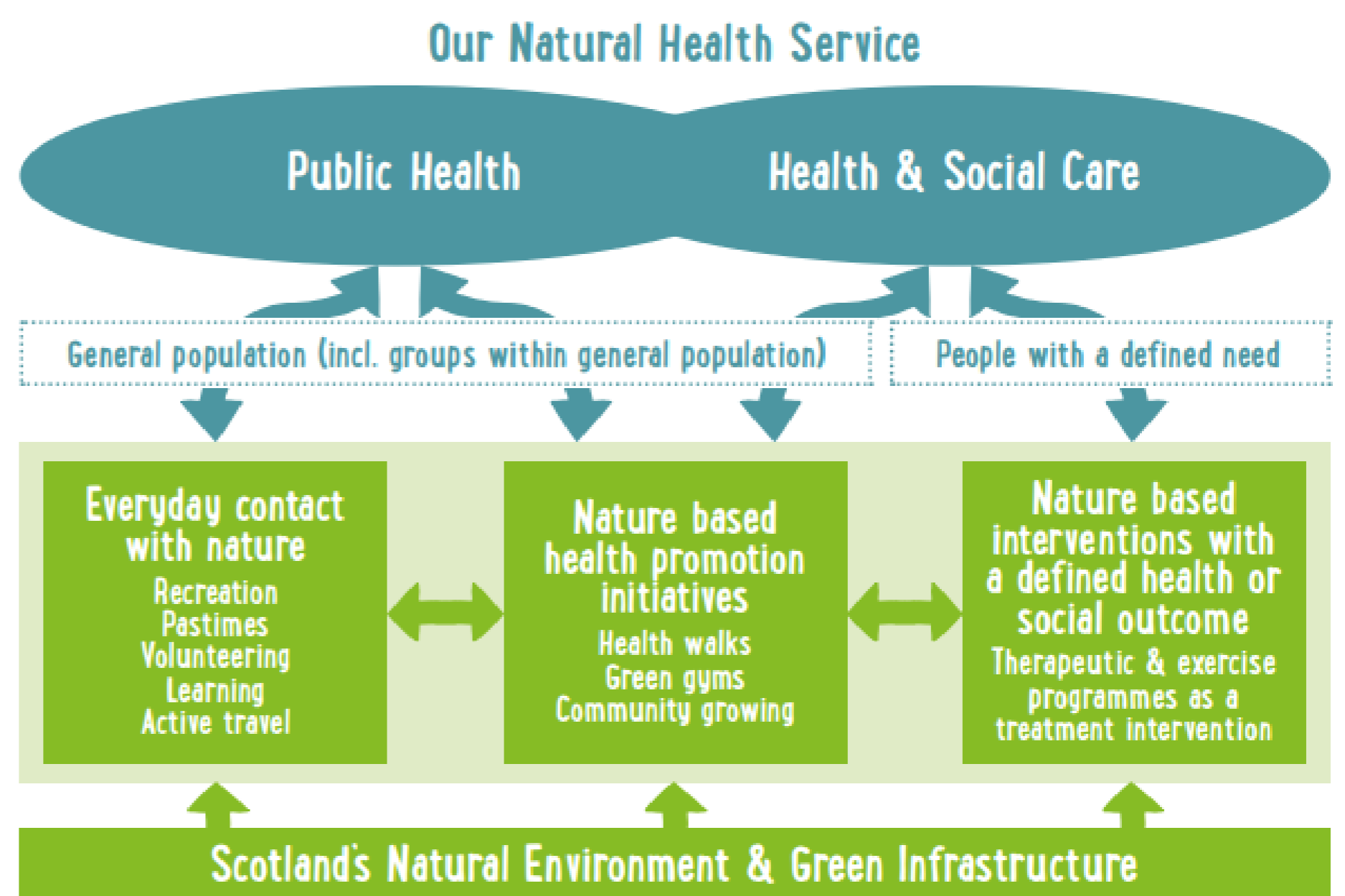
Health benefits from nature are now widely published. Even spending time in nature without doing physical exercise is beneficial for physical and mental wellbeing. Improving public health and reducing health inequalities are key priorities in Scotland.

SUDS, GI and Health

The growing recognition in policy and practice of the value of the outdoors to improve public health has led to the development of the concept of Scotland's outdoors as Our Natural Health Service, to help support and complement our National Health Service. Increasing the number of people who regularly use and enjoy the natural environment and associated **green infrastructure** is a longstanding aim in Scotland. SuDS and urban green spaces have a part to play.

Dundee Green Health Partnership

There are now 4 Local Green Health Partnerships in Scotland, including Dundee. We have secured funding to employ a project officer and we are establishing a green health network. Public use and experience of greenspace are important in realising the full range of **social, economic and health benefits**. For this we need good quality greenspaces which include SuDS and GI, a real challenge at a time when funding for greenspace is being reduced (SNH, 2017b)



There is a strong evidence base for the health and well-being benefits of 'green exercise' – a term which encompasses ways of using the outdoors and contact with nature to foster better health. Activities include walking, cycling, gardening, volunteering, outdoor learning and play, as well as just enjoying being out in green environments and nature. Making more use of local green spaces and natural places can help guard against and manage key health issues such as depression, coronary heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, obesity and dementia.

Reference: SNH (2017a)
<https://www.nature.scot/professional-advice/contributing-healthier-scotland/our-natural-health-service>

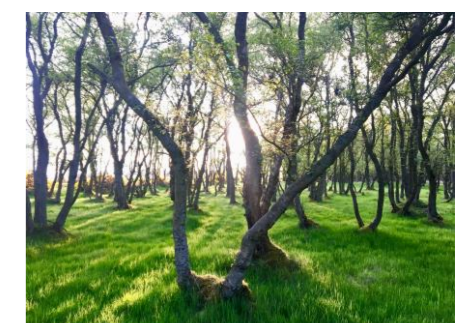
Most adults in Scotland (82%) visit the outdoors for recreation at least occasionally – and more than 9 in 10 of these visitors report improvements to their physical and mental health as a result: (94% say it helps them de-stress, relax and unwind; 92% found it improved their physical health; 90% report that it makes them feel energised and re-vitalised ; 81% say they enjoy getting closer to nature; 76% value the social experience. However, Less than half of adults in Scotland (49%) visit the outdoors on a regular, weekly basis - and 14% don't visit at all.

Reference: SNH (2017b)
<https://www.nature.scot/sites/default/files/2017-07/A2239751%20-%20Natural%20Health%20Service.pdf>



Scottish Natural Heritage
Dualchas Nádair na h-Alba
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NHS
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