



GREENPRINT

Our framework
for a green
recovery

Natural Health Service: Consultation Summary Summer 2022



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Greenprint Natural Health Service Consultation Summary

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Contents

1. Introduction.....	4
2. Method of consultation.....	5
3. Outcome 1: Access to Nature.....	6
3.1 Overview.....	6
3.2 Common themes and challenges.....	6
3.3 Suggested actions.....	7
4. Outcome 2: Sustainable Healthcare.....	9
4.1 Overview.....	9
4.2 Common themes and challenges.....	9
4.3 Possible actions.....	10
5. Useful resources.....	11

1. Introduction

1.1 About Greenprint

The Greenprint is a joint initiative led by New Forest National Park Authority, University of Southampton, University of Portsmouth, and Southern Policy Centre, working with Partnership for South Hampshire. The objective of the Greenprint framework is to enhance collaboration across and within sectors to achieve a green recovery together.

The Greenprint framework has been developed from existing plans and strategies, and through dialogue with a range of stakeholders, reflecting the distinctive characteristics of our area: our renowned coastline and national parks; the interconnected mosaic of urban, suburban and rural communities; our excellent educational and research institutions; a commitment to building sustainable places; and building climate resilience by working with local businesses and innovative Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). The framework focuses on five priorities: Net Zero with Nature, World Class Blue/Green Environments, Natural Health Service, Quality in Design and Build, and Green Skills and Jobs.

Between June and July 2022, Karolina Zarzyczny (the Greenprint Initiative secondee) conducted a series of interviews with a range of stakeholders and experts across the Central South. The objective of the interviews was to gather expert and key stakeholder opinions, regarding the actions which should underpin the Greenprint Framework. This document provides a summary of the consultation for the Natural Health Service priority.

1.2 Natural Health Service

The Natural Healthcare theme focusses on improving physical and mental health and wellbeing and tackling health inequalities through greater access to our world class natural environments as well as bringing nature into our urban communities. The priority is further split into two outcomes:



Access to Nature

“Improving access to nature through increasing engagement and awareness, and overcoming inequalities through supporting underserved groups. Ensuring feasible geographical access and enhancing both rural and urban natural spaces. Access to nature is facilitated through active travel and public transport infrastructure.”



Sustainable Healthcare

“Facilitating provision of sustainable access to healthcare and access to sustainable healthcare. Healthcare providers are accessible by public transport and active travel through strategic planning. Partnerships with NHS trusts work to mitigate environmental impact of healthcare, and healthcare estates provide access to nature for staff and patients.”

2. Method of consultation

2.1 Interviewee selection

The Greenprint framework was developed through dialogue with a range of stakeholders and experts which came together in Communities of Practice. For the consultation, members of Communities of Practice were invited for an online interview to provide their thoughts and expertise on actions which they believe should underpin the Greenprint framework. Individuals new to Greenprint, were invited on recommendation from other Community of Practice members.

For this consultation, we interviewed seven experts: Sienna Sommers (Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust), Dr. Lisa Riley (University of Winchester), Sarah Taylor (Natural England), Dr. Becky Broomfield (Testvale Surgery), Jim Mitchell (New Forest National Park Authority), Nick Tomalin (Royal Society for the Protection of Birds), and a Higher Education NHS Fellow from Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

2.2 Interview format

All the interviews were between 30—60 minutes long, and took place over Microsoft Teams. When a call was not possible, consultation was carried out over email. All the experts and stakeholders were interviewed by Karolina Zarzyczny.

The interviewees were first asked to provide an overview of their understanding of Greenprint, as well as their involvement in the initiative so far. The interviewees were then updated on the Greenprint progress, asked to confirm whether they understand the two Natural Health Service outcomes, and were given the opportunity to comment on the outcome definitions. Some of the experts were interviewed with the focus on other Greenprint priorities, but their comments and suggestions related to Natural Health Service and are therefore included in this report.

With the outcomes in mind, the interviewees were asked to provide their opinions on what actions they believe should be taken across the Central South, in order to achieve the Greenprint outcomes. Where appropriate, the interviewees were asked to identify the challenges and obstacles to achieving the outcomes, and provide suggestions for overcoming them. Finally, the interviewees were given an opportunity to add any other comments.

The objective of the Greenprint framework is to enhance collaboration across and within sectors to achieve green growth together.



3. Access to Nature

3.1 Overview



Access to Nature

“Improving access to nature through increasing engagement and awareness, and overcoming inequalities through supporting underserved groups. Ensuring feasible geographical access and enhancing both rural and urban natural spaces. Access to nature is facilitated through active travel and public transport infrastructure.”

Outcome 1 focusses on improving access to nature in a safe and nature-friendly manner. Everyone across Central South should have access to nature, either through rural or urban spaces. Importantly, access to nature should not negatively impact nature itself.

3.2 Common themes and challenges.

Throughout the interviews, common themes and challenges emerged across the sectors. Those themes and challenges are applicable to organisations, businesses, councils and authorities across central south. The common themes and challenges are summarised below:



Access to nature needs to begin at the doorstep. People are more likely to engage with nature when it is close to their home.



Access to nature should not just focus on a destination (e.g. park or nature reserve), but also on the journey. The journey itself can be nature-immersive experience.



There needs to be a healthy balance between access to nature and damaging impacts on nature arising from human activities.



Greening of spaces to bring nature to urban areas should focus on native and location appropriate biodiversity, and overall biodiversity net gain.



Greening cities should involve the local community to ensure people are provided with what they want and need.



There is a demand for reconnecting sectors to allow for more effective collaboration in social prescribing.



There is a need for increasing awareness of the public and different sectors on how beneficial engagement with nature is for health and wellbeing.



There is a need for improved sustainable transport to natural spaces.

3.3 Suggested actions

A summary of the suggested actions relating to Access to Nature , is provided in the table below.

Action	Aim of the action.	Sector	Possible metrics	Challenges	Taking it further
Every region should create an assessment of public access to nature to ensure everyone has access to nature within less than 2 miles of their home.	People are more likely to engage with nature if it is close to their home. According to Natural England, <u>over 2 in 3 nature visits are within 2 miles of home</u> .	Local authorities, councils and national parks. This work can also be supported by higher education.	Geographical data on access to nature for each household.	If the data cannot be extracted at a fine enough scale for each region from existing datasets (e.g. from Natural England), new surveys will be required.	Regional data could be pooled and shared in a Hampshire –wide database.
Provide opportunities for commuting to be a nature immersive experience as the commute itself can allow for interaction with nature.	Creating nature engagement through a range of sensory queues by e.g. planting wildflowers by bus stops or along cycle lanes or walkways. Alternative methods of transport such as kayaking can be nature immersive experiences but will require safe access to rivers.	Local authorities, councils, national parks and land owners.	Data can be obtained as size of “natural area” created or proportion of public and active transport which provides nature immersive experiences. Opinion data can be obtained from the public via surveys or feedback buttons placed at points of commute start/end e.g. bus stops.	Requires collaboration between sectors. Long term maintenance of natural areas needs to be considered in planning.	Support community projects to allow public to participate in planting in their local areas.
Increase number of signs which encourage engaging with- and relating to nature	People are more likely to engage with nature if they understand it better. Signage around natural areas should not only say what species are present, but also provide relatable facts. For example, usage of certain flower species.	Local authorities, councils, national parks and land owners. This work can also be supported by higher education.	Metrics can be obtained on the number of signs present and public engagement with the signs.	Initial costs associated with sign placement.	Create digital resources which can be accessed by scanning QR codes on the signs.
Create more outdoor engagement opportunities for low income, ethnic minority and older age groups <u>who are less likely to visit natural spaces.</u>	Outdoor access should be accessible to everyone. Subsidies should be available to schools from low-income areas for outdoor activity days. Natural spaces need to be accessible to allow engagement from older age groups and those with disabilities.	Local authorities, councils, national parks, landowners, outdoor education organisations and NGOs.	Metrics can be obtained on the number of people engaging with the natural world through the schemes.	Costs associated with subsidy. Requires collaboration across sectors.	Campaign for outdoor learning to become part of national curriculum, costs of which should be subsidised through governmental funding. Create a wider campaign on the benefits of being in nature.

Action	Aim of the action.	Sector	Possible metrics	Challenges	Taking it further
Already existing natural spaces need to have an incentive or a draw to them, to encourage visits by people who normally would not engage with natural spaces.	People are more likely to engage with nature if they have a direct reason for it. Incentives such as availability of picnic tables, benches, public hammocks or public hotplates for safe barbeques, are very popular in other parts of the world.	Local authorities, councils, national parks and land owners. Organisations and businesses could sponsor local projects.	Metrics on facilities available, and on public engagement.	Costs associated with creation of facilities and their maintenance.	Engage with local public to find out what they would like to see in their area.
Increase the provision of free public gyms in natural spaces.	Outdoor gyms are a great way for people to engage with outdoors and be active. Moreover, it provides facilities for those on low income who may otherwise not have gym access.	Local authorities, councils, national parks and land owners. Organisations and businesses could sponsor local projects.	Metrics on facilities available, and on public engagement.	Costs associated with creation of facilities and their maintenance.	Participate in a wider “get active” and “get out in nature” campaign.
Engage with young people to find out what outdoor activities they would like to have access to in their local areas.	Many young people engage with activities which can be considered antisocial. (For example, skate boarding or street art). Creating safe spaces for young people where they can engage in those activities will encourage them to spend time outdoors without the antisocial impacts.	Local authorities, councils, land owners and NGOs. Organisations and businesses could sponsor local projects.	Metrics on facilities available, and on public engagement. Data collected from youth surveys.	Costs associated with creation of facilities and their maintenance.	
Every GP surgery needs to create long-lasting partnerships with outdoor or nature organisations for effective social prescribing.	Many partnerships between GP surgeries and nature organisations are opportunistic. There is a need for active partnerships to ensure that the effects of social prescribing are maximised. For example some demographics are less likely to attend support groups but can gain similar benefits through accessing outdoor group activities such as allotment work or bushcraft.	GP surgeries and NGOs.	Already existing data around social prescribing.	Initial challenges with setting up partnerships.	

4. Sustainable Healthcare

4.1 Overview



Sustainable Healthcare

“Facilitating provision of sustainable access to healthcare and access to sustainable healthcare. Healthcare providers are accessible by public transport and active travel through strategic planning. Partnerships with NHS trusts work to mitigate environmental impact of healthcare, and healthcare estates provide access to nature for staff and patients.”

Outcome 2 focusses on ensuring that access to healthcare is sustainable and available to all, and ensuring that healthcare practices are sustainable themselves. This objective is particularly aimed at the healthcare sector.

4.2 Common themes and challenges.

In contrast to Objective 1 which spans across several sectors, Objective 2 is mostly focussed on the healthcare sector, ranging from GP surgeries to NHS Trusts and wider clinical commissioning groups (CCGs).



Communication within NHS Trusts is good, but could be improved across NHS Trusts through partnerships to facilitate best practice sharing.



Participating healthcare sectors should refer to Net Zero with Nature to embed Greenprint priorities in their Net Zero plans.



Public transport routes to access healthcare are generally good. The health sector could provide more incentives for green travel where possible.



Systems can be put in place to make prescription of more sustainable medical options easier and more intuitive.



4.3 Suggested actions

A summary of the suggested actions relating to Sustainable Healthcare, is provided in the table below.

Action	Aim of the action.	Sector	Possible metrics	Challenges	Taking it further
Organise or participate in a wider healthcare conference focussed on sustainability in healthcare.	To bring experts together across the healthcare sectors (GPs, NHS Trusts and CCGs) to celebrate achievements in sustainability and to share ideas on making healthcare more sustainable.	GPs, NHS Trusts, CCGs, Medicine Optimisation Group, and wider healthcare sector.	Engagement and actions arising from the conference.	Requires collaboration and pooling of funds.	Surgeries and hospitals could be awarded for their efforts.
Systems used for prescribing medication should include sustainability or "footprint" information for each medication.	Prescription systems are already set up in a way which enables doctors to prescribe recommended medication. By incorporating sustainability into the system, doctors are more likely to make sustainable choices.	GPs, NHS Trusts, CCGs, Medicine Optimisation Group, and wider healthcare sector.	Data on medication prescribed annually.	Requires collaboration across healthcare sectors and would benefit from opportunities allowing for the exchange of knowledge and best practice.	Relevant sectors could collaborate to create a framework for sustainable prescribing. This action could be a part of the Quality and Outcomes Framework (QOF).
Develop an ambitious Net Zero plan which includes elements of nature and contributes to the Net Zero with Nature Theme.	Delivering a Net Zero National Health Service should provide guidance for the healthcare sector. Each Net Zero plan can go beyond recommendations.	GPs, NHS Trusts, CCGs, Medicine Optimisation Group, and wider healthcare sector.	Net Zero planning relies on quantitative emissions data.	Obtaining data for Scope 3 can be challenging. Effective Net Zero planning relies on sufficient staff understanding of Net Zero.	If achieving Net Zero across Scope 3 is not feasible, focus on reduction in emissions rather than excluding Scope 3 entirely. Sign up for a formal Net Zero accreditation.

5. Useful Resources

This section contains a list of useful online resources and examples supporting the suggested actions. The useful resources list is not exhaustive, and there is a range of resources available online, which have not been added to this list. Please note, Greenprint does not endorse any of the listed organisations and the purpose of this list is solely to provide Greenprint partners with a starting point and ideas which could be incorporated into their future planning.



[A report from the Wildlife Trust](#) presenting the socio-economic benefits of prescribing nature (green prescribing) for wellbeing.



Interactive report on [people's engagement with nature](#) summarises the data collected by Natural England MENE survey.



Evidence that active commuting through natural environments is associated with better mental health can be found [here](#). "Highlights" summarise the key findings.



[Science Based Targets Initiative for Net Zero](#) contains a range of Net Zero Auditing resources. These resources are free to use but businesses can sign up (at a cost) to the official accreditation.

Greenprint is a joint initiative led by:



Working with:

