

# Commissioning green space for health

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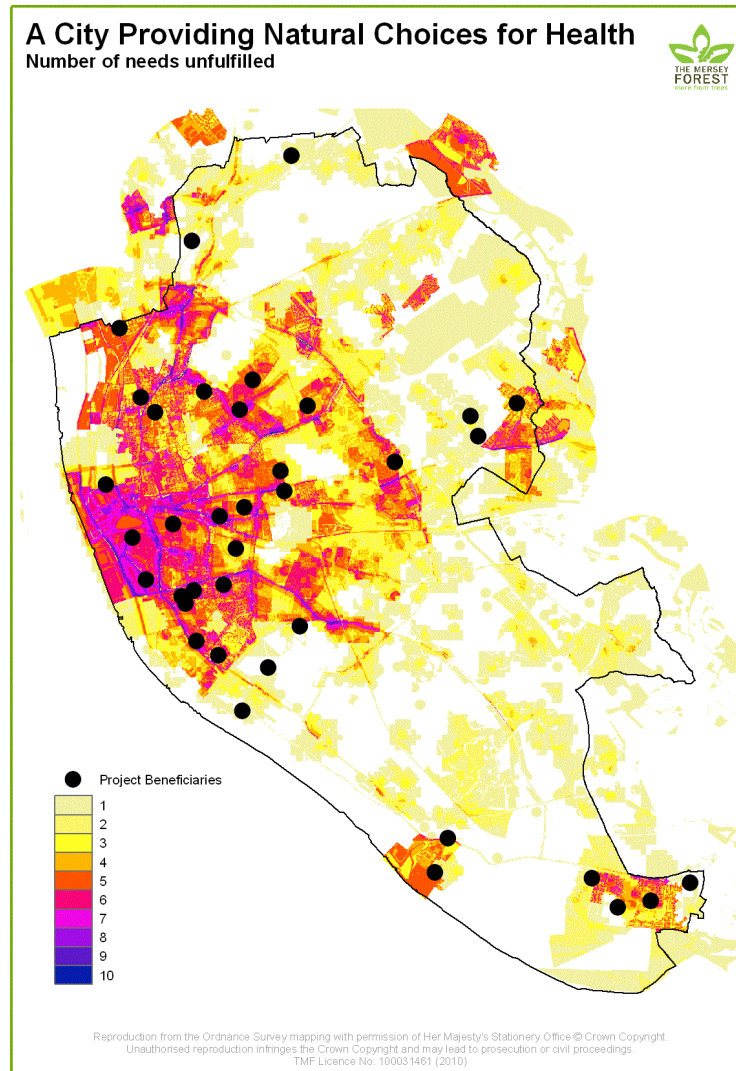
Paul Nolan - Director, Mersey Forest

# How will we know when we have achieved sustainability?

*“Our city faces some of the greatest health challenges in the country. It has some of the highest levels of deprivation and lowest levels of life expectancy. It has a high burden of disease and a relatively low take up of healthy lifestyles.”*



# Linking areas of need to interventions that use green spaces to help increase physical activity and improve wellbeing.





***“I climbed a tree and swung off the branches, it felt amazing”***

***“This keeps me fit by shifting and moving things, bending down, picking things up, and using the brush and doing a lot of lifting”***

***“When I was cutting the trunks out of the soil and the roots it was quite hard and it kind of got my anger out”.***

***“people regard this as their own ‘gym’, labouring and sweating to their hearts content”***

***“Many of the young people felt that as a result of this project they now choose to spend more time outside being active”***







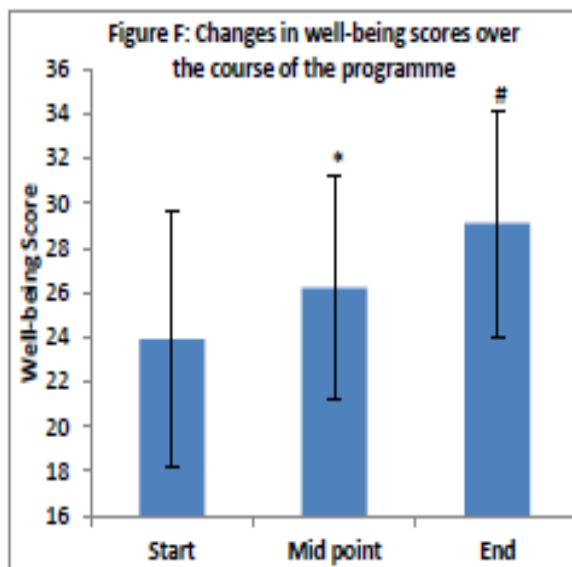
Decade of  
Health &  
Wellbeing



**“The best lesson we have ever had”**

***“children are outside and engaged...doing something practical and that in itself can be therapeutic...caring for plants and watching them grow has a better effect psychologically than anything that we could teach in lessons or that circle-time could deliver...”***





(\*indicates a significant difference between start and mid point scores ( $P < 0.01$ ), # indicates a significant difference between start and end, and start and mid point scores ( $P < 0.001$ )).

**Wellbeing scores improved by 18%**

**A greater proportion of participants had a 'high' well-being score by the end of the programme, whilst fewer had a 'low' well-being score.**

# What would a sustainable healthcare system look like?

A system!  
Many players  
Most not health professionals

## Natural Health Service



The **Natural Health Service** provides a single contact point to well-developed services in the natural environment, proven to tackle a range of health and wellbeing issues.

"Green spaces and natural environments provide a break from our busy lives - a great place to get some fresh air, reduce stress, exercise or play - a place to go and relax."

The Natural Health Service is a new way of linking people, their health and wellbeing and the natural environment through coordinated management with many partners and health focused organisations.

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### Halton Natural Health Service

The Natural Health Service in Halton, Merseyside, will offer fifteen free services from early September to just before Christmas this December, taking advantage of the area's wealth of green spaces and natural places.

[www.naturalhealthservice.org.uk](http://www.naturalhealthservice.org.uk)

