North East Local Nature Partnership
Local Nature Partnership - overview

- Strategic organisations and their purpose is to ensure the function and value of nature is considered in local decision making.
- Wide partnership – business, ngos, councils, Defra
- An environment version of the Local Enterprise Partnership
- Berwick to Newton Aycliffe, Hexham to 6 miles off shore

Our aims

1. Champion the value of nature
2. Lead landscape-scale biodiversity enhancements to mitigate the impact of climate change
3. Improve community health and wellbeing through better access to nature
4. Make the business case for investment into the natural environment
Naturally Healthy

- We acts as an advocate with local planning teams and HWB to build naturally healthy lifestyle choices into our towns and cities.
- Accessible high quality green spaces allow people to be more active and engaged with their community, resulting in fewer chronic illnesses.
Nature and healthy weight

• Want to encourage healthy behaviours that contribute to healthy weights
• To give our communities the best opportunities to live active, healthy and happy lives
• Need to design healthier lifestyles into new developments/ existing site as much as possible
• Natural environment plays an important role
  1. Presence of nature as a daily experience
  2. Access to local and wider landscape
  4. Mitigating against a changing climate – hottest ever in 115,000 years
Strong evidence base
Legislation and policy...

• UN Resolution 42/187 - The UK Sustainable Development Strategy ‘Securing the Future’

• National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
  - recognises that “the planning system can play an important role in creating healthy, inclusive communities”.

• Local plans
  – Supplementary Planning Documents
  – Local Development Framework
  – Biodiversity action plans
  – Blue and green infrastructure plans
Since 1960s had evidence... So why still creating this?
Cause for encouragement
Collaborative place making

- Holistic approach
- Upstream interventions
  - Joining up planning and health
  - Valuing and maximising our natural assets
    - Long term financial viability versus short term
    - Local authorities be exemplar developers
  - Educating and working with developers and consultants
  - JSNA & JHWS
    - Highlights importance of links between health needs and spatial interventions and grasp of the wider determinants of health
    - E.g. North of Nissan 100 Ha site
Green Infrastructure Strategies

Ecological Impact Assessments & Landscape Action Plans
Planning Healthy-Weight Environments
Components of a healthy weight environment: an illustration

A: Movement and Access
- Clearly signposted and direct walking and cycling networks
- Safe and accessible networks and public realm for all
- Well designed buildings with passive surveillance
- Walking prioritised over motor vehicles, and vehicle speed managed
- Area-wide walking and cycling infrastructure provided
- Use and monitoring of travel plans

B: Open spaces, play and recreation
- Planned network of multi-functional green and blue spaces to achieve multiple benefits
- Easy to get to natural green open spaces of different sizes from dwellings
- Safe and easy to get to play spaces for all with passive surveillance
- Sports and leisure facilities designed and maintained for everyone to use

C: Food
- Development maintains or enhances existing opportunities for food growing
- Development avoids over-concentration of hot food takeaways (A5 use) and restricts proximity to schools or other facilities aimed at children and young people
- Shops/food markets sell a diverse offer of food choices and are easy to get to by bike, walking or public transport

D: Neighbourhood spaces
- Community and healthcare facilities provided early as a part of new development
- Services and facilities co-located within buildings where feasible
- Public spaces are attractive, easy to get to and designed for a variety of uses

E: Buildings
- Dwellings have adequate internal spaces for bike storage, dining and kitchen facilities
- Development includes adequate private or semi-private outdoor space per dwelling
- Car parking spaces are minimised across the development
- Development includes a travel plan that promotes sustainable transport

F: Local economy
- Development enhances vitality of local centre through providing more diverse retail and food offer
- Centres and places of employment are easy to get to by public transport and on walking and cycling networks
- Facilities provided for people who are walking and cycling to local centres and high streets such as benches, toilets and secure bike storage
Green and blue infrastructure

• Is all of nature in urban and rural settings
  o Habitats (woodlands, grasslands, wetlands, waterways, coastal)
  o Wildlife corridors linking communities, wagon ways
  o Nature reserves, Wildlife sites, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (Durham Coast Mag limestone)
  o Everyday nature: Roadside and street trees and shrubs, biodiverse spaces
  o Sustainable urban drainage
  o Species – presence or absence is an indicator of ecosystem health

• Services from nature (Ecosystem services)
  – Cooling, heating, air and water quality, wind screening, flood resilience
Health inequalities and green space

• The connection between people living in a deprived area with little access to green spaces and poor health and wellbeing is evident and well evidenced.
• Research shows that access to green space is associated with better health outcomes, and income-related health inequality is less pronounced where people have access to green space.
• Lower body mass index (BMI) scores, overweight and obesity levels and higher levels of physical activity
• Green infrastructure can improve public health and community wellbeing by improving environmental quality, providing opportunities for recreation and exercise and physical health benefits.
• Green infrastructure also helps reduce air pollution, noise and the impacts of extreme heat and extreme rainfall events.
• Planned network of multi-functional green/ blue spaces to achieve multiple health, social and economic benefits
Landscapes and healthy weights

- Already have **Environmental Impact Assessments** and some use of Health Impact Assessments
- PHE has undertaken work to consider the role of planning in creating healthy and healthy weight environments
- For individuals and communities to have and maintain good health, their immediate environment needs to offer the opportunity to succeed by containing features that support healthy choices and lifestyles
- Opportunities for improving population health and wellbeing at the same time as enhancing habitats, creating biodiverse sustainable urban drainage systems and a place making landscapes should be maximised
- Without disengaging developers. Keen for clarity.
- Can we develop a **Naturally Healthy Assessment**?
Making it happen

• Have evidence, legislation, policy, knowledge and skills

• Let’s make it happen
  ➢ Identification of ‘it’
    • SPD? Naturally Healthy Impact Assessment?
  ➢ Quick wins and longer term gains
    • Social prescribing in nature
      Vs
    • Requirements for new development
    • Greening of existing developments
  ➢ Who’s involved?
    • Planning and delivery
    • Different way of engaging
Naturally Healthy Assessment (NHA)

• Focus on new developments both residential and commercial
  – What size site triggers?
  – What are the health needs beyond GP and dentist?
  – What are the access needs?
  – What are the ecological needs; biodiversity and connectivity requirements of the landscape?

• Layering the health and ecological needs
  – Green biodiverse spaces improves health, wellbeing, community cohesion, reduces crime and aggression. Liverpool, Glasgow, Philadelphia case studies.
  – The presence of nature matters as much as access to it
  Q. Does this work for people and the environment in the future?

• Health inequalities
  – Do those in most in need benefit too?