

## PLYMOUTH CITY COUNCIL

<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Benefits of Parks and Green Spaces</b>
<b>Committee:</b>	Health and Wellbeing Board
<b>Date:</b>	21 <sup>st</sup> June 2018
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Ian Tuffin
<b>CMT Member:</b>	Ruth Harrell (Director of Public Health)
<b>Author:</b>	Ruth Harrell & Jacky Clift
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<b>Ref:</b>	
<b>Key Decision:</b>	No
<b>Part:</b>	I

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### **Purpose of the report:**

There is growing evidence of the benefits of green spaces for health and wellbeing, Jacky Clift, the CVS Representative of the HWBB, has asked to raise this to the attention of the HWBB members. A report from Jacky is included as Appendix I.

The beneficial effects of green spaces, and in particular urban green spaces, are summarised by the World Health Organisation<sup>1</sup> as

- improved mental health
- reduced cardiovascular morbidity and mortality,
- reduced obesity and risk of type 2 diabetes
- improved pregnancy outcomes.

Mechanisms leading to these health benefits include psychological relaxation and stress alleviation, increased physical activity, reduced exposure to air pollutants, noise and excess heat.

Plymouth is one of the most unique and diverse natural environments of any city in the country. Over 40 per cent of the city is designated as green space, and is surrounded by three Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), a European Marine Site, a Marine Conservation Zone and Dartmoor National Park.

This provides an enviable setting with an abundance of green spaces and marine areas which, as well as contributing to health, are able to provide natural solutions to climate change impacts, including reducing flooding, improving water quality, and enabling wildlife to thrive.

The Plymouth Plan sets out the strategic direction which includes to 'ensure a functional green network is achieved that meets the needs of communities and wildlife'. This explicitly includes;

- Strategic Landscape Areas - providing a strong landscape context for Plymouth.
- Strategic Greenspaces - large scale sites to be proactively enhanced to provide a focus for people's interaction with nature.
- Local Green Spaces - providing multiple benefits to communities and wildlife.

Enclosed Papers

Appendix 1 Benefits of Parks, Green Space and Nature Author Jacky Clift

Appendix 2 Active Neighbourhoods Report Author PCC

*Ref 1. Urban green spaces and health. Copenhagen: WHO Regional Office for Europe, 2016.*

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**Recommendations:**

The recommendation is for the Health and Wellbeing Board to:

- Note the report and the benefits of green spaces on health and wellbeing
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