

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

The health and wellbeing of people and communities across the city region is a primary concern for all of us; from individuals taking responsibility for our own health, to the decisions taken by politicians and businesses about how our city region is planned, managed and funded.

The region faces a range of challenges including physical inactivity; the increase in obesity; growing mental ill health, dementia and social isolation; and continuing health inequalities.

However, there is an increasing body of evidence that points to the natural environment as being key to keeping us happy and healthy. The 25 Year Plan for the Environment highlights how the natural environment can be part of the solution to increasing demands on our health services.

Prevention is better than cure. We recognise that promoting healthy living by encouraging positive life-style choices and providing open spaces, such as parks and other green spaces for recreation and leisure time is important. There is overwhelming evidence which shows that a "dose of nature" can significantly improve peoples' physical health and mental well-being.

What we are doing about it

- In September 2018, Liverpool was named one of only five Active Cities worldwide and it has embraced a management model that motivates people at risk of inactivity-related illnesses to take up regular physical activity and sport, highlighting the importance of green spaces for health. We will continue with this approach
- Across the city region, we will encourage local authority ranger services to run more fantastic programmes in parks and green spaces that get people active and provide an opportunity to meet new people and learn new skills
- Through the Natural Health Service, we will provide the evidence and prepare the programmes that provide a "dose of nature" helping people to improve their health and wellbeing and make small changes to the choices they make each day

What can you do about it

- Enjoy time outdoors and get the maximum out of the health benefits of fresh air and contact with nature in the great parks and green spaces across the city region
- Join a local "Friends of" group to champion your local park
- Get along to one of the events or activities run by the ranger services, volunteers and partners across the city region
- Ask your GP or health professional about "prescribing" a dose of nature, with one of the ranger led programmes or the Natural Health Service
- Grow your own fruit and vegetables
- Check Year of the Environment activities / events calendar to get more involved

