



What makes us healthy?

Local environment

Our local environment is critical for our health and community. Having accessible green spaces, safe and well-lit roads, good public transport, shops, and good air quality supports people to make social connections, to access services, be physically active and stay healthy.



There is huge inequality in access and proximity to green space and those living in the most disadvantaged areas have the least access. **Studies have shown that on average, a 10% increase in exposure to green space translates into five years of better health.**¹ There is a particularly strong correlation between lack of access to green space and ethnicity. Almost 40% of people of black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds live in England's most green space-deprived neighbourhoods, compared to 14% of white people.

Disabled people often face barriers to using local spaces because many buildings, events, transport and day to day processes remain inaccessible. **Being and feeling safe in our neighbourhood is an important factor in how accessible our local environment is** and this has a disproportionate impact on women, and LGBT+ people.

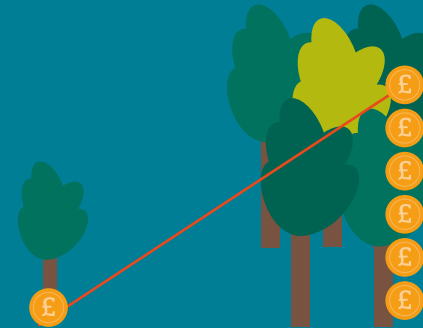


“Those facing daily battles find solace in the community garden as they work alongside others who share similar experiences. The community garden provides a great opportunity for informal learning and a huge amount of work is carried out through peer support.”

Karen Clark, Director, Justice Prince, Local Conversation in Longbenton

“Anxiety has increased over the past year and the community allotment gives people the freedom to relax, learn and play whilst connecting with nature and the local community. It's a safe space and is really accessible for children with additional needs. People have more pride in Stanwell and it has brought people together”

Monica Runke, Community Development Worker, Surrey Care Trust, Local Conversation in Stanwell.



The wealthiest 20% of neighbourhoods in England have five times more green space, on average, than the most disadvantaged 20% of neighbourhoods.²



Populations living in the most deprived areas are exposed to the least favourable environmental conditions such as risk of flooding, poor air quality, litter and lack of access to green space.³



1. The King's Fund, *Access to green and open spaces and the role of leisure services*, 2013.

2. CABE, *Urban green nation: Building the evidence base*, 2010.

3. Institute of Health Equity, *Fair society, Healthy Lives: The Marmot Review*, 2010.