



Green care: An overview



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- So many different ‘nature-based’ initiatives
- Being run by and for many different people
- Increasing interest in using nature for health
- But there is sometimes confusion
- Green care sector: has started to unify and deliver a clear message to commissioners
- Best way forward? Social prescribing? Green public health?

How can we make green care a natural part of health and social care services?



Many current health issues

- Obesity
- Physical inactivity
- Smoking
- Diabetes
- Cancer
- Mental ill-health
- Dementia
- Comorbidity

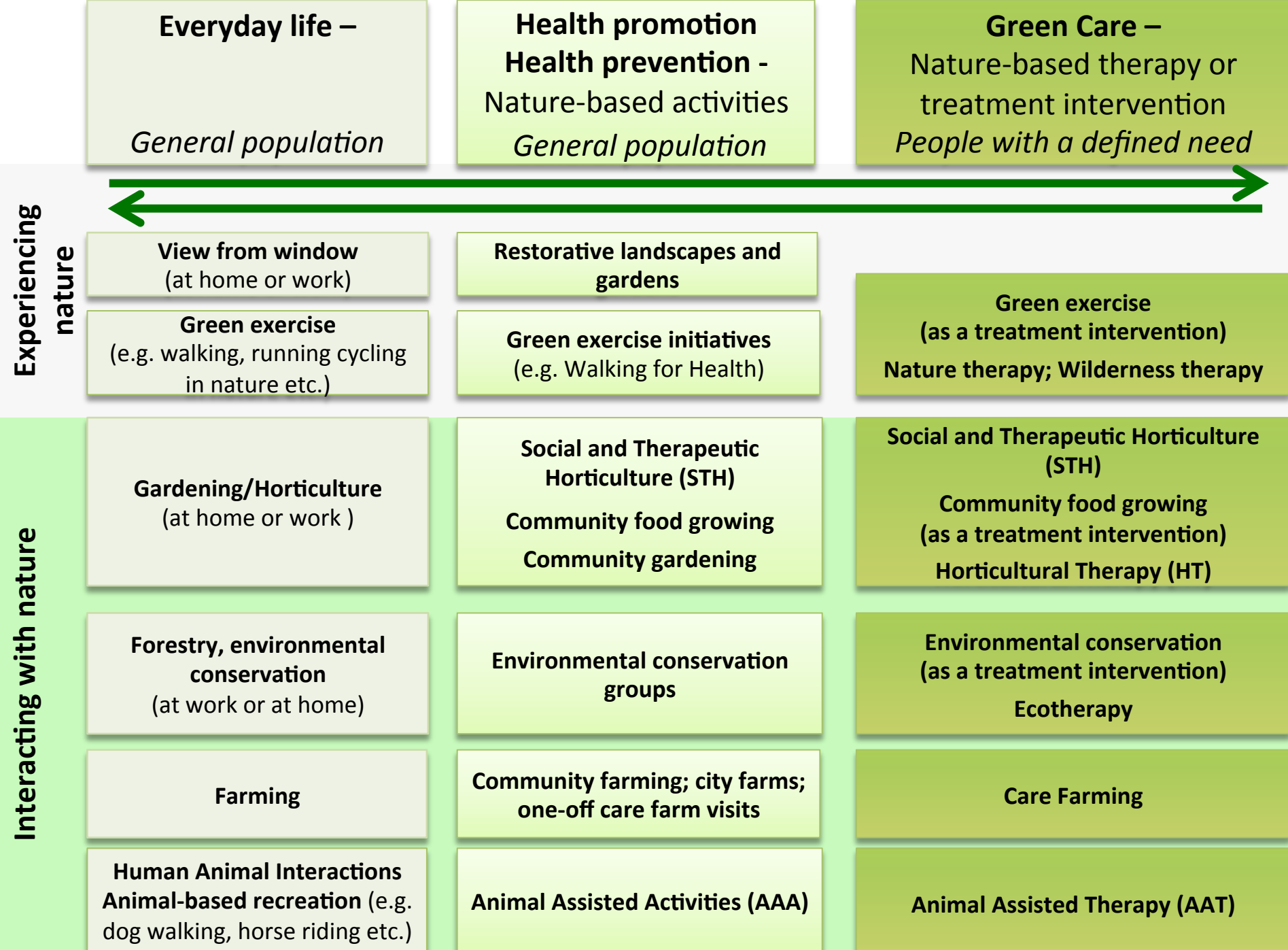
Challenges for NHS in treatment

and for Public health in prevention



Changes in health and social care

- Structural changes
- NHS needs to change
 - from “a ‘factory’ model of care and repair”
 - to one that focuses on much wider individual and community engagement (Five Years Forward View, NHS England, 2014)
- Social prescribing
- Drive to integrate health and social care
- Radical upgrade in prevention and public health
- National action to tackle major health risks
 - i.e. prevention (Five Years Forward View, NHS England, 2014)
- **Nature to the rescue?**





What is green care?

“Green care: nature-based therapy or treatment interventions - specifically designed, structured and facilitated for individuals with a defined need”

- not a casual encounter with nature
- A range of different green care interventions available
 - Collective name
 - But many different settings and contexts under the umbrella

Green Care

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graph TD; GC([Green Care]) --- STH[Social and Therapeutic Horticulture<br/>- including Food growing<br/>(as a treatment Intervention)]; GC --- CF[Care Farming]; GC --- EC[Environmental Conservation<br/>(as a treatment intervention);<br/>Ecotherapy]; GC --- AAT[Animal Assisted Therapy]; GC --- GE[Green Exercise<br/>(as a treatment intervention)]; GC --- O[Others:<br/>• Wilderness therapy;<br/>• Nature therapy;<br/>• Nature arts and crafts;<br/>• Ecopsychotherapy]; STH --> R[Range of different contexts, activities, health benefits,<br/>service users, motivations and needs.]; CF --> R; EC --> R; AAT --> R; GE --> R; O --> R;
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Social and Therapeutic Horticulture

- including Food growing
(as a treatment Intervention)

Care Farming

Environmental Conservation

(as a treatment intervention);
Ecotherapy

Animal Assisted Therapy

Green Exercise

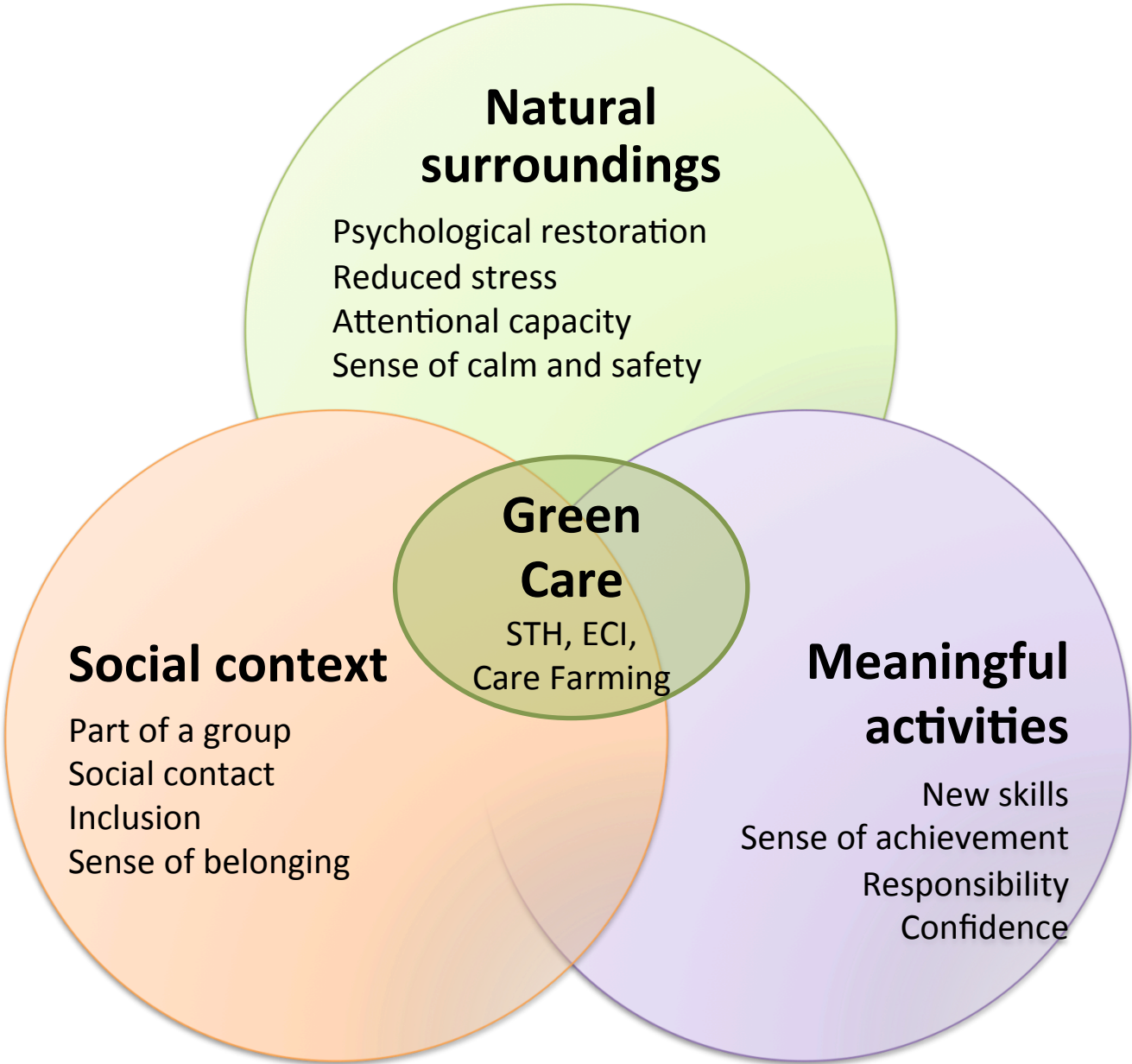
(as a treatment intervention)

Others:

- Wilderness therapy;
- Nature therapy;
- Nature arts and crafts;
- Ecopsychotherapy;

Range of different contexts, activities, health benefits,
service users, motivations and needs.

Interaction of three key elements within green care



Multiple outcomes

- Multiple outcomes from green care
 - simultaneously produces other positive life outcomes
 - wider than clinical outcomes
 - Integrates health and social care
 - Is therefore cost-effective
 - Also enjoyable – people go back!
- Ticks many of the boxes in ‘Five Year Forward View’
- Need to raise awareness – commissioners practitioners and patients alike



Some recommendations

- There is a need for the green care sector umbrella organisations to:
 - work together in partnership - in order to promote the sector more widely to policymakers, commissioners and potential service users; and
 - to raise awareness *within the green care sector* of the need for developing common messages for clear communications with commissioners.
- Through partnership, a core group of national organisations should widely adopt the term 'green care' to demonstrate leadership



- It is crucial to make a distinction between
 - specifically designed and commissioned interventions for individuals with a defined need (green care), and
 - public health programmes for the general population.
- To ensure that nature-based service providers use the appropriate language (and evidence) to talk to the ‘right’ commissioners
 - i.e. green care providers will target health and social care commissioners (Clinical Commissioning Groups and Local Authorities (social services)) and more general nature-based programmes will target commissioners of Public health (PHE and Local Authorities (public health)).



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Full references for figures

- Please include short reference underneath the figures *whenever you use them* – many thanks
- Full references are as follows:

Bragg, R. and Atkins, G. (2015) A review of nature-based interventions for mental health care. Natural England Commissioned Reports, (In press)

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