

A group of about six people are walking away from the camera on a dirt path through a lush green forest. The path is covered in fallen leaves and branches. The trees are tall and have dense green foliage. The lighting is soft, suggesting an overcast day. The overall mood is peaceful and natural.

# Evaluation Workshop Report

June 2024

HEALTH  
AND  
NATURE  
DORSET

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# Introduction

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Health and Nature Dorset (HAND) is a collaboration working together to connect with nature for health and wellbeing, by bringing organisations together including the health and environment sectors.

In June 2024, 17 members of HAND came together for an online workshop to discuss evaluations and how we can work together to use a consistent framework which will help with outcome evidence and future funding bids.

The following report sets out a summary of the discussions.

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# Evaluation Framework

Introduction by Dr Becca Lovell  
European Centre for Human Health and Environment  
University of Exeter

# Becca gave an introduction on the 'Common Outcomes Framework' which is being developed by Natural England with the support of Exeter University.

## A summary of the introduction is set out below:

A Natural England lead process being developed in collaboration with a range of stakeholders

Aiming to be applicable from Green Infrastructure projects to Green Social Prescribing

Not saying that every measure should be used and that these are the only measures to use

Aims to produce better evaluation and evidence that can be pooled in the future

Is aware that some of the evaluations can be triggering to participants and undo valuable work

Working on health outcomes in short, medium, and long term. What is working, where and for whom

Uses basic indicators to track who the programme is targeted at, who is coming into the programme and who is dropping out

There will be guidance on the appropriate outcome tools and will span the programme outcomes e.g. activity, general wellbeing, life satisfaction, mental health, resilience, loneliness, blood pressure etc.

Being created in partnership with bigger organisations such as Sport England

Bigger funders, such as the National Lottery, are picking up on using it

# Current Evaluations

What evaluations are members of HAND currently carrying out with the participants?

# During the meeting current evaluation methods were discussed.

## A summary of this discussion is set out here.

Evaluation of walking work abouts – rating 1-10, how are participants feeling e.g. tired, stressed before and after activity

Healthcare professionals: have used wellbeing scales in the past e.g. GAD7/Becks scale/HADS scale

Highlights of attending: What made you come along, what you learned about nature/heritage, how much you enjoyed it, how likely you are to come back and use the coast path again

Identifying barriers to taking part

Participation surveys as well as semi structured interviews

Separate questions for long term participants

Creating theory of change

5 ways to nature connection: outcome flower, scale 0-10 e.g. self-esteem, relationship with nature

SW Coastal Path Connectors project: External Evaluation – set of questions both paper and online

Active Dorset: ONS Wellbeing questions and Sport England questions around attitudes to physical activity and activity levels

Referral routes and signposting – how partnership working is beneficial

Interviews/Story telling/Case studies

# Evidence

What evidence is needed by healthcare professionals?



**There was a discussion about the current evidence that is requested by healthcare professionals.  
This is a summary of the discussion.**

Getting communications out to the right people – repetition of messages

Activity finders/open data

Where things are constantly changing it can be helpful to have consistent branding

Recognisable branding e.g. Natural Choices

Word of mouth useful to share messages/overload of digital information

Digital inclusion/health literacy – how to share messages with people who find information difficult to access

Where to share information – Public/professionals

Signposting – people often want someone to go with/someone they know

# Moving Forward

Future topics/questions for HAND

The group was asked what they would like to focus on at future meetings.

This is summarised here.

Communication of nature-based wellbeing messages – podcasts, soundbites – future plans?

Sustainability of projects when funding runs out/overlap between similar projects

Corporate staff wellbeing activities to bring funding to nature-based organisations

Facility providers sometimes seen as 'free spaces' to be used for wellbeing initiatives without being funded

Green finance – corporate investment into nature-based activities

**The HAND Steering Group will review the discussions and develop a plan for implementation.**

For any queries about the workshop or for more information about HAND, please contact: [hand@dorsetlnp.org.uk](mailto:hand@dorsetlnp.org.uk)  
or see [www.dorsetlnp.org.uk](http://www.dorsetlnp.org.uk)