Reconnecting with nature key for the health of people and the planet
13 February 2020

The findings are based on responses to the Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment (MENE) survey, commissioned by Natural England as part of DEFRA's social science research programme. The team looked at people's engagement with nature though access to greenspace, nature visits and the extent to which they felt psychologically connected to the natural world.

Lead author Leanne Martin, of the University of Plymouth, said: "In the context of increasing urbanisation, it is important to understand how engagement with our planet's natural resources relate to human health and behaviour. Our results suggest that physically and psychologically reconnecting with nature can be beneficial for human health and wellbeing, and at the same time encourages individuals to act in ways which protect the health of the planet."

Marian Spain, Chief Executive of Natural England added: "It's a top priority for Natural England to unlock the potential of the natural environment to help address the challenges we are facing as a society: poor physical health and mental wellbeing; the climate change crisis and the devastating loss of wildlife.

"These findings give vital new insights of the need to not just increase contact with nature, but about the sorts of experience that really help people build an emotional connection, which is key to unlocking health benefits as well as inspiring people to taking action to help their environment. We look forward to using the research as we work with our many partners to support more people from all walks of life to benefit from thriving nature."
