



Evaluating the natural capital value of the New Forest National Park and surrounds for health and wellbeing

Dr James Alden

Paediatrician and Public Health Fellow



What is natural capital?

- Any natural resource or process that supports human life, society and the economy forms an important part of our natural capital
- Divided into:
 - Provisioning services
 - Regulating services
 - Cultural services
- The current estimated whole economic asset value of natural capital in the UK is £1.2 trillion



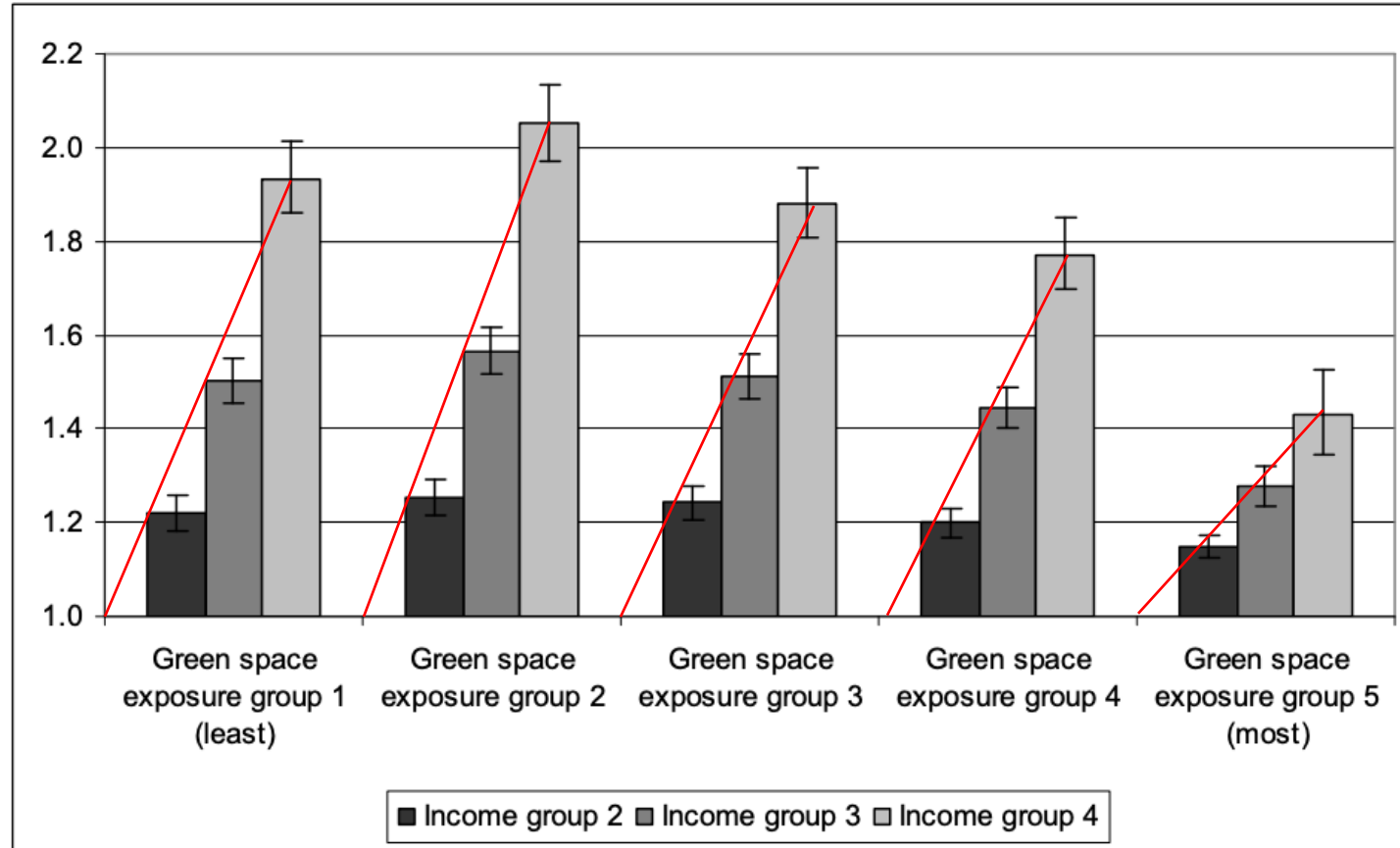
What has it got to do with health and wellbeing?

- Increased access to nature and greenspace results in reduced all-cause and cardiovascular mortality
- It mitigates inequality effects
- Health in all policies – the principle that health should be considered in all areas of public policymaking and planning

Health inequality and greenspace exposure



Least greenspace 'exposed' – poorest quartile 90% more likely to die than richest quartile



Most greenspace 'exposed' – poorest quartile 40% more likely to die than richest quartile

Targeting the sedentary (inactive)

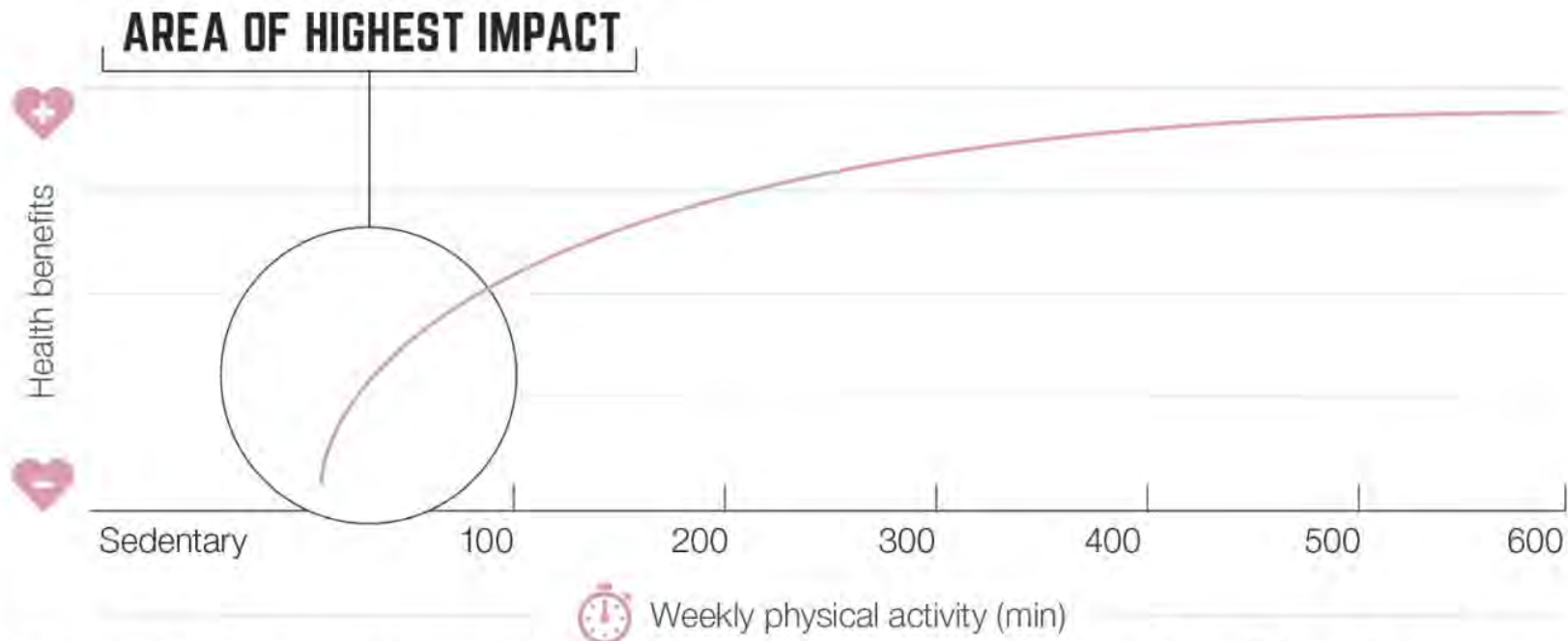
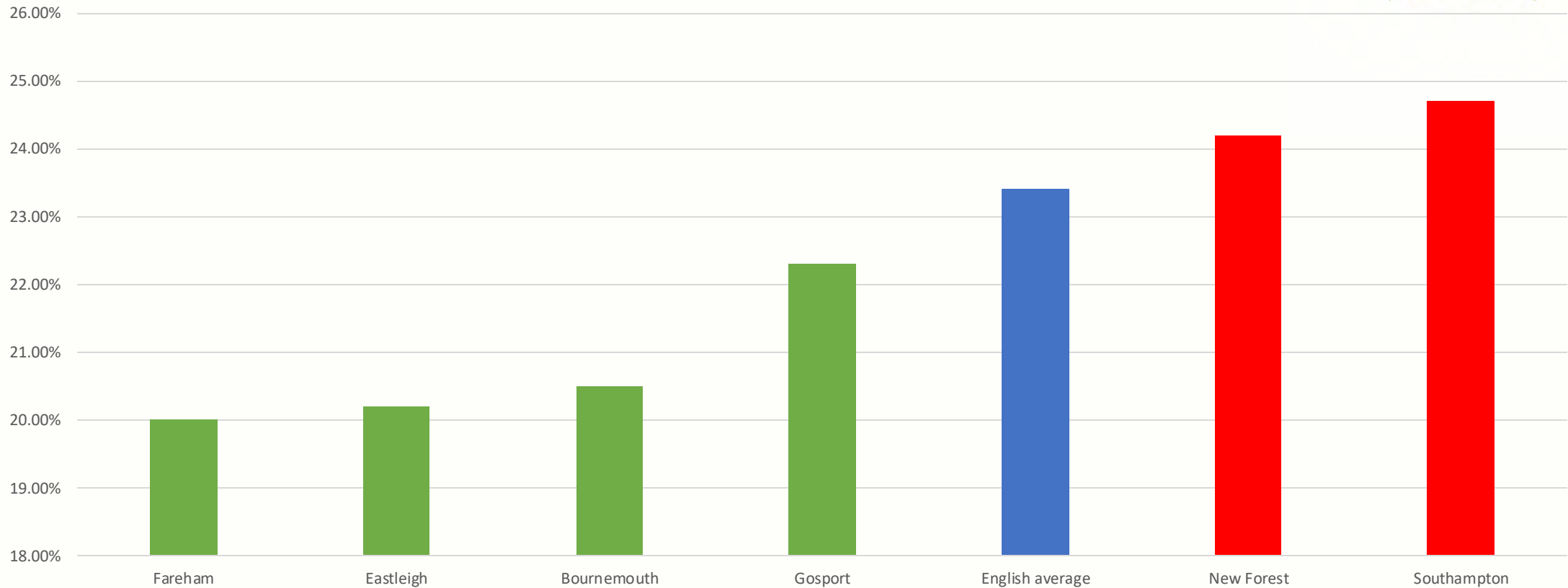


Figure 2: Dose-response curve of physical activity and health benefits. Adapted from (2)

Inactivity in relevant local authorities



% inactive adults (PHE fingertips 2020/21)



Data from PHE fingertips, 2020-2021

ONS report – health benefits of natural capital



Statistical bulletin

Health benefits from recreation, natural capital, UK: 2022

Further development of the UK recreation natural capital ecosystem service accounts, including specific methods used to estimate the health benefits gained from nature-based recreational activities.

Contact:
Harry Davies and Nirav Nayee
natural.capital.team@ons.gov.uk
+44 1633 580051

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Next release:
To be announced



ONS report – health benefits of natural capital

- Sought to value the health benefits of natural capital in terms of avoided healthcare cost (2020)
 - Two metrics
 - Outdoor exercise (150 minutes a week of at least moderate intensity activity)
 - Nature exposure (at least once a week, for at least 120 minutes)
 - National results
 - Outdoor exercise
 - Total annual value = £8.4 billion
 - Annual value to person fulfilling inclusion criteria = £716.99
 - Nature exposure
 - Total annual value = £6.2 billion
 - Annual value to person fulfilling inclusion criteria = £331.41



ONS report – the importance of urban natural capital

- ‘Built up areas and gardens’ which includes private gardens, public parks, wild paths, waterside environments, was the greatest contributor to healthcare avoided costs
 - Outdoor exercise - £3.3 billion (39% of total value)
 - Nature exposure - £2.4 billion (38% of total value)



Applying these principles to the New Forest and surroundings

- Utilised a large telephone survey undertaken by NFNP
 - Visit statistics to heaths and woodlands of the New Forest
 - Included people up to 25km
 - This wholly includes 6 local authorities (BCP, NF district, Southampton, Eastleigh, Fareham, Gosport)
 - Could establish those that qualified for 'benefit' i.e. those that visited NF >1x/week on average, for >120 minutes
 - This benefit per qualifying person was £331.41
- Applied to populations of the local authorities (census 2021)



Findings

- Total healthcare avoided cost benefit of all natural capital in the 6 LAs:
 - Outdoor exercise = £138,027,336.21
 - Exposure to nature = £112,587,412.50



Findings

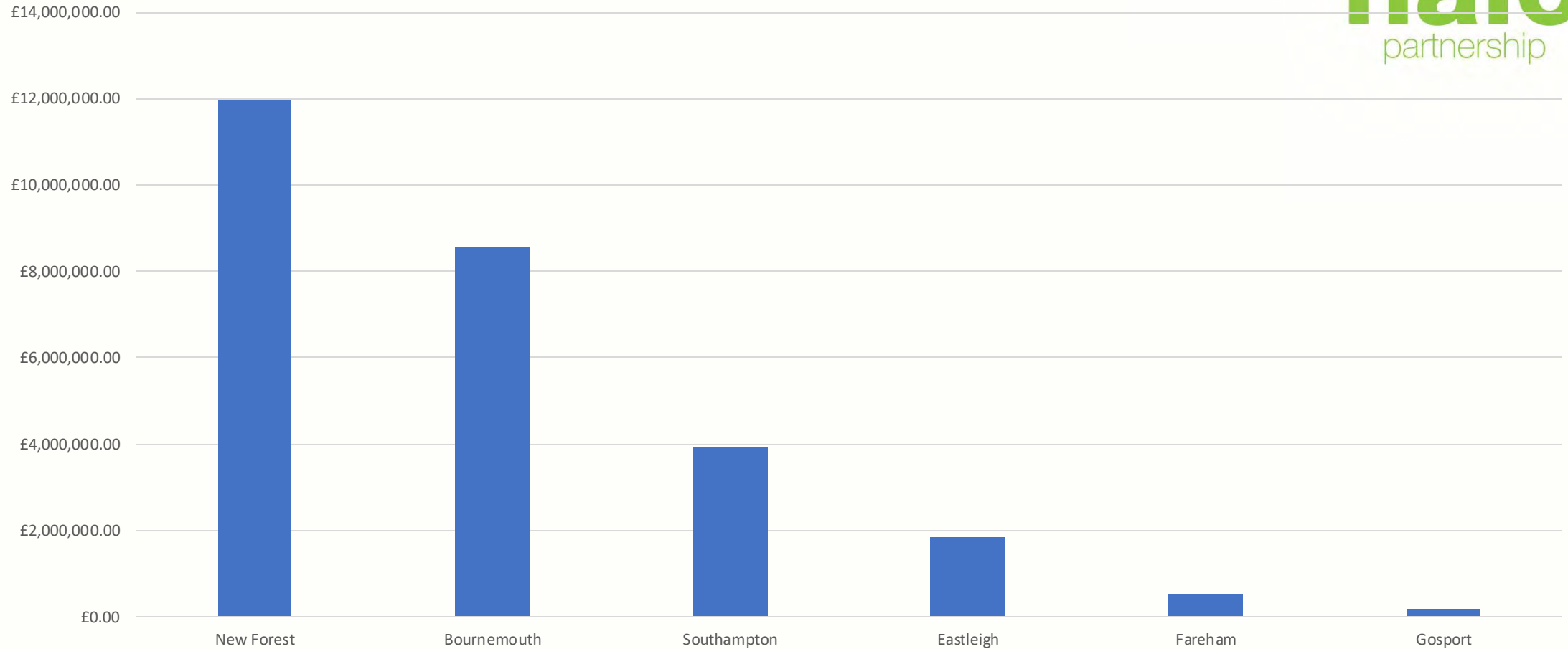
- New Forest National Park total benefit in terms of avoided healthcare cost =

£27,037,152.15

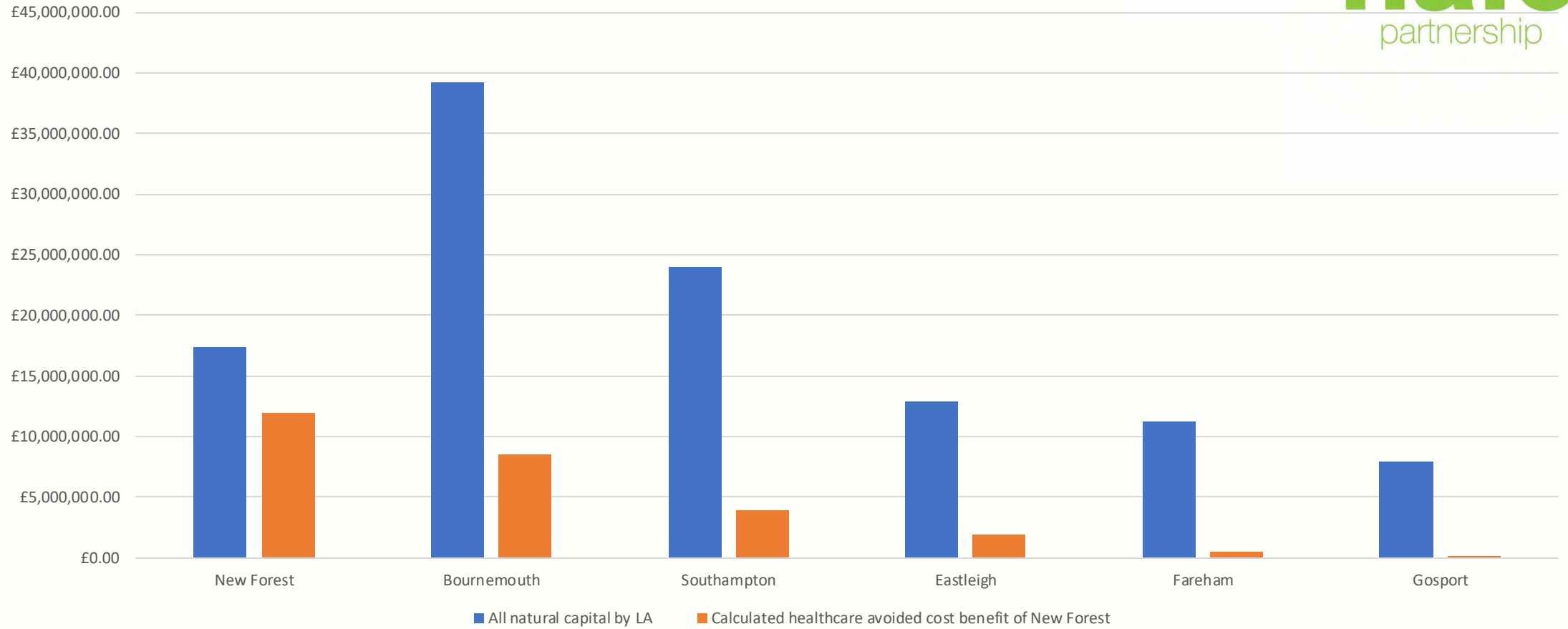
Breakdown by local authorities



Calculated healthcare avoided cost benefit of New Forest



Findings





Key messages

- 1) New Forest represents a significant value health benefit to the local population
- 2) Getting people out in nature is great. Getting them in nature and active is even better!
- 3) Targeting the right groups yields a greater return on investment:
 - Most deprived
 - Least existing access to greenspace
 - Most sedentary
 - Older age
- 4) It's not just about the New Forest, local natural capital has a big impact:
 - Evidenced by the significant contribution of parks and gardens to the total value of each metric
 - Proximity to home is important as it:
 - Increases use
 - Widens access for different population groups (deprivation)
 - Is shown to have the greatest value



Key messages

5) This methodology and model offers a way to measure health benefit of future projects and developments

A suggested investment – improving cycling access

- Cycle path from Totton to Ashurst through National Park
 - Estimated value of cycling, based on survey data = £3,689,802 at present
 - Rough population of Totton and Eling is 29,000 and it falls within the district boundaries
 - If you improved cycling engagement by 10% of this local population (ambitious number - equivalent to about 500 more people becoming active in Totton and Eling), this would result in avoided healthcare cost gain of £408,752





Thank you – any questions?

- Reference links

- Mitchell, R. and Popham, F. (2008) Effect of exposure to natural environment on health inequalities: an observational population study. The Lancet 372(9650):pp. 1655-1660 - <http://eprints.gla.ac.uk/4767/1/4767.pdf>
- Chief medical officer's guidelines 2018 - https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/832868/uk-chief-medical-officers-physical-activity-guidelines.pdf
- Data from PHE fingertips, 2020-2021 - <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/physical-activity/data>
- Data from ONS census 2021 - <https://www.ons.gov.uk/census>
- Sport England, Active Lives Report, 2020-2021 - <https://www.sportengland.org/research-and-data/data/active-lives>
- Health benefits from recreation, natural capital, UK: 2022 - <https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/environmentalaccounts/bulletins/healthbenefitsfromrecreationnaturalcapitaluk/2022#toc>
- Indices of deprivation, 2019 - http://dclgapps.communities.gov.uk/imd/iod_index.html