Connecting Actively to Nature (CAN)

Devon Local Nature Partnership’s (DLNP) vision for its flagship ‘Naturally Healthy’ priority is that ‘Everyone in Devon has the opportunity and the confidence to be ‘naturally active’ in order to improve their health and wellbeing’. Being Naturally Active is about people simultaneously enjoying being moderately physically active and connecting to nature, whether this be in a rural or urban, and terrestrial (‘Green’) or aquatic (‘Blue’) setting.

Being physically active and connecting to nature each benefit the person, society and environment, but taken together the benefits, engagement and behaviour change can all be amplified.

‘Connecting Actively to Nature (CAN)’ is a Devon Local Nature Partnership programme, supported by Sport England Tackling Inactivity funding and managed by Active Devon. An innovate partnership of DLNP organisations will deliver the programme, launching in May 2018.

Target Audience
The CAN programme will target older people (aged 55+) who are currently inactive. Research identifies that customers will be experiencing changing family structures, due to children fleeing the nest, retirement and/or increased caring responsibilities. They will be positive about activity but ongoing attempts at getting active are failing due to differing time pressures and a lack of knowledge about what is available and how and where to access opportunities.

The programme methodology will consist of two mutually reinforcing elements:

- **A coordinated CAN social marketing component that:**
  - Nudges people in the contemplation behaviour change stage to get naturally active
  - Normalises participation in physical activities that connect people to nature
  - Establishes a network of 360 local ‘Ambassadors’, that will help people to connect to activities and help make customers first steps easy and enjoyable
  - Establishes key high profile ‘events’ that provide focal points and visibility
  - Mutually amplifies impact with other relevant campaigns (e.g. One You)

- **A portfolio of CAN delivery projects that:**
  - Use proven approaches to sustainably adapt or gap-fill current provision to meet the demand from inactive people and improve customer experience - e.g. new nature walking groups
  - Test new approaches to delivery, in which learning and discovery is prioritised
  - Drive collaborative system improvements - e.g. data sharing, coordination of behaviour change training

Outcomes
The primary outcome will be at least 3,000 target audiences become regularly (30minutes Moderate Intensity activity) active while connecting actively to nature.

Secondary outcomes include physical/mental wellbeing gains, including likely reductions in loneliness and social isolation, and personal development gains for the ambassadors and volunteers involved.

Sustainability & Scalability
The programme will be focused on achieving sustainable behaviour change for people in the target audience and sustainable/scalable approaches to the promotion and provision of activity opportunities in the natural environment.