



Engaging people in the natural environment. Are we missing anyone ?

Jim Burt

Principal Adviser

Learning in the Natural Environment
and Outdoors for All Programmes

www.naturalengland.org.uk

The Outdoors for All Programme



Context

- Government's ambition '...everyone should have fair access to a good quality natural environment'. (NEWP 2011)
- However '...the opportunities to spend time in the natural environment are currently not open to everyone, and this can contribute to health and other inequalities.' (NEWP 2011)
- Natural England - responsibility to promote access to, and recreation in the natural environment and public well-being, for the benefit of today's and future generations.
- Natural England is championing Outdoors for All on behalf of Government and the natural environment sector.

The Outdoors for All Programme



Three strands of work:

- **Partnership:** National Outdoors for All Working Group

Membership

- BEN (Black Environment Network), MIND, CNP Mosaic, Disability UK, Disabled Ramblers, Fieldfare Trust, Riding for the Disabled, Age UK, Phoenix Futures,
- Woodland Trust, National Trust, RSPB, The Canal and River Trust,
- DEFRA, Forestry Commission, Environment Agency, English Heritage and HLF

- **Research:** Operational Research Group

Membership

- Plymouth University
- Essex University
- Nottingham University
- European Centre for the Environment and Human Health
- Forest Research
- Edinburgh University
- Sheffield University
- **Capacity Building Projects** eg. Sensory Trust, Autism and Nature, BEN, Dementia Adventure

Background to MENE



- Natural England, Defra and the Forestry Commission commissioned the **Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment** (MENE) survey in 2009.
- MENE is the most comprehensive dataset available on people's use and enjoyment of the natural environment.
(“open spaces in and around towns and cities, including parks, canals and nature areas; the coast and beaches; and the countryside - including farmland, woodland, hills and rivers”. A visit could be anything from a few minutes to all day.)
- Over 800 face to face in-home interviews per week or 45,000 interviews per year, representative of the English adult population (aged 16 and over).
- Presentation based on 142,000 interviews between March 2009 & February 2012

Full details <http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/research/mene.aspx>).

Five Key Groups



BME population

- 18,220 people of the Black and Minority Ethnic Population

Elderly population

- 35,054 people aged 65 years and over

Disabled population

- 29,716 people with a long term illness or disability

D&E socio-economic groups

- 48,478 people including semi and unskilled workers and long term unemployed

Urban deprived population

- 15,906 residents of areas in the bottom 10% of the Index of Multiple Deprivation AND in areas defined as Urban using the ONS Rural-Urban classification.

English adult population (aged 16 and over): 42 million

BME population

- 5.4m (13%)

Elderly population

- 8.1m (19%)

Disabled population

- 7.4m (18%)

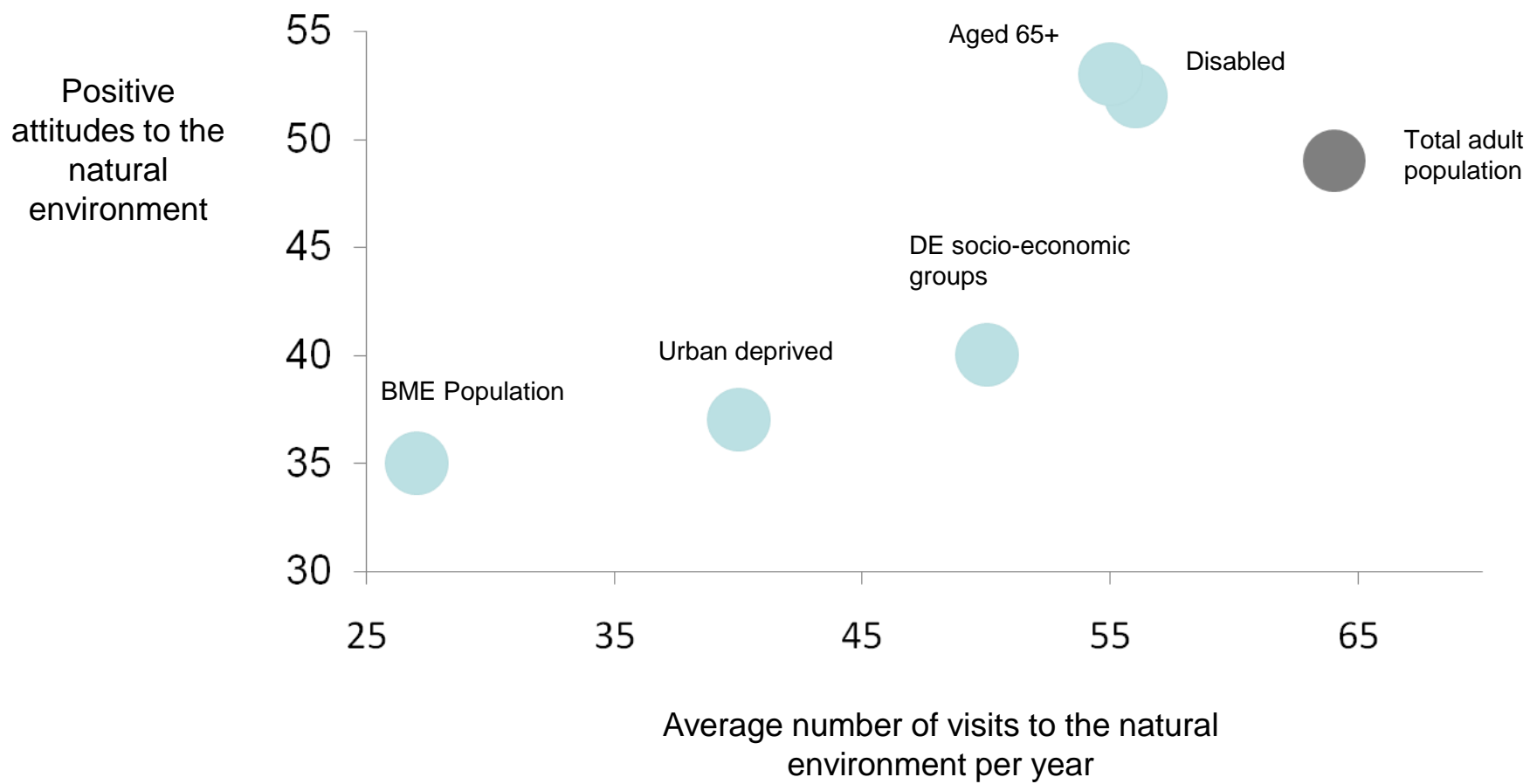
D&E socio-economic groups

- 11.5m (28%)

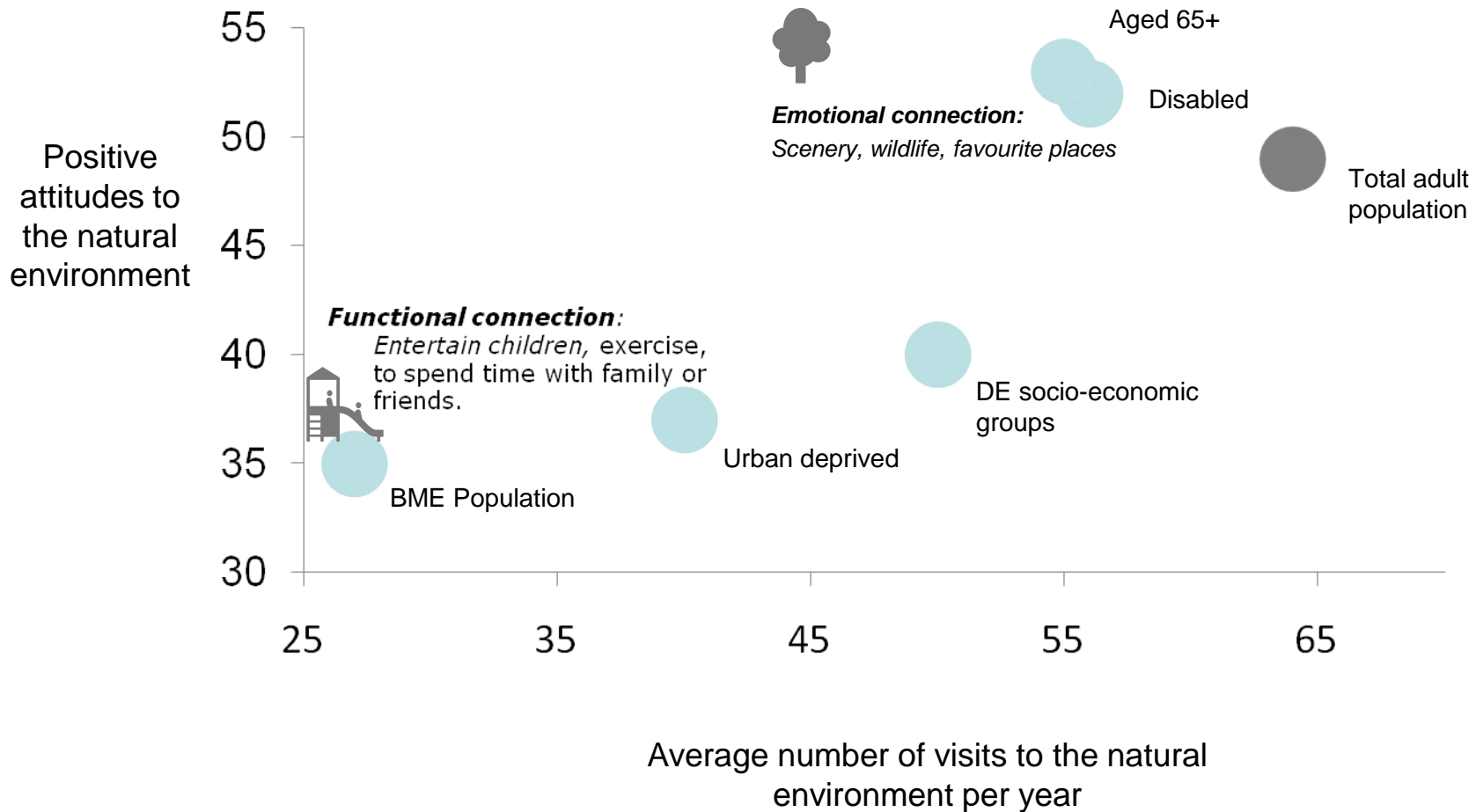
Urban deprived population

- 4.2m (10%)

Access & attitudes



Access and motivations



Comparisons

| | BME population | Urban deprived population | Total adult population |
|--|----------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Average visits per year | 27 | 40 | 64 |
| Age (%) Under 45 | 76 | 60 | 49 |
| Place of residence (%) Urban | 98 | 100 | 78 |
| Children in household (%) | 43 | 35 | 29 |
| Car Ownership (%) | 59 | 52 | 72 |
| Public transport used for visits (%) | 12 | 6 | 3 |
| Barriers to taking visits (%) Too busy work Too busy home | 32 25 | 20 16 | 26 18 |
| Visit destination (%) Urban Countryside or coast | 78 22 | 66 34 | 39 61 |
| Motivations (%) Health or exercise Entertaining children Enjoy wildlife/nature | 32 22 16 | 26 11 33 | 36 3 43 |

Summary



- Large parts of the English population remain under represented in the natural environment.
- Millions of people in the English adult population (BME population, residents of urban deprived areas and DE socio-economic group) visit the natural environment less than once a week, and
- Around 8 million people, or 20%, visit little more than once a fortnight (BME population, residents of urban deprived areas) - 40% less than the average for the English adult population.
- Government's ambition '...everyone should have fair access to a good quality natural environment' remains a critically important but a serious long term challenge for the natural environment sector.

Public engagement - Your role



- the media can raise awareness **but** don't assume this will lead to action or behaviour change
- for participation to become mass participation you need to **connect with communities and motivate** them
- **Get people involved** through locally relevant and emotionally appealing **events**, make changing attitudes a secondary objective
- the most **effective agents of behaviour change** are likely to be members and role models of community networks
- **Communities are the engine room of participation:** your organisations with local networks and face-to-face contact with communities have the means to activate participation.

However to meet the challenges identified by the MENE survey we must be ambitious and scale up our activities by continuing to work together, be responsive to the users of our services, be creative in our solutions, and fearless in our outreach to new audience.

Thank you



***“To Change Behaviour
You Have To Engage A Person”***



For more information contact:

Outdoors for All Programme

Sarah Preston, Senior Adviser, Outdoors for All.

sarah.preston@naturalengland.org.uk. Tel 0300 060 0523