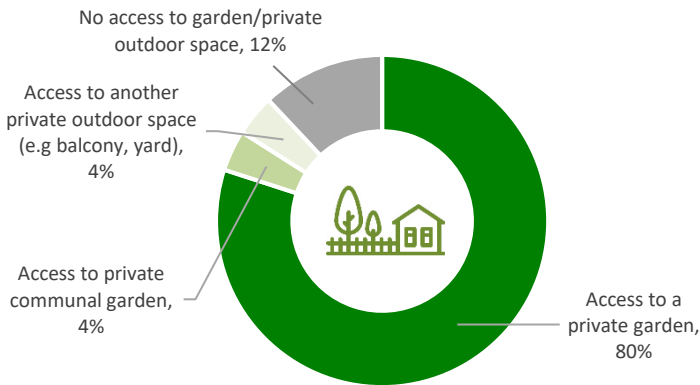


COVID-19 Impacts: Gardens and local parks have become vital places but is access equal for all?

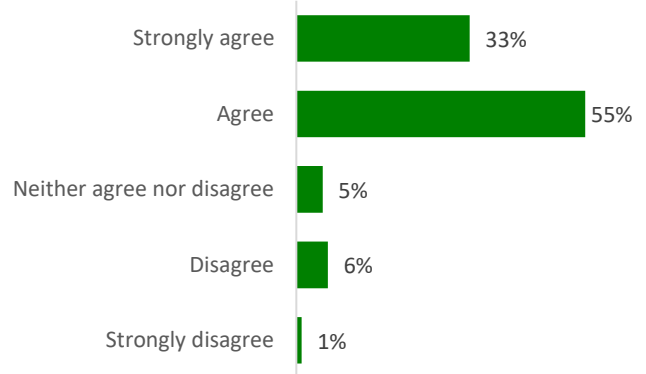
Figure 1 - Access to a garden – population in England



Source: Monitor of Engagement with Natural Environment 2009-2019 (N=17,659)

Figure 2 - Access to local greenspaces – England

“Local greenspaces are within easy walking distance.”



Source: Monitor of Engagement with Natural Environment 2009-2019 (N=21,194)

The message remains clear: to reduce the spread of COVID 19 we must stay at home and avoid social contact. Time can be spent outdoors once a day to exercise alone or with household members, walking, cycling or running - but other activities like sunbathing and barbecues are not appropriate. Yet with the sun shining and the Easter weekend approaching, there are concerns that a minority will continue to bend the rules and, if this happens, regulations may be tightened, and authorities may be forced to close local parks.

80% of the population in England have access to a private garden, while a further 8% have access to a shared garden or other outdoor space such as a balcony or yard. However, access to a garden or private greenspace is significantly lower amongst residents of the most urban areas, people in the least affluent social groups and younger age groups.

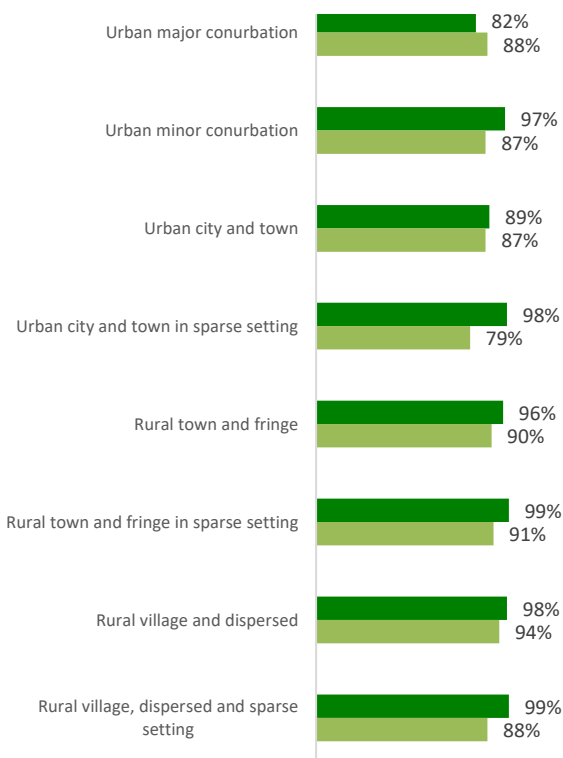
This note provides the headlines of a new analysis of Natural England’s *Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment* results illustrating how, while most of the population in England have access to a private garden and local greenspaces, many do not. Of concern, those groups of people less likely to have access to a garden or local greenspace are also predicted to be most badly impacted by the health and economic effects of the crisis.

When asked to what extent they agree with the statement ‘local greenspaces are within easy walking distance’ 88% agreed or strongly agreed that this was the case. However, this was less likely to be the case amongst those living in the most urban locations, the least affluent social groups and the oldest age groups.

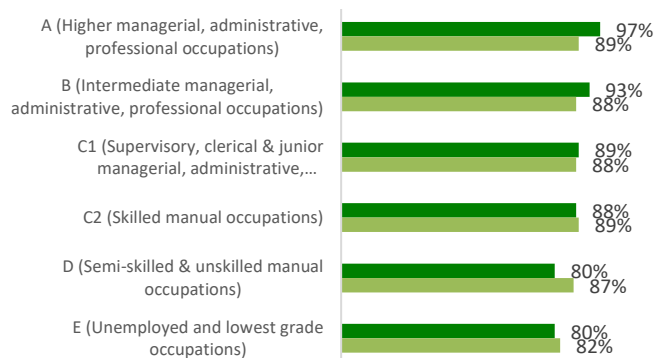
Figures 4 and 5 summarise these results by county – showing how garden and greenspace access varies somewhat between areas.

Figure 3 - Access to garden & local greenspaces by key demographics (agree or agree strongly that “Local greenspaces are within easy walking distance.”)

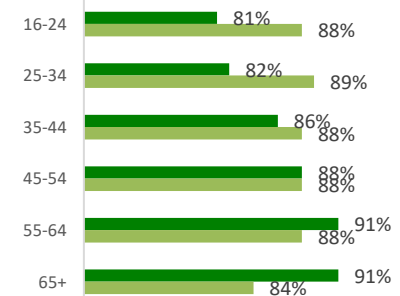
By place of residence (ONS urban/rural classification)



Socio-economic group



Age



■ Any Garden / Outdoor Space
■ Local Greenspace

Figure 4 - Access to garden by county

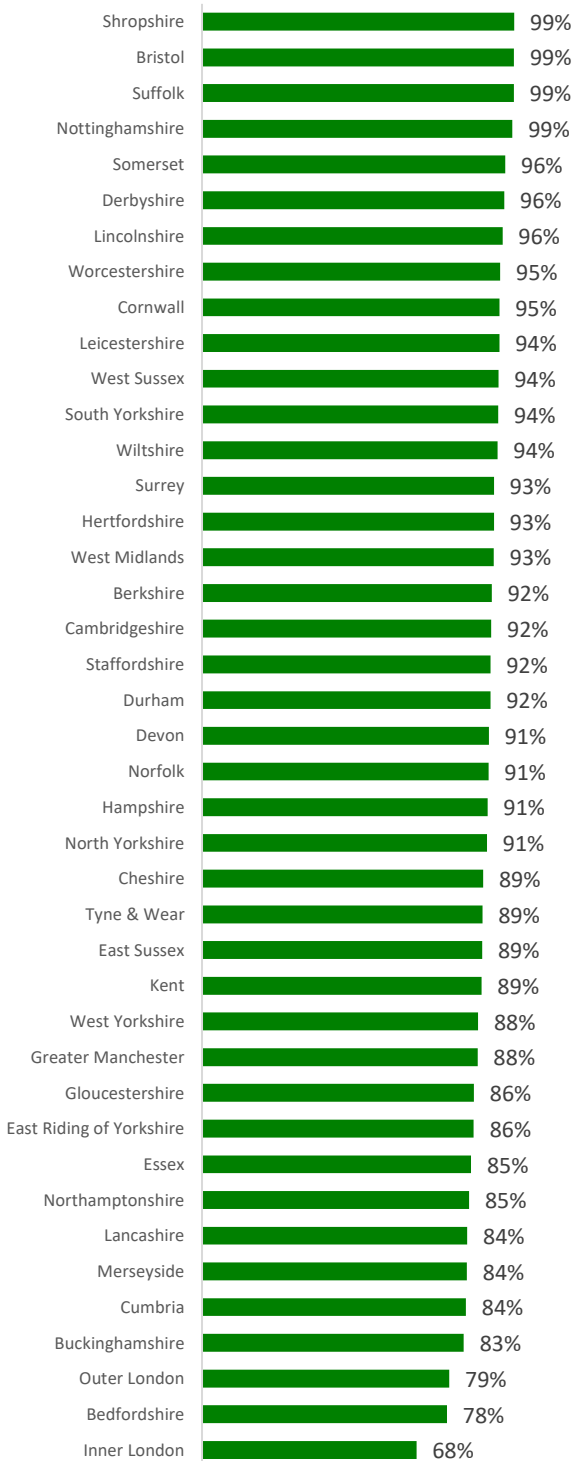
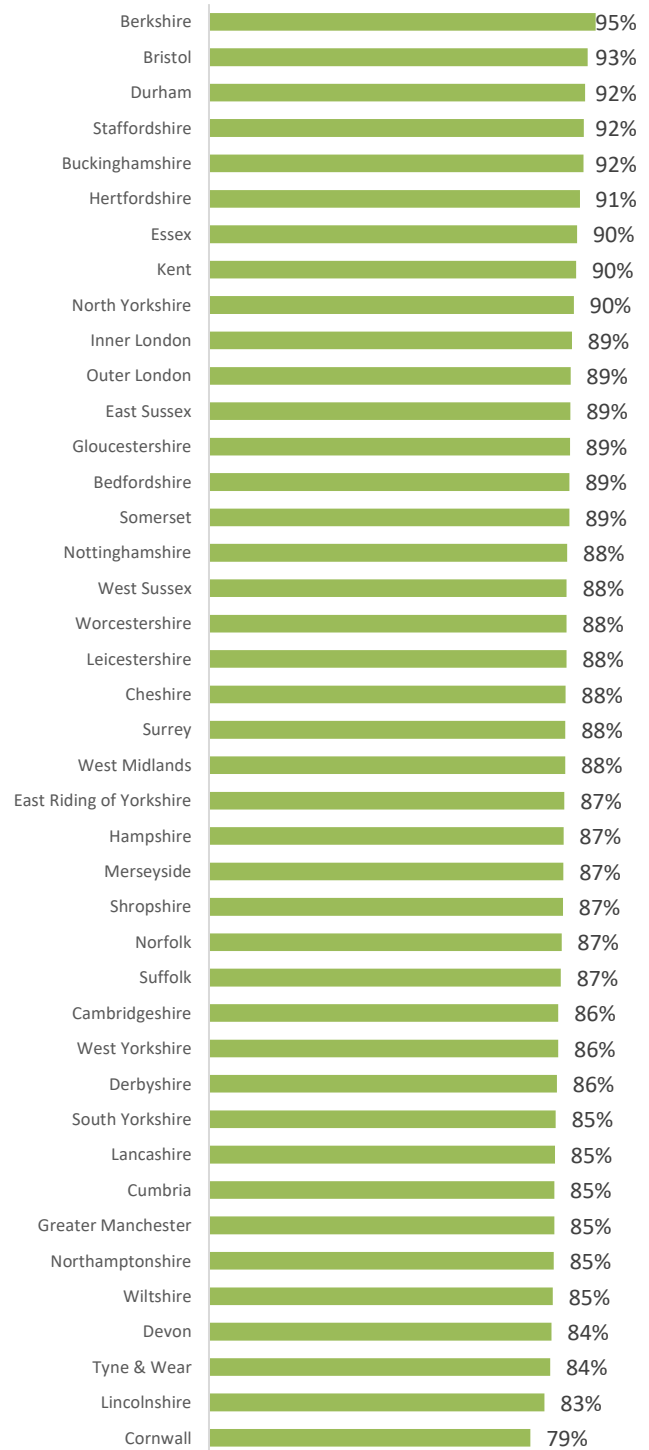


Figure 5 - Access to local green space by county (agree or agree strongly that "Local greenspaces are within easy walking distance.")



Source: Monitor of Engagement with Natural Environment 2009-2019 (excludes counties with sample size of less than 100 interviews)

56 Degree Insight are a research and insights consultancy based in Edinburgh. Over the years, the team have undertaken a great deal of research in relation to outdoor recreation, nature and the environment. These views are our own and placed 'out there' for discussion and debate – and we would be happy to discuss them further:

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