



UNIVERSITY of  
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A realist evaluation of  
greenspace programmes  
for improving mental  
health and supporting  
people with problem  
substance use

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BE THE DIFFERENCE

# Greenspace intervention programmes

- Greenspace programmes are health programmes undertaken outside in a green area
- Many settings have been used
- Includes horticultural programmes, wilderness or adventure programmes, conservation programmes, care farming, health walks, and others
- Programmes for people with PSU are increasingly being designed



# Programmes for substance use support

- In the UK, greenspace programmes have been implemented in services that look to support people who use drugs
- Limited academic work
- Some work has looked at adventure and wilderness therapy, as well as garden therapy for people who use drugs
- Acknowledgement it could be an adjunctive treatment to standard care



# Research gap



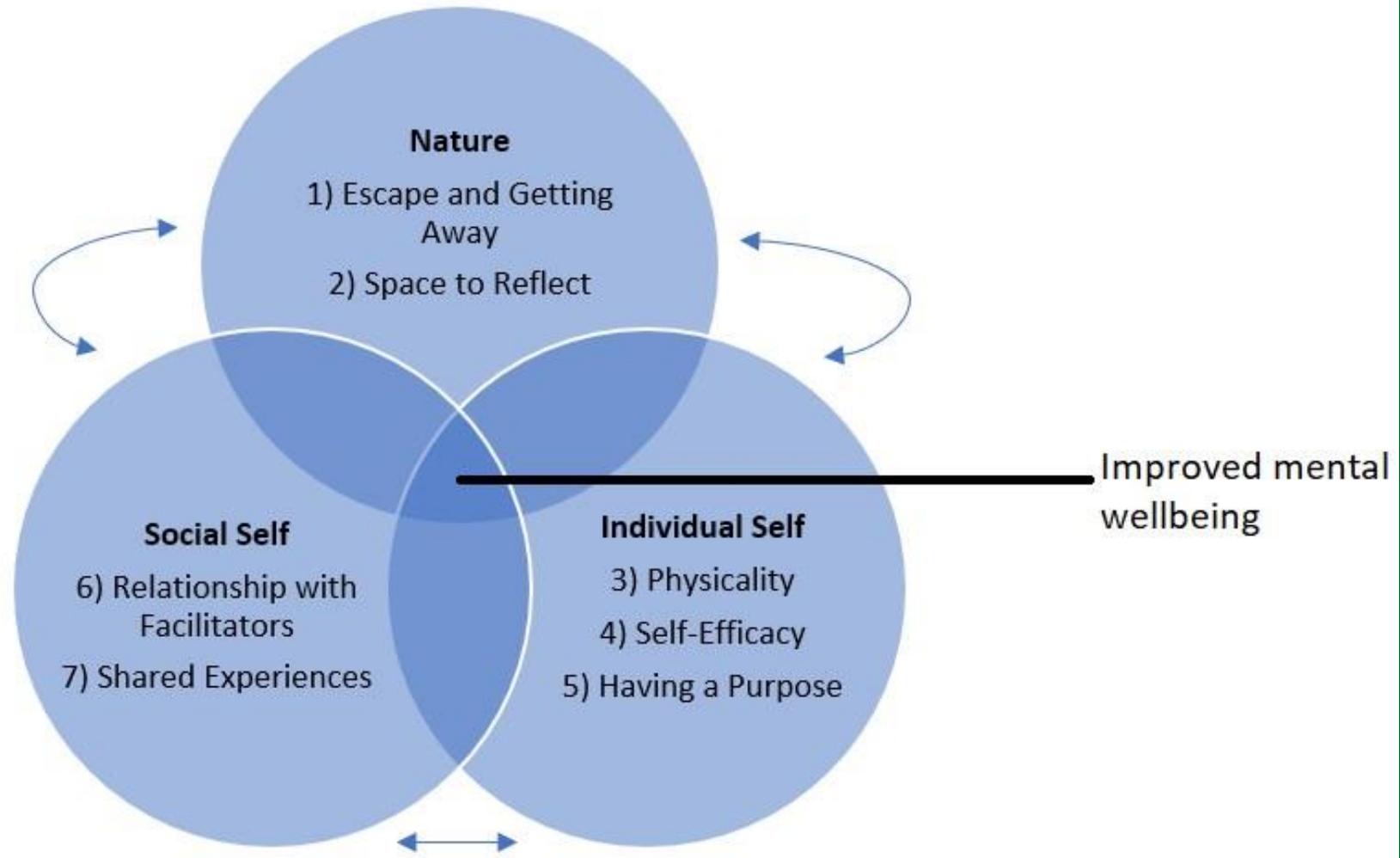
How can they be designed?



What are the mechanisms that lead to outcomes?



This is where my work is situated.

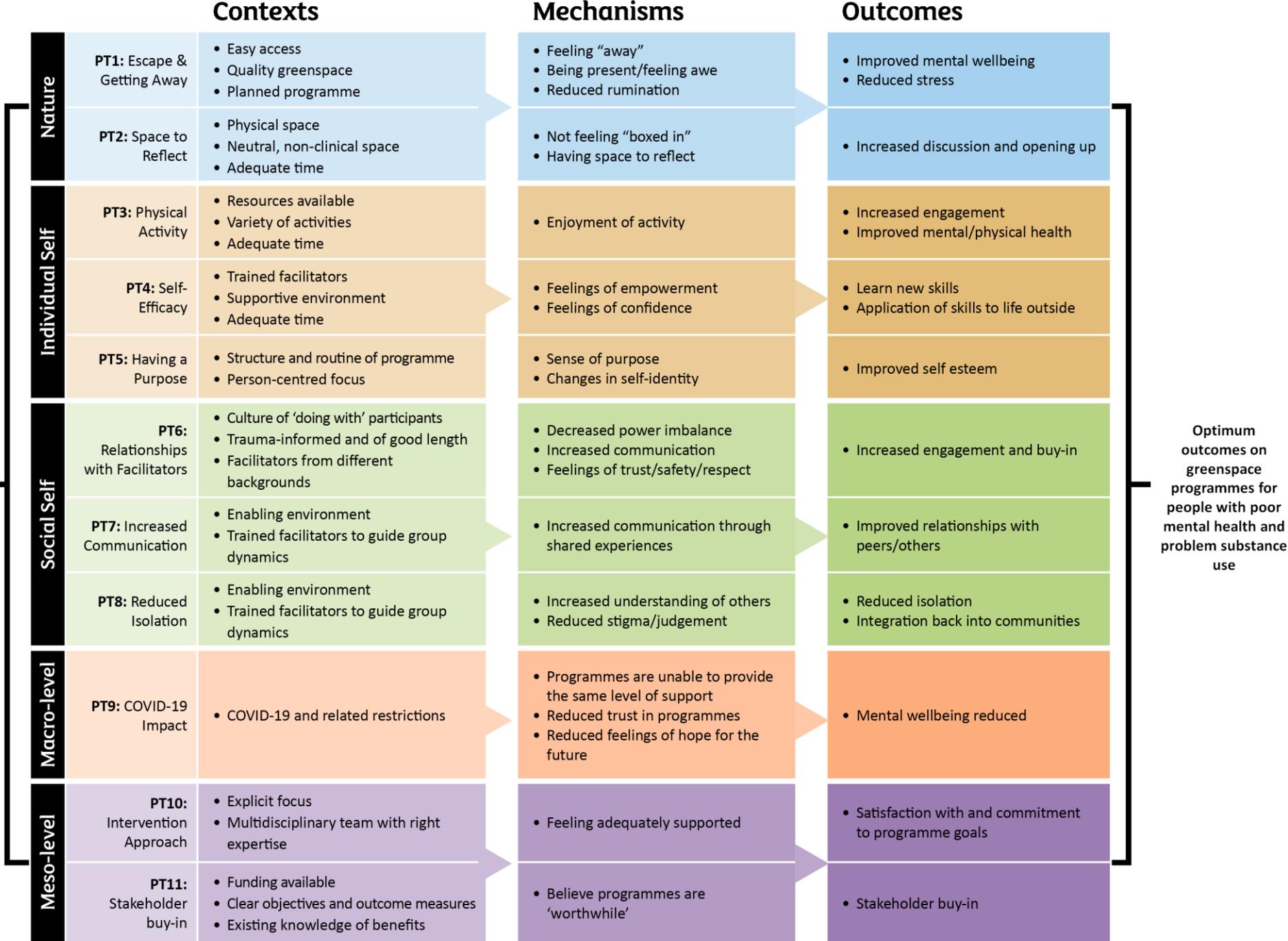


# Why are greenspace programmes effective?

“If you are embroiled in the world of substance use, looking at the mountains, looking at the trees, hearing the rivers, connecting with nature, with being outside. You are sort of separating from your own agenda and your own issues”

To come from such a stigmatized sort of isolated lonely place of serious addiction to actually feeling just part of the community that you live in through the gardens is absolutely amazing to see.”

- Micro-level individual differences**
- Age
  - Gender
  - Ethnicity
  - Personal opinion
  - Personal circumstance
  - Existing responsibilities



# Greenspace programmes for problem substance use



Can be used with a prevention focus with young people who may have a higher risk of substance-related harm.



Can meet people where they are at.



Can reduce barriers to health services and provide things typical treatment does not.

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# Thank you for listening

Thank you to:

The ESRC for funding my research

The people who contributed their time and insight to my project and made it possible

My supervisors: Professor Tessa Parkes, Professor Kirsty Park, and Dr Hannah Carver

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