

# Designing Access to Nature

For residential buildings

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# The Case for Nature Access

Review of 150 papers, (Strife and Downey 2009)

## *Our genetic background*

“We spend 95% of our time indoors – twenty generations ago, our ancestors would have spent most of their waking hours outdoors”

*Biophilia – Wilson’s Hypothesis* –  
reduction of threat by observing nature

Forest settings and proximity to green space for children improved –

- attention capacity and motor coordination,
- reduced ADHD
- Reduced violent behaviour and improved social interaction



# Daylight and Nature

Review of 50 papers on View Quality (Helinga 2013)

Cited evidence of –

- natural views highly valued
- less frustrated, more patient,
- greater enthusiasm and overall health
- 10% – 25% better performance in mental tests
- More rapid recovery of patients after surgery
- Daylight more highly valued as illumination when associated with view of nature (c.f. interactions with other environmental parameters e.g. thermal comfort)



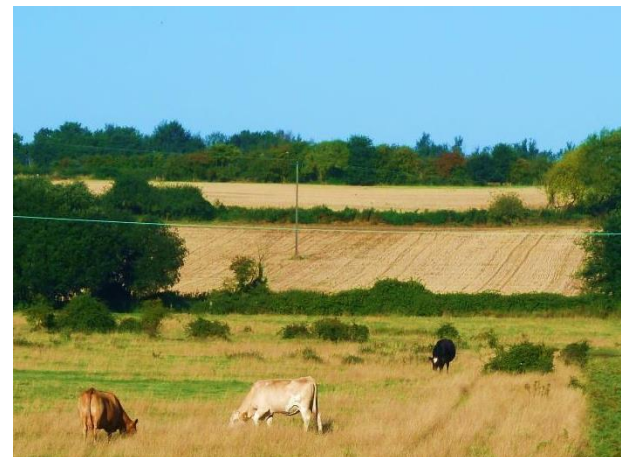
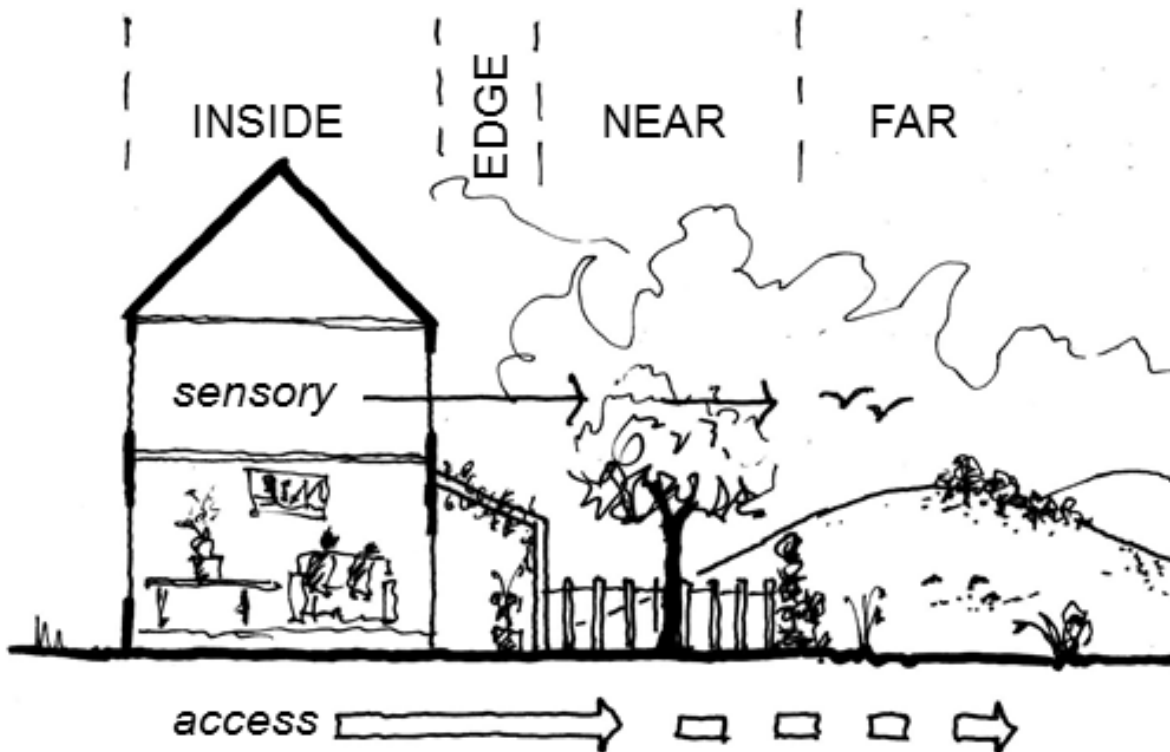
Cambridge Library Study



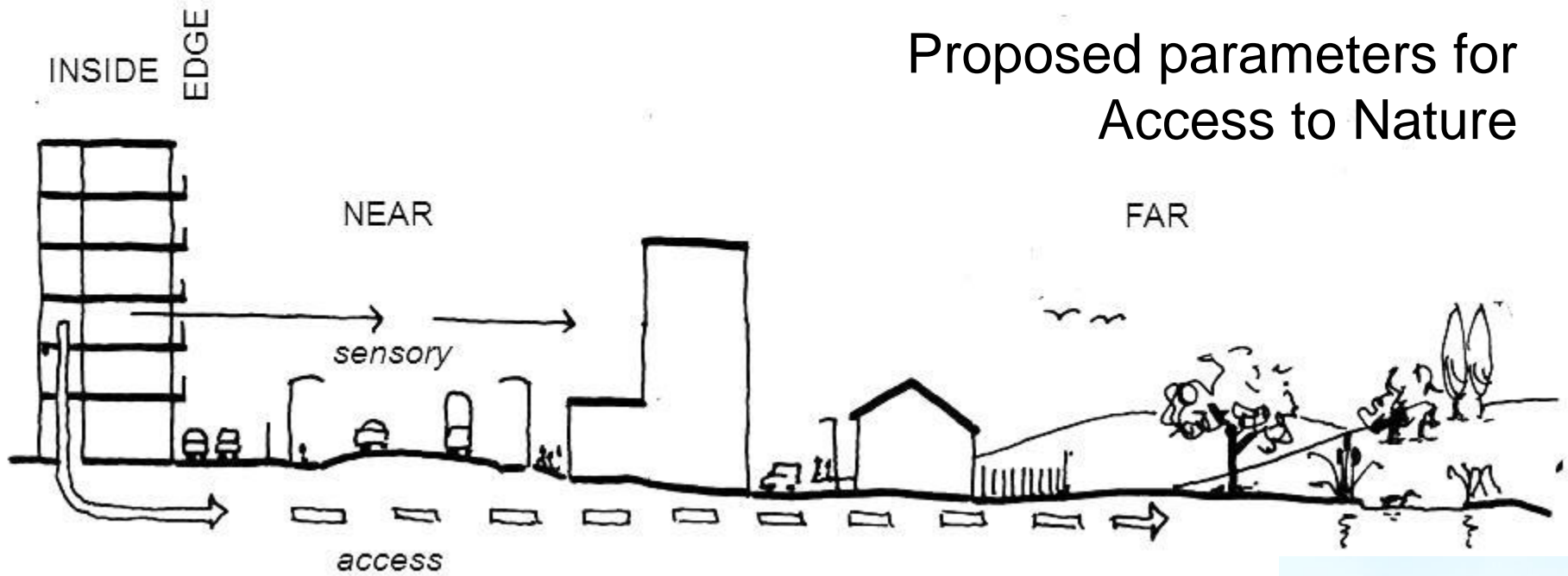
# Proposed parameters for Access to Nature

Zones – **INSIDE, EDGE, NEAR, FAR**

Links – **sensory, access**



# Proposed parameters for Access to Nature



..... Nature gets squeezed out



# Urban Gardening

How To Grow Food In Any  
City Apartment Or Yard No  
Matter How Small



## Benefits of urban gardening

Aesthetics  
Food production  
Therapeutic  
Attracting wildlife  
Community  
involvement

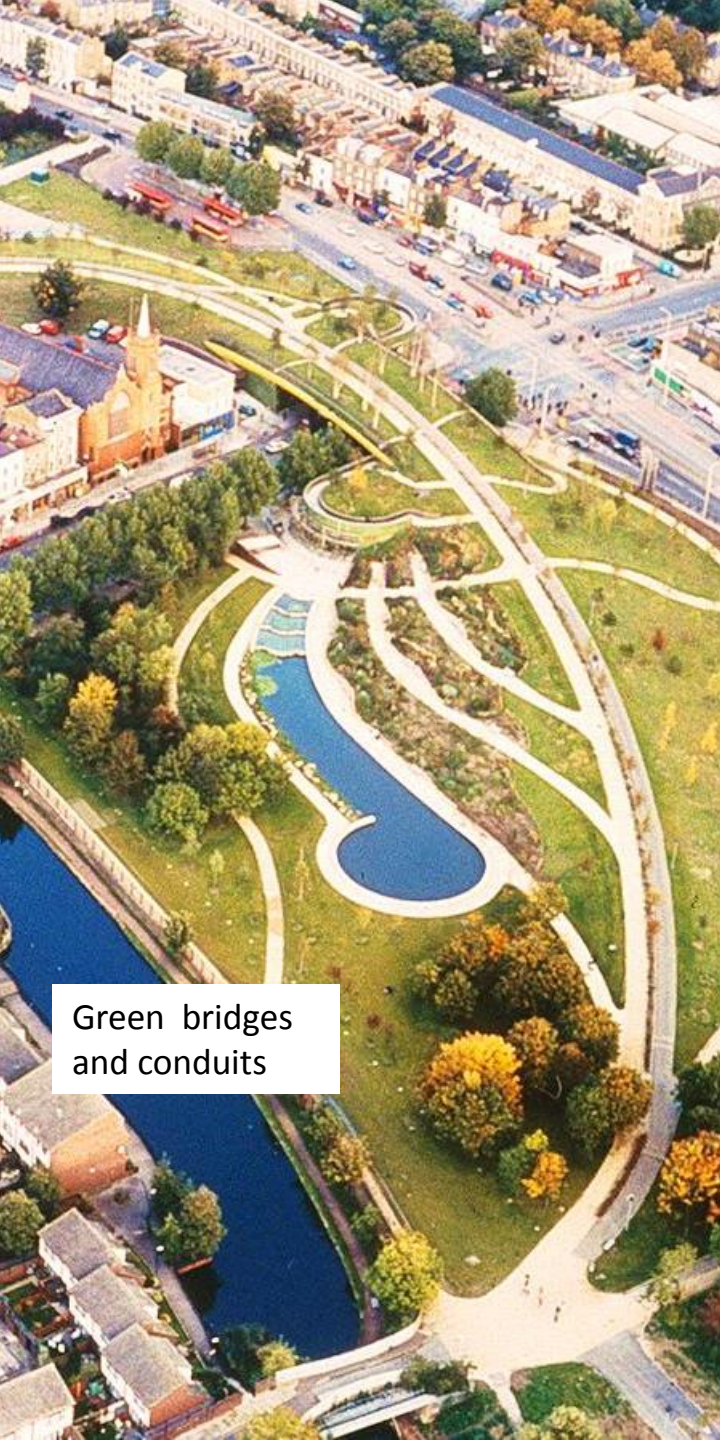


Turin Verde 25  
Luciano Pia



By Will Cook





Les Akènes' Eco-Neighbourhood



## Attracting wildlife



Urban planning scale  
Neighbourhood scale  
Building scale  
Micro scale



*Design can help*



Green bridges  
and conduits

Building details



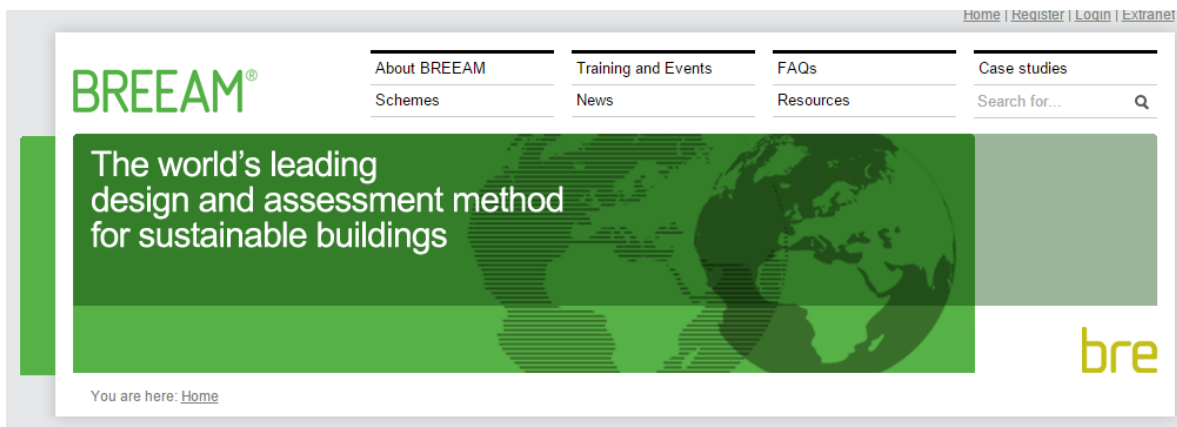
## Keeping pets

Pro – proven therapeutic value to all ages

Con – potential neighbour friction

*Design can help*

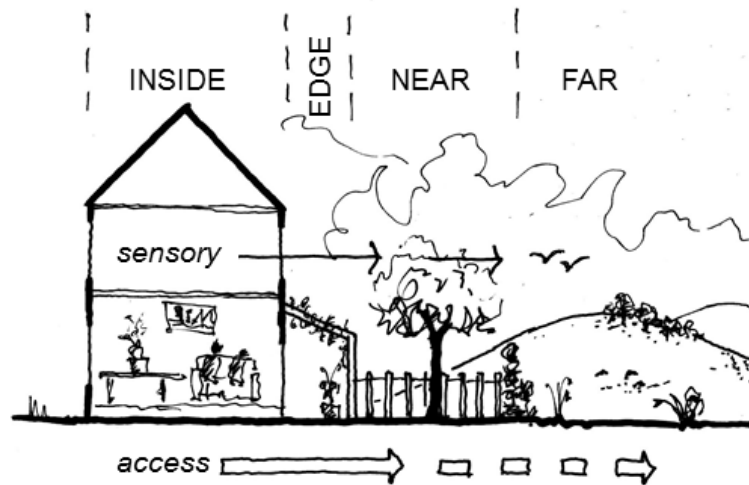




- Energy & CO<sub>2</sub> emission,
- Management,
- *Health and Wellbeing*,
- Transport,
- Water consumption,
- Materials ,
- Waste,
- Pollution,
- *Land Use*,
- *Ecology*.

## Nature Access Assessment Method

Semi-topographical  
model with  
coefficients based  
on empirical data  
and expert opinion



# Conclusions

There is overwhelming evidence that access to nature is an essential part of physical and mental health.

Architecture and urban design have a vital role to play in this.

... found in my backyard

