



Minutes of the National Federation of Parks and Green Spaces
Meeting
Saturday, 20th October 2012 at 10.30am
British and Midland Institute, Birmingham

		Actions
1.	Present	
	<p>Dave Morris (DM) – Haringey Friends of Parks Forum & London Green Spaces Friends Groups Network (Vice-Chair) Tom Cranston (TC) – Sunderland Open Space Network Group/ NFPGS representative for the North East Lucy Fowler (LF) – Green Space Administrator: Regions and Community (Note Taker) Simon Chapman (SC) – GreenSpace Regions Development Manager Lynn Good (LG) – Stockport Greenspace Forum Christine Hession (CH) – Stockport Greenspace Forum Ann Ault (AA) – Friends of Walsall Parks and Green Spaces David Garner (DG) – Liverpool Parks Forum Roland Bruce (RB) – Bristol Parks Forum Robert Lee (RL) – Wirral Parks Friends Forum</p>	
2.	Apologies	
	<p>Sarah Royal – Birmingham Open Spaces Forum (Chair) John Kerry – Friends of Greenwood Community Forum Colin Barson – Friends of Greenwood Community Forum Michaela Fyson – Newcastle Community Project Forum Paul Bramhill – GreenSpace Chief Executive</p>	
3.	Sub-Committee Meetings	
	<p>As SR was unable to attend the meeting due to illness, DM chaired the meeting.</p> <p>1.0 Planning Sub-Committee (CH) No real update given as no information regarding planning issues has been circulated. DM to contact The Open Spaces Society regarding the proposed leaflet which they are planning to produce on the topic of current planning issues and how they affect green spaces. AA – Have any members had any experience with lodges in parks; in Walsall there appears to be a problem with renting out lodges as it can fall under the “right to buy” initiative. Several suggestions were offered including considering short term leases, checking the designation of the building(s) and look at change of use; explore the option of converting a lodge into a café for example.</p> <p>1.1 Marketing & Publicity Sub-Committee</p>	DM

	<p>DM suggested that the NFPGS could write and produce two new leaflets; one on setting up a friends group and one on how to set up a Forum based on leaflets produced by BOSF and Wirral Parks Forum. Even though there are leaflets already available on these topics, it is important to have leaflets which feature the NFPGS brand/logo. Following discussions, it was agreed that DM will complete a draft version of the leaflets and circulate to all members for comments/amendments.</p>	DM
1.2	<p>Website TC confirmed that due to personal reasons, he is now no longer able to look after the NFPGS website and has stepped down from this role. The group thanked TC for all his hard work and discussed who could take over the role in the short-term. AA suggested that her son could help with the technical side of running the website and LF also offered to help run the website on an interim basis. It was agreed that LF would look after the management of the NFPGS website and DM/AA also offered further support.</p>	LF/DM/A A
1.3	<p>Fundraising and Finances (SR) These topics will be covered later in the meeting.</p>	
1.4	<p>Health (JK) As John Kerry is not present at this meeting, the topic will be discussed later in the meeting.</p>	
1.5	<p>Sub-committee meetings - are they working effectively? The group discussed whether the sub-committee meetings were working effectively. The main consensus was that it is good for the group to have a separate part of the meeting to discuss and chat about key issues however the session could be reduced to half an hour and reports should be written from all of the sub-committees either before or after the meeting. It was agreed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All chairs of each sub-committee are required to write a brief report either before or after each quarterly meeting which can then be circulated to all members. - The sub-committee meetings to continue to start at 10.30am however the main meeting will then start at 11am. 	Sub- committ ee chairs LF
4.0	Main Meeting	
1.0	<p>Introductions and Apologies DM welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made. Apologies were received from Sarah Royal, Colin Barson, Michaela Fyson and Paul Bramhill.</p>	
2.0	<p>Minutes of the last Federation meeting/Matters Arising RL requested a minor correction to one of the points listed under 1.2 "RL to circulate any relevant contact details for local MPs" – details regarding local MPs are already readily available. The group agreed that the minutes were a true account of the meeting.</p>	LF

<p>2.1</p>	<p>Matters Arising 1.1 (last point) – RL to send through details of activities/events which take place in parks and green spaces in Birkenhead to SC. DG confirmed that a similar exercise is on-going in Liverpool and DM confirmed that London are also completing a similar project. 3.1 (point 6.6) - SC to re-send a mind-map of potential partnerships to all NFPGS members. 7.4 – DM confirmed that he has made all the relevant amendments to the Forward Planning Action Plan as discussed at the last meeting. 7.4 (point 2b) – LF to collate any upcoming events/conferences that are relevant to the NFPGS and aim to circulate them on a regular basis.</p>	<p>RL SC LF</p>
<p>3.0</p>	<p>Supporting each other and helping new Forums/networks develop SC introduced the Core Cities/areas and existing/emerging Forums spreadsheet which he has compiled following the last meeting. The spreadsheet contains the basic information and can be updated as time goes by. Any updates to SC. RB – How can you find out the number of friends groups/Forums in a particular area? It was suggested that most local councils have details on local community groups on their websites including, in some cases, contact details. Also googling the net can help (see 3.7).</p>	<p>ALL</p>
<p>3.1</p>	<p>North West - CH reported that in Manchester there are 10 boroughs including Stockport and that Stockport is the only one with an active Forum. Manchester used to have a Forum according to the local council who are keen to potentially help re-ignite one. Accrington has a Forum which has been running for the last 5 years and CH emails them regularly regarding NFPGS meetings. Pendle Forum have mentioned that they are interested in attending future NFPGS meetings and a new Forum has started in Preston which is currently doing well. CH remarked that it is particularly surprising that Oldham, who have not made any cuts to their parks budget, do not have any friends groups or Forums. In Yorkshire – a new Forum has developed in Wakefield, Leeds and Bradford are interested in setting up Forums and York has an existing Forum.</p>	
<p>3.2</p>	<p>North East – TC reported that while there are plenty of friends groups, there are only a few Forums in existence. SC mentioned that he will be attending an upcoming meeting with Su Cumming in Newcastle in December so could promote the work of the NFPGS.</p>	<p>SC</p>
<p>3.3</p>	<p>South West – RB reported that Bristol Parks Forum are still active and that he is planning to undertake some research about friends groups/Forums based in the South West.</p>	<p>RB</p>
<p>3.4</p>	<p>Liverpool – DG recently attended a networking event for friends groups which was well attended and hopes to attend another one. There are also plans for Liverpool Parks Forum to hold a meeting with Glendale.</p>	

3.5	<p>Wirral – RL has recently completed some research regarding the number of friends groups/Forums in the Wirral – in Sefton there appears to be some activity towards forming a Forum and in Halton they are considering re-activating a Forum.</p>	
3.6	<p>Walsall – AA confirmed that in Walsall, a meeting with Street Pride to discuss new strategies is planned.</p>	
3.7	<p>London – DM confirmed that in London there are currently 17 existing Forums and a new Forum is being discussed in Lewisham.</p> <p>South East – DM addressed a recent meeting for community groups organised in Sussex, by Michelle Parker Green Space South East Partnership Manager. A new Sussex-wide Network has now been developed however it has not quite taken off yet. An existing Forum in Brighton & Hove appears to be going well.</p> <p>DM recently attended a founding meeting of the Kent Green Spaces Community Network organised by GreenSpace SE which was very successful and the existing Medway Urban Parks and Green Spaces Forum have agreed to co-ordinate future meetings.</p> <p>DM also reported that at the University of Canterbury, students undertaking a research project found over 300 community groups in the Kent area, most of them below the radar of national organisations and networks – it may be worth linking in with students undertaking this kind of research in the future.</p>	
3.8	<p>Scotland</p> <p>DM will also be attending an upcoming Edinburgh Friends Forum meeting on the 7th of November.</p>	DM
3.9	<p>Wales</p> <p>SR has attended GreenSpace meetings in Wales to try to make links with Friends groups and Forums there. Update – we are now in contact with the Cardiff Friends Forum which was established in 2006 and involves 20 groups.</p>	
4.0	<p>Marketing and Publicity</p> <p>As discussed earlier, DM will draft some new leaflets for the NFPGS which will be circulated to all members.</p>	DM
4.1	<p>NFPGS Regional Structure Paper – RL introduced the paper which he has written and previously circulated before the meeting.</p> <p>The group discussed the document: key amendments/suggestions raised were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - RB queried the last bullet point under Section 2 “to raise funds to implement the NFPGS objectives at the regional level”. RL commented that the points should be seen as aims not just responsibilities and that this document is looking at the future strategies for the NFPGS, certain responsibilities will not happen overnight. - Following on from the discussion, the group agreed to amend the title of Section 2 to “The Aims & Responsibilities of Regional Representatives”. - Section 3 of the document discussing the formation of a 	RL

	<p>Regional Development Committee, it was agreed that the reps on those Committees will be from existing or planned friends groups/Forums as well as NFPGS regional representatives.</p> <p>4.2 General discussion on Marketing & Publicity The group then discussed other ways of promoting the NFPGS including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The NFPGS could establish communication with other organisations such as Groundwork, TCV etc. at a regional and national level and send them the contact details for the regional officers. DM confirmed that he has contacted TCV at a national level to discuss such issues and is awaiting a response. - DM/SR will both be attending GreenLINK in November so that they can try and connect more with relevant organisations. - RL - Could we follow-up with all the delegates who attended the last NFPGS Conference in 2011 to find out whether they want to link in more with the organisation? DM confirmed that he would be happy to contact all the delegates and provide an update on behalf of the NFPGS. TC/LF to send through the delegate list from the Conference to DM. - The NFPGS could produce a basic NFPGS newsletter informing members about what's happening – a simple way of keeping in touch and promoting the organisation. The newsletter could include NFPGS leaflets, details on the upcoming conference and Love Parks Week 2013 for example. DM to draft the newsletter and circulate to all members and all NFPGS members to provide any further news/features for the newsletter to DM. <p>5.0 Campaigning for adequate resources for green spaces Undertaking a national petition The NFPGS are supporting the Horticulture Week campaign 'Make Parks a Priority' and currently only a limited number of MPs have signed the Early Day Motion 219 calling for a Parliamentary inquiry into the funding crisis facing urban parks. On a similar note, HLF and BIG are holding a Parks Summit on 25th of October on the topic of funding of parks – should the NFPGS consider organising a National petition via 38 degrees in support of current topical issues? A discussion then followed, key points raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Should the petition be circulated via GreenLINK so that the petition can be supported by other organisations such as TCV etc? - The focus should be on making the petition quite specific so it highlights a particular point/subject. - Also need to focus on the outcome of the petition – what is the overall statement? - The petition could focus on the subject of parks becoming a statutory obligation. Following on from this idea, the petition could focus on two components – campaign to protect parks and to then achieve a statutory obligation. - NFPGS need to play a key role as the organisation represents the grassroots. 	<p>RL</p> <p>DM</p> <p>TC/LF</p> <p>DM ALL</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Members of friends groups could go out into parks and collect signatures - Petition could be available as an online petition and as a paper version as well. - The first newsletter from the NFPGS could launch the petition - Should the petition be focused towards central government or towards local councillors - Upcoming Police Commissioner elections – could we link in with this in some way? 	
5.1	<p>Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DM/RL to discuss further and then produce a draft outline of the petition which will then be circulated to members. - DM to discuss the petition at the upcoming GreenLINK meeting on 14th November to see if any organisations that attend would be willing to support it as a partner organisation. If they are not keen then the NFPGS can be the lead organisation and other organisations can pledge to support it. - The aim would be to launch the petition after the GreenLINK meeting. 	<p>DM/RL</p> <p>DM</p>
5.2	<p>Green Flag Award Scheme Update</p> <p>Discussions are still on-going with DCLG and there should be an official announcement regarding the future of the Scheme at the BIG/HLF Parks Summit next week. The initial bid for the license was launched by Keep Britain Tidy in partnership with GreenSpace, Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens and The National Housing Federation.</p> <p>NFPGS have pledged to continue to support the Green Flag Award Scheme and have requested to be an integral part of the monitoring and advisory process. Update: Keep Britain Tidy have been awarded the Green Flag for a 5 year period.</p>	
6.0	<p>Discussions</p> <p>NFPGS Conference 2013</p>	
6.1	<p>Venue</p> <p>DG/CH viewed a potential location for the conference called LACE - http://www.conferenceatlace.co.uk/ . The venue is located on the outskirts of Sefton Park and has plenty of room for the main conference and breakout rooms. The venue will be £30 per head which includes venue, equipment and catering and the venue has been provisionally booked for the 23rd of March 2013.</p>	
6.2	<p>Overall cost</p> <p>Based on the venue costs and other costs such as delegate packs/travel expenses, approximately £6,000 is needed to cover putting on the conference.</p>	
6.3	<p>Awards for All bid</p> <p>As discussed at the last meeting, a bid will be submitted by RL/DG and CH to Awards for All for the conference which will be more of a conference for the North rather than a national conference. If the model for the upcoming conference is successful then the NFPGS</p>	<p>RL/DG/C</p> <p>H</p>

	<p>could look to hold a conference in the South adopting the same model.</p> <p>RL confirmed that he has received the original application form used for last year's conference and that the aim will be to bid for the full £10,000 to fund the conference and also to develop the North West as a NFPGS Regional Forum. Even if the bid is unsuccessful, the NFPGS should still continue with the conference – if this does happen then RL will seek a free Town Hall venue and DM has offered to do all the photocopying for free.</p> <p>TC to send through all the relevant financial figures from the conference to RL.</p>	<p>RL</p> <p>TC</p>
6.4	<p>Programme/Speakers</p> <p>There are still a number of speakers, who were originally scheduled to speak, that need to be confirmed for the conference however there may be a need to revise the agenda/speakers to ensure a North West theme. LF to circulate the full draft programme and critical path for the conference to RL.</p>	<p>LF</p>
6.5	<p>Other discussion topics</p> <p>The Green Flag Campaigning document – the suggestion was made that the standard/criteria could link in with the Park Health Check questionnaire which was run for the first time throughout the Love Parks Week 2012 campaign.</p>	
6.6	<p>Health Update</p> <p>An official update was not given due to John Kerry not being present at the meeting.</p> <p>RB requested some support/information from GS on current Health issues – SC to circulate information regarding the Cultural Commissioning Training Day which Michelle Parker, GreenSpace South East, recently attended.</p> <p>RB also requested the contact details for Valerie A Little from Dudley who spoke at the last NFPGS conference – SC to circulate the contact details.</p>	<p>SC</p> <p>SC</p>
7.0	<p>Any internal Federation admin</p> <p>Financial Update</p> <p>Currently there is £186.58 in the NFPGS bank account.</p> <p>TC reported that he has completed the Awards For All Grant Management Report which has recently been sent through to Awards for All. The Report contains all the information regarding the conference and relevant attachments including the delegate pack, post-conference report and pens/badges etc. The NFPGS will also be returning over £432 of unspent money to Awards for All. The group thanked TC for all his hard work.</p> <p>TC also mentioned that he may need to step down from his role as the Treasurer at the next NFPGS AGM meeting however he will confirm if this is happening nearer the time.</p>	
7.1	<p>NFPGS Potential Funding Models document</p> <p>SC introduced the document which he has compiled and circulated looking at potential sources of funding/income for the NFPGS. The</p>	

	<p>key points raised were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The NFPGS need to look at core funding - GS are keen to continue to support the NFPGS where possible however it is not a guaranteed fund - The document does not include a definitive list of options – this can be fleshed out over time. - Green Places Fund – So far Birmingham & Nottingham are up and running with the Fund and Preston & Leeds are about to sign up to the Fund. If the NFPGS start to link in with the Fund then potentially some funding may come their way. SC to circulate a presentation about the Green Places Fund and confirmed that he is happy to speak at the next NFPGS meeting about the Fund in more detail. - It may be easier for the NFPGS to access funding at a regional level rather than at a national level which is where linking in with the Green Places seems a viable option. - What type of activities could the NFPGS offer that encourage funding? NFPGS could look at offering training, selling research on current friends groups for example. - Could we sell services to GreenSpace? - The NFPGS could submit a bid to Awards for All as a starting point to cover administrative costs such as room hire for meetings however this is not sustainable long term. - A bid to Esmee Fairbairn could fund a paid member of staff for the NFPGS. - Membership fees – may not be the best way forward for the organisation however an appeal for donations may be more appropriate. - The NFPGS could hold a sponsored event once a year – something like the Olympic Torch Relay for example. 	SC
7.2	<p>Actions SC to discuss with SR regarding how to take all these ideas forward. SR to look at potential bids to Awards for All and Esmee Fairbairn.</p>	SC/SR SR
7.3	<p>Events Attended Events National Conference – ‘Youth in Green Space’ – DM recently attended and circulated NFPGS material to all delegates. Upcoming Events BIG/HLF Parks Summit, 25th October, London – SC/DM/RL/SR all aiming to attend Green Space and Communities – a life’s work, 31st October, Manchester – RL/DG will be attending GreenLINK meeting, 14th November, London – SR/DM will be attending.</p>	
8.0	<p>Updates from all the Forums/Networks Any members who have not yet circulated an update, please email them to LF and they will be circulated as one document with the minutes following the meeting. Note: DM distributed various additional relevant London documents/minutes.</p>	NFPGS members

<p>9.0</p> <p>10.0</p>	<p>GreenSpace Update relevant to the Federation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Green Places Fund – SC to circulate information regarding the Fund as discussed earlier in the meeting. The website for the Green Places Fund should be launched at the end of November. - Quality Manual – this is due to be circulated in the next few weeks; it will be available as an online document broken down into different categories. - Green Places magazine – this has now been taken in house; if any members have any articles/features that they would like to include in upcoming editions, please email Kelly Caulfield, Marketing and Communications Manager kellyc@green-space.org.uk - Community pages on the GS website – LF has spent the last few months updating the Community pages on the website with new features and the Community Networking Project 2011 Final Report is now published and available alongside the original 2003 report - http://www.green-space.org.uk/community/communityresources/Community%20Networking%20Project/index%20-%20Copy.php <p>Any Other Business</p> <p>Ash Tree Fungus disease – an email was circulated by Hugh Holden, Bristol Tree Forum regarding the spread of Chalara fraxinea which has caused great damage already in Europe. The Bristol Tree Forum backs an import ban and calls on all community groups/Forums to lobby their MPs as soon as possible. More details can be found here - http://www.defra.gov.uk/news/2012/10/04/chalara-fraxinea/ GS to report about this in any upcoming newsletters and this could also be highlighted in the upcoming NFPGS newsletter. Update: A ban on ash imports starts on Monday 29th of October - http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2012/oct/26/ash-dieback-imports-banned?intcmp=239</p> <p>DM thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.</p>	<p>SC</p> <p>ALL</p> <p>GS DM</p>
<p>11.</p>	<p>Dates for the next meeting</p>	
	<p>NFPGS Quarterly Meeting, Saturday 26th January 2013, TBC, Birmingham, 10.30am – 15.30pm</p>	