

National Federation of Parks & Green Spaces

www.natfedparks.org.uk

Green Spaces News and Policy Update

Autumn 2013

Some detailed and specialist information for those committed to protecting and improving the UK's green spaces

*Compiled by Michelle Parker, SE Network + Policy Advisor, National Federation of Parks and Green Spaces
With additions by Dave Morris, Campaigns Officer, National Federation of Parks and Green Spaces*



UK Networking updates

Greenspace Scotland monthly bulletin

This regular bulletin always contains a wealth of information on all kinds of initiatives and issues relating to Scotland's green spaces. To read the bulletin go to: <http://gss.cmph.org/o/0JKL9SRV0HfttmHnsRCB1g>
To subscribe, contact: info@greenspacescotland.org.uk

West Berkshire Council is asking whether there is any current research about changes in the value grounds maintenance contracts. Are values increasing or decreasing noticeably through external impacts, such as fuel costs or competition? If anyone knows of any research or has anecdotal evidence they would like to share please get in touch by replying to this email.

Green Connect - Recent newsletter for the South West region is available <http://us6.campaign-archive1.com/?u=8d47a74df5066b29167afed23&id=87fb02fb2a&e=5554b644c6>

London Green Spaces Friends Groups Network

A network for the 500+ Friends Groups for public green spaces - meets bi-monthly. Discussions about the need for adequate resources for local parks services, protection of green spaces regarding planning and development, promoting wildlife, local reports from around the boroughs, and much more. Info: <http://www.lfgn.net/> Click on 'Minutes' for latest update.

Birmingham Open Spaces Forum

BOSF was set up in 2005. It continues to go from strength to strength and now comprises of over 150 Friends Groups and other community organisations concerned with local green spaces. The BOSF Conference 2013 on Saturday 22nd June was attended by delegates from groups across the city and was enthusiastically received. Read what happened on the day <http://bosf.org.uk/birmingham-open-spaces-forum/aboutbosf/bosf-conference-2013/>

Bristol Parks Forum

In July 2013 the Bristol Parks Forum produced an excellent summary of what they stand for and their mission. Entitled 'A Manifesto for Parks and Green Spaces: Protecting Bristol's Green Heart'. They say: '*This Manifesto sets out the objectives of the Forum, in support of Bristol becoming the European Green Capital in 2015. We call on everyone in Bristol to help us achieve its objectives. The Manifesto has been prepared by the Parks Forum committee and will be offered for formal adoption at the next meeting of the Parks Forum in October.*' www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/manifesto/

National Federation of Parks and Green Spaces

The NFPGS is the umbrella organisation for the local Friends of Parks Forums and Networks throughout the UK. The Friends Groups movement currently involves over 5,000 local groups, and there are around 45 area Forums. There are many towns, counties and areas without a Forum so if Friends Groups in your area would like to form one please contact the NFPGS. Report of the August 2013 NFPGS meeting - www.natfedparks.org.uk/nfpgs-meetings.html

Parks Alliance

In June 2013 a new national alliance of dozens of key national green space organisations was formed to stand up for the interests of the UK's green spaces. In this it will build on the good work of the Greenlink coordination meetings, which have now ceased due to the demise of the charity Geenspace. Details of a follow up PA meeting in the autumn will be announced soon.

Horticulture Week reports: Plans to build an alliance to tackle the funding crisis facing public parks took a significant step forward at the beginning of the summer as a cross-sector group of parks and allied representatives gathered in London to agree the next steps for the initiative including the creation of a transitional board. Nearly 40 key sector executives from across the UK discussed the way forward at the second Parks Leadership Round Table, hosted by Horticulture Week.

Prompted by Horticulture Week's 'Make Parks a Priority' campaign, the round table was formed to provide a shared industry voice amid Government and council cuts as well as a stumbling economy. The group agreed a strategy document for the Parks Alliance prepared by one of the working groups that states the alliance's core mission is "to provide campaigning leadership and put public parks at the heart of the drive for healthy, resilient and sustainable communities" to be achieved through "a broad range of leadership programmes, actions and plans". Participants agreed to set up a transitional board that will meet before the next round table event.

Facilitator Professor Chris Baines said it was fantastic to see so many people "committing to this process". He added: "We are on the brink of a complete step change in the status of parks and the seriousness with which they are taken by governments." He called for "the magic missing ingredient" to help "common sense reach the people who make decisions".

The Parks Alliance goals:

- Be a single unified voice for the UK's green-space organisations and stakeholders.
- Become the missing champion of public parks across the UK.
- Make the case for parks, seek protection, investment and sustainable funding.
- Seek the endorsement of national and devolved UK governments.
- Seek to involve, inspire and inform.
- Seek to influence the future direction of the green-space sector.
- Press for investment in training and support innovation and skills.
- Promote environmental sustainability.
- Use the word "parks" to mean all public green infrastructure.
- Promote the Green Flag standard as the benchmark for parks.

Full report: www.hortweek.com/Parks_and_gardens/article/1185132/parks-alliance-formed-stand-sector/

Contact: news@theparksalliance.org

Green Infrastructure Partnership updates

NEW ECONOMIC EVIDENCE REPORT: Investment in multi-functional green space or Green Infrastructure (GI) encourages inward investment and can attract increased visitor spending at a local level, according to findings of a new research study published 15/08/2013. GI can also benefit national economic growth by helping reduce flood risk, improve air quality and provide health benefits. This in turn boosts productivity, the study, Green Infrastructures contribution to economic growth: a review found.

The EFTEC (Economics for The Environment Consultancy Ltd) and Sheffield Hallam University report, which reviewed current national and international studies examining the link between green infrastructure and economic growth, found qualitative and quantitative evidence to show six ways in which green infrastructure acts as a catalyst to growth. You can download this important and long-awaited report: <http://randd.defra.gov.uk/Default.aspx?Menu=Menu&Module=More&Location=None&Completed=0&ProjectID=19056>

Future of the Green Infrastructure Partnership:

Over the summer Defra held a number of consultations regarding the future of the GIP. In terms of outcomes, and realistic way forward, the consultation resulted in one clear offer of support that will secure continuation of the partnership post 2014. This proposal from the Town & Country Planning Association (TCPA) looks really positive in terms of not only continuing the partnership, but also actively building on our successes to date.

Its now important a decision is reached and we move things forward. As such, because the GIP is your

partnership, we want to canvass your views/feedback on TCPAs offer of support. So, please take some time to look through their proposal

(see http://www.green-space.org.uk/southeast/online_forum/viewtopic.php?f=16&t=141&p=1015#p1015

follow to the end of the thread) and let the GIP know what you think

(GreenInfrastructure.Partnership@defra.gsi.gov.uk), in whatever form suits you, by the end of Monday 23 September. Thereafter, the GIP Comms Group will use your feedback to help shape a final recommendation (way forward) to the GIP Project Board for sign-off around mid-October.

SEEDS Project

<http://www.seeds-project.com/> - The aim of the SEEDS Project is to promote the re-use of vacant sites by working transnationally to implement innovative spatial planning policy instruments, and by stimulating regeneration and sustainability across the North Sea Region to create thriving locations in which to live, work and invest. Check out their first newsletter here: <http://www.seeds-project.com/documents/newsletters/>.

Biodiversity Offsetting government consultation

This consultation accompanies Biodiversity Offsetting in England a consultation document published on 5 September 2013. This document sets out options for the Governments proposed biodiversity offsetting system and poses questions about how the system may best operate. The online survey is your chance to provide feedback on the document - https://consult.defra.gov.uk/biodiversity/biodiversity_offsetting - open until 7th November.

Interesting items from around the web

- **Green roofs** on buses: <http://www.takepart.com/article/2013/08/07/public-transportation-20-buses-rooftop-gardens?cmpid=tpenviro-eml-2013-08-10-shark-A>
- **Housing Standards** consultation article: <http://www.building4change.com/page.jsp?id=1954> and consultation page at DCLG here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/housing-standards-review-consultation>
- **Sustainable retrofit** funding available: <http://www.bre.co.uk/news/100m-funding-available-to-invest-in-Green-Retrofit--889.html>
- **Empty homes programme**, partners wanted: <http://www.bre.co.uk/page.jsp?id=3177>
- The latest news from **Climate SE** - <http://www.climatesoutheast.org.uk/> - Sept and again thanks to them for sharing this excellent resource from New York City: Green Infrastructure Toolkit designed for homeowners and communities to help deliver low-cost, GI solutions particularly for storm-water management.
- **Community owned energy projects** should be backed more by Government: <http://www.building4change.com/page.jsp?id=1989>
- **Keep Britain Tidy** are continuously looking at ways to improve the ways in which they interact with supporters. They are currently looking for individuals and groups to test their new online platform and would love you to be involved. To get involved, please email andy.walker@keepbritaintidy.org
- The latest newsletter from the Equality Trust - www.equalitytrust.org.uk

Surveys

UK Friends Groups Survey - Have your say!

Please can every Friends Group try to fill in this very important national Survey (see below)? Over 400 have done so already! The report being produced over the next few months will be a very detailed assessment on the state of the UK's parks. It will be used to call for action from Central Government to recognise the extent of the unfolding financial crisis for green spaces, and to ensure adequate protection and resources for all our green spaces.

We helped to frame the questions, so we hope they are simple, clear and relevant to all the local groups. The deadline for responses is 27th September. The link is:
www.cfpuk.co.uk/stateofukparks/friendsgroup.htm

Please forward urgently to all Friends Groups throughout your area/region

Sara Royal (Chair) and Dave Morris (Vice Chair) - National Federation of Parks and Green Spaces

Landscape Institute survey

The Landscape Institute is undertaking a survey to understand how they might better provide services for other professional disciplines such as landscape managers. This is a good opportunity to encourage the LI to broaden their membership criteria, which has long been something that I've discussed with managers across the region. The survey can be accessed here: <http://landscapeinstitute-news.org/6KZ-1RF9L-L6T72-PVNCY-1/c.aspx>. It would be great if we can open the way for professional recognition and ongoing support I've completed the short survey already.

Scottish Household Survey 2012 - greenspace results

News from Greenspace Scotland... The latest Scottish Household Survey (SHS) annual report was published on 28th August 2013. The 2012 survey included questions on access to greenspace. Key findings include:

Access to greenspace

Over two thirds (71%) of adults in Scotland have access to a useable local greenspace that is within a six minute walk from their home. Access to local greenspace differs by area deprivation levels. More than half (61%) of those living in the 20% most deprived areas of Scotland have access to useable greenspace within a six minute walk, rising to a high of 75% of those in the top three least deprived areas. Those in the most deprived areas are twice as likely as those in the least deprived areas to say that a local greenspace area that they and their family can use is more than a 14 minute walk away (19% versus 9%). There is also an association between access to greenspace and how people rate their neighbourhood as a place to live. Three quarters (75%) of adults who rate their neighbourhood as a very good place to live say they have access to useable greenspace within a six minute walk, compared to just under two thirds (60%) of those rating their neighbourhood as very poor.

Use of greenspace

Overall less than a third (28%) of adults use their local greenspace either every day or several times a week, which is lower than those who use them less often (40% in total) or not at all (32%). There is a strong link between how far people have to walk to reach their local greenspace and how often they use it. Adults who live less than a 6 minute walk from useable greenspace are more than twice as likely to

use it every day or several times a week than those who live a 7-13 minute walk away (35% versus 14%), and are nearly four times more likely to use it every day or several times a week than those who live more than a 14 minute walk away (35% versus 9%). Frequency of use of local greenspace differs considerably by area deprivation levels. A fifth (21%) of those in the 20% most deprived areas of Scotland use their local greenspace every day or several times a week, compared to under a third (29%) of people in the 20% least deprived areas.

Greenspace and health

Those adults who have useable greenspace within a six minute walk from their home are more likely to say their health in general has been very good or good than those whose nearest useable greenspace is more than a fourteen minute walk away (75% versus 69%). Similarly those whose nearest useable greenspace is more than a fourteen minute walk away are more likely than those for whom it is less than six minutes away to say that their health is bad or very bad (9% versus 6%). Those who use their local greenspace every day or several times a week are much more likely to say that their health in general is good or very good than those who don't use it at all (80% versus 65%). Similarly those who never use their local greenspace are almost three times as likely as those who use it every day or several times a week to say their health is bad or very bad (11% versus 4%).

Satisfaction with greenspace

Nearly three quarters (73%) of adults in Scotland are satisfied with their local greenspace, with only 9% being dissatisfied. Across all age groups 7 in 10 people are satisfied with their local greenspace, with the highest levels of dissatisfaction, compared to the population as a whole, being reported by the 35-44 age group (12%).

There is considerable variation in satisfaction with greenspaces by area deprivation levels. Just under two thirds (61%) of those in the 20% most deprived areas are satisfied with their local greenspace, rising to over three quarters (81%) of people in the 20% least deprived areas.

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2013/08/6973>

Events and training

CIRA

With thanks to Frank Rallings at the University of Brighton for sending me details of this event: [CIRIA Event in London on 21 October 2013 entitled Unlocking the potential of brownfield sites](#).

Water Management

Construction Industry Councils event: Climate Change, Water Management and the Construction Industry, 24 October 2013, 9am
Yorkshire Water Conference Centre Price: 40 + VAT (48).

CleanMed Europe, Oxford September conference

As part of my new role, Ive just attended this conference which was looking at the ways that healthcare needs to transform itself in order to deliver services that dont harm the environment and therefore, which exacerbate problems.

The general messages included:

- Healthcare must look towards delivering preventative public health measures and move away from cures and treatments; lifestyles make big differences towards health outcomes.
- Understanding patient care pathways will allow interventions to be considered at all stages of treatment
- A more complete understanding of society and cultural impacts on health will also provide links to the built environment and green infrastructure

Im writing up my notes from the event and will be sharing these widely. The organisers were the [Centre for Sustainable Health](#) who spoke at our GreenSpace National Forum about the NHS Forest campaign. Ill provide more details when my notes are complete.

BALI

In addition to Karens event above, BALI has a training event coming up: Tuesday 15th October at 15.00 hours at Lullingstone DA4 0JA: A visit to a remarkable garden created by Tom Hart-Dyke after his captivity in the South American jungle. Tom will guide people around, which is quite a treat. The visit is open to non-members too - all are welcome. Please see flyer at this link:

<http://www.palmstead.co.uk/downloads/2013%20ST%20Lullingstone%20Tom%20Hart-Dyke%2015Oct13web.pdf>

Green Connect's first networking event:

A morning meeting and afternoon sites visit with plenty of opportunity to meet other parks people and share your thoughts and experiences. **BOOKING IS ESSENTIAL FOR THIS EVENT DUE TO THE SIZE OF THE ROOM SO PLEASE DO GET IN TOUCH** (Karen Hughes at Green Connect (greenconnect@btinternet.com)) **IF YOU WANT TO COME.**

This networking event is open to everyone but as there is a limit on numbers at the venue - Karen will give organisations that subscribe to Green Connect the first option on places. They also attend for free. If you aren't a subscriber the charge is 40 for the day. Book your place here: <http://green-connect.weebly.com/index.html>

Venue: The Deane House, Taunton TA1 1HE 10.30am Tuesday 8th October 2013

Learn about doing things differently in the face of forces for change such as budget reductions - hear about the Cordiale project: Managing Landscape Change in North West France and South West England from two of the consultants who have worked on the project and talk to them about the learning from it for parks managers.

The potential for using new technology to help with the day job

Hear about the love clean streets app and website and examples of using QR codes in parks. Join in the discussion and help us to consider whether we do an App for you to use with your communities.

In the afternoon... Walking Workshop to see the new and improved green spaces along the River Tone in Taunton. The walk will be led by the designer with help from Deane DLO that maintains the sites and from the Friends group that is making one of the sites a huge success. Delegates should wear appropriate footwear for walking on grass paths if joining the walk. Lunch is not provided - you can bring your own or there are several cafes and takeaways near the meeting venue and to the start of the walk.

Carbon Offsetting

I was amazed how easy it was to carbon offset my recent holiday. The cost of driving (medium diesel car) to Lisbon, Portugal for two adults and a child was 13.35! I upped it to 20 as I was feeling generous that covered 5000km!

When compared to a flight for the three of us it would have been 27.50 without added bonus that's 0.89tonnes/CO2 driving, compared with 1.82tonnes/CO2 flying. The scheme I used can be found here: <http://www.worldlandtrust.org/eco-services/offsetting>.

I will soon be offsetting my whole emissions footprint. Again, I want to be a positive contributor by having a negative footprint and will therefore be paying the average four-person family rate of 168.00 annually. I hope that this, coupled with home green energy tariffs for electricity and gas that we have mine through <http://www.ecotricity.co.uk> means I'm very simply, and relatively cheaply, covering the cost of our families carbon footprint.

Kind regards,

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Editorial note: This is our first national bulletin, based on the SE England bulletins produced by Michelle during the last year. Please note that the information in the bulletin is as accurate as we can ascertain.

We recognise that it is just a snapshot of some of the very many activities, issues, reports and events relating to green spaces. Any errors, major omissions or broken links in the above edition are entirely the responsibility of Michelle Parker and Dave Morris