

**Our goals and practical organisation
- in the short, medium and long term**

See also our Action Plan

1. Strengthen the movement

- a. **Encourage and support more Friends Forums to develop throughout England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.** Make pro-active efforts to seek out contacts, and develop regional networking etc.
- b. **Encourage all Forums to link up with each other and the Federation.**
- c. **Encourage and promote training initiatives which strengthen grass roots organisation**

2. Consolidate and expand the role and influence of the Federation

- a. **Publicity through press releases and media presence** Officers to be available for comment.
- b. **Presence at all key relevant national and regional events in the UK.** We aim to contact organisers to seek an invitation and preferably chance to speak
- c. **Hold an annual Friends Groups conference/workshops/event.**
Could be regional or national. Dependant on funding. Could rotate venue.
- d. **Take the initiative on key issues.** See 3 below.

3. Lobby for green spaces – the resources and policies they need

- a. **Promote Green Flag Awards as national minimum standards for all green spaces.** Offer to join Green Flag Awards advisory process.
- b. **Promote Love Parks Week and World Parks Day each year.**
- c. **National lobbying campaigns for adequate resources and for a statutory obligation to provide and manage**
- d. **Work with and ally with others to attain the above results**
eg. Partnership with Keep Britain Tidy. Support the Parks Alliance.

4. Improve our internal administration, finances and independence

- a. **Improve the Federation's public presence and profile.** Via website, leaflets, banners/stands - discuss developing 'grass roots' brand. Do annual Newsletter.
- b. **Strengthen internal communication:**
 - officers email list and phone numbers
 - committee 'core' attendees email list and phone numbers
 - all Forum representatives' email list and phone numbers
 - develop full national database of Friends and User Groups, compiled and updated through existing Forums and other sources
- c. **Raise independent NFPGS finances.** To cover at a minimum basic running costs (eg. room hire, travel for officers and regional representatives, publicity, annual conference etc) and possibly a worker.
- d. **Identify, elect or co-opt to NFPGS further regional representatives and officers for key roles.** eg. Fundraising, Campaigning, Biodiversity, Health, Planning Issues, Website, Organisational Sustainability, Policy Advice etc
- e. **Consider how to manage potential increased attendance at NFPGS Committee Meetings as we grow.** Improve communications between meetings.
- f. **Develop partnership with Keep Britain Tidy.** Sign Memorandum of Understanding.
- g. **Investigate charity status.** Consider the advantages and disadvantages.

Notes:

- i. We could consider expanding these points into a full 'NFPGS Business Plan', something like the Stockport one. This would be a major task but could help with clarity/transparency and fundraising efforts.
- ii. Each point above to have a timeline and targets, reviewed annually. See Action Plan.

National Federation of Parks and Green Spaces FORWARD PLANNING: ACTION PLAN

Adopted by NFPGS 8.10.2011. Amended 21.7.2012, 10.8.2013, 9.11.2013

	OBJECTIVE	TARGET(S)	TIMESCALE	WHO TO DO
1a	More Friends Forums	All UK.	Ongoing	All, especially NFPGS regional representatives
1b	Linking up Forums/NFPGS	All Forums	Ongoing	All, especially NFPGS regional representatives
1d	Support training initiatives	N/a	Will support training by other organisations. Ongoing.	KBT
2a	Publicity	All Friends Groups and professionals to know of us within 1 year. 75% population within 10 years. Bulletin.	Ongoing	All, especially NFPGS officers
2b	Presence at major events	75% events	Ongoing	NFPGS officers & KBT
2c	Annual Friends Groups Conference/workshops/events [regional or national]	1 in 2014 [Jointly with KBT?]	Decision ongoing	Review at Committee Meetings
3a	Promoting Green Flag standards	Increase Green Flags, join GF Awards advisory process, establish as minimum standard	Ongoing	All, especially NFPGS officers
3b	Love Parks Week / World Parks Day	More events/numbers each year	Ongoing	All, especially NFPGS officers
3c	National lobbying Resources & statutory obligation	Establish basic campaign presence within 1 year eg petition	Ongoing	NFPGS officers + Parks Alliance?
3d	Ally with others	As needed eg PA, KBT + NACF, FCFCG, TCV, FiT and others	Ongoing	NFPGS officers
4a	Public profile/interface	Basic materials / website available. Update leaflets.	Ongoing	NFPGS officers
4b	Internal communication	Lists clarified and active	Ongoing	NFPGS officers
4c	NFPGS fundraising	Achieve at least minimum running costs. MOU with KBT.	Ongoing	NFPGS officers
4d	Extra reps/officers eg themes / regional	Strengthen NFPGS influence and organisation	Ongoing	Committee Meetings
4e	Future meetings	Ensure continue/affordable	Monitor	Committee Meetings
4f	Partnership with KBT	Independent and supportive relationship	Ongoing	NFPGS officers
4g	Investigate Charity Status	Consider advantages/disadvantages	Ongoing	Who to do?

National Federation of Parks and Green Spaces

REGIONAL STRUCTURE

As agreed at NFPGS meeting, 20.10.2012. Amended 10.8.2013.

1. Context

In order to achieve its wider objectives, NFPGS has decided to adopt a regional structure. Regional representatives have already been appointed for the following regions: the North East, the North West, the West Midlands, the East Midlands, the South West and London and the South East. The intention is to complete our national coverage by including representatives from the 'Home Counties' (for example, the south and east coasts), as well as Yorkshire and Humberside who can help to strengthen the role of Friends Forums in their region. Representatives will also be sought from Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

2. The Responsibilities of Regional Representatives

Regional representatives will have the following aims and responsibilities:

- To promote the agreed objectives of the NFPGS (as specified in the constitution)
- To promote the formation of new Friends Forums and Friends Groups in their region
- To foster cooperation and communication between Friends Forums and Friends Groups within their region
- To assist in the dissemination of best practice at a regional level
- To campaign for the improvement of green space provision in their region
- To liaise with Keep Britain Tidy regional officers, where appropriate, and to work in close partnership in order to achieve common objectives
- To work together to achieve common objectives with other relevant organisations which engage with communities at the grass roots level, including Groundwork, Natural England, TCV, the Wildlife Trust, Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens, National Federation of Cemetery Friends
- To represent their regions at NFPGS committee meetings
- To raise funds to implement the NFPGS objectives at the regional level.

3. The Formation of a Regional Development Committee

In order to take forward their responsibilities, regional representatives will establish a NFPGS Regional Development Committee of Friends Forum representatives, with the following objectives:

- To establish the current profile of Friends Forums in their region
- To support existing Friends Forums and to encourage cooperation and communication between them
- To promote the creation of new Friends Forums at area and regional levels
- To develop and support a programme of events, including workshops and conferences, aimed at Friends Forums and Friends Groups in their region
- To provide a network for communication and cooperation at a regional level with Friends Forums and all other stakeholder groups with an interest in parks and green spaces.

National Federation of Parks and Green Spaces

GREEN FLAG AWARD STANDARDS – CAMPAIGNING STRATEGY

Adopted by NFPGS meeting 19th May 2012. Amended 10.8.2013

1. Aim and mission

To aspire towards and seek the achievement of the Green Flag Award standards for all the UK's open green spaces

2. Measuring Green Space Quality

At the moment, there are no standard or national criteria to assess the quality of parks and green space. However the Green Flag Award standard, which was launched in 1996 and has proved immensely popular, offers a really useful minimum benchmark for green spaces on a national basis.

3. The Green Flag Award

The Green Flag Award standard sets out eight criteria. To obtain the Green Flag Award, your park needs to demonstrate the following:

- It must be a welcoming place
- It must be healthy, safe and secure
- It needs to be well-maintained and clean
- It has to demonstrate sustainability
- It must address conservation and heritage issues
- It has to draw on community involvement
- There has to be a proper marketing strategy in place
- It has to have an appropriate management structure

4. The significance of the Green Flag Award

The introduction of the Green Flag Award has helped to raise national quality standards considerably. Indeed, many local authorities pride themselves on the fact that they have been able to increase the number of parks which have successfully obtained a Green Flag Award. It has become a means of assessing the commitment of local politicians, irrespective of their political party, to the well-being of their constituents, given the central importance of parks and green space to health, leisure and social cohesion.

5. The current crisis

Following the financial crisis of 2008 and the commitment of the coalition government to cut public spending, local authority budgets have suffered a considerable contraction and savings targets will continue to influence resource allocation for parks and green space for the foreseeable future. Because of the absence of any statutory

protection, parks are often an easy target for local politicians who fail to understand their wider cultural, economic, health and social significance. Instead of seeing them as assets which need to be protected and improved further, they are often treated as areas of public space of secondary importance.

6. Raising the quality threshold of parks

This is the moment to campaign for the future of our parks and green spaces. No-one wants to return to the 1970s and 1980s which were decades of disinvestment in the country's parks and resulting deterioration and neglect. Instead, we need capitalise on the gains which have been made in the recent past when many parks have benefited from new sources of funding and a revival of local pride in community green space.

7. What Friends Groups, area/regional Forums and the NFPGS can do

To achieve the above objective, we need to argue for the continued funding of local parks; we need to campaign for a continued commitment to raise the number of successful Green Flag awards; and we need to persuade local councillors and other stakeholder groups that the Green Flag Award Standard should remain the benchmark for improving all our local parks and green spaces.

In particular members of Friends Groups can get involved in a number of ways eg:

- Ensure that their Friends Group is involved in all stages of the Green Flag Award process
- Become Green Flag Award judges
- Become Green Flag Award 'mystery shoppers' to check standards are being maintained

The National Federation of Parks and Green Spaces will, for example:

- Join the Green Flag Awards advisory and monitoring process
- Support the greater involvement of Friends Groups at the local and regional level
- Support moves to establish 'Green Flag Council' Awards, with the criteria that each such Council aspires to, and takes active steps, to achieve Green Flag Award standards for all its green spaces