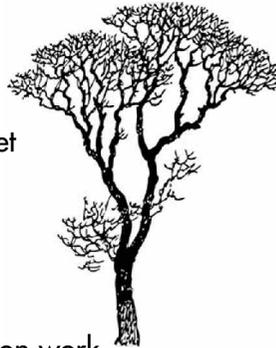


SPEAK OUT FOR OUR PARKS AND GREEN SPACES! THE HEART OF A NEIGHBOURHOOD

 The UK has a variety of Parks and Green Spaces, from nature reserves and ornamental gardens, woodlands and sports pitches, to allotments and cemeteries. These open spaces provide a huge range of opportunities both for wildlife and for local residents, some of whom have no other access to any sizeable free outdoor space or nature.

WHAT DO OUR PARKS AND GREEN SPACES OFFER:

- Beautiful gardens for people to sit and relax in
- Havens for wildlife that people can enjoy and learn about
- Sports pitches for organised, casual and school use
- Healthy walking routes for gentle exercise
- Play areas for children to gain new skills & experience adventure
- Safe tracks for joggers and cyclists
- Pleasant shortcuts to work, home and school
- Places for outdoor picnics and parties
- Places where the community can mix and meet
- Outdoor venues to study nature
- Areas to play tennis and basketball
- Cafes where people can meet others
- Permanent jobs, apprenticeships and training
- Opportunities for volunteering and conservation work
- Major contribution to physical, mental and spiritual well being



In short, all life goes on in our open spaces, where people relax, meet, play, exercise, learn and work

Research shows that “87% of people have used their park or green space in the past year, more than any other public service, and 95% of people thought it was very or fairly important to have green spaces near to where they live.” ... “if people are satisfied with their local park they tend to be satisfied with their local authority.”

Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE)

IMPROVEMENTS... NOT CUTS

 Over the past few years, hundreds of local Friends Groups have worked really hard to publicise their green spaces, to ensure they are better managed and improved, to access funding, promote volunteering, and to organise activities there. As a result many open spaces have gone from, in many cases, forlorn areas of neglect to thriving, attractive places. But there is still a long way to go to get the resources necessary to maintain and develop green spaces for future generations. Staffing levels are often highly inadequate. Many park buildings, facilities and equipment are in desperate need of repair and refurbishment.

 A well-resourced park can be the heart of a community, feeding into all the positive aspects of human society. An under-resourced park can soon deteriorate and become a negative space full of fear and anti-social activity. It will not make any economic sense to make more cuts in parks budgets given the huge contribution they make.

 Parks and green spaces offer fantastic value for money. In a time when one of the overriding social concerns is the need for community cohesion they are invaluable assets.

 Parks are a democratic institution, they cater for, and matter to everyone — people of all ages, backgrounds, interests and abilities. Like education, housing and health, recreation and access to nature is a human need and right. Let's ensure all public services get the resources they need from local and central government.

**Fight against cuts in public expenditure
— increase spending on frontline public services!**

This leaflet is produced by The National Federation of Parks and Green Spaces – for Forums and Networks involving over 1000 local Friends and User Groups across the UK.

See: www.green-space.org.uk/community/nfpgs