

Parks & People, Stronger Together West Midlands conference 3 August 2019

Contents

Overview of Parks and People, Stronger Together conference	2
Venue	2
Audience	3
Aim.....	3
Attendance number.....	3
Geographical spread of groups attending	3
Plenary: Welcome and introductions and some key themes	3
Welcome to the day	3
Welcome to Birmingham	4
Housekeeping	4
Warm up activity for My Community	4
Info on the day ahead	5
Plenary: reports back from the workshops' discussions	6
How can groups build stronger and more diverse membership, and ongoing engagement with the range of park users?	6
How do we develop our local volunteering and project management skills and capabilities?	7
How do we develop good partnership working with site managers and Councils? .	8
How do we try to access and ensure adequate funding for our groups, our activities and projects, and for our sites generally?.....	9
What ways can we promote effectively our activities, groups and sites, including better use of social media?	10
Summary of 'Just a Minute' showcase presentations	11
First round – Local Groups.....	11
Second round – Area Forums	12
Final plenary.....	14

Parks Action Group Community Empowerment Workstream



Stronger communications	14
Messages to the PAG	15
What should we be telling the government and what should they be hearing? .	15
Participants post-event feedback summary.....	16
Scores.....	16
APPENDICES.....	16
1. Weblink to delegate pack resources	16
2. Agenda.....	16
3. Workshop attendance numbers	17
4. Feedback form comments.....	18
Usefulness	18
Venue.....	18
Food and facilities	19
Workshops	20
Any other comments	21
5. Attendee Groups and Websites/Social media.....	21

Overview of Parks and People, Stronger Together conference

Birmingham, Saturday 3rd August 11:30 – 17:00

It was held on a Saturday to suit the audiences' schedules. The start and end times allowed for one-day travel and any train delays.

Venue

The Studio, Birmingham

We aimed to book venues conveniently located close to the station or in the city centre and aligned to the ethos of the events if possible. The Studio, Birmingham was a good fit for this. It could accommodate our maximum numbers and need for breakout spaces. The venue was comfortable and spacious, warm and had plenty of natural light. The catering booked was provided by the venue and it was of great standard and much appreciated by delegates.

Parks Action Group Community Empowerment Workstream



Audience

West Midlands Friends of Parks and volunteer groups; councils, greenspace charities etc who work to support community empowerment in our public green space.

Aim

To promote and encourage greater community empowerment in our public green spaces.

Attendance number

- 79 bookings including staff and facilitators
- 44 actual attendees – 4 no shows and 2 came on the day without booking

Geographical spread of groups attending

The areas represented at the event were:

- Coventry
- Birmingham
- Tipton
- Cannock
- Sheffield
- Atherstone
- Chelmsley Wood
- Wolverhampton
- Walsall
- Wednesbury
- Smethwick
- Kidderminster
- Rugby
- Oxford
- Redditch
- Solihull
- Stirchley

Plenary: Welcome and introductions and some key themes

Welcome to the day

Dave Morris, Chair, [National Federation of Parks Green Spaces \(NFPGS\)](#)

The organisers value and recognise the vital importance of community engagement and empowerment in the UK's green spaces, and we thank everyone for their contribution to their local sites. The event's aim is to share experiences, showcase good practice, discuss some key common issues, and develop communication, coordination and partnerships for the benefit of parks and green spaces.

Parks Action Group Community Empowerment Workstream



It will be a day of learning and networking organised as part of a series of regional events to cover all regions in England. Organised by [NFPGS](#), [Locality](#), [Groundwork](#). Funded by [Parks Action Group \(PAG\)](#) and paid for by the [Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government \(MHCLG\)](#). All the organisers believe that parks and people are stronger together, hence the name of the events.

There was an introduction to the Parks Action Group and the PAG Community Engagement workstream, and the organisations involved at the event, and the staff present from NFPGS and Locality.

Dave said thank you for all the work, paid and unpaid, that everyone does for parks and green spaces, and for coming to talk about community involvement and empowerment.

The purpose of the day was to discuss and share experiences and views. So, there were no PowerPoints and no speeches, only discussions and workshops. Contributions would be noted, and a report made to feed back to the participants, those unable to attend, the PAG and the wider sector.

Dave invited attendees to volunteer to do a 'Just a Minute' presentation about their own work later.

Welcome to Birmingham

Sarah Royal, Birmingham Open Spaces Forum, and CEO of the National Federation of Parks and Green Spaces

Birmingham is a very large city and a very green city. There are 591 public parks and green spaces. There are 130 Friends and community groups attached to the [Birmingham Forum](#). They are all talking together and supporting each other, and generally and doing their bit. The Forum worked well in partnership with Birmingham Council taking up strategic issues and acting as a 'critical friend'. Sarah was pleased to see lots of recognisable faces in attendance.

Housekeeping

Fire exit and alarms, toilet locations, refreshments, leftovers are given to homeless charity, WIFI password, information table.

Photo and video consents were announced and agreed with one exception.

Warm up activity for My Community

Jenny Steele, Locality

Jenny introduced the [My Community](#) website. It was set up by MHCLG five years ago to provide information and signposting for the community sector on a whole range of relevant issues. Now a steering group of 12 organisations is redeveloping it.

Parks Action Group Community Empowerment Workstream



They want it to be the first place to go when community groups are looking to progress in various ways. Specifically, regarding green space issues, we are seeking information from the room to help shape what to put up on the site.

Post-it notes questions

- Need to know who could use the website – age, occupation, when you do work for parks and green spaces, are you full time or volunteer?
- What do you need, what is it for, what is stopping you achieving your goals?

Jenny collected the post-it notes to feedback later in the day during the Plenary reports back from the focussed workshops/discussions. Here are the results:

Notes:

- Most people present are volunteers rather than employed

Issues include:

- a need for more young volunteers. However, lack of time is stopping them volunteering and the groups don't always know how to engage with them
- There is a need for specialist skills in events, engagement, access to information, horticultural skills, digital tools
- Social media advice and resources are needed
- Groups want funding for parks staff, group fundraisers, building repairs, new buildings, maintenance
- Some people wanted better response rates from the police to prevent anti-social behaviour
- Groups felt a lack of time and money. They wanted to know how to find someone to do something for you or get additional support when needed.

Info on the day ahead

There was a short introduction to the day and to the delegate pack and what you can find in it, including:

- agenda (see appendix 2)
- detailed and informative 'takeaways' related to each workshop theme
- community empowerment information (including how to set up Friends groups and Forums, the PAG community empowerment projects, and parkscommunity.org.uk website)
- delegate lists
- and the very important feedback form.

Link to delegate pack resources:

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1P36JrWZ01csN1Vo42GMDHSxOXquS-WWVv>

Parks Action Group Community Empowerment Workstream



Plenary: reports back from the workshops' discussions

How can groups build stronger and more diverse membership, and ongoing engagement with the range of park users?

Facilitator: Michelle Furtado, NFPGS

Attendance: 20 over the 3 sessions

Questions posed by the facilitator:

- How do we try to ensure our group reflects and engages as far as possible the range of park users and communities we serve – in terms of age, gender, ethnicity, class, disability, interests etc?
- What are some of the local success stories in groups trying to address this?
- How do we build good relations with other user groups involved with our sites?

Notes:

- It was seen as important to try to strengthen existing groups in terms of numbers, active involvement, age and diversity of background. This was often quite challenging.
- Members of particular ethnic groups might not feel like they have a stake in local green spaces and community engagement affecting them. They might not know that they can get involved and do things in an area. It is worth reaching out to them.
- Existing groups often worry about how they will be received by less involved ethnic groups.
- Relationship with BAME groups takes time to build up and the work should be ongoing.
- Some groups had good diversity at events but found it harder to get committee members. They thought language could be a barrier or the role seen as dull.
- Different cultures have different cultural aspects and attitudes towards nature and volunteering.
- Many groups also want to see diversity of age groups represented. Events are often useful in attracting families and younger people.

All delegates received a detailed specialist document prepared by NFPGS setting out some of the issues to grapple with and ways in which groups can strengthen and diversify their membership: <https://parkscommunity.org.uk/community-involvement/making-our-groups-stronger-and-more-diverse/>.

Parks Action Group Community Empowerment Workstream



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government



How do we develop our local volunteering and project management skills and capabilities?

Facilitator: Leon Hayward, [The Conservation Volunteers](#)

Attendance: 20

Questions posed by the facilitator:

- What examples are there of successful local volunteering sessions, projects and activities – and some of the challenges overcome and skills needed (e.g. online mobilising, an extra language, van driving, running kids' activities etc)?
- What practical and organising skills do groups have lots of, and what is often lacking?
- How can we improve the way we organise ourselves to become more active and effective (e.g. having specialist officers, developing sub-groups and autonomous groups, partnerships with other user groups etc)?

Notes:

- There has been a shift in recruiting volunteers since some groups began 20 years ago. It seems harder and they are finding more apathy. However good things are being done.
- People have come a long way through their volunteering. They are powerful champions of groups and are good at persuading others to volunteer.
- With more people renting their property, this changes how much people feel about local public space.
- A positive attitude is infectious.
- It is helpful to work with community partners like schools and council initiatives to engage and find more volunteers.
- Look for people with time and enable them to use their skills and best way to contribute.
- Group started with a local meeting with negativity, but residents worked hard to change to a positive attitude from that meeting onwards. Formed a Friends group who litter pick every day. They got a heritage grant for residents to choose seating and the lighting which make people feel more involved and have ownership, so they continued in the future. Problem is getting young people to carry it on. Small park with residents all around, already feel like they own the park but want to get new local people involved e.g. churches, dog walkers to join the Friends Group.
- 60% of young people renting properties so not the same level of ownership and commitment, they think councils are responsible for doing the work/paying for it. Can concentrate on trying to get local businesses to provide funding and facilities and volunteer – corporate responsibility.. but doesn't solve the problem of getting the local residents involved. Need residents to take ownership.
- Residents need to get something out of it, target to work towards, projects to capture their imagination

Parks Action Group Community Empowerment Workstream



- One group had 600 people down as volunteers but still struggled to get numbers at events.
- It is a good idea to have volunteer days to give an informal introduction, finding out their skills, time available and what they want to get out of it.
- Need to find the 50-year olds to take over, also new people to the area like to get involved to get to know the area and people. Key life moments can often trigger volunteering.
- Need to see who will benefit locally from the work you do and get them involved and feel ownership from the start of the project.
- Local people don't always have the skills and confidence to do it themselves. They often need leaders and mentors to show them how.
- Local businesses may support initiatives. For example, a local builder won't come to a meeting but could help with free building work.
- It works to have small tangible things for people to engage with e.g. sponsor a hanging basket, buy a plaque on a bench.
- Groups have problems sustaining success as committee members are getting older. They need younger people in to take over the roles.
- As council roles reduce, volunteer roles go up, but ageing volunteers can't do it forever.
- Some tasks must be done by park rangers due to insurance – issues with risk assessments.
- If possible, it's best to work to a management plan co-written with the council.

All delegates received a detailed specialist document prepared by TCV setting out good practice in attracting and engaging volunteers and running sessions effectively: <https://parkscommunity.org.uk/volunteers/recruiting-and-managing-volunteers/>.

How do we develop good partnership working with site managers and Councils?

Facilitator: Sarah Royal, [Birmingham Open Spaces Forum](#)

Attendance: 24

Questions posed by the facilitator:

- What good examples are there of groups working closely and constructively with those who manage greenspace, and vice versa?
- What are some of the challenges?
- What can we do to try to create and strengthen good communication and coordination (e.g. site walkabouts, meetings, Management Plans, and Service Level Agreements)?
- How can we develop and maintain such ongoing partnerships despite challenges such as understaffing and disagreements?

Parks Action Group Community Empowerment Workstream



Notes:

- Ongoing communication and networking are key.
- Community groups need landowners and landowners need community groups. There needs to be a proper partnership.
- Losing staff from Councils means that skills are being lost and this can lead to more responsibility and work for volunteers.
- Area Forums are a good way to get proper partnering practices established.
- Finding the landowner and the relevant reps can sometimes be tricky to track down. There was a request to put a resource on My Community about how to find out who owns lands.
- When consultation happens, it needs to be more than tick box exercise. Local people often have different knowledge and experience to their Council.
- Find deeds, trusts, leases, management plans relating to the land so that they can make sure legal covenants and policies that protect the spaces are not lost but are being carried out.
- A good way to engage the Council is to start discussing with community groups as part of any funding bids, Heritage Lottery Funding, and Green Flag Award applications etc.
- Groups need to find a way to work with private developers, to hold them to their green space plans, and make sure they manage the spaces properly.
- Groups need to find a way to prove the true value of the land to the community. This is economic, social and health or environmental value. It should not just be seen as a cost.

All delegates received a detailed specialist document prepared by NFPGS setting out some of the issues with developing and maintaining good community/Council partnership-working: <https://parkscommunity.org.uk/park-green-space-management/partnership-working-with-landowners-and-managers/>

How do we try to access and ensure adequate funding for our groups, our activities and projects, and for our sites generally?

Facilitator: Amit Dattam and Thea Kerwick, [Groundwork](#)

Attendance: 15

Questions posed by the facilitator:

- What funding can we currently access or raise ourselves to help make a difference to our site, e.g. with activities, projects and improvements?
- Are there good examples we can share?
- What funding is really needed so that every park has the staffing, maintenance and capital improvements it needs?
- How do we help with, or press for this, at the local level? What should Councils be doing?
- What can groups in an area do together?

Parks Action Group Community Empowerment Workstream



Notes:

- There were a mix of groups who took part - large, small, established, newer, some successful at fundraising and some that had not started to apply.
- Groups felt there was more competition for funding these days.
- New groups felt overwhelmed. They don't know where to look or if they are eligible, so don't spend as much time on it.
- Groups felt they needed to change focus to suit funders. They felt a push and pull which created mission drift from what they were set up for.
- New groups don't know what you need to set up before applying for funding.
- It was hard to know what is the remit for the group and what is the remit of the local authority? Who can apply for what funding?
- People wanted funds for management plans and employees (to tackle lack of park rangers).
- Groups felt it was hard to balance maintaining infrastructure, finding funding, growing membership/visitors/volunteers and running projects.

All delegates received a detailed specialist document prepared by Groundwork setting out issues to do with funding and how to apply for grants successfully.PDF: <https://parkscommunity.org.uk/funding/groundwork-fundraising-guide-for-community-groups/>

What ways can we promote effectively our activities, groups and sites, including better use of social media?

Paul Todd, [Green Flag Award](#) Manager, [Keep Britain Tidy](#)

Attendance: 24

Questions posed by the facilitator:

- What are the range of tools available to us (e.g. noticeboards, flyers, email lists, social media, and word of mouth)?
- How can we use social media better?
- How do we work together with other user groups (e.g. football teams, schools, dog owners) to generate publicity?
- How can we use publicity to generate more involvement in our groups?

Notes:

- There is some great promotion going on already but there are gaps.
- Groups want to know how to get their message to younger people. Groups should use social media and talk to them in ways they can understand.
- Groups need to post pictures of young people to attract young people.
- Don't forget the simple things like a banner in the park, wearing a volunteer t-shirt (so people don't assume you are employed by the council and people can approach you if they want to come and join).

Parks Action Group Community Empowerment Workstream



- There was a request for a day-long conference about social media.
- Go to college and university to get students to help promote your space to get work experience.
- Approach local business to ask their marketing department to help you with your social media.
- Use other organisations to get your message out for you and increase diversity. Local radio stations are good.
- Hold regular events at the same time every year to build a following of attendees.
- Social media needs to be regular not sporadic.
- Groups need a designated person to coordinate promotion. This could be someone who doesn't like digging etc.

All delegates received a detailed specialist document prepared by Keep Britain Tidy setting out ways of effectively engaging and using various forms of media e.g. press and radio. PDF: https://parkscommunity.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/HowTo_PromoteYourGroupAndSite_LFGSN.pdf

Summary of 'Just a Minute' showcase presentations

First round – Local Groups

Michael Abraham, [Friends of Broadwaters](#)

They started 18 years ago from a project instigated by Wyre Forest District Council and supported by Local Heritage Initiative. They wanted to make the park a place people wanted to visit. They are now a group of some sixty members. They've raised £175,000. They have set up a litter picking rota. They went from picking up two bags a day to nothing some days. People now respect and use the park.

Lynn Evans, [Friends of Hednesford Park](#)

2011 started because Cannock Chase Council wanted to gain a Heritage Lottery bid, which they achieved. They are really proud that they spoke to all local youth groups, nurseries and schools and continue to work with young people. They worked at a level that the children could all understand to get their insight on what they wanted in their new park. Everything they asked for they got in the park. They have done a lot of things since then. They are a dementia-friendly park, town and community. They have the Cannock Chase Dementia Action Alliance's meetings in Hednesford Park. They are the base of the Cannock Chase Mental HealthHub. They recently became an organic hub for the national charity [Time to Change](#).

Liz Coleman, [Warley Woods Community Trust](#)

They are a charity who run the park with employees. Famous landscape architect Humphrey Repton designed the landscape which they are very proud about. Funded by Heritage Lottery Fund to bring the park up to scratch. It is the engagement with the community that is massive because they have various schools coming to visit.

Parks Action Group Community Empowerment Workstream



They have running clubs, a golf course, junior golf, cross country running, dogs' group, wildlife events, an annual picnic. A good fundraising event is a bring and buy plant sale. It is very simple to organise. People bring the plants they don't want; they swap and sell them.

Chris Vaughan, [Friends of Edgbaston Reservoir](#)

They are supporting a beauty spot, a local nature reserve and a site of historic importance. The Council are having difficulties to keep the place going because they are cash strapped. So, the Council controversially wants to bring in a developer to commercialise it to generate money to keep the place going. The Council put in a supplementary draft plan with lovely pictures in it to attract the developers. So, Friends of Edgbaston Reservoir produced own plan instead of fighting the Council. If anyone wants to see their alternative plan, they are happy to share. They are proud that they were a community that came forward and said they would do it themselves.

Josephine Royle, [Friends of Friends East Rugby Group](#)

They have just been going a couple of years. They took on a little local park because it was becoming a very anti-social park although there was a nice area for the children to play. They were getting drug problems, it was getting unkempt, although the Council do help and support them. They now do regular litter picking, they put extra benches in which they raised money for themselves. But one of the things they are most proud of is they had a disused building that was an eyesore and put off people using the park. They lobbied the Council and they took the building down. The park has now taken on a totally new environment. They get a lot more children playing, and they are moving forward. What is nice is that the Council have come back to them to ask what does the community want for this park, so they are now working together.

Rob Tilling, [Fruit and Nut Village](#)

They are an organisation that was set up between [Lets Grow Together](#) and Brum. They bring together pre-existing fruit trees around the area, adding nut groves into them, creating different ways for fruit trees to be seen and grow. They have added espaliers, nurseries, runs of trees behind houses. They are getting the local community together to learn about grafting, pruning, tree care through the year, watering and all the different aspects. In time they are hoping that community organisations will be able to understand the needs of the trees, come together and run events without their involvement and then roll the model out to other parts of Birmingham.

Second round – Area Forums

Sarah Royal, [Birmingham Open Spaces Forum](#)

They started in 2005 with a number of community groups getting together to see if they could network with each other. They have grown since then, they are now 130 groups. They are a charity incorporated organisation. Sarah has moved from being a

Parks Action Group Community Empowerment Workstream



volunteer to being currently employed four days a week, funded by the [Esmée Fairbairn Foundation](#). They send out regular newsletters, they help new groups to set up and join the Forum. They run regular social networking activities from coffee mornings, training, interesting walks around the place so people can find out more about what is going on. They get the community voice heard in as many relevant strategic decisions in Birmingham as they can. They meet regularly as a critical partner with Birmingham City Council. They are part of the [Greener Birmingham](#) network, which is all the green organisations in Birmingham getting together to see what they can do about the city's green and open spaces. They are involved in the Natural Capital Core Delivery Group and in any networking group to do with open green spaces in Birmingham. They get all the information out to all the groups, encouraging them to get more involved in getting their voices heard to make a difference and get involved with consultations. They have managed to save the Council park budget from serious cuts on a number of occasions.

Ann Ault, [Walsall Green Spaces Forum](#)

They have recently been relaunched. The original one was a Friends Group network started in 1998 and was constituted in 2007. It petered out because there was a lack of people to keep it going. They have had a relaunch in the past couple of years. They have allotments groups involved which help swelled the number of people interested. They have an [Awards for All bid](#) to provide insurance for their members and park groups. They have small grants to support groups, hold events to encourage networking, and produce some leaflets and publicity material. They are now applying for some money for a part-time person to develop a website and expand the network.

Jim Passmore, Coventry Green Space and Heritage Forum

They are similar to the Birmingham Open Spaces Forum. They meet quarterly to discuss various topics that are common to them all. This includes public liability insurance and first aid training. Currently, in Coventry, every group has to get its own insurance and they are trying to get the City Council to provide an overall cover for all groups.

Michelle Furtado, [Adur and Worthing Green Spaces Partnership](#)

They consist of 40 groups. They had a successful [Awards for All bid](#) for £10,000. They have set up a website which is just about to launch. They have done power tool training, so their groups are properly ticketed. There was an issue with Council insurance without a Ranger on-site, so they currently insure all the groups through the Forum. They meet every couple of months. They have a really nice AGM and they always make it into a bit of celebration so that the Green Space volunteers eat really nice food because they deserve it.

Dave, [Birmingham Tree People](#)

They are part of the Wardens. They would like to be the eyes and ears of community and Council officers. They can offer first aid for trees but not critical care. They want

Parks Action Group Community Empowerment Workstream



to support Councillors in the 69 wards in Birmingham with one Tree Warden per ward. To do this they need to have Tree Warden skills and education which they do once a month on a Saturday morning which is free. They cover the biology of trees, identification, the basic management of the trees stock, pest and diseases and where are the trees in Birmingham. They also help with planning and development concerns for their local community including tree preservation orders. They have a [website](#) and they are active on [Facebook](#).

Dave Morris, [Haringey Friends of Parks Forum](#)

They started in North London in 2001 and they have met every two months since then. The Council come to half of each meeting, so they work in partnership with the Council. They encourage the formation of new groups so now pretty much every major public green space in Haringey (45) has a Friends Group. They create walking booklets, lobby for more resources for the parks service, they try and support individual parks when they have issues that need to be addressed. They are only one borough in London, there are 33 London boroughs. About 15-20 of the boroughs have formed a forum. About 10 years ago they formed a London-wide regional network [London Friends of Green Spaces](#) Network. This network meets every three months or so. They try to spread good practice, take up strategic issues that affect the whole of London, planning policy, funding issues and so on.

Final plenary

Stronger communications

Facilitator: Michelle Furtado, NFPGS

Michelle has been in post with NFPGS since April 2019 and she is funded for a year by MHCLG as one of the Parks Action Group community empowerment projects. She will be reaching out to Forums and many of the 7,000 or so Friends Groups around the UK to understand what people need. She is doing the publicity for these regional events and building the network through greater communication and coordination at all levels.

Michelle is mapping Friends Groups contacted and linking them with existing Forums and networks and encouraging new forums to develop. Once all these conferences are finished, Michelle will work on encouraging unconnected groups and clusters to network with each other.

The NFPGS have released a survey to ask what Groups and Forums need to grow and develop, and what support is needed from the PAG and Government. They already have 150 responses. Lots of responses want help linking up, building forums, or sometimes it can be just simple things like borrowing equipment. There are also common issues of managing relationships with the local authorities, especially now when departments share staff.

Parks Action Group Community Empowerment Workstream



There are currently 70 Area Forums in the country involving around 3,000 of the Friends Groups. The Forums don't need to be led by the council. They can be independent. But it can be helpful to have Council Officers in or meeting with the Forum for help with resource and meeting rooms. Forums don't always need a constitution. Others (Voluntary Service Councils, Universities etc) might be able to help in a similar way to Councils.

Four delegates requested help to set up forums in their areas. Michelle will follow these up.

Messages to the PAG

Dave Morris explained that following lobbying by the NFPGS and Parks Alliance for a national inquiry into the future of parks, the parliamentary Local Government Select Cttee of MPs conducted an Inquiry and produced recommendations to Government and the sector in 2017. The Parks Action Group (PAG) was set up, and a Minister for Parks identified.

The PAG asks: how do we ensure that our parks and green spaces are protected and properly managed for the future? There are a number of PAG work streams and projects underway, and the Community Empowerment stream (chaired by NFPGS) has organised these conferences.

The PAG is preparing a business case to present to Government departments and the Treasury, and others, to demonstrate the full value of parks and to raise the issues of long-term financial commitment to ensure they are properly managed for the benefit of communities.

Some people felt that parks and green space were wrongly seen as just a local issue rather than a national government issue. People often assumed parks were a statutory service but surprised to find they aren't.

What should we be telling the government and what should they be hearing?

- There should be more awareness of the need for covenants – like those promoted through Fields in Trust - as they are important to protect land in perpetuity.
- One group was facing its fourth campaign in 20 years to save their land from developers. They would like developers and Council to stop looking at green spaces as a cheap source of income. They are of more value than money.
- Parks often look like deficits in council budgets as they don't recognise their wider value. This should be debated at a national level.
- There should be a more conscious distribution of green spaces. Some areas have a lot and some not very much. Green spaces should be planned and put in planning regulations/developer contracts. People should have a right to live within walking distance of a well-managed green space.

Parks Action Group Community Empowerment Workstream



- More works should be carried out on the asset value of parks e.g. trees are asset value of £1,000 each.
- One group raised the importance of wild green spaces in the city. Children should have the opportunity to experience wild nature. Parks are changing from just recreation and sports to also areas of wild growth.
- Parks prove to be a joy to all sections of the community.
- Parks are not a luxury, but an essential.

Dave Morris thanked everyone for attending, for their thoughts and contributions, and most importantly for their much-appreciated commitment and work on behalf of green spaces.

Participants post-event feedback summary

The response was very positive, with high scores and appreciative comments.

Scores

5 being the highest mark.

Question	5	4	3	2	1	Blank
Usefulness of the day	23 (72%)	6 (19%)	2 (6%)	0 (0%)	1 (3%)	0 (0%)
Venue	27 (84%)	2 (6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (9%)
Food and Facilities	29 (91%)	3 (9%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Workshop	19 (59%)	10 (31%)	2 (6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (3%)
Total	98 (77%)	21 (16%)	4 (3%)	0 (0%)	1 (1%)	4 (3%)

	Yes	Blank
I would like help to set up a Friends Forum	8(25%)	24 (75%)

Comments in Appendix 4.

APPENDICES

1. Weblink to delegate pack resources

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1P36JrWZ01csN1Vo42GMDHSxOXquS-WWV>

2. Agenda

Parks Action Group Community Empowerment Workstream



Time	Session
11:30	Registration and refreshments
12:00	Plenary: welcome, introductions and some key themes
12:30	<p>Focused workshops/discussions - part 1</p> <p>Participants can attend 3 x 30min sessions in total in part 1 & 2</p> <p>Part 1: attend 2 x 30min sessions from the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building a strong and diverse membership • Volunteering and project management • Partnership working with landowners/managers • Fundraising • Promotion and social media
13:30	Light lunch and refreshments - Time to browse material, and make 'Postcards to the Parks Action Group'
14:15	<p>'Just a minute' showcase</p> <p>5 x 1min talks on successful ideas and activities or challenges for groups (focus on individual groups)</p>
14:25	<p>Focused workshops/discussions - part 2</p> <p>Participants can attend 3 x 30min sessions in total today</p> <p>Part 2: attend 1 x 30min session</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building a strong and diverse membership • Volunteering and project management • Partnership working with landowners/managers • Fundraising • Promotion and social media
15:00	Plenary: reports back from the focussed workshops/discussions
15:15	<p>'Just a minute' showcase</p> <p>5 x 1min talks on successful ideas and activities or challenges (focus on forums and networks)</p>
15:25	<p>Final plenary</p> <p>Networking, and developing stronger communications, coordination and sustainability: how do we sustain and build on today's discussions?</p> <p>How do those who support parks, from community groups to Government, ensure our public green spaces are well-managed, enhanced and protected for future generations?</p>
16:15	Time to chat, and refreshments
16:30	Close

3. Workshop attendance numbers

Workshop	Session One	Session Two	Session Three	Total
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Parks Action Group Community Empowerment Workstream



Building a strong and diverse membership	10	7	3	20 (19%)
Volunteering and project management	6	7	7	20 (19%)
Partnership working with landowners/managers	8	5	11	24 (23%)
Fundraising	7	4	4	15 (14%)
Promotion and social media	3	12	9	24 (23%)

4. Feedback form comments

Usefulness

5

- Want to set up our own forum. Have action from the workshop to do
- Very informative, good networking opportunity
- Very good. Really enjoyed each location I visited
- Informative
- Meeting new people and exchanging ideas and networking
- Great to hear other groups' experience and successes as well as barriers
- Good workshops
- Yes, it was a good use of my time – collected some useful information
- I have learnt a lot and met a lot of nice people
- Very useful, have learnt a lot and got plenty of useful contacts
- Good to learn from other people's experience
- Very useful day, with important points discussed
- Good exchange of ideas – no PowerPoint!
- Great to meet other group from Rugby
- Glad I made the effort to attend. More aware now of options/possibilities
- Fantastic day very useful, very well organised, no 'wasted time', lots of networking

4

- I really took some useful info from the discussion. Was Birmingham centric, understandable, but would be nicer for a greater mix of West Midlands
- Very good time meeting new people
- Good to meet other groups

3/3.5

- Interesting to know what other groups are doing and the support available to Friends Groups
- I was a little late, sorry. Really good for networking and general issues

Venue

5

- Great venue: bright and airy
- Very good

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- All fantastic – location, facilities, food, refreshment (was cold with the air con on)
- Lovely room and food – great venue. Easy to get from anywhere – rail/road
- Lovely surroundings
- Amazing venue, very accommodating
- V. comfortable
- Great open space
- Wonderful – easily accessible
- Light, airy, smart
- Very clean and good for disabled people
- Very comfortable location, easily accessible
- But felt like I was in a game of Cluedo
- Lovely, very clean and inviting
- Great coffee and food. Mic worked well
- Good venue, lovely room
- Spacious breakout rooms and nearby toilets
- 5 min from New St station 😊
- Good central location
- Beautiful venue. Good access

4

- Had issues getting my less mobile volunteer close to site, actual venue was gorgeous, thank you
- Great
- No score
- Nice airy space. Easy public transport links

Food and facilities

5

- Food was very enjoyable, and I like free cups of tea
- Excellent – lovely veggie curry
- Very good, esp. mint tea
- Lovely, thank you
- Excellent!
- Great food
- Food was fab and the facilities clean and tidy
- Excellent
- Good choice
- Food was very well presented and combinations were good
- V. good – lots
- Delicious
- Excellent choice
- Beautiful food – very enjoyable
- Interesting selection of food
- Great selection of food nice and airy rooms. Great coffee!
- Coffee on tap – great lunch – plenty of choice and sufficient quantities

Parks Action Group Community Empowerment Workstream



- Food was excellent, venue had all facilities we needed
- Good variety and catering for specific diets. Clean toilets
- As above, felt very spoilt – good food

4

- Food was great
- Pleasant food, neatly presented

Workshops

5

- I only felt the need to attend two of the workshops and they were good
- I learned something from all, other people attending workshops were fabulous
- Learnt from other peoples' experience useful. Interesting
- Very informative and an information sharing experience
- Didn't know what to expect, but I learned a great deal as a volunteer
- Informative
- Yes
- I had no expectations
- In the main most helpful
- Good subjects – made me feel lucky to be part of a larger community trust
- Good discussion and interesting feedback
- Everyone had a chance to have their say
- Very useful – great to be able to give feedback which will influence decision makers
- Very inspired, loads of info

4

- Interesting to see what others are doing and the common issues which arise
- Gave everyone a chance to talk, didn't look at what might do differently
- Hearing different people and learning new things
- Learnt a lot from other members in a group. Not everyone got a chance to feedback
- I thought there would be more output of info rather than 'gathering' of info but I still found it very informative
- Some useful information and case studies
- Probably better than anticipated
- Opportunity to learn and share from one/with another. Inspirational ideas shared
- Would have liked to attend 4
- Degree of repetition is inevitable – useful exchange of experience and information

3

- Workshop on partnership was fantastic. I was hoping for more tangible information from funding workshops

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- I found people might have liked a little more of an introduction or event some learning to share. We have some good sessions as part of our leadership training that might have worked well.

No score

- Perhaps give actual information from an ‘expert’ in addition to peoples’ experience

Any other comments

- Useful links – list of organisations. Maybe some top-tips and information from the organising groups
- What do we want to change? Who do we need to work with to do this?
- N/A thank you
- I would certainly appreciate future workshop on this subject and maybe something on LA
- Basic hands on session on social media
- Really useful to listen to and share ideas with other groups
- Good to hear what group have done – progress made was interesting
- Nothing/learned a lot to take back
- Practical advice from the experts
- I will let you know
- More knowledge-based resources to take away
- Business cards on table from leader
- Marketing techniques to get more friends involved
- More information on what Locality can do to help us and make sure we get feedback from Government on our comments
- Perhaps – email/FB/website contacts of all attendees?
- Great event, nice friendly, well done.

5. Attendee Groups and Websites/Social media

Organisation/Group	Website
Academics ltd	https://www.academicsltd.co.uk/
Acqstar	https://acqstar.com/
Green Tides (Adur and Worthing Green Spaces Partnership)	https://greentides.org.uk/
B 37 project t	https://www.facebook.com/B37-Project-1570412743010340/
BBC Wildlife Trust	https://www.bbcwildlife.org.uk/
Birmingham City Council	https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/
Birmingham Open Spaces Forum	http://bosf.org.uk/
Birmingham Tree People	http://www.birminghamtreepeople.org.uk/home.html
Birmingham Trees For Life	https://btfl.org.uk/
Cannock Chase Council	http://www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk/
Castle Bromwich historic gardens	https://www.castlebromwichhallgardens.org.uk/

Parks Action Group Community Empowerment Workstream



Coventry Culture Trust	http://www.culturecoventry.com/
Coventry War Memorial Park	http://www.fwmpcoventry.org.uk/
Eco n Wise	https://www.facebook.com/groups/econwise/
Free at last	https://www.freeatlast.st/
Friends of Broadwaters	https://www.facebook.com/groups/1099695803420665/
Friends of Brunswick Park	http://fobp.playboxdesign.co.uk/
Friends East Rugby Group	https://www.facebook.com/FriendsEastRugbyGroup/
Friends of Edgbaston Reservoir	http://bosf.org.uk/members/friends-of-edgbaston-reservoir/
Friends of Hednesford Park	https://www.friendsofhednesfordpark.org.uk/
Friends of Manor Farm Park	https://www.friendsofmanorfarmpark.org.uk/
Friends of Perry Park	https://bosf.org.uk/members/friends-of-perry-park-fopp/
Friends of Pitts Wood	https://bosf.org.uk/members/friends-of-pitts-wood/
Friends of Sheldon Country Park	https://www.facebook.com/SheldonCountryParkRangers
Friends of Small Heath Park	https://www.facebook.com/foshpv/
Friends of the Orchard, New Spring Street park	https://www.friendsofcherryorchardpark.org/
Fruit & Nut Village	https://www.facebook.com/Fruit-and-Nut-Village-1634420476669426/
Glebe Farm and Stechford Residents Group	
Globally Local	
Groundwork	https://www.groundwork.org.uk/hubs/westmidlands/
Haringey Friends of Parks Forum	http://www.haringeyfriendsofparks.org.uk/
Keep Britain Tidy	https://www.keepbritaintidy.org/
Locality	https://locality.org.uk/
My Community	https://beta.mycommunity.org.uk/
NFPGS	https://natfedparks.org.uk/
No Limits To Health Community Interest Company	https://www.nolimitstohealth.com/
NWBC	https://www.northwarks.gov.uk/site/
Oxford Brookes University	https://www.brookes.ac.uk/
Project Millennium Green	
Quinton Meadows Consultative Committee	
Rubbish Friends Redditch	https://www.facebook.com/rubbishfriendsredditch/
University of Birmingham	https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/index.aspx
Walsall Green Spaces Forum	https://www.facebook.com/WMBCGreenspaces/
Warley Woods Community Trust	https://www.warleywoods.org.uk/

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Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

