

# Facing the Crisis Parks & People: Stronger Together

A Conference for North West Parks Community Groups

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**Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> April 2019**  
Birkenhead Town Hall  
Wirral



## Programme

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| <b>Arrival and refreshments</b>  |
| <b>Welcome and Introduction</b><br>Professor Robert Lee – Chair, North West Parks Friends Forum (NWPFF)<br>Councillor Phil Davies – Leader, Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council  |
| <b>An Introduction to the North West Parks Friends Forum (NWPFF)</b><br>Nigel Sharp - NWPFF and Secretary NFPGS  |
| <b>The Challenges of a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Park Manager and the role of Friends Groups</b><br>Paul Rabbits - Author, Parks Historian, Head of Parks, Open Spaces & Projects, Watford Borough Council   |
| <b>Parks Fundraising – lessons from history for confronting the current crisis</b><br>Dr Katy Layton-Jones – Cultural Historian and Historical Consultant  |
| Refreshment Break  |
| <b>WORKSHOPS: SESSION ONE (repeated p.m.)</b><br><b>Campaigning</b> Chris Marsh - Friends of King George V Playing Fields, Knowsley<br><b>Networking</b> Dave Morris - Chair, National Federation of Parks & Green Spaces (NFPGS)<br><b>Resources</b> Nigel Sharp - NWPFF and Sec. NFPGS |
| <b>MORNING REVIEW: Q &amp; A</b>   |
| Buffet Lunch   |
| <b>JUST A MINUTE</b><br>Inc. 'Speculations: The Business of Place & Parkness' Michelle Rowley - Fine Art, Wirral Met College   |
| <b>Protecting and Promoting Parks for Future Generations</b><br>Jamie Leeson – North of England Development Manager, Fields in Trust   |
| <b>WORKSHOPS SESSION TWO (details as a.m.)</b>   |
| <b>A Parks Movement from Grass Roots to Government</b><br>Dave Morris - Chair, National Federation of Parks & Green Spaces (NFPGS)   |
| <b>Closing Thoughts</b><br>followed by reception celebrating 175 <sup>th</sup> anniversary of Paxton's Plan for the 'New Park' at Birkenhead.  |

This report is a summary of the event with links to relevant information and references included in the final section. Further details, including the individual presentations, available on request from:

[nwparksforum@gmail.com](mailto:nwparksforum@gmail.com)

**Welcome and Introduction:**

Emeritus Professor Robert Lee MBE [Wirral Tourism Ambassador; Chair, NWPFF]  
Councillor Phil Davies – Leader, Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council

Robert welcomed all to the Conference and Cllr. Davies reflected on his work as Council Leader, about to step down from his position at the forthcoming elections, and his pride in the Borough, a special place with over 240 green spaces and 23 Green Flag Award sites. He stressed the great importance of Wirral's parks, as places for the community, for health and wellbeing but also as places of heritage and tourism interest.

**An Introduction to the North West Parks Friends Forum (NWPFF)**

Nigel Sharp [NWPFF & Secretary National Federation of Parks and Green Spaces]

NS provided an introduction and update about the development and progress of the North West Parks Friends Forum (NWPFF). He presented the context of work by the National Federation of Parks and Green Spaces (NFPGS) from 2009 to establish a national network of parks community groups through linking the country's area forums. NWPFF was borne from local area forums in Wirral, Stockport and Liverpool joining to create more effective local support for the region's many green spaces friends and community groups.

From its inception in 2013 – launched with a Conference also on April 13<sup>th</sup> – the new regional forum delivered a series of workshop events with the support of a successful 'Awards for All' grant from the National Lottery. Alongside these activities, a legacy of the events was a toolkit of support materials to aid group development which included summary reports of the Conference and workshop events, guidance papers and templates.



Following additional events with NFPGS support, the regional forum secured further Lottery funds to deliver a new programme of events, comprising sub-regional workshops in Lancashire, Greater Manchester, Merseyside, Cheshire and the Conference, with a further local event planned for groups in Cumbria.

NS noted the challenges in developing and sustaining a regional network on a voluntary basis – highlighting communication, geography, resources and capacity as major issues for NWPFF, urging all groups to keep in touch, to help share the benefits of effective networking and peer support.

NS closed with an overview of the national network, with over 50 local area forums linking to the NFPGS, and significant regional hubs of activity including Birmingham Open Spaces Forum, Bristol Parks Forum and extensive local networking in Greater London through the work of the London Friends Group Network.

**The Challenges of a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Park Manager and the role of Friends Groups**

Paul Rabbits - Author, Parks Historian, Head of Parks, Open Spaces & Projects,  
Watford Borough Council

Paul provided a thoughtful journey through the changing role of the Parks Manager. He lamented that although parks fulfill so many cross cutting themes they should be top of local authority agendas, there is generally a lack of recognition of these qualities, with parks particularly often challenged to meet more commercial aims, with the fundamentals of good maintenance and management practice secondary concerns.



Paul illustrated how there has been a change from the Victorian parks pioneers of landscape and horticulture, and even the 'traditional parkie' to more specific roles within technical services – in some cases now without even a 'parks department' as service delivery has been transformed with a trend initially driven by the rigours of Compulsory Competitive Tendering (CCT) towards Leisure Services, and more recently to 'Streetscene Services'.

He reflected on the resurgence in the mid 1990s, with the introduction of the Heritage Lottery Fund enabling park regeneration complimented by significant professional sector support including organisations like Greenspace and CabeSpace, alongside new initiatives such as the Green Flag Award, which helped develop the role – and impact – of parks services. However, with the loss of these advocates during the early 21<sup>st</sup> century parks managers have been left lacking with less representation and support.

Paul illustrated the recent plight of the parks manager with the summary of the diversity of service 'transformation' creating a plethora of job details for the role – from the technical - 'Environmental Services Client Managers' to the relatively opaque - 'Place Manager'.

Nevertheless this variety of terminology helped demonstrate the great diversity of disciplines now inherent in the park manager role, far beyond the landscape and horticulturally focused skills of yore and Paul showed a simple graphic to summarise some of these qualities.



To elicit resurgence in recognition and support for the role Paul proposed a ten point plan:

1. We are parks people – ensure we have parks in our job title – its what we do
2. We need a career pathway – the old traditional route is defunct - we should be targeting schools of landscape architecture, ecology, environmental science – its not just about horticulture
3. We need to identify the ‘stars’ –Who are they? And where are they?
4. Government champion – not necessarily a politician but an inside champion
5. A body that champions our cause – a new **ILAM** is vital to ensure the survival of the profession. Paid subscriptions perhaps? **The Landscape Institute???** A Parks Chapter for Parks People?
6. We must be **VISIBLE and BE HEARD** – enter Green Flag – be seen to be being seen and if you aren’t heard, no one will know you are there and you will continue to be ignored.
7. Be **STRATEGIC** – maximum impact in the right place
8. Embrace the **Health Agenda** – find out who is responsible for public health in your area / authority – they could be the key to your survival
9. Spend what we have wisely – maximum impact – we are still LG PLC
10. Don’t be afraid to take risks – we outsourced in Watford – a brave decision for us

Paul concluded with several case studies of current initiatives demonstrating positive park progress and a renewed cause for optimism in park management:

- Over a thousand regular ParkRun events, supported by tens of thousands of volunteers to enable millions of runners to participate;
- Green Gym schemes provide health and wellbeing benefits as well as helping employability;
- Heritage Open Days have helped champion the nation’s history and culture and introduce many to learn more and take pride in place;

- The regeneration of park facilities such as at Cassiobury Park, Watford now provides an improved attraction to support over two million visits annually;
- The great contribution of Parks Friends groups and volunteers from events to projects and initiatives such as the Green Flag Award, without whom these improvements and achievements would not be possible.

### Parks Fundraising – lessons from history for confronting the current crisis

Dr Katy Layton-Jones – Cultural Historian and Historical Consultant

Katy introduced her work with Historic England to look at funding models from the past to provide an insight into historic funding challenges for park and green space management. She noted how this role had also enabled her to present evidence to the parliamentary Select Committee (2016). [A link to download this report is included in the Appendix.]

Katy observed that there has long been pressure on parks funding, with demands for entrepreneurial or innovative approaches and perhaps the current demands to ‘sweat the assets’ is nothing new. The range of strategic influences was noted but it is questionable whether these are fit for purpose or understand the park manager needs.

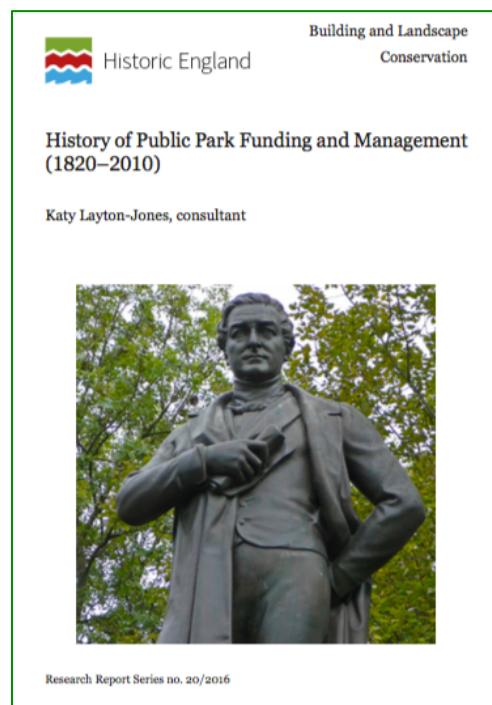
Katy linked to the previous item, and the disruptive influence of ‘endless transformation’ and the culture of change affecting parks and their management – and the folly that parks cannot be sustained on a ‘zero budget’.

‘The public has always been aware of the value of parks...Whether this extends to government and government agencies is another matter’ (Hazel Conway, 2009)

Katy’s quest to review historic funding models involved research of primary source material including local council archives such as committee minute books throughout England from London and Bristol to Manchester and Liverpool.

Katy provided a brief, informative summary of the different options identified:

- Philanthropy brought contributions from local people and businesses – the Victorian equivalent of Bill Gates – however such donors are no longer prevalent and it is now apparent that often such donations brought compromise or control associated with the gift, with elements of sponsorship.



- Subscription is another historic model considered but it is significant that a huge mass of contributors would be required to generate the level of revenue necessary to avoid a downward spiral of resources and standards. Katy illustrated that this would be unrealistic model highlighting that the Joseph Rowntree Foundation's *A Minimum Income Standard (MIS) for the UK* asserts that in Britain in 2015, single people need to earn at least £17,100 a year before tax to achieve a MIS. Couples with two children need to earn at least £20,000 each. The MIS takes into account, 'what you need in order to have the opportunities and choices necessary to participate in society' (Hirsch for JRF, 2015).
- The virtues of local taxation to fund green spaces are limited by property ownership, as many local authority areas already suffer disadvantage through low Council tax values.
- Many parks have been restored and regenerated through grant funding but such capital contributions are not a viable, sustainable funding model for future revenue demands.
- Similarly speculative development once helped provide the resources for new park development (Princes Park, Liverpool) but success was limited as neighbourhoods go through cycles of fashion and profitability and like grant funds this represents limited, capital income.
- The Milton Keynes Trust is considered an exemplar of an endowment approach to funding however, even this example has needed to adjust to losses and increase investment. This is also not typical of most local authorities which would require a huge sum to be sourced to apply retrospectively to cover demands.
- Revenue creation is also cited as an opportunity for parks funding but Katy noted how this cannot be relied on for every site and affects the principle that parks and communities should be equally valued.

In conclusion Katy stressed the need to avoid repeating previous mistakes with inadequate funding models and referenced the House of Commons Communities and Local Government Committee statement that:

**'We strongly believe that without being able to demonstrate the contribution made by parks to broader agendas, local authority parks departments will find it difficult to secure sufficient priority for their parks, or to access alternative funding sources'.**

*Public Parks, Seventh Report of Session 2016–17*

#### WORKSHOP SESSIONS

**Campaigning:** Chris Marsh – Friends of King George V Playing Fields, Knowsley

FRIENDS OF  
KG Brown's Field  
& Carr Lane Woods  
SAVE OUR PARKS

Chris provided a comprehensive and informative review of the process and journey towards lessons learnt from the recent campaign in Knowsley to protect his local green space:

## 1. Our Experience: The beginning....

- Independent review panel to explore options for future management and funding model reported to KMB Council Cabinet 27 November 2017.
- Proposed option to dispose of some (up to 10%) of parks to create a £40m endowment to maintain those remaining forever.
- To be delivered through a new Knowsley Parks Trust.
- Proposed enhanced role of communities, friends groups etc.. in future delivery.
- Recommended deeper work with communities, town and parish councils etc.. on basis of selection of parks for disposal.
- At the same Cabinet meeting....
  - A list of 17 sites for disposal was tabled and agreed as the basis of a business case to be developed.
  - Based on officer appraisal of 161 sites in Knowsley against a set of criteria (use, heritage, ecology).
  - KGV Prescot and Play area included in the 17, despite ranking 89<sup>th</sup> and 90<sup>th</sup> in the appraisal.
  - Plan to agree business case by June 2018, start delivery of new model by November 2019.

## 2. The Campaign

- Information gathering – what's happened and why?
- Mobilising and informing the community – meetings, newsletters, Friends Group.
- Engaging key decision makers (Borough and Town Councils, Councillors, MP's, Panel members).
- Wider Prescot community (business, voluntary, community and faith sectors).
- Connection to wider Knowsley effort.
- Fundraising.
- Mainstream and Social Media visibility.
- Clear core messages and visuals.
- People power – petition and march.



### **3. Mainstream and social media campaign**

- Mainstream Media attention
  - BBC NWT news
  - BBC Radio Merseyside
  - BBC Radio 4
  - New York Times
- Social media
  - Facebook – local communications and engaging in the debate – updating, informing, clarifying, myth busting.
  - Twitter – local and national visibility, engagement, support and networking.
- Our approach
  - Solid core, media messages
  - Calm and clear
  - Gentle pressure, relentlessly applied!

### **4. The Technical Case**

- Crucial to check and challenge decisions and how they are made.
- In our case a clear challenge to:-
  - Criteria for selection and how they were applied (consistency, rigour, engagement, data use).
  - Legitimacy of the Cabinet decision.
  - Consistency with the Panel recommendations on engagement process and more.
  - Omission of consideration of major factors – notably Fields in Trust protection.
  - The technical accuracy and diligence of the work – including some basics on the numbers.
- Making the case clearly and ensuring it is heard by people of influence (MP's, senior politicians, media, KMBC).
- This was vital to our to our eventual outcome.

### **5. The Politics**

- Parks and green space issues get highly politicised, very quickly.
- The austerity argument, trading off parks and people who campaign for them against 'essential services'.
- National and Regional Governance cite 'local decisions' but still take note.
- As a group we remained politically neutral (with support from local Greens and Lib Dems) but staying well connected to the political dynamics was crucial.
- In our case:-
  - Many local Councillors unhappy and disenfranchised.
  - Internal rifts in the ruling group, a scale of opposition rarely seen in Knowsley.
  - All Knowsley MP's cautioned against the policy.
  - Parks policy became a defining issue in the May 2018 local elections with loss of Labour seats.
  - Eventual removal of the Council Leader by Labour Group.
- Formal abandonment of parks plan and budget proposals in June 2018.

**6. Summary of tips and lessons learnt:**

- The 'Fight or Flight' judgement.
- Get ready for a life take – over!
- A wake up call – have we taken this for granted?
- Accept that not everyone wants to get involved, but make sure they are aware – this will pay off.
- Check and use your group's skills – we found some amazing talents!
- Find your allies, ignore your trolls – they want your energy!
- Keep talking - influencing opinion and those who form it.
- Live in the detail – it really matters.
- Keep the faith – it only feels like you have no power!
- Be calm, collected, constructive, state your case, again and again.
- Say thanks to your supporters, either way it goes.
- Remember, win or lose, you stepped up.

**7. Future thoughts**

- Partnership Agreement between Town & Borough Council.
- Extended leases to TC, in return for financial contribution.
- Key role for Friends Groups.
- FA Investment.
- Watch this space...
- We are still vigilant!

**WORKSHOP SESSIONS**

**Networking:** Dave Morris - Chair, National Federation of Parks & Green Spaces (NFPGS)

Dave chaired a discussion considering the value and issues for effective networking, highlighting how area forums of local parks and green space friends and community groups provide the building blocks for a national network. The NFPGS draws from this network to provide a collective view and influence national policy decisions.

Discussion showed local organizational issues with a need for more active members to support area forum activity, which for the Wirral Parks



Forum includes work with the Parks Partnership and Performance Board. Although this empowers the Forum, providing a direct link to the Council and parks management, it adds significant demands on the Forum officers.

Other areas represented without area forums are now considering the need for developing local contacts, encouraging groups to make contact and benefit from a combined and united voice – particularly in the context of current or future development challenges such as recently threatened Knowsley's parks.

**WORKSHOP SESSIONS****Resources:** Nigel Sharp - NWPFF and Sec. NFPGS

NS provided an overview of 'Finding Funds' to support continued parks group development, focusing on fundraising ideas.

A key message was that the actual process of fundraising could be beneficial to group development, raising group profile and providing a focus for members, while also helping develop partnership links. Funds raised are also relatively unrestricted, giving a group freedom and control over activities and projects which these funds may enable.

NS urged groups to get 'fit for funding' with basic levels of organization including a constitution, bank account and general policies to underpin activity, and then he recommended having clear aims as a focus for group activity – such as an event or project – which can become a target for fundraising and related group development.

A number of fund raising initiatives were considered including crowdfunding platforms such as Spacehive and the 'Easyfunding' scheme. A range of fundraising activities were considered as an opportunity to not just generate funds but also engender partnership working and generate publicity with a reminder that a successful activity must be cost effective, safe and legal! The potential to develop a calendar of activity was highlighted with suggestions drawn from the usual seasonal events alongside more unusual 'awareness days' which may provide the inspiration for imaginative activity.



There was also consideration of the wider benefits of a more integrated approach – combining activity and projects to raise funds and create a legacy for a park with examples including a photo mural in Poole Park, Dorset, and the Liverpool Parks Photo Competition which included an annual exhibition and calendar. Other suggestions included parks merchandise from trails and postcards to branded bird boxes.

## Morning Review

Discussion followed highlighting the need to get parks on a manifesto, in local and national media. Although the recent Government pledge of £13m shows recognition of the need for additional support NFPGS stressed that the real need is for an additional £1bn a year to address the loss of parks funding.



There are similar needs to arrest the decline in professional park managers, to reinstate a career pathway and establish a professional voice for this important and multi-faceted role.

## Just a minute (summary)

Brief comment or updates were invited from parks and community group representatives:

### **Wirral Tree Wardens**

Dave Ellwand highlighted a problem in Wirral and other local authorities which lack a tree strategy and how the wardens worked with the Wirral Parks Forum to prepare a tree charter, working with the Wirral Environmental network and Tree Council to map local trees to create a tree census and ensure future plans provide the right tree, in the right place at the right time!

### **Save Our Green Spaces, Liverpool**

Eric Smith urged Friends groups to challenge council comment – ‘do not always believe all you’re told!’ This is not out of cynicism – more a realistic observation since as councils have shed staff, knowledge and skills and he noted issues relating to the proposed development of Sefton Park Meadows and Calderstones Park.

### **Friends of Storeton Woods**

Paul Wallington commented that the group has now around 500 members and woodland is both a popular asset and a focus for community engagement with events including tree planting and woodland management workdays.

### **Cheshire East**

George Broughton (Parks Manager, Cheshire East Council) reported that following a recent NWPFF sub-regional workshop in Crewe, members of Cheshire East groups were interested in setting up an area forum.

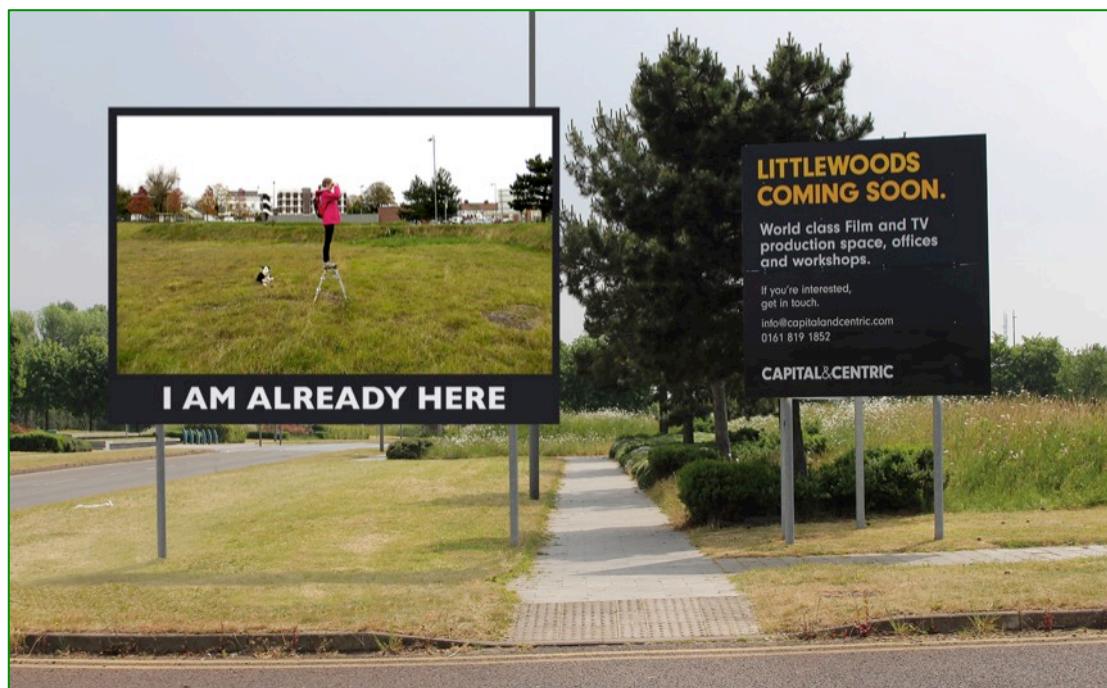
### **Knowsley Parks Friends**

Chris Marsh (King George V Playing Fields) & Rita Walker (Court Hey Park) also confirmed interest in establishing a Knowsley Parks Forum.

### **'Speculations: The Business of Place & Parkness'**

Michelle Rowley (Fine Art lecturer, Wirral Metropolitan College) provided a fresh insight to land use and place. The change in attitude when sites are under threat and the use or misuse of the term 'park' were illustrated with examples such as Wavertree Technology Park and 'innovation parks'.

These were contrasted with spaces for leisure and play or wilderness and place, with the 'business parks' shown as areas of underuse, with defensive mounds adding to an unwelcoming appearance. Michelle suggested that these are places 'awaiting content' and yet may still fulfill an informal park role for regular exercise or dog walker visits.



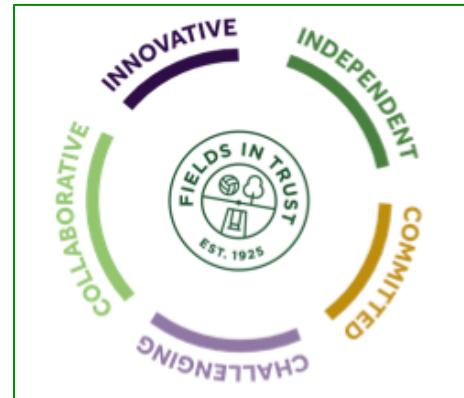
The use of nature in business metaphors – from hedge funds to shell companies and coupled with some imaginative approaches to experiencing green spaces – including a personal step-ladder – the presentation provided an alternative view on the definition of 'a park'.

## Protecting and Promoting Parks for Future Generations

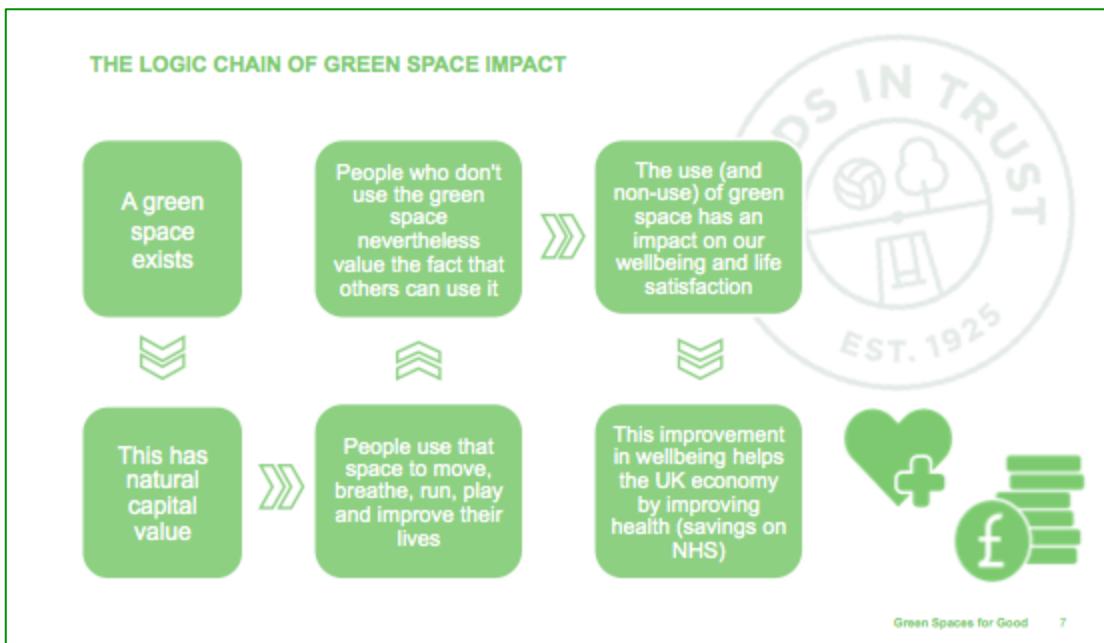
Jamie Leeson – North of England Development Manager, Fields in Trust

Jamie introduced Fields in Trust (FiT) – a champion, supporter and protector of the nation's parks and green spaces. Formerly the National Playing Fields Association, established by King George V post WW1, Prince William is now the FiT President.

The current Strategy 'Green Spaces for Good' (2018-22) recognizes the positive contribution these areas make to healthy communities, with physical, mental and wellbeing benefits. Jamie suggested all of us have a memory of a green space which provided an early memory – is it still there? How is it today? He stressed how these spaces are the bedrock for sport, play and recreation but once they are gone, they are gone for good, but Fit can protect for good.



To support their work, FiT has prepared evidence – drawing on information about who is using parks and green spaces, and how, to determine a robust economic valuation of parks, to quantify the benefit of these areas and help compile a business case to counter the cost. The report identified a 'logic chain of green space impact'.



This approach includes consideration of health outcomes – including an estimated wellbeing value of £34.3bn/yr and NHS savings of £111m/yr. Moreover, these are considered very conservative estimates, for example, not including added savings due to reduced prescription drugs or increased attendance in work. Jamie also noted the wider benefits to

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community wellbeing such as reduced social isolation and the impact arresting the growth in childhood obesity.

FiT now works with more landowners with over 2,800 spaces protected across the UK against a background of development threats such as relaxed town and country planning laws associated with supporting new house building. In this context local green space legislation may provide only short-term protection for the duration of a local plan and covenants have been challenged and may not be absolute.

Jamie illustrated the impact of FiT protection by contrasting the recent loss to housing development of the Ingelborough Road Playing Fields – a local WW1 memorial site in Tranmere, with a successful FiT - site designated in 1946, and noting that in addition to enduring protection, the site had become improved with facilities to respond to local recreational demand and support community use.

## **PROTECTING IN PERPETUITY**



1946



2017

Green Spaces for Good 16

It was noted that most parks have no statutory protection but FiT will work collaboratively to protect sites through a 'Deed of Dedication' with ownership, management and maintenance remaining with landowner. The agreement will protect green spaces against any future threats – such as local government re-organisation or boundary changes, while presenting opportunities for new approaches such as asset transfer or support from FiT with promotion.

Jamie provided examples of recent FiT programmes including Centenary Fields and Jubilee Fields with links to a range of landowners with 30 sites in Leeds, Town and Parish Councils, and other partners including Friends groups, the London Marathon Charitable Trust and the Royal British Legion. FiT also provides guidance for sport and play ‘Beyond the Six Acre Standard’, and helps champion parks with a UK’s best park nominations and voting and the Have a Field day programme of events.

[in addition: our ‘Knowledge Base’ provides invaluable information for community groups relating to the management and maintenance of parks and green spaces – for details, see the Appendix]

### A Parks Movement from Grass Roots to Government

Dave Morris - Chair, National Federation of Parks & Green Spaces (NPGS)

Dave introduced the parks movement with some context – there are an estimated 27,000 parks nationwide with an estimated 6,000 parks friends and community groups. However, since 2010 the UK’s parks services have been drastically affected by massive cuts to public sector funding resulting to loss of staff, services and budgets to manage and maintain these vital community assets.

The NPGS was influential in calling for an enquiry into the state of public parks and in 2016 a cross party Select Committee was set up with a call for evidence prompting an unprecedented level of interest, with over 400 submissions demonstrating the scale of public concern, which included a petition of 300,000 signatories.

Following the Select Committee report, the subsequent Government response has included the setting up of a cross departmental committee, and perhaps more significantly a Parks Action Group, bringing together partner organisations from across the parks sector – including Groundwork, Fields in Trust, Keep Britain Tidy, the Heritage Lottery Fund. The NPGS is also involved in this group with an important role as the lead body representing ‘grass roots’ parks community groups. The Parks Action Group has enabled like-minded groups committed to parks to work together and provide greater focus to review park needs and opportunities.

Central to this is a Funding Working Group which has tried to determine the gap in resources now estimated at an annual £1bn required. To maintain pressure for change NPGS has worked with 24 other parks sector organisations to launch The Charter for Parks, including a call for parks to be recognized as a statutory service.



Through chairing a Community Empowerment Working Group for the Parks Action Group, NPGS has led demands for recognition of the contribution to parks made by the many friends and community groups stressing that volunteers are not ‘cheap labour’ but strive to support depleted and threatened services and maintain a community voice for their parks.

Dave noted that the campaigning has received an increased public profile from the Mail on Sunday support which has included 'Save our Parks' articles 'saluting our park saviours', featuring news items from across the UK, including reference to Walton Hall Park, Liverpool.

It was noted that although there remains a gross underinvestment in our parks – the recent Government pledge of £13m equates to around £40k per local authority – the provision of additional funds, albeit minor, should be welcomed as a small sign of progress and encouragement to keep campaigning.



Dave highlighted progress in his local park group – the Friends of Lordship Rec. - which has been awarded funding to develop a community empowerment project which will include the development of a new website with resources to support parks friends and community groups with shared good practice 'parkscommunity uk'.

He concluded with more positive news that NPGS will be supported by Parks Action Group related funds to develop national networking through a series of regional conferences in areas hitherto lacking the networking support evident in the North West and London. He complimented North West Forum (NWPFF) for pioneering work to establish a model of regional activity which the NPGS will now seek to replicate to further strengthen the parks community movement nationally.

### Closing Thoughts

Concluding comments summarised that the Conference had been informative, helpful and thought provoking and all – speakers, friends groups and participants – were thanked for their contributions to a useful and enjoyable event.

## Appendix: Links to items referenced in Conference presentations and discussions

A summary of key links referred to in the event presentations and related discussion.

### Introduction

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/leisure-parks-and-events/parks-and-open-spaces-0>

### Introduction to the North West Parks Friends Forum

<https://www.natfedparks.org.uk/>

<http://www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/>

<http://bosf.org.uk/birmingham-open-spaces-forum/>

<http://www.lfgn.org.uk>

### The Challenges of a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Park Manager

<https://www.parkrun.org.uk>

<https://www.tcv.org.uk/greengym>

<https://www.heritageopendays.org.uk>

<https://cassioburypark.info>

<http://www.greenflagaward.org.uk>

### Parks Fundraising – lessons from history

<https://www.hlf.org.uk/state-uk-public-parks-2016>

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/communities-and-local-government-committee/inquiries/parliament-2015/public-parks-16-17/>

History of Public Park Funding and Management (1820 – 2010) [document download]

<https://research.historicengland.org.uk/Report.aspx?i=15442>

### Workshops

#### Protecting Parks

<https://en-gb.facebook.com/FriendsofKGVCarrLaneWoods/>

#### Networking

<https://www.natfedparks.org.uk/>

<https://wirralparksforum.org.uk>

<http://www.lfgn.org.uk>

#### Resources - Finding Funds

[www.spacehive.com](http://www.spacehive.com)

[www.easyfundraising.org.uk](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk)

[www.letsgetfundraising.co.uk](http://www.letsgetfundraising.co.uk)

[www.bbchilreninneed.co.uk/fundraisinghub](http://www.bbchilreninneed.co.uk/fundraisinghub)

[www.signupgenius.com/school/school-fundraising-ideas.cfm](http://www.signupgenius.com/school/school-fundraising-ideas.cfm)

[www.awarenessdays.com](http://www.awarenessdays.com)

### Just a Minute

<https://en-gb.facebook.com/WirralTreeWardens/>  
<https://pdellwand.wixsite.com/wirraltrees>  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/sogsliverpool/>  
<http://www.friendsofstoretonwoods.org.uk>  
<https://en-gb.facebook.com/friendsofcourtheypark/>

### Protecting and Promoting Parks for Future Generations

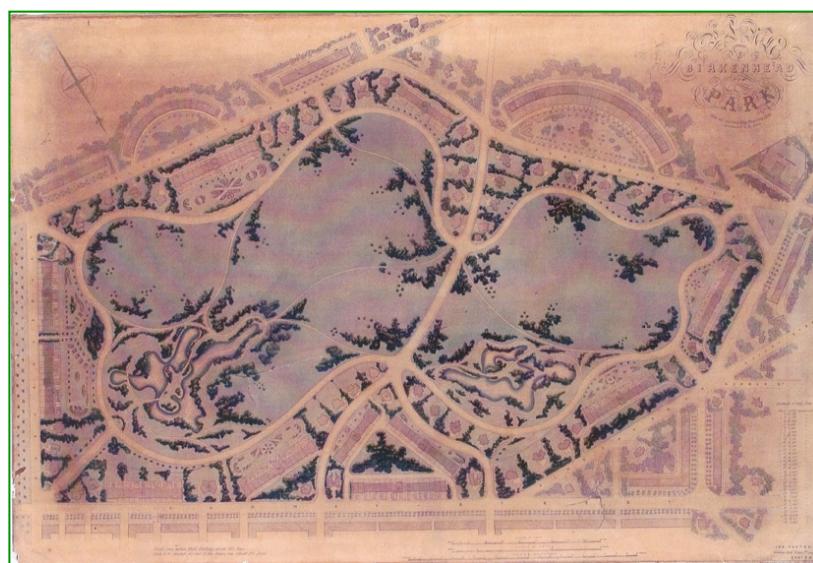
<http://www.fieldsintrust.org/revaluing> - link for the Research report – a summary and in full.  
<http://www.fieldsintrust.org/guidance> - includes the provision of green space per pop.  
<http://www.fieldsintrust.org/knowledge-base> - provides invaluable information for community groups relating to the management and maintenance of parks and green spaces.  
<http://www.fieldsintrust.org/have-a-field-day> - event support  
<http://www.fieldsintrust.org/best-park> - another opportunity for Friends Groups to champion their green space on a national level, with 'UK's Best Park' nominations  
<http://www.fieldsintrust.org/protect> - details of our protection

### A Parks Movement from Grass Roots to Government

<https://www.natfedparks.org.uk/>  
<https://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/communities-and-local-government-committee/inquiries/parliament-2015/public-parks-16-17/>  
<https://www.parkscharter.org.uk>  
<https://www.nesta.org.uk/blog/parks-community-uk-introduction-project/>  
<https://parkscommunity.org.uk>

### Additional

<https://www.birkenheadpark1847.com>  
<http://friendsofbirkenheadpark.org.uk/index.html>



The Conference concluded with a reception to celebrate the 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Paxton's Plan for the 'New Park' at Birkenhead (1844).