



Community Engagement and Volunteering Plan

August 2022

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Introduction

The Community Engagement and Volunteering Plan sets out how the Council proposes to take forward its plans for Community Engagement and Volunteering to support the overarching Haringey Parks and Greenspaces Strategy priorities of inclusion, climate change and service quality.

Haringey's Parks are used by all communities and are a major source of social interaction and cohesion. You can get a good idea about who lives in Haringey by spending time at one of our bigger sites such as Finsbury Park or Lordship Recreation Ground.

However not all communities have the same level of access to parks and some communities may feel that parks are neither welcoming nor meet their needs.

The Covid 19 enforced lockdown highlighted the importance of parks for health and wellbeing whilst also highlighting the importance of ensuring that they can meet the needs of all communities and particularly the needs of communities most affected by Covid, BAME, people with disabilities and older people.

Health benefits can include lower rates of heart disease, diabetes and obesity as well as better mental health and wellbeing.

Haringey has a proud and positive history of working with Friends of Parks groups and other volunteers and the recently completed NESTA project to develop and share good practice for Community Empowerment and Co-Management in greenspace between Friends and local authorities is a good example of this.

There are an estimated 45 Friends groups in Haringey generating over £400,000 per year in added value for Haringey Parks and communities through practical volunteering, events and activities and by providing opportunities for local people to get involved.

However, the people involved in Friends groups currently tend to be older people from the white community and often have an above average level of educational attainment and experience fewer social and economic barriers.

Covid and the re-emergence of the Black Lives Matter movement have highlighted the importance of parks as communal social spaces and the importance of these spaces being able to benefit everyone.

We want to extend usage and involvement by encouraging more people to take an active interest in our parks, particularly young people, people from BAME communities, disabled people, women and girls and young people.

As part of this Plan, the Council also wants to work with residents to develop new opportunities to look after smaller and more local spaces and features, such as street planters and street tree planting.

There is considerable expertise already existing between the Council, Friends groups, stakeholders, and partners, both existing and emerging, for volunteering in our parks

and greenspaces and we will be seeking to build on the excellent foundations these provides.

Haringey is relatively green with over 148 parks and greenspaces creating 382.87 hectares of open space which represents 12.8% of total area of the borough. Many of these are supported by community organisations such as Friends of Parks groups, Residents Associations or special interest groups like Tottenham Trees and the Haringey Rivers Forum.

This is one of several plans and policies supporting the overall Parks and Greenspaces Strategy (PGSS).

It will:

- Provide information and direction for how the Council will work with stakeholders, including seldom heard from communities and Friends of Groups for the next 15 years in order to maximise the benefits for our local communities and provide the highest possible quality of greenspaces
- Identify which policies support this plan including those that inform the wider Parks and Greenspaces Strategy and those that are part of the wider policy framework
- Look at benefits from community engagement and volunteering
- Identify issues and challenges that impact on community engagement and volunteering
- Identify agencies and organisations involved and their roles
- Provide an action plan to inform the future approach towards community engagement and volunteering
- Provide information about current parks and greenspace volunteering and links to key supporting and reference documents

Aims

The Aims are taken from the overall Parks and Greenspaces Strategy.

Inclusion and Wellbeing: Providing inclusive parks and greenspaces that all communities in Haringey can benefit from so that usage and enjoyment of our parks and greenspaces reflects the communities living in Haringey and contributes to improved wellbeing.

Climate Change and Sustainability: Supporting the Council's declaration of a Climate Emergency by reducing the carbon footprint of parks and greenspaces, protecting and promoting biodiversity, and helping educate everyone in Haringey about contributing toward saving the planet.

A Quality Service: Securing investment, improving standards, partnerships, communications, and outcomes

Objectives

Inclusion and Wellbeing

- To create a framework that will help the Council work cooperatively with all park users and stakeholders, including targeted engagement with seldom heard from communities
- To better understand, appreciate and celebrate the role of Friends Groups and other key stakeholders
- To work with partners to identify and reduce areas of conflict in parks and greenspaces e.g. between dog walkers and footballers or between cyclists and walkers
- To develop a Plan with identified actions and targets to support community engagement and volunteering in parks, greenspaces and street planting
- Expand on the range of groups that contribute to the design, management, marketing and usage of parks and green spaces by developing regular and ongoing engagement with BAME, faith, younger, older, disabled and LGBTQI communities
- Developing more active, independent community groups in parks and green spaces
- Engaging a more diverse group of people in volunteering in parks and greenspaces and in street based volunteering

Climate Change and Sustainability

- Improving access to nature for BAME and other seldom heard from communities
- Offering skills and knowledge training for volunteers to enable them to better contribute towards meeting targets for biodiversity.

A Quality Service

- To develop more opportunities for corporate volunteering and similar schemes that provide social benefit
- To celebrate the achievements of the parks and greenspace sector
- To improve communications between key stakeholders to enable better partnership working for the benefit of Haringey's parks and green space users

Benefits

Engaged, informed, and supported communities have a greater sense of ownership of their parks and greenspaces. This sense of ownership improves the facilities and wider park environment as conversations between groups, communities and the Park's Service are open and based on trust, so the outcomes are more likely to be mutually agreed and beneficial for all, which also encourages greater use by a wider range of people.

Many studies have been done looking at the benefits of volunteering in parks and greenspaces. These include the social, health and environmental benefits.

Another benefit of engaging in volunteering is that communities feel empowered and develop a sense of ownership of their public spaces, which in turn helps to build resilience within the parks sector, an area of public service that has had to deal with budget cuts and the resulting resource shortages.

Anyone that volunteers has their own reasons for wanting to. Some volunteers see it as a way to give back to their communities using skills they already have, for others it is an opportunity to learn new skills and meet new people in their community. Although their reasons for volunteering may be different, everyone that gives their time wants to make a positive impact for their local park, feel a sense of reward for their efforts and have engaging projects and activities to take part in.

Benefits from community engagement

Parks are one of the best and most effective areas available to us for building a sense of community and improving quality of life. They provide spaces that inspire us to connect and interact over a shared passion and can channel positive community participation by getting diverse people to work together in support of a shared vision.

As a free to use community resource, parks are a great leveller and users from all socio-economic backgrounds come together to enjoy them and make use of the facilities. Our 50 Friends groups in Haringey involve and engage literally 1000's of residents and are amongst the strongest voluntary groups in the borough. Their activity helps build community resilience and empowerment.

Social benefits

Haringey parks and greenspaces offer a great opportunity for residents from our diverse communities to come together and support a shared community space, helping to break down barriers and learning from each other.

“Many report social benefits from their volunteering. Almost nine in ten volunteers say they have met new people. Young people aged 18–24 (77%) and 25–34 (76%) are the age groups most likely to say their volunteering helped them feel less isolated.” (Time Well Spent: NCVO national survey on volunteering, January 2019)

Health benefits

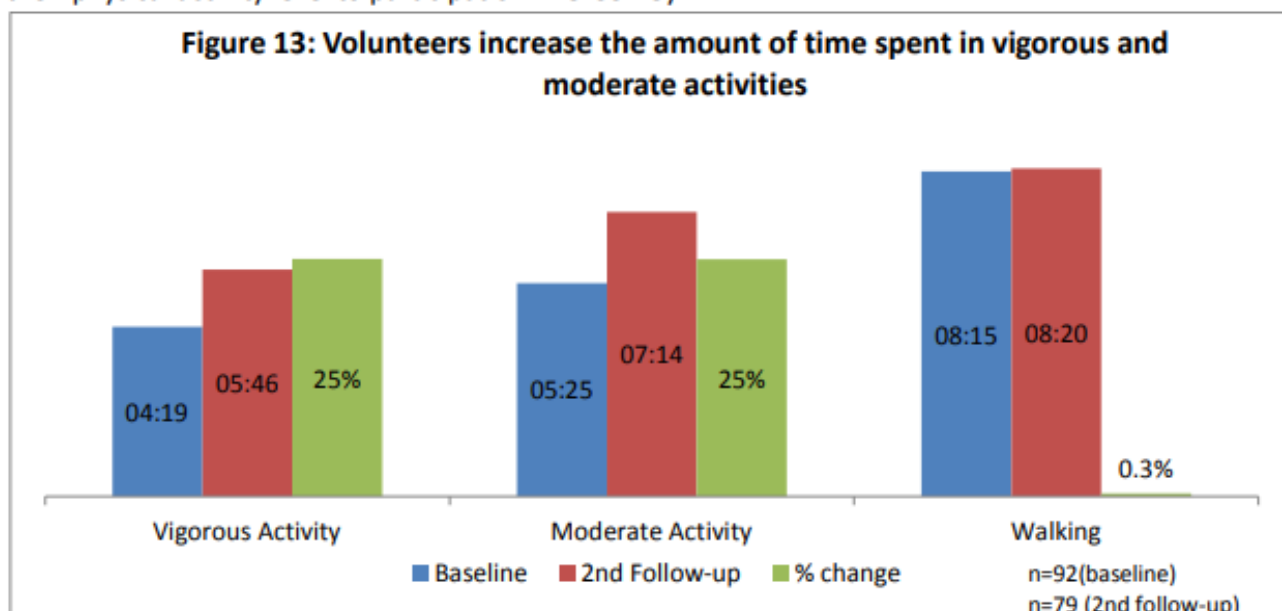
Haringey's Annual Public Health Report 2019 details the health inequalities and inequities across the borough, some of which can be improved by 'having easy access to safe and enjoyable outdoor spaces...and doing some physical activities' (*Haringey's Public Health Report 2019: Tackling health inequalities for a healthier and fairer Haringey, p.3- Environment, Appendix 1*)

There is a wealth of research that supports the health benefits of volunteering. The overall findings recognise that, along with the social benefits of meeting others in your community that mental and physical health benefits can be substantial if the volunteering activities are rewarding, challenging and well supported.

‘Over three-quarters (77%) of volunteers agreed that volunteering had improved their mental health and wellbeing. This compares with just over half (53%) who agreed their

physical health had improved' (*Time Well Spent: NCVO national survey on volunteering, January 2019.p.57 Appendix 2*)

On average, volunteers spent 50% more time engaged in vigorous and moderate activities over a week at the end of the three month study period when compared with the time spent at the start of the study period. Volunteers were spending a little more time walking too. Nine out of ten attribute their physical activity level to participation in Green Gym.



The Conservation Volunteers: Green Gym National Evaluation, 2016, p 21. Appendix 3

Environmental Benefits

Parks and greenspaces are vital to supporting biodiversity. The Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) for parks and greenspaces will provide details of how improvements can be made to help support existing habitats and species create more.

Volunteers, especially from Friends Groups and The Conservation Volunteers (TCV) play an important role in ensuring that biodiversity is supported, many activities are centred around the creation of new habitats such as bird and bat boxes, planting and caring for native species and campaigning for wild areas.

TCV are a major delivery partner in this area, supporting the Council to develop nature conservation volunteering opportunities across a variety of parks and greenspaces in Haringey.

Empowering Communities

Parks and greenspaces are key resources accessible to everyone. They are available for a wide variety of activities from litter picking with a handful of volunteers to more involved activities such as community events with dozens of volunteers and more intricate planning.

Better supporting the process of volunteering in parks and greenspaces will help to further the relationships we already have with many groups as well as opening up the opportunity to volunteer for others.

The Council also supports communities and groups to expand their reach and volunteering opportunities through providing facilities, resources and buildings in parks and greenspaces to use as hubs and bases. This helps to raise the profile of the groups and the role of volunteering as part of the park and greenspace experience. Moving forward, we will also seek to support other opportunities to engage residents in volunteering in the community including adopting street trees and the installation of community planters in suitable locations on the public highway.

Building resilience

Engaged and empowered park users feel greater ownership of their community.

Identifying the assets, opportunities and strengths within the community will help the Council to focus resources on enabling park users to achieve and decide their own outcomes, seeing people as the answer rather than trying to fix everything for them.

A Community Engagement officer will help to facilitate this community development, give voice to those seldom heard from groups and current park groups, supporting them as active users rather than as passive consumers. This approach will also ensure that the Council can focus on the quality of its parks service as it will support improvements agreed through collaborative working with park groups and communities, who have grassroots knowledge vital to achieving the things that people know their places need.

Continuing to identify Council assets, such as buildings in parks, that can be used by third sector groups and organisations to support their work, will help to build their resilience and volunteer base. Empowering grassroots organisations, making them more visible and accessible in parks and greenspaces will enable communities to engage directly in making their neighbourhoods better places to live.

Current engagement in Haringey's parks and greenspaces

In previous years, the development of Haringey's Community Engagement Framework gave guidance on best practice with the 'You said, we did' approach and the principles still hold true.

- Work in partnership to join up our engagement activities
- Engage when it will make a difference
- Be clear about what we are asking
- Be inclusive and aim to engage with all communities
- Communicate the results of engagement activity
- Build capacity of communities to take part in engagement activities

The Parks Service currently engages and consults with key stakeholders, including Friends Groups, Residents Associations and internal colleagues, when planning or proposing improvements to parks and greenspaces.

Spotlight meetings are an interactive way that the Parks Service engages with stakeholders. These take place while a Parks Project Officer carries out an inspection of the park and so gives the stakeholders an opportunity to raise questions about planned repairs, improvements and concerns as the inspection takes place.

Bi-monthly meetings of the Haringey Friends of Parks Forum are also attended by Parks Service Officers, usually Senior Managers, giving the Forum a platform to speak directly to the service and hear first-hand about improvements and changes to the service.

The Council also supports the activities of voluntary groups through provision of resources that support their own community engagement activities, such as: litter pickers, waste bags, waste collection, woodchip, access to notice boards, waving event fees for small community events and rental for banner space on park railings.

Other current examples of how the Parks Service is engaging with communities through parks are through the provision of parks buildings with community leases for third sector organisations and charities such as;

- Wolves Lane Centre, N22. Home to the Wolves Lane Consortium, offering training and volunteering across a range of horticultural disciplines through social enterprise. <https://www.wolveslane.org/>
- Lordship Rec Eco- Hub (Lordship Hub), Lordship Rec, N17. The base for the Friends of Lordship Rec and the Lordship Rec Eco-Hub Co-op. They manage the award-winning Passive Haus building which also has a community café and rooms for hiring. It is run by volunteers and paid staff. <https://lordshiphub.org.uk/>
- Edible Landscapes, Finsbury Park, N4. This organisation manages a space to show how sustainable, permaculture techniques can be used to grow fruit and vegetables. <https://ediblelandscapeslondon.org.uk/>

Most recently, we have begun to develop new stakeholder groups such as the Parks Accessibility Steering Group, which comprises of representatives from disability action groups in Haringey; The SEND Parents Group, Haringey Wheelchair Users Group, Haringey over 50's Forum and accessible activity group Pedal Power, along with internal colleagues from Adult Services and Council Members. They were formed during the consultation process to install a Changing Places facility in Finsbury Park in the spring of 2021.

We are also exploring the use of Manor Lodge in Finsbury Park to be used by the Museum of Homelessness as a base for their program of activities to tackle homelessness and housing inequality through research, events, workshops, campaigns, and exhibitions. <https://museumofhomelessness.org/>



Finsbury Park Changing Place Toilet being opened by users and Councillor Hearn

Current volunteering in Haringey's parks and greenspaces

The 2019 survey of Haringey Friends of Parks Forum shows the important role they play and the benefits of working with and supporting them. This is backed up by the minuted discussions with Council officers at the bi-monthly Friends Forum meeting. Although every site and every group have their own character, there are some common activities. Their top three activities which help to achieve the aims identified in this plan tend to include:

Litter picking

- Taking an active and, sometimes, leading role in tackling litter and helping raise awareness about the effects of litter on the biodiversity and natural areas. Promoting recycling to help combat the climate emergency

Community Events

- Grassroots events either promoting awareness of an issue effecting the park e.g. Wildlife, Youth Sports, Rivers and water bodies, or to support and encourage the cultural diversity within the immediate community through music, arts and food.

Planting

- Increasing, managing, and maintaining the biodiversity in parks and greenspaces.

Promotion and news

- Managing parks notice boards, e-lists, websites, social media

Development

- Discussing and proposing ideas and projects to improve a site and develop a vision for its future

Liaison

- Liaising with staff and managers regarding maintenance and repairs, anti-social behaviour etc
- Linking up with local stakeholders e.g. sports team, adjacent school, site café, nearby residents association

Within the Friends 2019 survey, the groups identified that they would like more Council resource to support them with their administration and fundraising capacity, as well as better and more direct communications with the Parks Service. In response to this the Parks Service will be introducing two new posts to support engagement and volunteering in parks and greenspaces.

Haringey has a very strong and well-established Friends network that has played a significant role in helping to establish the National Federation of Parks and Green Spaces, the umbrella organisation for the 7,000 local Friends groups throughout the UK.

The Friends of Lordship Recreation Ground (FLR) have also established the Parks Community UK platform as a subsidiary of the National Federation of Parks and Green Spaces. Parks Community received NESTA Lottery funding to develop and share good practice, case studies and advice guides for Community Empowerment and Co-Management of green space between Friends and local authorities based. This was based upon the successful working relationship they developed with the Council for the regeneration of Lordship Rec that was completed in 2012. One of the outputs from the NESTA project was a 'Ladder of Involvement' to help Friends Groups identify their current relationship with their local authority Park's service. (Appendix 2)



The State of UK
Parks: Heritage
Lottery Fund
report 2016

Current resources

The Parks and Leisure Service comprises of a number of teams, each has a role in supporting community engagement and volunteering.

Park Project Development Team

The Park Project Development team focuses on improvements to infrastructure. They inspect hard assets in parks such as paths, fences, bins, benches and lead on larger funded project work such as installation of new play areas and sports courts. They are also the primary contact for park stakeholders and groups, liaising and communicating on a day-to-day basis about plans, concerns, and meeting stakeholders to enable a better communication.

Park Operations Team

The Park Operations Team deals with the day-to-day horticultural maintenance of all our parks and greenspaces. They also manage and organise all the litter and waste clearance. They are the front-line staff and are often approached by members of the public and members of the friends for support. They are key to providing on the ground support when working with large corporate volunteer groups or waste collections after volunteer led litter picks and horticulture sessions.

Active Communities Team

The Active Communities Team oversee and develop partnerships with sports and leisure providers and produce a framework for sports and play improvements based on evaluated need. Their aim is to find ways to encourage people to lead more active lives, particularly those from seldom heard from groups. They regularly work closely with small local sports providers to support the work they are doing and produce a timetable of holiday activities.

Events and Partnerships Team

The Events and Partnerships team are responsible for managing the booking of parks for all types of events, from small community led to large music and performance events. They also coordinate the Green Flag inspections with Keep Britain Tidy and liaise regularly with Friends groups and stakeholders on usage of parks and greenspaces. This team also manage the Small Parks Grant scheme, which is a pot of funding open to stakeholders to support events and activities they organise themselves.

Arboriculture and Nature Conservation

The Arboriculture and Nature Conservation team are responsible for all the trees in the borough, with a focus on trees in parks and greenspaces, highways and schools. This includes managing inspections, maintenance, felling, planting and care. They are

looking at furthering the involvement of residents in the planting, maintenance and care of street trees.

Part of their team focus on Nature Conservation which includes increasing and managing biodiversity across the borough and supporting the work of friend's groups and stakeholders to do the same. The development of the Biodiversity Action Plan is part of their remit as is managing the partnership with The Conservation Volunteers (TCV). TCV work with us to create a program of volunteer opportunities within nature reserves and natural areas across the borough, they also offer training, education and technical input.

Haringey's policies and plans

Building a fairer, greener borough – Haringey Labour Manifesto 2022-26

Following the local elections in May 2022 the Council's ambition and priorities are based on putting residents at the heart of everything the Council does. For the remainder of 2022 and into 2023, the Council will work with residents to develop the Haringey Local Deal. The Haringey Local Deal will seek to empower communities to make change, putting local people at the forefront of decision-making. The Biodiversity Action Plan will support the delivery of the Haringey Local Deal and in turn the manifesto commitments.

Below we have included extracts from the Manifesto that the BAP will help to either directly deliver or support.

Inclusion and Wellbeing

Directly

- Community gardening and tree planting on estates and trees
- Co-produce designs for pocket parks, community gardens and street side verges

Support

- Participatory budgeting to help the council set its spending priorities
- Contribute to the development of the Young Voices Programme

Climate Change and Sustainability

Directly

- Plant street trees until each ward reaches 30% canopy cover
- Plant 10,000 new trees by 2030
- Invest in sustainable drainage systems to reduce flooding
- Work to create three brand new nature reserves by 2026 and introduce Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation

Support

- Reduce and eliminate the use of single use plastics
- Install green pollution barriers on schools on main roads
- Explore green energy production in parks
- Identify sites for local food growing can take place

Quality Parks

Directly

- Install more LED Parks lighting to keep people safe

Support

- Apprenticeships
- SEND opportunities

Other plans within the Parks and Greenspaces Strategy also support these objectives

- **The Water Course and Flood Risk Plan** provides details of opportunities for engaging with park communities on supporting the care and maintenance of local rivers and bodies of water.
- **Biodiversity Action Plan** gives guidance regarding the needs of our local environment and how the Council can help, both as a service but also as a community. It includes opportunities for engaging communities in increasing biodiversity, reducing our carbon footprint, and tackling the climate crisis.
- **Tree and Woodland Management Plan** details the role trees have in shaping our landscape, the positive impact of trees on carbon emissions and scope that communities can engage in a boroughwide tree planting

Wider policy context

Haringey

- The Local Plan (In development) <https://www.haringey.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning/planning-policy/local-plan>
Haringey's dedicated plan for land use policy including parks and greenspaces
- Equalities Profile for Haringey <https://www.haringey.gov.uk/local-democracy/about-council/equalities-haringey> These documents present a summary of the characteristics of the borough's population against the protected characteristics defined in the Equality Act 2010. Along with the Borough Plan Equality Impact Statement they help the Park Service to understand the wider context of the inequalities that are faced by people from these protected communities as well as detailing the specific challenges and their impact on health outcomes across communities and areas of Haringey
- The Climate Change Action Plan <https://www.haringey.gov.uk/environment-and-waste/going-green/net-zero-carbon-haringey> This plan covers the approach that

the Council intends to take to become a Net Zero Carbon borough by 2041. It received significant community interest and engagement during its development. The document details the impact of higher emissions on our ecosystems and some of the actions the Council can take to reduce these impacts, such as encouraging sustainable travel and offsetting carbon output with street greening and sustainable planting in Parks and Greenspaces

- The Health and Wellbeing Strategy <https://www.haringey.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/health/health-and-wellbeing-strategy> This document is in draft form at time of writing, but looks at the facilities that are already available to residents to help improve their health and wellbeing, including being more active.

Regional

- The London Plan 2021 <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/london-plan> The London Plan 2021 is the Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London. It sets out a framework for how London will develop over the next 20-25 years and the Mayor's vision for Good Growth. While Parks and Greenspaces feature within the plan in chapter 8- Green Infrastructure and Natural Environment, it also sets out the vision for building strong and inclusive communities as one of the main tenants of the plan. Haringey's Borough Plan is informed by the vision of the London Plan
- Good Parks for London 2020- <https://parksforlondon.org.uk/resource/good-parks-for-london/> This document assesses each London Borough's Parks Service against ten criteria to enable comparison between them. It is a marker for what is working well, helping to improve performance across London's Parks Services.

National

- Heritage Lottery-The State of Our Parks- <https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/publications/state-uk-public-parks-2016>
This is the second report of this type. It shows a growing deficit between the rising use of parks and the declining resources available to manage them. It is vital that reports like this are considered when planning community engagement as it will help to support requests for additional resources and broaden the understanding of the relationship between the condition of parks and how people use them.
- Improving Access to Greenspace: A new review for 2020 - https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/904439/Improving_access_to_greenspace_2020_review.pdf
This document was produced by Public Health and looks at the benefits of green space and the associated health outcomes. It also identifies the barriers that some communities face when accessing greenspace and the work they are doing to combat this.
- Advice Guides for Friends Groups - from Parks Community UK
Setting up a Friends Group: <https://parkscommunity.org.uk/starting-a-friends-group/lets-be-friends/>
Making our groups stronger and more diverse: <https://parkscommunity.org.uk/community-involvement/making-our-groups-stronger-and-more-diverse/>

Improving relationships among user groups sharing a green space:

<https://parkscommunity.org.uk/community-involvement/how-to-user-groups/>

Partnership Working between Friends Groups and Landowners and Managers:

<https://parkscommunity.org.uk/park-green-space-management/partnership-working-with-landowners-and-managers/>

What is community empowerment, and how can we make it happen?

<https://parkscommunity.org.uk/community-involvement/what-is-community-empowerment-and-how-can-we-make-it-happen/>

'Better Friends' Strength Checker

<https://parkscommunity.org.uk/betterfriends>

Key issues and challenges

This section identifies the key issues and challenges to community engagement and volunteering in parks and greenspaces. These issues and challenges have been identified from engagement undertaken to help inform this plan and the wider PGSS as well as by drawing on the wider policy context. The action plan will reflect how we aim to approach these.

Community engagement issues and challenges

Enablement

Widespread community engagement and volunteering depends on having a supportive, enablement infrastructure in place at site level and across the borough.

This includes a dedicated community or Friends Group at each site committed to generating appropriate and effective volunteering initiatives and opportunities in the long term.

Such groups need an effective and ongoing support infrastructure. This includes:

- peer-to-peer communication, encouragement and sharing of good practice, as provided by the Haringey Friends of Parks Forum
- regular communication and liaison with the relevant operational and project staff and management through a supportive Parks Service
- additional expert and capacity support from additional Parks Service officers and a third sector body, such as The Conservation Volunteers

Inclusion and diversity

As mentioned previously Haringey is a culturally diverse borough and this can be seen in the usage of our parks and greenspaces. There is little to no targeted engagement with seldom heard from communities to understand how they use parks and what improvements, or activities might help them to increase their use and engagement in the development of parks and greenspaces.

There is emerging research that indicates that many in BAME communities are less likely to visit the natural environment for leisure and that their preferences for usage

often differ to those that the areas are designed by and for, who are usually older, educated and from white ethnic backgrounds. (*Weeds, Wildflowers and Whiteness, Snaith.B, 2016. Appendix 6*)

The Council do not currently understand all the barriers that prevent seldom heard from communities from engaging as stakeholders in parks and greenspaces. Parks can be potentially contested spaces, with the demands on their resources coming from several different groups. Often those with the loudest voice or most obvious interest can be heard above others.

The Park's Service currently has limited resources to support the sort of targeted engagement needed to ensure that seldom heard from communities are meaningfully included in park development and improvement conversations as key stakeholders.

Our current and main form of engagement is through key stakeholders such as Friends of Park Groups, but the Council acknowledge that these groups and indeed our own parks staff could be more representative of our diverse community. Many Friends Groups' core activists tend to be predominantly older, white, more educated residents with English as a first language, but they are also challenged by their lack of time and capacity to target seldom heard from communities as they are voluntary groups themselves. Many of the groups try hard to attract a representative membership through a range of means, including the development of social media and a focus on building relationships with local stakeholder and user groups.

The Council do not have a clear and meaningful plan detailing our approach to targeted, active engagement with park users and seldom heard from communities.

Budgets and resources

Each of the 50 Friends Groups has an identified officer from the Park Projects Development Team who they have direct contact with. They are also invited to spotlight inspections with officers to engage with the program of repairs and improvements.

The introduction of two new roles, a Community Engagement and Partnerships Officer and a Volunteering Officer, will help the Council to focus resources on engaging with seldom heard from groups to better understand the needs of those communities within our parks and greenspaces and create a toolbox of resources to help strengthen existing and support emerging groups and partnerships. Additional resources are needed to provide further targeted activities such as an annual celebration of volunteering, a funding stream dedicated to promoting physical activities aimed at seldom heard from groups and those most in need of improving their health outcomes and supporting the continued growth of stakeholder groups interested in increasing biodiversity, natural areas and community food growing projects.

Resources are also needed to help develop a process for capturing usage and data as there is currently no consistent method for achieving this.

It would also be beneficial to provide a program of training on inclusion and engagement, for staff and stakeholders, to start the behaviour change needed to ensure the changes made to the service are fundamental and long lasting. The new

posts will also enable investigation and application for matched funding to support targeted engagement.

How parks are used and by who

The impact of Covid 19 and the subsequent lockdowns on parks and greenspaces is a national issue. The usage of parks, and their public profile and appreciation, greatly increased. Resources were focused on keeping parks and green spaces safe and open for daily exercise and socialising, as such the Council were only able to provide a reactive service. This highlighted the importance for better investigating, understanding and provision for the needs of seldom heard from communities, particularly as the Council do not currently have reliable and consistent data usage. This is something that needs to be developed.

Parks can sometimes be contested spaces, with the use and behaviour of different groups being off putting or unappreciated by other users. Conflicts can arise between different groups for several reasons; young people being loud can make older people feel unsafe, dogs are seen as unclean by some religious groups who may feel they should not be in public spaces, cyclists and joggers “taking over” footpaths and moving too fast for users with less or limited mobility for example. Tackling these potential conflicts can be very challenging and require engagement with and support from a range of stakeholders including Friends, Parks Service Staff, seldom heard from groups and from the Council’s Communications and Enforcement services

Volunteering issues and challenges

Volunteering plays an important role in the improvement and development of parks and greenspaces. A 2019 survey of Haringey’s Friends of Parks Group (*appendix 7*) revealed that an estimated 45,000 volunteer hours were spent improving parks and greenspaces, these convert to the equivalent of approximately £600,000 of economic value. The same survey revealed several issues and challenges to volunteering for these groups and on a wider scale.

Other than this survey in 2019, there is currently no regular method for collecting this information from Haringey Friends of Parks Groups on a regular basis. TCV collect data from the session that they lead across the borough, for the period between 1st April 2019 and 31st March 2020:

- 206 Conservation volunteering sessions run by TCV Haringey
- 1,789 volunteers attended those sessions
- 90 school sessions run by TCV Haringey

In addition, many Friends groups fundraise and apply for grants for improvements to park features and facilities, or for activities. This brings in much needed extra resources that the Council is unable to access or manage. National Heritage Lottery Fund research in 2016 estimated that Friends Groups nationally raised over £70m pa this way, around £12,000 per group at that time – which would equate to around £600,000 pa in Haringey. This community volunteering effort needs to be encouraged, supported, and celebrated.

Many groups find getting started to be one of the barriers to engaging in parks and greenspaces. Creating a clear route to getting involved in a park or greenspace will help ensure that a group starts with the good understanding of roles and responsibilities as well as setting out aims and objectives. More established groups need understanding of their needs to supporting their growth, along with clear communication routes.

Communication

While the current Park Project Development Officer roles have helped to create clearer communications routes for Friends Groups and other interested parties, there remains some misunderstanding and confusion about which team in the Parks Service deals with which issues. This leads to delays in replying or taking action and subsequently the relationship between the voluntary group and the Parks Service can become strained.

There is no formal agreement or understanding with the Park Service. This adds to the pressures on the service to accommodate the needs of the groups and for the groups to understand their role within the parks. The development of a Memorandum of Understanding is intended to help to define the roles and responsibilities of the Council and voluntary organisations.

Developing Corporate Volunteering

The Council do not currently have the resource in the Park Service to support Corporate Volunteering, which usually brings with it funding and groups of people that can take on larger projects such as tree planting, mulching, and watering etc, this means the Council miss out on providing impactful improvements and potentially a source of income.

Corporate volunteer groups are also sometimes able to offer specialist support and training, which could upskill Friends or other voluntary groups, again the Council do not currently have the resource to take advantage of this potential offer.

A strong Friends Group may be able to take up this option. The Friends of Lordship Rec have a 5yr MOU agreement with Trees for Cities (TfC) to hold corporate volunteering sessions in the park. The Friends get some payment from TfC for preparing and being present during each session, but TfC undertake the supervision of the extra volunteers.

Dedicated resource is needed to pursue and build the relationship with potential corporate volunteers. Projects will need to be identified and costed to incorporate any resource needed to support the organisation and logistics. The costing should be included in the offer to corporate volunteers to ensure the projects have a positive financial outcome for the Parks Service.

Resources

Without a clear idea of the type and amount of volunteering opportunities in parks and greenspaces or the support systems needed to see them completed it will be

increasingly difficult to be able to engage communities, including seldom heard from communities in a meaningful and long-term way.

Further investigation and the development of a tool kit to enable groups to record and report back on the work that they are doing, as well as their aspirations for future development will help to build a clearer picture of the resources and support needed from the Council.

Opportunities

The challenges that the Council faces can be met by identifying the opportunities to make real and lasting changes, such as:

- developing a system for capturing and sharing volunteer input data between the Council, partners, stakeholders and park groups
- developing a structured programme of engagement to ensure the Council are hearing from all groups, with specific focus on seldom heard from groups and those that rarely use parks
- expanding the role of TCV so they can provide greater opportunities for volunteering, training and education, and the management of nature reserves and wild areas, to support the need for better managed and increased biodiversity
- developing a training offer to volunteer groups to help them to expand their base, increase their output and reach and to identify funding streams to support the work they do
- investigating, developing and implementing a program of micro volunteering opportunities in response to the hybrid working arrangements as a result of the impact of Covid 19
- expand the offer of doorstep volunteering through working with partners to offer more opportunities for parklets, street planting and greening projects
- investment in resources that will help to supply colleagues, partners and groups with plants and trees for greening projects, such as the nursery at Finsbury Park
- developing a program of meaningful engagement activities focused at seldom heard from groups
- supporting the emergence of greenspace champions from seldom heard from communities
- organising events that celebrate the role of volunteers in parks and greenspaces, including those that focus on inclusion from seldom heard from groups and engage with both park users and non-users.
- expanding our work with partners to ensure the Council are making best use of existing networks and providing opportunities for their contacts to engage with parks
- identifying funding streams and opportunities to increase income through partnership working e.g. Public Health programs, Corporate Volunteering, facility hire etc
- increasing investment across the Parks and Leisure Teams so they are better resourced to fulfil the demand for green, safe, and accessible parks and greenspaces

Partners

The Council already has several formal partnerships with organisations that support volunteering in Haringey. The Council also work with other Council departments to provide volunteering opportunities to their customers and clients. The Council want to build on these relationships and use these informal agreements to work with Friends groups and continue enhancing parks and green spaces.

The Council have also identified new potential partnerships that will help to achieve the aims and objective set out in this plan.

Current partners

Friends of Parks Groups

50 voluntary groups that have formed to support and champion Parks and Greenspaces across Haringey, from large district parks, such as Finsbury Park, Lordship Recreation Ground and Queens Wood to smaller local parks and gardens such as Nightingale Gardens, Palace Gates planters and Albany Crescent. The groups and senior Council representatives meet bi-monthly through the Haringey Friends of Parks Forum.

The Conservation Volunteers (TCV)

The Conservation Volunteers (TCV) Haringey, are based at Railway Fields in Harringay Ward. They are the local branch of a national charity that has been working with volunteers for over 60 years. They have an inclusive approach to their volunteering activities and work with children and adults from all backgrounds. They have a formal agreement with the Council to manage and maintain areas of nature conservation in the borough and to support some Friends groups in their parks.

They run sessions across the borough in several locations where interested people can join for a few hours and be supported to take part in a manual volunteer session to improve an area of special interest for nature conservation. They hold regular practical work sessions at several parks and greenspaces across the borough, including The Woodland and Spinney at Lordship Rec, Tunnel Gardens, Queens Wood, The Paddock, Parkland Walk, Palace Gates Embankment and Railway Fields. Full details are on their website.

They also work with local schools and offer site visits to their conservation site at Railway Fields where the children can enjoy a practical experience in a natural environment.

They provide specialist training and advice to Friends Groups.

Youth Offending Team- Reparation (YOS)

The Youth Offending team is a multidisciplinary team of people who are responsible for the supervision of young people in custody and in the community from police

officers to outreach workers and parents. They aim to stop young people reoffending and the reparation program helps with this aim. Reparation is similar to Community Payback, but the session may only see one or two young people engaged at a time.

Currently the team have regular sessions at four parks throughout the week, Bruce Castle Park, Downhills Park, Chapmans Green and Wood Green Crown Court. They coordinate with the Park Operations staff to agree a range of work and access to tools and resources.

On speaking with the Youth Offending team they would like to have access to more opportunities across the borough and have a direct line of communication with Park Development Team to enable them to widen their offer to the young people that they work this.

Emerging partners

Parks Accessibility Steering Group

This group has come together primarily to discuss and guide the installation of Changing Places facilities in some of our district parks. Members include parents of children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), the Haringey Wheelchair Users Forum, Pedal Power, an accessible bike organisation and Disability Action Haringey. They have provided invaluable expertise and insight about the needs of disabled people.

Public Health

Over past year the Park Service has been working with colleagues in the CCG, Adult Services and Public Health on the “Parks and Ageing Well” Pilot aimed at finding out and understanding the barriers that older people face when thinking about facilities in parks as means support their physical and mental wellbeing. This initial work has shown that there is significant interdependence between the two services in terms of needing to improve reach into the seldom heard from communities and understanding their needs.

Bridge Renewal

The Bridge Renewal Trust is a charity based in Chestnuts Community Centre, Tottenham. Their mission is to deliver programmes and projects that enable people to live healthier, long and fulfilling lives- thus playing our part in working towards reducing health inequalities and building stronger communities.

They welcome the partnership approach adopted in the Borough Plan and are committed to working collaboratively to improve the health and wellbeing of Haringey residents through the delivery of the following services:

- Strategic Partner Services (Community Impact Haringey) - a vibrant, inclusive, viable and self-sufficient voluntary and community sector well placed to meet the needs of local people
- Volunteer Centre Haringey - promoting good volunteering practice and matching volunteers and organisations together

Bridge Renewal also organise an annual expo for voluntary organisations, along with an award ceremony. There is currently nothing specific to Friends Groups or others that volunteer within a park or greenspace.

The Bridge Renewal Trust welcome the opportunity to support Friends Groups and the Friends Forum with volunteering activities in parks and greenspaces and can offer informed support about governance, administration and information regarding funding applications and finance management for groups.

Trees for Streets

Trees for Streets is a not-for-profit enterprise, set up by the charity, Trees for Cities, and the civic innovator, Start with Local. It's supported by the Mayor of London and funded by the City Bridge Trust. In Haringey Trees for Streets works with the Council to support residents to sponsor street trees and celebration trees in parks. Trees for Streets have an ambition to plant ¼ million street trees over the next ten years. A new online portal for sponsorship has been launched to make it easier for residents to sponsor a tree. Sponsors are encouraged to help maintain the tree by watering it regularly for a reduced sponsorship cost. Trees for Streets are also able to directly fund some tree planting in the borough through national funding agreements.

Probation Services - Community Payback (PSCP)

Community Payback is a facility used by the Probation Services for offenders to complete any hours they have been given as part of their sentence. It gives offenders the opportunity to contribute to their communities in a constructive way. For example, they may pick litter, remove graffiti, redecorate public spaces and buildings, clear waste land. They will always be supervised by a member of the Probation Services. They do not provide tools or equipment to undertake these tasks.

Initial discussions have been had with this organisation but were curtailed by the lockdowns through 2020.

Tree Wardens

The Tree Warden initiative is something that the Council will revisit as it was successful in engaging and supporting resident led groups, such as Residents Associations and Neighbourhood Watch Schemes to take on some responsibility for tree identification, inspection and care.

Street Planters and Highways

Street planting is something that has seen a surge across London, and the Council have also seen instances across the Haringey. The Highways Team have identified opportunities for engaging with communities and have a draft plan for taking this forward. They have been working with the Regeneration Teams on several projects supported through GLA funding, such as the Gladstone Avenue pocket park and the Mayes Road Linear Park. There are many Residents Associations throughout Haringey who are supportive of improving their local street scene. They can be contacted through the Haringey Federation of Residents Associations.



Action Plan

The following Action Plan uses the three aims from the Parks and Greenspaces Strategy to inform how best these can be achieved.

Aim	Objective	Issue/Challenge	Action	Resource
Inclusion	To create a framework that will help us work cooperatively with all park users and stakeholders, with targeted engagement with seldom heard from communities	Engagement with communities generally, including Friends Groups and seldom heard from communities	<p>Identify groups or organisations and partners that already have relationships with communities</p> <p>Identify the barriers these groups most commonly face when attempting to engage</p> <p>Develop a framework of proactive and purposeful engagement</p>	<p>Community Engagement and Partnership Officer</p> <p>Zonal Officers</p> <p>Park Development Team</p> <p>Operational Team</p>
Inclusion	To better understand and appreciate the role of Friends Groups and other key stakeholders	Behaviour change and buy in from internal and external stakeholders	Develop a program of training and mentoring support to develop greater understanding and more inclusive work practices	<p>Community Engagement and Partnership Officer</p> <p>Greenspace Volunteering Officer</p> <p>Workforce Plan</p>
Inclusion	To work with partners to identify and reduce areas of potential concern and conflict in parks and green spaces.			
Inclusion	To develop a Plan with identified actions and targets to support community engagement and volunteering in parks, green spaces and street planting	Formalise the relationship between the Friends Groups and Park Service	Co-produce a Memorandum of Understanding or similar guiding document to bring together the already supportive relationship	Greenspace Volunteering Officer

Aim	Objective	Issue/Challenge	Action	Resource
Inclusion	Expand on the range of groups that contribute to the design, management, marketing and usage of parks and green spaces by developing regular and ongoing engagement with BAME, faith, younger, older, disabled women and girls and LGBT communities	Champion volunteering and scope of our reach into seldom heard from communities and groups	Develop a program of events and activities that celebrate volunteering, including a focus on reaching seldom heard from groups	Community Engagement and Partnership Officer Greenspace Volunteering Officer Zonal Officers Operational Team
Inclusion	Developing more active, independent community groups in parks and green spaces	Partners, stakeholders and community groups may be struggling to achieve, or are resistant to change and will need support and targeted resources to help them feel more prepared and open to the changes needed to be more inclusive in their practices	<div>Communicate with internal stakeholders, initially about why the Council is taking this community engagement approach and thereafter in support of implementing and sustaining the approach</div> <div>Develop a Marketing and Communications Plan that supports increased usage and involvement by seldom heard from groups.</div>	Community Engagement and Partnership Officer Greenspace Volunteering Officer Parks and Leisure Communications and Marketing Officer
Inclusion	Engaging a larger and more diverse group of people in volunteering in parks and green spaces and in street based volunteering	Need to build on present understanding of the groups, communities and needs, with additional focus on seldom heard from communities	Recruit a Community Engagement and Partnership Officer	Workforce Plan

Aim	Objective	Issue/Challenge	Action	Resource
Inclusion	Developing more active, independent community groups in parks and green spaces	Partners, stakeholders and community groups may be struggling to achieve, or are resistant to change and will need support and targeted resources to help them feel more prepared and open to the changes needed to be more inclusive in their practices	<p>Communicate with internal stakeholders, initially about why the Council is taking this community engagement approach and thereafter in support of implementing and sustaining the approach</p> <p>Develop a Marketing and Communications Plan that supports increased usage and involvement by seldom heard from groups.</p>	<p>Community Engagement and Partnership Officer</p> <p>Greenspace Volunteering Officer</p> <p>Parks and Leisure Communications and Marketing Officer</p>

Aim	Objective	Issue/Challenge	Action	Resource
Service Quality	To improve communications between key stakeholders to enable better partnership working for the benefit of Haringey's parks and green space users	<p>Much greater commitment to communication and informing to promote better public understanding and to support behaviour change/behaviour modification</p> <p>Supporting staff to fully understand the role of Friends Groups and how better communications and partnership working supports the Parks and Greenspaces Strategy</p>	<p>To provide more information in parks and via Council and Friends websites/media that supports the strategy priorities of inclusion, mitigating climate change</p> <p>Develop in-house training on improving communications and a shared understanding of the role of Friends Groups</p>	<p>Community Engagement and Partnership Officer</p> <p>Zonal Team</p> <p>Projects Team</p> <p>Operations Team</p>
Service Quality	To celebrate the achievements of the parks and green spaces sector	Building resilience and capacity of existing groups to meet the needs of the wider community and park users	Plan and organise a calendar of events to help promote, celebrate and recognise achievements across different sectors	<p>Greenspace Volunteering Officer</p> <p>Community Engagement and Partnership Officer</p>

Aim	Objective	Issue/Challenge	Action	Resource
Service Quality	To develop more opportunities for corporate volunteering and similar schemes that provide social benefit	Building resilience and capacity of existing groups to meet the needs of the wider community and park users	Expand the role of TCV so they are able to provide more opportunities for volunteering, training and education	Greenspace Volunteering Officer
		Finding alternative sources of income and funding to support engagement and volunteering in parks	To recruit a Greenspaces Volunteer Officer to work with Friends groups and other volunteering partners and to develop an improved corporate volunteering offer.	Community Engagement and Partnership Officer Greenspace Volunteering Officer
		Resources needed for the Parks and Greenspaces Strategy	Develop a prioritised program of growth and development and training to up skill staff and partners	Workforce Plan
		Work towards creating a more diverse Operational workforce	Advertise role opportunities through the Friends Groups, Forum and Stakeholders	Workforce Plan

Aim	Objective	Issue/Challenge	Action	Resource
Climate Change	Improving access to nature for BAME and other seldom heard from communities	Need to develop a better understanding of the place of the natural environment to different cultural and ethnic groups and how to make it more accessible for them	<p>Provide activities and events that help promote access to the Natural Environment to people from BAME and other communities</p> <p>Develop a programme of activities and events that showcases and supports increased usage and involvement by seldom heard from groups including activities to involve communities in nature and activities</p>	Community Engagement and Partnership Officer Greenspace Volunteering Officer
Climate Change	Offering skills and knowledge training for volunteers to enable them to better contribute towards meeting targets for biodiversity.	The need for additional support and information about climate change issues, challenges and the means to mitigate them	To provide more information in parks and via Council and Friends websites/media that supports the strategy priorities of inclusion, mitigating climate change	Community Engagement and Partnership Officer

Appendices

1. Haringey's Public Health Report 2019

https://www.haringey.gov.uk/sites/haringeygovuk/files/health_inequalities_public_health_report_2019_a4.pdf

2. National Council for Voluntary Organisations

https://www.ncvo.org.uk/images/documents/policy_and_research/volunteering/Volunteer-experience_Full-Report.pdf

3. The Conservation Volunteers- Green Gym Evaluation

<https://www.tcv.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/green-gym-national-evaluation-2016-full.pdf>

4. Taken from the Parks Community website- <https://parkscommunity.org.uk/>

5. Haringey Council- Borough Plan, Equality Impact Assessment 2019-2023-

https://www.minutes.haringey.gov.uk/documents/s107023/Borough%20Plan%20EQIA_FINAL.pdf

6. Shape Landscape Architects, Bridgit Snaith- Weeds, Wildflowers and Whiteness.

https://issuu.com/shapelandscapearchitects/docs/the_queen_elizabeth_park_w_hose_val

7. Also discussed at the Future of London roundtable webinar-

<https://www.futureoflondon.org.uk/2020/10/20/parks-and-green-space-does-everyone-feel-welcome/>

LADDER OF INVOLVEMENT

for a Friends of the Park Group at a site, or part of site

In Control	You run your site, or the parts of it you want to.
Key partner	You are fully informed about all matters you want to know about. Involved in all the decision-making you are interested in.
A partner	Regularly informed about some key issues. Involved in some of the decision-making
Consulted Regularly	Informed about some things. Consulted sometimes.
Consulted occasionally	Only contacted when it suits the management, maybe on one issue. Your emails and phone calls are replied to.
Existence noted	Your activities and views are noted but carry little weight.
Ignored	Your efforts and views are ignored.

parkscommunity.org.uk

8. Volunteering in Parks

The picture of volunteering in Haringey Parks and Green Spaces

As part of the information gathering for this plan a survey was sent out to the Haringey Friends of Parks Forum. There were fifteen questions which covered governance, membership, offer and need. Twenty-one groups filled in the survey, of that twenty-one, twelve were groups from a park or green space with a Green Flag. The results of the survey are reproduced as an appendix.

The majority of groups are constituted, which helps to give a clear message that they have a mandate to represent parks users and apply for external funding.

Three quarters of the groups have a website and most use Facebook and /or Twitter as additional forms of communication to members and the wider community. Four groups also use WhatsApp and Instagram. But under half regularly update social media platforms.

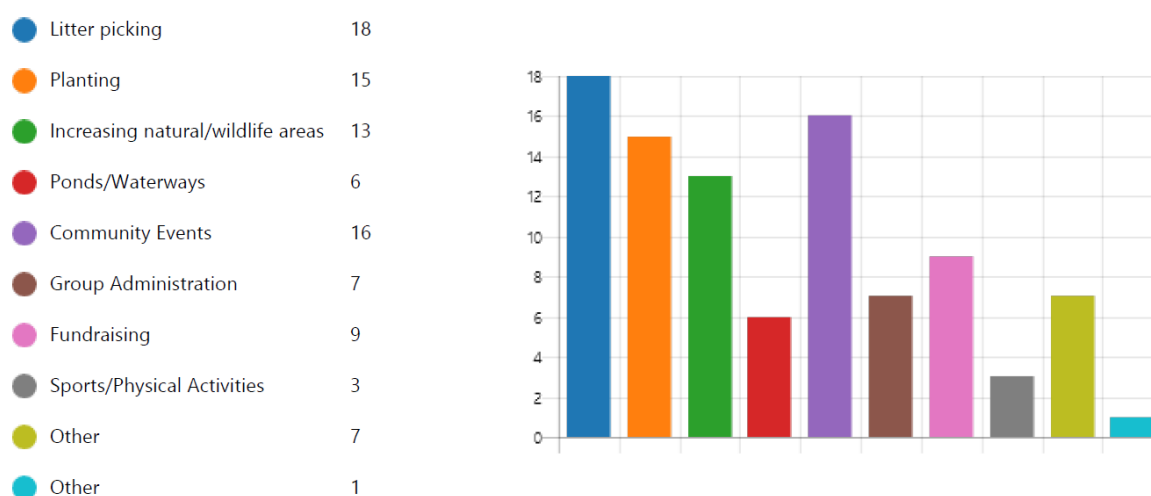
Eleven of the groups have action plans.

Seventeen of the groups have a membership between 1-200, the majority of those have between 1-50 members. The remaining four groups have 200 - 500>.

The membership results contrast greatly when looking at the number of active members within the groups. Eight groups have only 1-10 active members, twelve groups have 11-30 active members, with only one group reporting that they have more than 30 active members.

The following charts are reproduced here as the information they contain is easier to discuss with the results present. These questions had the option to select multiple answers.

What types of volunteering activity does your group focus on?

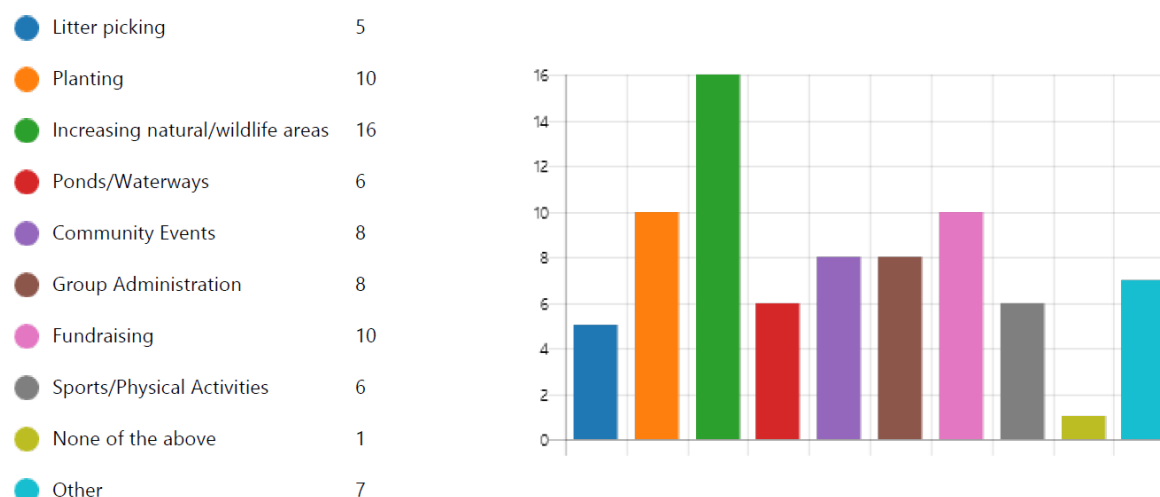


The majority of groups organise litter picking, community events, planting and increasing natural/wildlife areas. Less than half the groups fundraise or do a considerable amount of administration.

Six groups have pond/waterways that they use to offer volunteering and three take part in sports/physical activities as part of their volunteering.

The option of “other” had additional comments including Promotion, raising awareness of a space, liaising with the Council, therapeutic gardening, working with local schools and colleagues, community food growing, bee keeping, art projects

What type of volunteering activities would your group like to develop?



In comparison to the current offer of volunteering in parks and green spaces the results above show significant increases in the Friends groups desire to do more to increase natural/wildlife areas, planting, and fundraising.

“Other” activities that groups identified they would like to increase are indicated below

Protect both green spaces and increase biodiversity

More liaison with community groups in the area. Promoting safe streets project. Education and training in

Increased use of the Church Tower and increased awareness of the existence of both Tower and Churchyard

Turning bowls pavilion into a community hub

More activities for families introducing them to the natural environment and wildlife in the park

Improving footpaths

Community food growing, Bee keeping, Eco Arts, Cycling, walking, environmental cafe and campaigns up cycling and reuse, books, paint wood and clothes

Groups were asked to estimate how many hours volunteering they believe their groups does in a 12-month period. Over half the groups estimate they volunteer

between 1-500 hours a year, six groups volunteer between 501-1500 hours, with the remaining three groups estimating volunteer hours between 1500 to over 2000.

The groups weren't asked if they keep accurate records of all the volunteering that they do, but if the list of current volunteering, the hours spent and active members are compared, there is a discrepancy that suggests the groups have under estimated their volunteering hours in the main. Further analysis of the results, in discussion with the Friends Groups, are needed to understand if this is the case.

The total economic value of these volunteer hours is estimated to be just under £600,000 for an estimated 45000 hours over the year

The calculation used in this instance was based on the assumption that half of the hours would be used fulfilling basic manual work in the park or green space and half would be used for either skilled manual or skilled administration work. The current London Living Wage was used to calculate the basic manual wage total and a higher figure of fifteen pounds was used to calculate the skilled manual and administration.

45000 hours divided by 2 equals 22500 hours

22500 hours multiplied by £10.95 per hour = £224,375 basic manual work

22500 hours multiplied by £15 per hour = £337,500 skilled manual and administration work

Giving an estimated total of £583,875 worth of work in our parks and green spaces.

On the question of funding over half the groups accessed the Small Parks Grant available through the Council. The next largest source of income for the groups is through community events that they organise. Only four groups accessed external funding listed, with one group receiving funding from four different sources. Six groups did not make any funding applications.

Other sources of funding were from the Tottenham Grammar School Foundation, a local developer, Veolia, subscriptions, and crowdfunding.

The final section of the survey asks questions about further support, what the groups would like support with and other organisations that they would like to or would consider working with.

Would you like more information and support from the Council for any of the following areas?

As can be seen majority of groups would like further information and support on fundraising, increasing natural/wildlife areas and planting, organising community events. The results here basically reflect the answers to the previous question about areas the groups would like to develop.

"Other" answers include

Support to develop the pavilion

More information and support from the Council in every area of parks maintenance

Training

Capturing rainwater for use in the park and toilet access

Art

Council collaboration is essential

Safety of trees

Lights and security, installation of notice boards, cycle path and bike racks for locking bikes, public seating area

A further question allowing groups to expand on their needs revealed that training, attracting, and retaining volunteers, support with administration and promotion and procuring new facilities were important to many groups. Having a strong connection and commitment from parks staff, particularly the nature conservation officer, was also a common theme.

The following question gave groups the opportunity to give a longer written answer. These can be seen in full in the appendix.

What could the Council do to improve the relationship with your group?

The common theme to these replies was about the level of communication with the Council both at a project officer level and within different departments. Groups recognise there are resource and capacity issues but would like to see more consistent and proactive communications. Many want parks to receive more investment, both in the park and at officer level.

The final three questions were regarding working with outside organisations to deliver projects or for one off volunteer sessions in their park or green space.

Twelve of the groups had worked with organisation like Trees for Cities and Probation services in their park, nine groups had not worked with any other organisations in their Park or Green Space. All twelve groups found working with other organisations to be a positive experience.

Those groups that hadn't worked with other organisations in their park or green space were asked if they would be interested in developing additional support for their space, 8 groups said they would be interested in developing those relationships and seven replied 'maybe'.

Next Steps

The answer to the survey will help to inform the actions for this plan and the action plans for the individual parks. They will also help officers to understand the needs of the Friends Groups and how they can best support the growth and resilience of the group, through the provision good communication and opportunities for the group to grow.

Communication

- Clear point of contact- Project Officer roles have helped with this, but there should be a liaison/support officer for the forum
- Open, honest communication
- More awareness about the role of Friends groups in parks within other departments
- Proactive Councillors and Cabinet members
- Championing the work of the Friends: Improving parks/green spaces, fundraising, community events etc.
- Regular meetings with all Friends groups, not just those with Green Flags
- Management Plans for all parks and green spaces, not just Green Flag parks

Needs

Support with.

- Training and capacity building: admin, funding, safeguarding, risk assessing, project planning. Perhaps through workshops
- Recruiting and retaining new members e.g. young people
- Working with other organisations: corporate groups, schools, TCV
- Finding experts and professional presence e.g. Youth service, probation service, school sessions

Other needs.

- Memorandum of Understanding with the Council
- Understanding and visiting other parks and locations to see what is possible
- Understanding how to work with local schools
- Codify the priorities for Friends

9. Draft Expression of Interest – Shared Spaces Scheme

Supported/Shared Spaces

Expression of Interest

Thank you for contacting Haringey Councils Parks Team regarding our Shared Spaces programme.

The Council are hoping to empower residents to take ownership of areas or facilities within parks and green spaces, with the view that working together we can have a truly positive impact on our environment.

So let's get started!

	Name/Description	Nearest postcode
Park Name or location description if not a park		

	Group Name and contact information	Your position in the group
Your group details		

Does your group have a constitution?	Yes	No
Does your group have insurance for the activities that you would like to carry out?	Yes	No

(tick as appropriate)

Tell us about your idea and plans for the park or green space

--

Please send the completed form to parkprojects@haringey.gov.uk with the subject line Shared Spaces and one of our officers will be in touch soon with information on the next step.

We look forward to working closely with you on this journey!

10. Draft Expression of Interest - Shared Spaces Scheme

Memorandum of Understanding

Between XXXXXXXXXXXX and Haringey Council for the area known as XXXXXXXXXXXX

Purpose

This Memorandum of Understanding ("MoU) forms the basis of the agreement between XXXXXXXXXXXX and Haringey Council.

The MoU is not a contractual agreement and does not impose any legal obligations on any party. The relationship between the XXXXXXXX and Haringey Council is based on mutual consent and understanding that this is based on a voluntary arrangement.

Aim

This document is designed to enable and empower Friends of Parks groups, Residents Associations and site-specific groups to take on shared responsibility of a park, area within a park or other green space with the Council.

Outcome

To build resilience in the volunteer communities within our Parks and Green Spaces in order to secure their future, increase biodiversity and potentially positively impact on the health and wellbeing of residents using and visiting the spaces.

Responsibilities

XXXXXXXXXX will be responsible for:

1. Providing designs and plans for any proposed work. These can be in the form of a simple sketch, or for more intricate works more detailed designs may be required
2. Providing an annual action plan of maintenance for the space
3. Providing an annual update regarding the activities of the group/association in the space, including numbers of volunteer hours
4. Having a constitution
5. Ensuring the group has the correct insurance for carrying out the activities planned
6. Ensuring risk assessments are completed for activities

XXXXXXXXXX will not be responsible for:

1. Any works that continue to be the remit of the Park Operations team within the Park or Green Space such as: grass cutting, litter, play equipment, paths, furniture, tree felling, hedge trimming, weed maintenance, unless it forms part of the agreed action plan.

Haringey Council will be responsible for:

1. Working collectively with the Friends Group/Residents Association/site specific Group to support the action plan and maintenance of the space
2. Providing support and guidance to the group when completing risk assessment and other compulsory obligations
3. Providing support to any funding applications the group may make for assistance in developing and/or maintaining the space
4. Maintaining a clear line of communication including providing the relevant information, conducting joint site visits and/or attending meetings as required
5. Maintaining all areas around and outside of the 'Shared Space' as well as any areas within the space that remain under their remit of work such as: grass cutting, tree felling, hedge trimming, weed maintenance etc
6. Requiring that any works within the space are within health and safety regulation and do not pose a danger to the general public that will also be using the space and raising any concerns with the group, giving them an opportunity and clear timeline for making any changes or improvements.

Haringey Council will not be responsible for:

1. Maintaining any additional features within the Shared Space unless agreed, or they pose a risk to the Health and Safety of the general public
2. Providing insurance cover for the activities of the group

Communication

Both parties agree to communicate openly and with the best interests of the 'Shared Space' at heart. They also agree to have open and transparent communications with other key stakeholders that may have a vested interest in the wider Park or Green Space.

Ending the MoU

The MoU may be ended by any party giving a two-month notice period. Notice must be given in writing, including the reasons for the termination.

Signed on behalf of XXXXXXXX _____

Name in block capitals _____

Position _____

Date / /

Signed on behalf of Haringey Council _____

Name in block capitals _____

Position _____

Date / /