



## **Diary Date**

12 June 2008

**EMBARGOED UNTIL SATURDAY 14 JUNE**

## **Children get active for Love Parks Week**

This week children will have plenty of reasons to get outdoors and get active as hundreds of park events take place across the country in celebration of Love Parks Week, taking place from 14 - 22 June.

Events will be held in some of Britain's best loved parks and green spaces, providing a wide range of healthy activities for children to get involved in, from health themed fun days for the whole community, to sports taster sessions and organised kids' walks.

This is the third year that parks charity GreenSpace has organised Love Parks Week, its annual awareness raising campaign, which this year highlights the role that parks can play in the health of children.

Childhood obesity is rising throughout the UK; according to the Department of Health, one fifth of children under the age of 16 are obese and this is set to rise to 25% of children by 2050. Action is needed to curb this trend, and Love Parks Week aims to showcase the nation's parks as natural playgrounds where children can sustain exercise through play, sports and exploring – for free!

And it's not just physical health that parks can benefit. Natural England, the government's countryside and land management agency, acknowledges that every child should experience their local natural environment to benefit their mental and physical health and further their social and cognitive development.

Paul Bramhill, chief executive of GreenSpace, said: "Rising childhood obesity levels are a growing concern, and so this year's Love Parks Week is all about demonstrating the many ways that parks can encourage children to play and get active outdoors, while having fun in a safe and free setting.

"Love Parks Week draws attention to the great opportunity we have to get children interested in the outdoors, and in doing so give them a great start in creating healthy lifestyles for their future."

Visit [www.loveparksweek.org.uk](http://www.loveparksweek.org.uk) for more information and to find out what's on in your local area.

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### **-Notes to Editors-**

- To arrange an interview or for press images please contact Jon Cornwell on 0118 946 9062.

- GreenSpace is a registered charity which works to improve parks and green spaces by raising awareness, involving communities and creating skilled professionals. For more information please go to [www.green-space.org.uk](http://www.green-space.org.uk)
- Love Parks Week is a national awareness raising campaign organised by the only UK charity dedicated to parks and green space, GreenSpace. The aim is to celebrate parks and draw attention to the benefits they offer and the issues surrounding them.
- Love Parks Week was launched in 2006, when it was celebrated by 200 park events attracting 150,000 attendees. In 2007 over 300 events took place during the week and encouraged over 250,000 people to get out into their local parks and green spaces.
- Other events taking place during the week include a national conference, Parks for Life, which will look at how to maximise the health potential of parks, and a round table debate to discuss the future of parks and what has been achieved a year on since the first debate took place in Love Parks Week 2007.
- For more information please contact:

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