

Friday 30 January – for immediate release

**BIG Lottery is holding a consultation on how lottery funding should be spent between now and 2015. GreenSpace is calling on its members and supporters to respond and make clear the demand for further funding for parks and green spaces.**

**GreenSpace's statement on the BIG Lottery consultation:**

The importance of parks to people's everyday lives was highlighted in the findings of GreenSpace's 2007 Park Life report, with 83% of respondents viewing their parks and green spaces as being the focal point for their communities. This clearly illustrates the importance of parks and green spaces to communities and is further backed up by research by MORI, on behalf of CABI Space, that showed that 91% of residents believe that public parks and open spaces improve the quality of their lives.

Early indications from unpublished studies currently being undertaken around Comprehensive Area Agreements, examining satisfaction with local areas, indicate that they will show that communities place as much importance on the quality of their local green spaces as they do the quality of housing in the area.

It is commendable that the Heritage Lottery Fund and BIG Lottery have recognised the significance of parks to communities, and have combined funds over the past three years to award over £150m to parks and green space. This has enabled considerable funding to continue for parks in the face of lottery funding being siphoned away from the main funds to support the Olympics.

To date only around 1- 2% of UK parks have benefited, but there is still high demand as funding programmes are significantly oversubscribed. It is therefore important that the lottery continues to fund public park projects in order to make a difference to the daily lives of communities.

The support and hard work of community and 'friends of' groups has been crucial to the work done to restore our parks and green spaces. Their achievements show how committed communities and local authorities are to working together to ensure quality parks and green spaces that are accessible to all.

GreenSpace is keen to see further funding to ensure these partnerships can continue to grow. We are calling on both community groups and local authorities to respond to the consultation and emphasise how much can be achieved by working in partnership, how the lottery can support this, and how much this can mean to the lives of the individuals who use the green space.

The consultation offers the opportunity for those that have successfully bid for lottery funding to convey the importance of this funding, what has been achieved, and how by working in partnership the community is at the heart of each project. We would also urge those considering applying for funding in the future to be explicit in the need for further funding opportunities, and to put forward the potential for effective partnership working.

This is an excellent chance to prove the demand for funding for parks and green spaces, and to ensure that the public's lottery ticket money really is spent where it will benefit everyone.

**Make your voice heard by going to [www.big-thinking.org.uk](http://www.big-thinking.org.uk) by February 27 2009.**