

## GreenSpace

### Media release

15<sup>th</sup> August 2011 – for immediate release

Diary date: Love Parks Week 21-29<sup>th</sup> July 2012 [www.loveparksweek.org.uk](http://www.loveparksweek.org.uk)

Diary date: Green space & health conference, London, 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2011

## Parks and green spaces need you

As a million people verify their love of green spaces through [Love Parks Week](#) and the implicit benefits these precious spaces bring are endorsed by [Macmillan Cancer Support](#), [Play England](#) and [RICS](#), charity GreenSpace appeal for the impetus to persist.

Martin Page, Chairman of GreenSpace said “As highlighted in our [Blue Sky Green Space](#) report, the benefits of parks and green space are immense, yet unfortunately the sector is struggling with severe budget cuts. We are at risk of seeing quality decline, which will lead to a drop in use; this in turn will have severe effects on health and wellbeing – mental, physical and social, plus let’s not forget if we lose these spaces the effect on the environment and economy, disinvestment in parks and green spaces makes no strategic or economic sense.”

Page asks “It’s time for organisations to start augmenting sustainably, releasing the full potential of parks and green spaces; putting back, what we are taking from them. We must keep the pressure up.”

GreenSpace insist that at a time when there is likely to be growing unemployment, less disposable income, increased stress and anxiety and pressure on family groups, money could not be better spent than reinvesting in parks. They warn that failure to do so will only result in burgeoning financial costs elsewhere in health and wellbeing costs and environmental management and sustainability, with the less tangible social cost being much higher.

The benefits of green spaces are backed by many leading organisations including mental health charity Mind, whose [Ecominds](#) campaign promotes the proven benefits that outdoor activity can have on conditions including depression and anxiety. Whilst Macmillan Cancer Support releases results from their latest study [Move More](#), suggesting that doctors are failing to inform cancer patients about the benefits of exercise.

A step towards showcasing the capability of green spaces, GreenSpace in partnership with Natural England will be holding a conference in November, looking at unlocking health potential from parks and green spaces, keynote speaker Dr William Bird will highlight why we should be reinvesting in parks as the panacea.

[GreenSpace](#) is urging organisations to support them with this important movement; enabling stronger campaigning and completion of further research and toolkits.

Please email Kelly Caulfield for further information: [kellyc@green-space.org.uk](mailto:kellyc@green-space.org.uk)

## Notes to editors

### Love Parks Week

Love Parks Week smashed records this year with over 1240 events taking place across the country, seeing one million people visit parks and green spaces across the week (23-31 July 2011). The variety of events which took place throughout the week was enormous showcasing what our parks and green spaces can and should continue to offer to society, with many events opening people's minds to new activities, groups, people and hobbies.

**Diary date: Love Parks Week 21-29<sup>th</sup> July 2012.** [www.loveparksweek.org.uk](http://www.loveparksweek.org.uk)

### GreenSpace

GreenSpace is a registered charity which works to improve parks and green spaces by raising awareness, involving communities and creating skilled professionals. [www.green-space.org.uk](http://www.green-space.org.uk).

**Save the date: Health conference in partnership with Natural England, London 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2011**

The [Blue Sky Green Space](http://www.green-space.org.uk/resources/GreenLINK/index.php) report outlines the many benefits that a diverse range of quality green spaces bring, covering health; communities; economic and environmental value. <http://www.green-space.org.uk/resources/GreenLINK/index.php>

### Macmillan Cancer Support

Results from Macmillan's latest study *Move More* highlight that doctors are failing to inform cancer patients about the benefits of exercise. *Move More: Physical activity the underrated 'wonder drug'*. Is a report highlighting evidence reviewed as part of Macmillan's more detailed 2011 report *'The importance of physical activity for people living with and beyond cancer: A concise evidence review.*

[http://www.macmillan.org.uk/Aboutus/News/Latest\\_News/Inactivityriskslongtermhealthof16millioncancersurvivors.aspx](http://www.macmillan.org.uk/Aboutus/News/Latest_News/Inactivityriskslongtermhealthof16millioncancersurvivors.aspx)

### Play England/Savlon

Savlon and Play England, in conjunction with Natural England, are calling upon families to share their safe local outdoor playing spaces, with the launch of an interactive online map. To coincide with the launch, Savlon and Play England have released new research showing that the outdoor world seems to be out of reach for many of today's children revealing that it is a myth that children prefer indoor based play activities such as computer games, with the majority actually preferring to play outside and that over 60 per cent of parents would like their children to play outdoors more often than they currently do.

<http://www.playengland.org.uk/news/2011/08/children-missing-out-on-the-great-outdoors.aspx>

### Mind

Mind's latest campaign *'Feel better outside, feel better inside'* promotes the benefits of outdoor activity to mental health. Highlighting research that shows that those who are more active have a greater sense of wellbeing and have lower rates of depression and anxiety. Even simple activities like taking a stroll in the park, or doing some gentle outdoor exercise can have big benefits for our mental wellbeing.

<http://www.mind.org.uk/ecominds>

### RICS

RICS – the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors publishes information paper on *Green infrastructure in urban areas*, it identifies how green infrastructure can be both understood and delivered, and aims to estimate the value of the natural world by taking account of the economic, health and social benefits we get from nature.

[http://www.rics.org/site/scripts/news\\_article.aspx?newsID=2261](http://www.rics.org/site/scripts/news_article.aspx?newsID=2261)

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/sustainable-business/value-green-infrastructure-spaces>

### Natural England

Natural England is the government's independent adviser on the natural environment. Established in 2006 our work is focused on enhancing England's wildlife and landscapes and maximising the benefits they bring to the public. <http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/>