

Proposed 1<sup>st</sup> draft of Terms of Reference

<p><b>Name of group:</b> GreenSpace East Midlands Steering Group</p>
<p><b>Purpose &amp; Goals:</b></p> <p>The steering group is responsible for the realisation of the forums vision, aims and objectives. It will achieve this through its structure, network and support mechanisms. Proposals and decisions will be presented and made at the steering group meetings.</p> <p>The forum has a vision, four aims and nine objectives. The vision is detailed below and the aims and objectives are detailed in Appendix 1.</p> <p><i>The Forum exists to provide a united voice dedicated to promoting, advocating and lobbying for the regeneration and sustainable future of quality green spaces throughout the East Midlands.</i></p>
<p><b>Members of steering group:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chair</li> <li>• Vice-Chair</li> <li>• Representative from public sector</li> <li>• Representative from voluntary sector</li> <li>• Green Flag Award Judges Association Committee representative for East Midlands (JAC)</li> <li>• (In attendance) Forum Manager (GreenSpace staff) (Meeting Secretary) and GreenSpace Regions Development Manager</li> <li>• *2</li> </ul> <p>All of the above roles need to be paid up members of GreenSpace East Midlands except the JAC rep.</p> <p>Other invitees -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional invitees can be invited at the Chair’s discretion in connection to particularly agenda items or relevant organisation update.</li> <li>• GreenSpace staff and GSEM members are permanent invitees.</li> </ul> <p><i>*2 should we have a representative from private sector.</i></p>
<p><b>Voting rights and governance:</b></p> <p>Voting rights are reserved to steering group members only, as detailed above; this excludes the forum manager and GreenSpace Regions Development Manager.</p> <p>Voting is by show of hands. The chair has the final casting vote if there is a tie. If a decision is required before the meeting period because of circumstances such as a deadline then the Forum Manager will either: send out a briefing with reply slip for steering group and GSEM members to complete and return, or seek approval from the Chair depending on which is most appropriate.</p> <p>The steering group quorum is 3.</p> <p>The Forum Manager will keep GSEM members informed of decisions to be made by circulation of the agenda and associated briefing notes when provided. Responses received will be read out by the Manager if the member is not present to represent themselves to ensure members views are appropriately considered by steering group.</p>

The Terms of Reference can be amended at a steering group meeting with an advance notice of two weeks provided to members. The Terms will be reviewed annually during the Annual Review.

Steering group meetings are quarterly. The Annual Review is held before the April steering group meeting.

Election of chair, vice-chair and all representatives except JAC is carried out annually at the annual review. The JAC representative is a role administered and appointed by Keeping Britain Tidy, part of the Green Flag Award Plus Partnership.

Nomination for steering group roles will be requested in March for approximately a 4 week period. If there is more than one nominee for a position, voting will be carried out by email via a voting slip. A voting slip will be sent to all GSEM members by the Forum Manager. Voting period will be for approximately 2 weeks. The successful candidates will be appointed at the Annual Review, the Chair's first meeting will be the steering group which follows the Annual Review (same day).

Candidates can stand for an unlimited number of years, provided they are fairly elected annually.

#### **Deliverables:**

The scope of the steering group includes the following powers, these may be carried out directly or through Forum Manager -

- To make decisions about the direction, work activities, funding and business of the GSEM forum including resources, projects, time-scales and partnerships.
- To give regional representation, consultation at regional and national events, policies and workshops etc. through its forum manager and chairs.
- To align/ link action points from GSEM action plan into GreenSpace National Forum business plan.
- To hold an annual review where members can attend.
- To hold an annual election for the steering groups volunteer positions of chair, vice-chair and other representatives.
- To liaise with GreenSpace with regard to the appointment of forum staff, currently a full-time Forum Manager and their subsequent personal development review.
- To apply for grants, attract funding and participate in fundraising opportunities as and when necessary, with GreenSpace's approval, where there is legal responsibility for carrying out associated activity.
- To seek funding through membership fee and/or partnership contribution, to set and vary rate at steering groups discretion but in communication with GreenSpace.
- To engage the services of contractors as and when necessary, through the assistance of GreenSpace.
- To organise and deliver events such as workshops, seminars and open meetings, making charges to participants, where and when appropriate.
- To explore and work in partnership (internally and externally) in the organising and delivery of such events including where appropriate receiving monetary contributions or services in-kind such as free use of venue. If contract needs to be signed, approval may need to be sought from GreenSpace.
- To explore and work in partnership on projects/ initiatives when appropriate, also receiving monetary contribution or services in-kind, where appropriate.
- To keep members and contributing partners informed of forthcoming proposals and made

<p>decisions at the steering group meeting, usually through briefing notes and agenda.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set up, close and give direction to working groups. Where appropriate give working group secretarial support through Forum Manager. Request representation and update reports from working group to steering group meetings, alternatively where appropriate representation can be provided by Forum Manager. Currently working group is Heads of Service meetings.</li> <li>• Where capacity allows, provide support to County Forum meetings, usually in organising and secretarial duties, also attend meetings providing and receiving supportive news and information.</li> </ul> <p>Background to forum scope and other details in Appendix 2. GSEM Action Plan detailed in Appendix 3.</p>
<p><b>Structure, reporting mechanisms and relationship to other networks:</b> Structure illustration detailed in Appendix 4.</p>
<p><b>Resources, support received and budget:</b> Detailed in Appendix 2.</p>
<p><b>Membership of forum:</b> Detailed in Appendix 2.</p>
<p><b>Terms of Reference version:</b> Final draft</p>
<p><b>Date agreed:</b></p>
<p><b>Signed by Chair:</b></p>

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## Appendix 1

### **VISION, AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

#### **Vision**

The Forum exists to provide a united voice dedicated to promoting, advocating and lobbying for the regeneration and sustainable future of quality green spaces throughout the East Midlands.

#### **Aims**

The Forum has broad objectives covering the four main areas of:-

##### *Advice to members*

The Forum should become the conduit for important information and the latest in best practice. It should be able to give guidance and advice to members on key issues and provide early warnings of new initiatives and funding regimes.

##### *Advocacy*

The Forum, through its working groups and other mechanisms, should be able to gather and channel member's views on the key issues and represent these to the policy makers. By speaking with a united voice, the views of the local authority members, associated friends of park groups and others responsible for the management and/or development of the East Midlands' green spaces will be more clearly heard.

##### *Reaching Out to Park Users*

Pivotal to the Forum's role is the two-way exchange of information and ideas. The forum has the opportunity to harness, for the first time the influence of a huge number of park users across the East Midlands including the 1000s of friends of park groups. The Forum will also communicate directly through media campaigns.

##### *Cross Boundary and Partnership Working*

The Forum will aim to facilitate and encourage the exchange of information, sharing of good practice and establishment of partnerships within and across boundaries with the aim of raising the standards of green spaces and infrastructure throughout the East Midlands.

#### **Objectives**

The objectives of the Forum are to:-

- Be the representative body for parks and green spaces in the East Midlands
- Promote and support the regeneration, management and sustainable future of parks and green spaces in the East Midlands region.
- Raise the quality standard of parks and green spaces in the East Midlands to reflect the needs and aspirations of all residents and visitors.

- Promote and support the roles of the East Midland's parks and green spaces in supporting cross cutting themes such as health and well-being, liveability, sustainability, crime and disorder, accessibility, environment, education, young people, culture, quality of life and regeneration.
- Develop and maintain a network of members for the exchange of expertise, experience and information
- Identify, promote and disseminate good practice in planning, design, maintenance and management of parks and green spaces in the East Midlands.
- Advocate the case for adequate capital and revenue funding for parks and green spaces in local authority budgets and national spending reviews
- Promote higher standards in skills and training for those responsible for planning, maintaining and managing the East Midland's parks and green spaces.
- Promote community involvement in the continued development of parks and open spaces and contribute to the promotion of friends groups nationally using the annual East Midlands Regional Friends of Parks event.

## Appendix 2

### Background information supporting Terms of Reference

#### **Scope of Forum:**

GreenSpace East Midlands (GSEM) activities currently focus within the East Midlands region. Since the national election in May 2010, the regional government boundaries have been removed. With this and the forthcoming creation of cross-boundaries Local Enterprise Partnerships, there has been a subsequent moderate decrease of regional activities from a variety of organisations. This change also offers opportunities to expand membership across the former East Midlands boundary particularly in currently unstaffed GreenSpace regions.

East Midlands is one of the more rural regions in England with just fewer than 40% of the population living in towns and villages with a population of less than 10,000. It also has the equal lowest number of unitary councils and the highest proportion of district councils, when compared with other regions. The Forum recognises that this dynamic might have an effect on staffing provision and resources between authorities.

The forum defines green spaces to include a wide range of types such as parks, allotments, woodlands, gardens, playing grounds, recreation fields, nature reserves etc. We welcome working with all the associated land owners from public, voluntary and private sectors.

GSEM believes in the importance of demonstrating how green spaces significantly contribute to local strategic outcomes such as health and well-being, stronger communities, economy, children and young people, crime prevention etc. and enabling professionals to make the case. It believes what underpins these contributions is adequate provision, quality and accessibility of green spaces. It is these three pillars that the Forums work will revolve and evolve around.

GSEM recognises the learning opportunities that can be shared and benefits possible from collaborative working with others particularly in the culture sector.

GSEM believes that Green Infrastructure is an important approach and local and area strategies provide guidance in ensuring appropriate provision, quality and connectivity of public green spaces. This combined with private land helps to conserve, maintain and extend green assets providing multi benefits to public, environment and economy, so balancing grey and green infrastructure.

#### **Structure, reporting mechanisms and relationship to other networks:**

GreenSpace National Forum Business Plan gives guidance to all regional activities and GSEM provides action points about their activities for this plan. This plan is overseen by the Regions and Communities Development Group. The Chair or other representative of GSEM Forum and Forum Manager attend and contribute to the National Forum quarterly meetings, which are usually located in Birmingham.

The GSEM Forum Manager also attends and contributes to GreenSpace regions and communities' staff and development meetings. The Regions and Communities development group meeting is overseen by GreenSpace Trustees.

The Forum Manager attends and supports the County Forum meetings providing them with a GSEM update and key latest news and information. The Manager also raises issues and opportunities from these meeting to the steering group meeting.

The Forum Manager produces a monthly News and Information Bulletin. This is sent to a large contact list. The bulletin acts as a conduit of information about all green space issues with relevance to the East Midlands as well as a suitable platform for providing updates on Forum and GreenSpace activities.

The website provides information such as news, information and events as well as a login section for members where they can download minutes, presentations and other resources.

Members receive additional information including briefing notes, agenda and minutes for the steering group meeting.

GSEM participates in:

East Midlands Green Infrastructure Network, 6C's Growth Areas stakeholders group and appraisal panel, EMRAF high quality environment working group, Breath of Fresh Air partnership meeting and correspondence, and attend East Midland Cultural Improvement Partnership events.

**Resources, support received and budget:**

The forum is funded by annual membership subscriptions/ partnership contributions and Department of Communities and Local Government grant (until 2010/11).

More recently income is being received through charging of some events in order to attempt to cover the actual cost of running these events. Some resources are given in kind such as meeting rooms. Sometimes commercial sponsorship is sought to help towards the cost of catering at meetings in return for a short presentation.

The forum expenditure covers the employment of a full-time forum manger, their expenses and associated office costs, as well as venue hire for meetings.

The Forum Manager is a home worker. Therefore they currently use their printer, scanner, chair, desk, monitor, keyboard etc. GreenSpace and the forum have provided regional staff with a netbook, docking station, software, licences and IT support. They use their own car and public transport to get to meeting locations. Consumable office, transport and other expenses are reimbursed.

The Forum Manager manages and oversees the forum's accounts. The Forum Manager provides finance reports to the steering group and regional development group meetings. GreenSpace fulfils the role of treasurer by holding the bank account and processing all

financial procedures such as salary, expenses, invoices and membership payments.

Support is given by a variety of staff from GreenSpace particularly the Regional Manager, but also the Finance Officer, Community Networks Officer, Membership Administration Assistant and communications team. The support GreenSpace provides to the GSEM forum is paid for annually and detailed in a Memorandum of Understanding.

The cost of travelling to meetings and other expenses made by steering groups member, invited guests and others are the responsibility of the individual organisation.

**Membership of forum:**

Membership is by annual subscription. Members will be encouraged from interested organisations that are supportive of forum vision, aims and objectives.

The membership rate varies in relation to the type of sector i.e. voluntary, commercial and public and upon the size and geographical area covered. For the current local authority rates please visit the GSEM website, otherwise ask the Forum Manager.

Partnership contributions should be negotiated initially with Forum Manager who will seek approval from the steering group. If a memorandum of understanding or other agreement is required then approval will also be sought by GreenSpace.

Membership of the GSEM is not available for individual staff. Individuals are encouraged to become a member of Institute of Parks and Green Spaces (IPGS).

## Appendix 2

### GSEM Action Plan 2011/12

Core activities are those that the forum sees as their key business and covered by membership fees whether as the activities within the second column need to be funded through other methods such as partnership contributions, sponsorship, grants etc.

Activities	Core	Project/ partnership/ grant
News & Information bulletins - monthly	√	
Website	√	
Green Flag Award demonstration day (1)		√
Support GFA scheme – statistics, feedback to scheme etc.	√	
3 seminars t.b.c and where time allows:		
1. Stronger Communities – June/July		√
2. Health – September		√
3. Climate Change? – November or February		√
Workshops - about 3 a year (to be decided upon following survey such as adopted development land and land management companies, open space strategies, community area forums, climate change in parks /EMS training etc.)		√
HLF? Central, regional or PFP project		√
volunteer training/ communities – proposal to be worked up (phased)		√
GS regions and communities staff and development meetings	√	
GS National forum	√	
Steering group meeting – 4 a year	√	
County meetings – attendance and additional support	√	
Set up County Forum in Lincolnshire, if there is enough interest	√	
Continue to support Heads of service meetings	√	
Continue with Natural England – Open Space Study		√
GSEM Network Questions	√	
Forum Manager Green Flag Award judging	√	
EMGIN – caretaking	√	
Representation at appropriate area/ regional meetings	√	

Appendix 4 - Structure illustration

