
Our mission is 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.

This News and Information bulletin is produced by Ruth Rolls, GreenSpace East Midlands forum manager. Its objective is to support GSEM members. It is currently also circulated free of charge to other green space sector organisations.

The work of GreenSpace East Midlands (GSEM) is mostly funded by organisations annual membership, therefore membership is encouraged. For more information please visit www.green-space.org.uk/eastmidlands.

GSEM Diary Dates

26 August 2009 – Training Working Groups inaugural meeting – Melton Mowbray – Contact Ruth Rolls on 01604 807 771.

4 September 2009 – Nottinghamshire Parks Forum meeting – venue t.b.c. – Contact Sarah Daniels on 01623 457 300

22 September 2009 – Leicestershire Parks and Opens Space Forum meeting – Abbey Park – Contact Bob Mullin on 0116 291 4483

29 September 2009 – GreenSpace Conference, Raising the Standard – Contact the events team on 0118 946 9068.

14 October 2009 – **Steering Group Meeting and Open Meeting** – Lincolnshire – Contact Ruth Rolls on 01604 807 771

13 January 2010 – **Steering Group Meeting and Open Meeting** - Derbyshire - Contact Ruth Rolls on 01604 807 771

Other Diary Dates

22 August 2009 – 25th Anniversary of Blisworth Tunnel Opening – More information [here](#).

31 August 2009 – The National Forest Wood Fair – Beacon Hill Country Park, Leicestershire – [More](#)

7 to 9 September 2009 - Designing Outdoor Play Environment & Conference – Sheffield – [More](#)

17 September 2009 – The Future of Culture, Tourism and Sport: 5th national conference – London - Contact Laura Brownlee on 020 7324 4372 - [More](#)

8 October 2009 – East Midlands EXPO 2009 – Leicester – Contact Maria Coles on 01664 502 581 or www.emra.gov.uk

9 October 2009 – 6Cs GI Project – Final Stakeholder and wider event – Derby – Contact Sharon Jefferies on 0116 305 7851

National News

Natural England's draft Protected Landscape Policy

This policy is now available to view. [Here](#). The closing date for comments is Monday 5th October.

Greenspace checker

Natural England is encouraging the public to test the quality of their local parks by using the Greenspace checker web questionnaire. By answering three simple questions anyone can get a measure of their access to green space. [Visit](#).

Call for more effective partnerships

Businesses, the government and third sector need to develop stronger and more innovative partnerships to provide real and practical help for communities at risk of fracture due to the recession, a report published today by an independent taskforce claims.

Led by Dame Julia Cleverdon, Business in the Community's Vice President, the taskforce on Building Stronger Communities has focused on places and practices to develop a national framework of recommendations and examples of innovative cross-sector partnerships.

The report outlines ten recommendations to businesses, the third sector and to the Government under three key priorities for action: building closer connections between the sectors at local level, the importance of downsizing responsibly, and investment in innovative partnerships. [More](#).

Make time! Playday 2009

5 August was Playday - the annual celebration of children's right to play.

Over 800 events are taking place this year, making Playday 2009 the biggest on record and giving around half a million children and young people the opportunity to get out and play!

This year's Playday campaign theme, 'Make time!' highlights that all children have the right to play and need time and space to play. Research published last week shows that nearly three-quarters of parents (72%) want more time to play with their children or to take them places to play. Research also found that

children are facing pressures on their time too, with homework and extra-curricular activities impacting heavily on children's free time.

Playday is coordinated by Play England, part of NCB. To find out more about Playday or download the research, [visit](#).

NCB launch new charter

The National Children's Bureau is pleased to announce the launch of new resources to help raise awareness of the importance of play for children in your area. These colourful and inspiring resources will help to engage key stakeholders – from children through to decision makers – in discussions about the importance of play in children's lives and what you can do to ensure the children in your area can enjoy it.

Please contact 0845 458 9910 or Email: ncb@centralbooks.com. [Visit](#).

Climate change and health

On 23 July a debate was stimulated on Climate Change and Health by Angela Mawle, Chief Executive of the UK Public Health Association, on IDeA's website. She argues climate change poses the biggest threat to public health and that local authorities are key to creating the right environment for the nation's health. Add your views [here](#).

The search begins for 'Britain's Best Park'

The annual 'Britain's Best Park' competition, sponsored by lawnmower engine manufactures Briggs & Stratton and run in partnership with The Sun newspaper, Horticulture Week and Garden News, is now open for nominations.

Local authorities, community groups and members of the public can put forward their favourite park, which will then be shortlisted by a panel of well-respected judges. Parks will be judged on criteria including environment, design, usability, maintenance and inclusion.

The winner of Britain's Best Park will go forward to compete against parks in Germany, Poland, France, Sweden and Italy for the title of Europe's Best Park.

Last year's winner for the UK was Mowbray Park in Sunderland.

The closing date for entries is 28 August. [More](#)

UK's first 'City of Culture' for 2013

A competition open to the whole of the UK to find the nation's first 'City of Culture' was launched recently by Culture Secretary Ben Bradshaw. The winning city will become a focus for national attention in 2013 and could host high-profile media events including the Turner Prize, BBC Sports Personality of the Year, The Brits and the RIBA Stirling Prize as part of their year in the spotlight.

Bidders will have until 16 October this year to submit an outline application, with a deadline of 11 December for initial bids. [More](#)

Local News

1st Access to Nature Award in East Midlands

The Wildlife Trust has launched a new project 'the Great Outdoors Project' to research why some people don't visit the countryside and to develop new opportunities encouraging local people to get involved with the natural world and the Wildlife Trust's work.

They are inviting people in Northamptonshire to take a closer look at wildlife on their doorstep by going to one of the reserves and telling the charity what they think of it.

This year, the Trust will be meeting local communities near Summer Leys near Wellingborough, and Lings Wood in Northampton. Over the next three years the project will roll out to King's Wood in Corby, Barnes Meadow and Kingsthorpe in Northampton.

To support this work, the Wildlife Trust has been awarded the first Access to Nature grant in the East Midlands, which is funded by the Big Lottery Fund's Changing Spaces programme.

For more information about the Great Outdoors Project [here](#). For more information about Natural England's Access to Nature grant [here](#).

Changing Places changes

The last few months have seen a number of changes announced to the Changing Spaces programme by our award partners. So to clarify, here's a summary.

Due to an exceptional high level of demand, the RSWT's Local Food programme is to suspend acceptance of new first stage applications, with effect from Friday 21 August 2009. Existing applications have only got until 21 August 2009 to submit their applications. For full details please visit the [Local Food](#) website.

Natural England's Access to Nature scheme is now scheduled to close its Stage 1 applications (expressions of interest) by 1 February 2010 with Stage 2 applications (full applications) to be received by 4 May 2010. Full details are available on the [Access to Nature](#) website.

Ecominds has experienced huge demand for funding since its launch in September 2008 and it is clear that the programme has been extremely successful in raising interest of the environmental, mental health and social benefits of Ecominds. Due to the high number of current applications received and the amount of funding on offer application closing dates have been applied to the remaining application sizes. The closing dates are:

Amount	Closing dates
Large bids (£60,001 to £150,000)	Friday 30 October 2009, 12:00 noon
Medium bids (£20,001 to £60,000)	Friday 8 January 2010, 12:00 noon
Small bids (£0 to £20,000)	Wednesday 30 June 2010, 12:00 noon

The [Ecominds](#) website has full details.

Groundwork's Community Spaces programme is open to small grants and medium grants for projects making improvement to community green spaces. Please see the [Community Space](#) website for more information.

BRE's Community Sustainable Energy Programme is still fully open with the final deadline date of 29 October 2010. Details can be found on the [Community Sustainable Energy](#) website.

New awards for all

The first batch of awards made under BIG's new Awards for All small grants scheme were made this month, to four groups who receive a total of £37,545.

One was in Leicestershire, Whitehouse Allotments & Gardens Society Ltd will use its grant of £10,000 to buy a portakabin where members can meet, socialise and take part in workshops, as well as for use as a general office.

Breath of fresh air

Friday 24th July saw the launch of *Breath of Fresh Air* at Rosliston Forestry Centre near Swadlincote, South Derbyshire. Part of the Igniting Ambition Cultural Olympiad, Breath of Fresh Air is a regional partnership of environmental organisations including BTCV, Groundwork, the National Trust, the National Forest Company and the Woodland Trust and the Wildlife Trust.

The programme will involve site improvements across the region culminating in environmental and cultural activities on green spaces in the run up to the 2012 London Olympics.

For further information on Igniting Ambition and the Cultural Olympiad see [here](#).

For further information on Breath of Fresh Air please contact Rebecca McIntyre on rebecca.mcintyre@groundwork.org.uk.

Biodiversity review

DEFRA recently started a review looking at how Local Authorities and other organisations implement the biodiversity duty introduced by Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

The study will report back towards the end of 2009.

Riders leap to a new challenge in Sherwood

Mountain bikers are being given a chance to defy gravity with the opening of a spectacular dirt jump zone in Sherwood Pines Forest Park.

The Forestry Commission has unveiled the development as part of a massive £300,000 project to create a National Cycling Centre of Excellence in the historic wood, near Clipstone, Nottinghamshire. [More](#)

Help for ancient limewoods

Landowners and farmers could benefit from a unique new grant scheme to help protect one

of the most fragile and historic woodland areas in England.

The Forestry Commission has unveiled details of a new £85,000 scheme funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund to expand the Lincolnshire Limewoods and create improved public access.

The closing date for applications is 29 August 2008. Please contact David White on 01673 843461 for further information.

EMGIN

East Midlands Green Infrastructure Network is in the process of producing a statement call 'The state of Green infrastructure development and delivery in the East Midlands'. Watch this space! Visit their website [here](#)

State of the natural environment

Natural England has recently published its first report on the State of the Natural Environment in the East Midlands. It brings together regional evidence about the current situation.

The report illustrates the successful improvement of the condition of existing sites but highlights the importance to continue to work together to help keep our environment healthier during forthcoming pressure of climate change and housing growth.

For a copy please phone 0845 600 3078 or download it from their website [here](#).

GreenSpace News

GreenSpace East Midlands forum manager

The **Training Working Group** whose aim is to work towards improving skills and opportunities in our sector, are holding their first meeting on Wednesday 26th August 2009.

On the agenda is 'Hot Topics', so if you have an issue, success story or challenge that you would like to raise please let me know. Please limit these to no more than 3 points and keep them brief. The idea is that these will highlight the main hot topics around training and skills and will focus our future work.

There are 7 volunteers currently booked, with good representation from training and education sector. We would welcome more

volunteers particularly from local authorities and other green space organisations.

Community involvement working group –

Thank you to everyone who contributed their completed questionnaires. We received about 17 in total. Work is in progress in collating the results and presenting them in a summary document. So please watch this space.

GSEM was invited to a stakeholders workshop by **East Midlands Rural Affairs** on 30th July to discuss the review of their action plan in particular the section on ‘high quality environment’ and ‘sustainable and inclusive communities’. The consultation period is open until the end of August and the forum manager is currently preparing a report.

Why not join your local **County forum**? This is a great networking opportunity and way of contributing to the development of our sector. Dates are listed above. If your County doesn't have one, contact Ruth Rolls about starting one.

Love Parks Week 2009

This year's LPW was herald a success with more events registered and support from politician and celebrities than last year.

GreenSpace is interested in hearing news about how LPW resulted in positive outcomes and outputs on your green space such as site improvements for disadvantaged residents. There will be wider discussions on how we can use LPW as a promotion opportunity and a way of creating opportunities to improve parks and services such as reaching new audiences.

Green Flag Award & the Regional Forums:

The GreenSpace Regional Staff from across the country are in the process of developing a plan to enable consultations and feedback from judges and applicants via the regional forums. This is likely to be discussed at the next steering group meeting in October.

New staff at GreenSpace

GreenSpace have recruited a **Communication Assistant** who will start later this month, Shaun Lowman will assist the communications team with their activities, also keeping our regional websites up to date.

Following the success of the regions and the **CLG strategic grant**, Michelle Parker started this month in her part-time role for South East. Bob Iversen starts in September for the East. The total number of staffed English regions will be six of nine.

Useful Resources

Free learning resources for managers

IDeA is providing free learning resource to help you develop as a manager and leader: these are provided through a partnership with Ashridge Virtual Learning Resource Centre. [More](#)

IDeA 'Get Ahead' programme

This programme is for ethnic minority middle managers working across local government including: leisure, environment, planning etc. It encourages participants to gain a clear understanding of their skills, their managerial style and values and to establish their personal goals.

The programme consists of four two-day modules spread over a 7 month period. Programmes are planned in Coventry and Nottinghamshire, with an application deadline of 4th September and 6th November respectively. For more information please contact Liz Cole on 020 7296 6632 or [More](#).

IDeA other resources

Their 'What's new in culture and sport?' website section includes publications and articles on:

- Making performance management work for culture and sport: a step-by-step guide.
- Improving partnership working in the culture and sport sector.
- Improving strategic commissioning in the culture and sport sector.
- Culture and sport member leadership academy.
- Learning by stories – Hartlepool: placing culture and sport at the heart of the LAA.
- Improving culture and sport's provision and performance in LAAs.
- Lifting People, Lifting Places: Culture, media and sport helping the country come through stronger – at the heart of the new economy. [More](#)

GSEM Website

The GSEM website is gradually being updated. It is anticipated that the recruitment of a new Communication Assistant will help speed up this process and ensure the website is an effective communication tool in the future development of GSEM.

Please visit the website as it does contain a wealth of information. There is also a section for members only (you will require login details to access this).

GSEM Network

Here you can ask our members and our contacts a green space question. Between us we have an enormous pool of knowledge. Please share your expertise, experience or view point with us in order to help others in our field.

N&I Issue 5 Questions

Q1 on Park charges – 1 reply so far

Q2 on Section 106 contributions – 2 replies

Q3 on SUDS – 2 replies

These questions will remain open until we receive more replies then the results will be summarised/ collated and displayed on GSEM website probably in late September. To see these questions again please visit our website and view the Issue 5 of our News and Information Bulletin.

Question 1

Do you or have you in the past used TAES (Towards an Excellent Service)? If yes, GreenSpace would be interested to know when and where? What you liked or did not like about it? Also if you don't use it, then what are the barriers that prevent you?

This is an initial survey into how widely it is used and has been received in the East Midlands. It is a subject that is likely to be discussed in more detail in the future.

Current thinking is that TAES is here to stay. Communications with other cultural

departments that embrace TAES have shown that it was slow to establish for them too.

Question 2

What quality manuals and contract specification do you use or have?

GreenSpace have been given the opportunity to share work completed by the London regional group but would like to see other examples too. They would also like to find out how useful it would to share a generic document, which can be used as a guideline rather than a definitive statement?

Please send all your responses to Ruth Rolls by email. These will be collected, summarised and circulated via bulletin and/or our website.

Contact us

Ruth Rolls – GreenSpace East Midlands forum manager – rrolls@gsem.org.uk or 01604 807 771 or 07553 406 884.

There are other regional forums across Britain. These are supported by Sarah Moore, GreenSpace. Contact 0118 496 9065 or sarahm@green-space.org.uk

If you would like to subscribe to this monthly news and information bulletin then please email rrolls@gsem.org.uk and write 'subscribe' in the subject heading. Likewise, if you would like to unsubscribe, please email writing 'unsubscribe' in the subject heading.

Disclaimer – GSEM News and Information e-newsletter is published and circulated by GreenSpace. Any comments, opinions or views expressed in the New and Information do not necessarily reflect the views of GreenSpace Forum Ltd, its staff, partners or funders. Replication or duplication of this publication, in whole, or in part, without written permission is strictly prohibited. © 2009 GreenSpace.