

GreenSpace East Midlands

Big Society: How will it affect the Sports
and Cultural Sector?

9 June 2011



Relationship: usage and giving

Almost nine out of 10 people use parks and green spaces and they value them and the higher the quality of the green space, the more likely it is to be used.

Volunteer time spent on parks and green spaces is worth between £22 million and £28 million across England each year.

Levels of community engagement



Adapted from Arnstein's ladder of participation

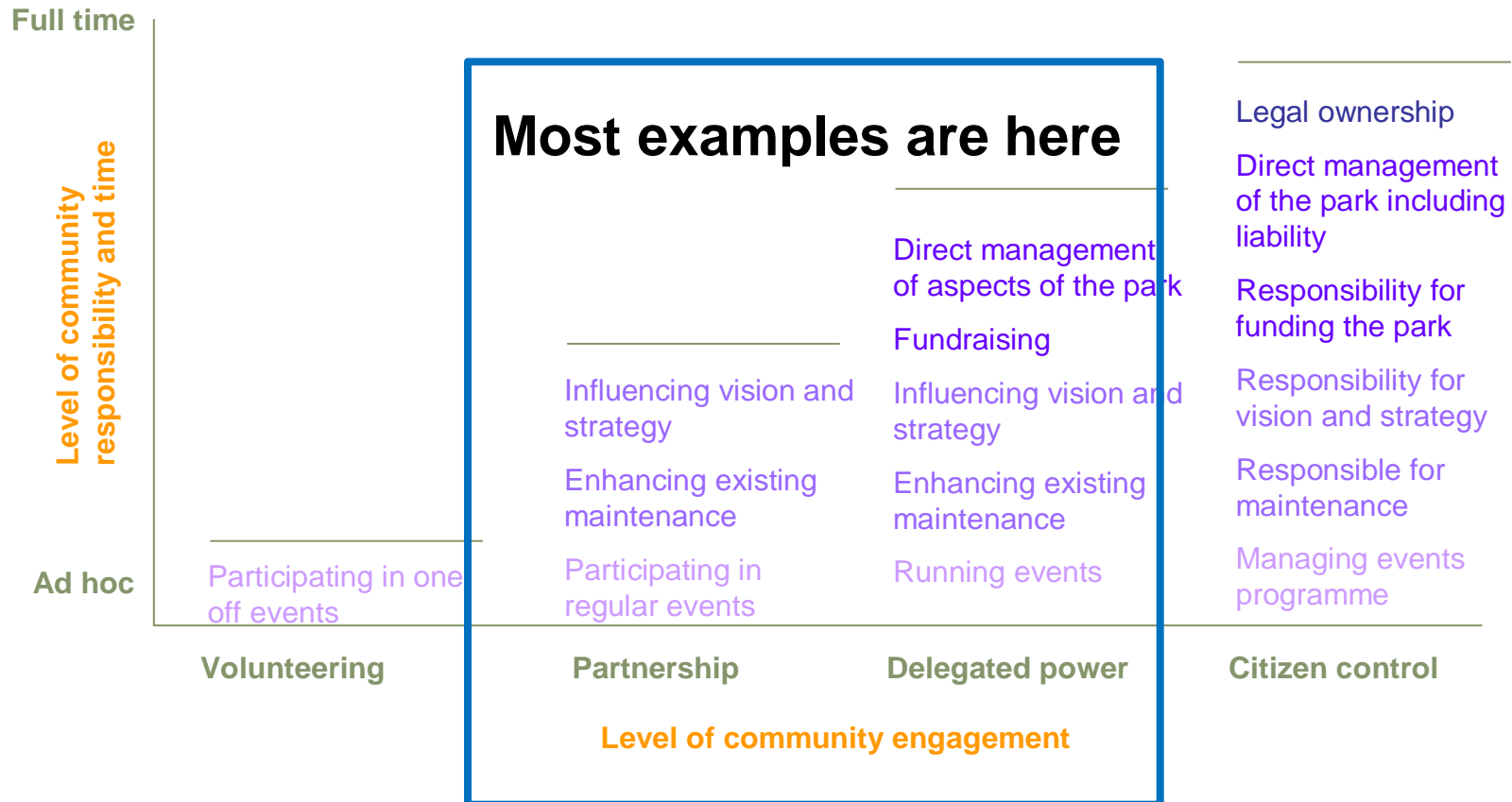




Levels of community engagement



Adapted from Arnstein's ladder of participation



Consideration: Asset Transfer

- Establish whether you already have a dedicated community asset transfer strategy, and whether it covers public open space assets. You should try to augment existing policies and procedures so that all expressions of interest from community groups are treated in the same manner. As a local authority, you can request support from the Asset Transfer Unit if you do not already have a strategy in place.
- Consider the feasibility of transferring sites. This may include their condition and suitability, the long-term effect of transfer on the quality of space, including future maintenance and management costs, and the level of community interest. You should involve representatives of the voluntary and community sector and a cross section of community groups in developing strategies and policies.
- Make sure that options exist for different levels of community involvement. These could range from full ownership of a space, to friends groups and/or volunteering opportunities. Ensure that there is a long-term strategy for community development and support.
- Consider the implications of transfer on all sections of the community, in particular any likely positive or negative effects that transfer may have on particular groups of people. You have a legal duty to ensure that you conduct an equalities impact assessment of your policy, and publish a plan to mitigate any associated risks.
- Check how your various asset transfer options could affect your other policies, for instance on climate change adaptation, flooding, transport, access, health, culture and education.

Learning from NW

- Does not apply to all types of green spaces or services.
- No one single management model is likely to fit all.
- Maintaining quality will be important.
- The Green Flag Award standard for communities and for innovation can be used as a benchmark to work to.
- Having a single, named, project worker to co-ordinate the process right from the start has been vital.
- Ensure good communications within the council so that all relevant people —such as legal, finance, property services and so on —are kept up-to-date.
- Engage other organisations such as housing associations and businesses with CSR policy.
- Seek advice and share knowledge/ lessons with others.

What GreenSpace can offer?

National Charity with wide spread of memberships.

- Network of professionals who receive advice and support including our Network Question circulations.
- Joint IPGS conferences and training workshop opportunities,
- Products such as GreenSTAT and GreenSKILL, also sector magazine called Green Places,
- Policy paper responses
- Joined up advocacy work and document e.g. BlueSky GreenSpace through GreenLink,
- National public campaign called 'Love Parks Week'

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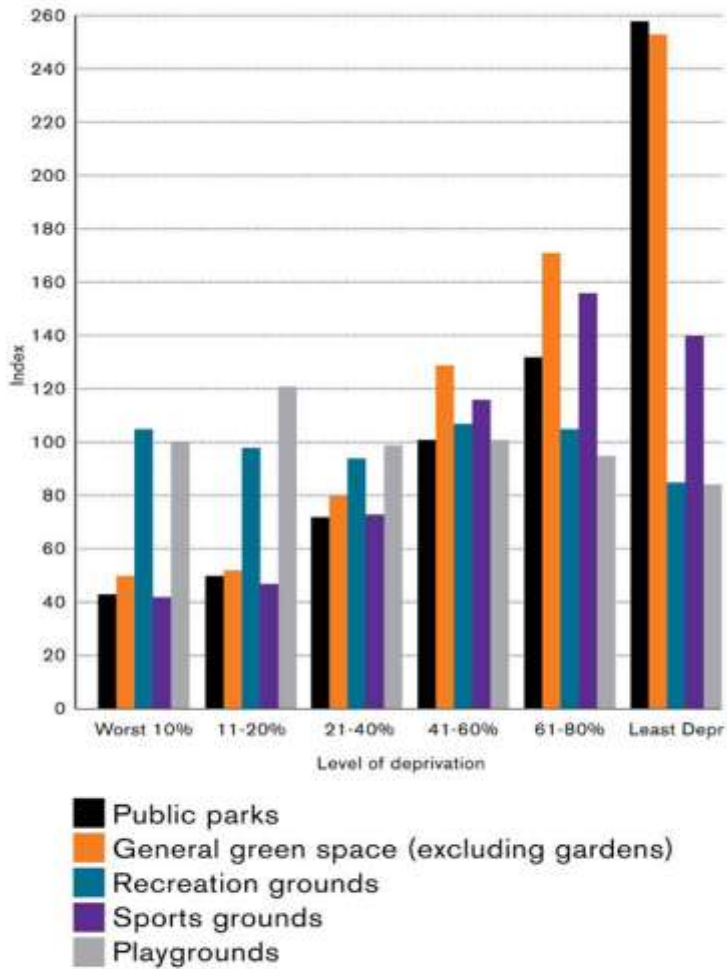
Community Network –

- Community Bench – a regular newsletter
- Online resources – information, toolkits, fund searches, network questions etc.
- Voluntary sector rate* for GS services e.g. conferences
- Community Network Project , new research

National Federation of Parks and GreenSpace –

- It's a forum of green space community forums
- Advocacy role promoting the importance of spaces for people as well as supporting community groups
- Conference on Worlds Park Day in September

Figure 3: Quantity and type of green space and area deprivation



Sources: CIPFA Leisure, culture and recreation statistics 2007/08 and *Municipal Year Book* (recreation grounds); CABI Space urban green space inventory (public parks); Generalised Land Use Database (general green space); Sport England Facilities data 2009 (sports grounds) Ordnance Survey Points of Interest information (playgrounds). All measures based on area (hectares) of green space per 1,000 population. Deprivation calculated using the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2004.

Suggested relationship between frequency of use and interest in volunteering. Two thirds of visits were taken within two miles of the starting point of the visit and by walking. Monitoring of Engagement with the Natural Environment, Natural England, 2010.

Public space acts as a site for the pursuit of social action as well as for discord, debate and discussion, all of which can lead to the development of valuable citizenship skills.

‘Big Society’: Social action and the role of public space, 26th January 2011 By Stuart MacDonald

Current: authority austerity

- Open Space budget expenditure: 56% of parks and grounds maintenance costs are staff, 16.5% are premises, 12.5% are vehicles, the rest on equipment and materials, sub contractors, administration and central establishment charges. APSE's Performance Networks benchmarking
- Over 40% of respondents expecting significant skill shortages in horticulture and community engagement, over a third with landscape and working with volunteers... Comprehensive Spending Review survey, GreenSpace 2011.
- 70 – 80% report that quality standards will fall, spaces will be less attractive and welcoming and wear, tear and vandalism won't be dealt with fully. Comprehensive Spending Review survey, GreenSpace 2011.

Question?

Big Society

Local Strategic Outcomes



Will Localism Bill be enough to encourage a BS everywhere?

May only benefit the already socially active citizen equipped to take action in affluent areas?

Developing stronger communities – improving access, provision and quality also providing engagement opportunities, create more citizens leading to more BS activity.

Existing Initiatives

- Neighbourhoods Green
- Walk on the Wildside
- Greenwood Community Forest
- Pocket Parks Scheme



The End... or beginning