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CABE calls for creative use of green spaces

CABE has called on Local authorities to use green space creatively to reduce the impact of climate change. To illustrate the point CABE has launched a series of case studies to show how adapting public spaces to the impacts of climate change has helped towns and cities respond to the seasonal problems of flooding, water shortage and rising temperatures, for instance by storing rainwater to keep trees green in summer and so moderating the urban heat island effect. One study features the River Quaggy in south London, which has been brought back up to the surface from being piped, allowing it to flood in high rainfall onto its natural plain and now provides attractive parkland for locals.

Read the full article at <http://www.planningresource.co.uk/bulletins/Planning-Resource-Daily-Bulletin/News/842623/CABE-calls-creative-use-green-spaces/?DCMP=EMC-DailyBulletin>

Change4Life - eat well, move more, live longer

Change4Life is a new movement, supported by the Department of Health, which aims to improve children's diets and levels of activity so reducing the threat to their future health and happiness. The goal is to help every family in England eat well, move more and live longer.

The challenge:

Obesity is growing at an alarming rate and making a significant impact on individuals, our National Health Service and society as a whole. The Government Office for Science's Foresight Report forecasts that by 2050, 60 per cent of men and 50 per cent of women could be obese. There is a clear link between having too much fat in your body and preventable illnesses like diabetes, coronary heart disease, cancer and depression. Our ambition is to be the first major nation to reverse the rising tide of obesity and overweight in the population. Our focus at the start will be on children.

Research

Key findings from research has shown us that:

- While parents acknowledge childhood obesity is a problem they do not think it is their problem.
- Parents underestimate the amount they and their children eat and overestimate the amount of activity the family does.
- Parents do not make the connection between unhealthy weight status and long-term health problems.

Read more at <http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/News/Currentcampaigns/Change4Life/index.htm>

Rt Hon Alan Johnson MP, Secretary of State for Health speaks on Obesity

A transcript of the speech by Secretary of State for Health Alan Johnson at the The Fabian Society on 23 July 2008. He talks about obesity and the role of the NHS in curbing obesity.

View the transcript at http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/News/Speeches/DH_087420

Go-ahead for first phase of Chesterfield scheme

Planning permission has been granted for the first phase of a £300m urban village in Chesterfield. The approval covers the creation of a new lock and 1,200 sq m canal basin which will form the terminus to the restored Chesterfield canal network. Urbo Regeneration, a joint venture company established by Bolsterstone, Arnold Laver Group and AGD Regeneration are behind the scheme. The wider scheme will include a mixed-use waterside neighbourhood of 1,300 homes together with a retail and business quarter, hotels, landmark public square, eco-park and public open spaces. It is scheduled for an outline planning application in late 2008.

Trust pushes land gift tool

The National Trust has urged the government to increase use of conservation covenants and is looking to challenge Planning Bill proposals to restrict their influence. A report for the trust by planning and environment consultancy Green Balance, released this week, claims that covenants could also promote a culture of donating land for conservation. The trust owns covenants on more than 36,000ha and is considering the scope for expanding the form of environmental protection. It also challenges a section of the Planning Bill that if enforced would remove the legislative power of covenants. Trust director of strategy and external affairs Tony Burton told Planning: "If the government wants to push through the bill to speed up infrastructure project delivery then at the other end of the scale it has to look at protecting green belt land. There are a lot of landowners who want to donate land to safeguard it from development." Green Balance partner Richard Bate added: "In countries with such covenants there are more landowners keen to donate than authorised conservation bodies can cope with. We are missing a trick in the UK."

Communities in Control: Real people, real power: The making and enforcement of byelaws - Consultation

Communities and Local Government is proposing to put in place the legislation that will provide new procedures for the making and enforcement of certain byelaws in England. The document seeks views (1) on the proposed new procedure which will enable authorities to make certain byelaws without the need for scrutiny by central Government and confirmation by the Secretary of State and (2) about proposals for a new enforcement regime for byelaws, moving away from the current method of enforcement through the Magistrate's Court and towards a fixed penalty regime.

See <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/byelaws> to respond to the consultation - closing date 20 November 2008.

Protection of heritage and environment gets new focus in fire and rescue service response

Hazel Blears today (28 August 2008) unveiled new guidance to the Fire and Rescue Services to integrate better protection for historic buildings and the environment into Fire and Rescue Service planning. Fire and Rescue Services are to gather and integrate information to help deal with fire or other emergencies (eg floods or chemical incidents) in sensitive environments and historic sites into their strategic planning. Communities Secretary Hazel Blears will announce this when she addresses the national Fire Conference in Liverpool.

Key steps outlined in the guidance are:

- Understand the issues and determine the scope for the FRS;
- Carry out risk analysis;
- Develop strategies for prevention, protection and operational response;
- Deliver by knowing the area and liaising with local organisations and owners;
- Monitor and review the approach including debriefing after incidents.

See <http://www.communities.gov.uk/news/corporate/944239> for more information.

IRMP Steering Group Integrated Risk Management Planning: Policy Guidance - Wildfire

This document is intended to guide FRAs in the preparation of an IRMP strategy for combating wildfires. The purpose is to assist the FRS in understanding the scope of wildfire considerations in the IRMP process to undertake risk analysis, develop response and prevention strategies, develop delivery mechanisms and to monitor, review and evaluate such activity.

See <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/fire/irmpwildfire> to download the publication.

IRMP Steering Group Integrated Risk Management Planning: Policy Guidance - Protection of Heritage Buildings and Structures

This document is intended to guide FRAs in the preparation of an IRMP strategy for Heritage Protection. The purpose is to assist the FRS in understanding the scope of heritage considerations in the IRMP process to undertake risk analysis, develop response and prevention strategies, develop delivery mechanisms and to monitor and review and evaluate such activity.

See <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/fire/irmpheritagebuildings> to download the publication.

Whilst the documents referred to in the above links are intended to guide fire and rescue authorities in the preparation of an integrated risk management planning strategy for combating wildfires/fires to heritage property, they may also contain some useful information for management and risk assessments of green spaces.

CLG) England's councils to take tips from Nottinghamshire's success at making cleaner communities

Councils around England have been encouraged to learn from the councils in Nottinghamshire who have proven their success in keeping their neighbourhoods tidy, in a new government guide from the government and the Local Government Association published 13 August 2008. Eight Nottinghamshire councils have driven down their waste collection costs by nearly £150,000 a year for local taxpayers by deciding to buy refuse collection vehicles together - increasing their bargaining power and getting more for their money. In total, the deal landed them 27 refuse trucks with a saving over £4,000 per vehicle. The eight councils set up a dedicated project team and created a single common specification for RCVs so they could go to the market together.

And Nottingham City Council has gone even further, tackling problems with littering, fly-posting and untidy gardens in student areas by working with student unions, universities and landlords to raise awareness about their responsibilities. An education programme starts at the beginning of fresher's week in October, and the first of three annual clean-ups takes place in November involving waste management, street scene teams and student volunteers. The results have a better impression of students and noticeably cleaner streets.

See <http://www.goem.gov.uk/goem/news/722776/> for more information.

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