

# Policy and Legislation implications and impacts

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# GreenSpace

- Started in 1997 as Urban Parks Forum
- Renamed in 2003, became a national charity in 2005
- Now have:
  - Regional forums & the GreenSpace National Forum
  - Green LINK national coalition of NGO's – with agency observers
  - Community Network of 1000's of community and Friends groups
  - Host the National Federation of Parks and Green Space
  - Founder member of Parks for Life international partnership
  - Green Places magazine
  - Founded the Institute of Parks and Green Space
  - Love Parks Week campaign
  - GreenSTAT visitor satisfaction tool
  - New Policy & Research unit

# Research and Evidence...

## Social Value

- Communities
- Volunteering and Community-Led Management
- Public Health and Well Being
- Families and Children
- Education
- Older people
- Social Care and Disability
- Equalities
- Crime and Policing
- Culture and Sport

## Environmental

- Ecology, Nature and Biodiversity
- Air Quality
- Air Cooling
- Water and Flood Management

- Landscape
- Waste
- Local Food
- Energy and Climate Change
- Transport

## Economic Value

- Business Attraction and Retention
- Increase in Property Value and Local Taxes
- Redevelopment and Renewal
- Health
- Recreation
- Environment
- Tourism
- Events
- Industry/Employment Value

Blue Sky  
Green Space

# So what is the problem?

- Budgets are being dramatically reduced 25-40% for some authorities
- Local authorities do not have to provide parks as they are not statutory
- There is ever growing demands from statutory services: education, children's services, community care and housing etc
- Budgets normally annual

# Agendas from Government

## The big picture



- The Prime Minister has been clear that the government has three priorities

### Generating growth



### Creating the Big Society



### Implementing reforms



Voluntary and philanthropic action

Community empowerment

Public service reform

HM Government

The Natural Choice:  
securing the value  
of nature



# Localism: Current initiatives...

## Action taken and underway



### Lift the burden of bureaucracy

- Red Tape Challenge
- CAA/LAA/Audit Commission
- Regional strategies
- Standards Board

### Increase local control of public finance

- Removal of ring-fencing
- LG Resources Review
- Community budgets
- Social Fund

### Open up government to public scrutiny

- Transparent crime data
- DCLG and LAs spend data
- Single Data List
- SCS salary data

### Empower communities to do things their way

- General Power of Competence
- Neighbourhood Plans
- Community Right to Buy

### Diversify the supply of public services

- Academies and Free schools
- Right to challenge
- Mutuals
- GP Commissioning

### Strengthen accountability to local people

- Health and Wellbeing Boards
- Police and Crime Commissioners
- Directly elected mayors

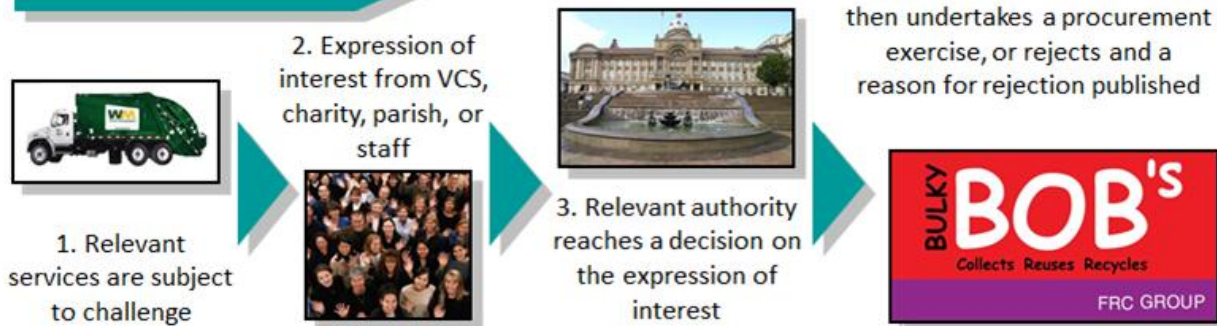
# Right to challenge...

## A powerful Right to Challenge



- Public bodies already contract out services – local government spends £42 billion a year on contracts for goods and services
- Many public bodies already make good use of the talents of voluntary and community bodies, but in some areas good ideas fall on deaf ears – only 2% of spend on public services goes to the VCS
- The Right hands the initiative to communities with good ideas about how services can be run differently or better, ensures these ideas get a fair hearing, and gives them the time they may need to prepare effective bids to run the service

### How does it work?



For a light-hearted view see:

<http://www.dsc.org.uk/PolicyandResearch/news/communityempowermentandtherighttochallenge>



# Right to Buy...

## A new Community Right to Buy



- The Community Right to Buy is a radical new community right
- The aim is to give communities a fair chance to bid to take over land and buildings that are important to them
- This will help local communities to save important community assets, tackle social need and build up resources in their neighbourhood

### How does it work?

1. Communities identify assets of community value



2. Local authorities hold and control a list of assets of community value

3. Communities get time and support to bid for assets



4. More communities take control of local assets

# Right to Build...



The poster features a teal background with a white silhouette of a town and a church spire. The text is in white and black. The logo for Communities and Local Government is in the top left. The main title 'Community Right to Build' is in large, bold, white letters. Below it, the subtitle 'An Opportunity in the Making' is in bold black letters. The body text is in a smaller white font, and the list of criteria is in black. The footer is in small white text.

**Communities and Local Government**

## Community Right to Build

### An Opportunity in the Making

The Government is planning to give citizens more rights to decide what is built in their communities, including housing, local shops and community facilities.

Proposals for the Community Right to Build are currently before Parliament as part of the neighbourhood planning framework in the Localism Bill. If the Bill becomes law any successful proposal will need to be:

- from a community group such as a community interest company or a community land trust, etc
- independently assessed to see whether the proposals meet specific key criteria; and
- supported by more than half of the community that vote in a referendum.

If you're interested in a community-led development you should talk to your neighbours to get an idea about what sort of development the whole community would want to see. You may also want to talk to your local council, housing association or other community groups. You may also find it useful to get advice from people who already have experience of taking forward community-led schemes.

To find out more about the Community Right to Build visit:  
[www.communities.gov.uk/righttobuild](http://www.communities.gov.uk/righttobuild) for further information.

If your community group is interested in using the Community Right to Build and wants to be kept in touch, tell us about your plans at:  
[righttobuild@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:righttobuild@communities.gsi.gov.uk)

For information on community led developments, visit:

*Community Land Trust Network* – [www.communitylandtrusts.org.uk](http://www.communitylandtrusts.org.uk)

*Locality* – [www.locality.org.uk](http://www.locality.org.uk)

*UK Cohousing Network* – [www.cohousing.org.uk](http://www.cohousing.org.uk)

*Action with Communities in Rural England* – [www.acre.org.uk/our-work/community-led-planning](http://www.acre.org.uk/our-work/community-led-planning)

*Confederation of Co-operative Housing* – [www.cch.coop](http://www.cch.coop)

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- Communities can take forward developments for new homes, shops and facilities in their area
- Community organisations can go ahead with developments which have overwhelming community support, without the need for planning permission

# Local Enterprise Partnerships

**Figure 2: Enterprise Zones - the haves and the have-nots**



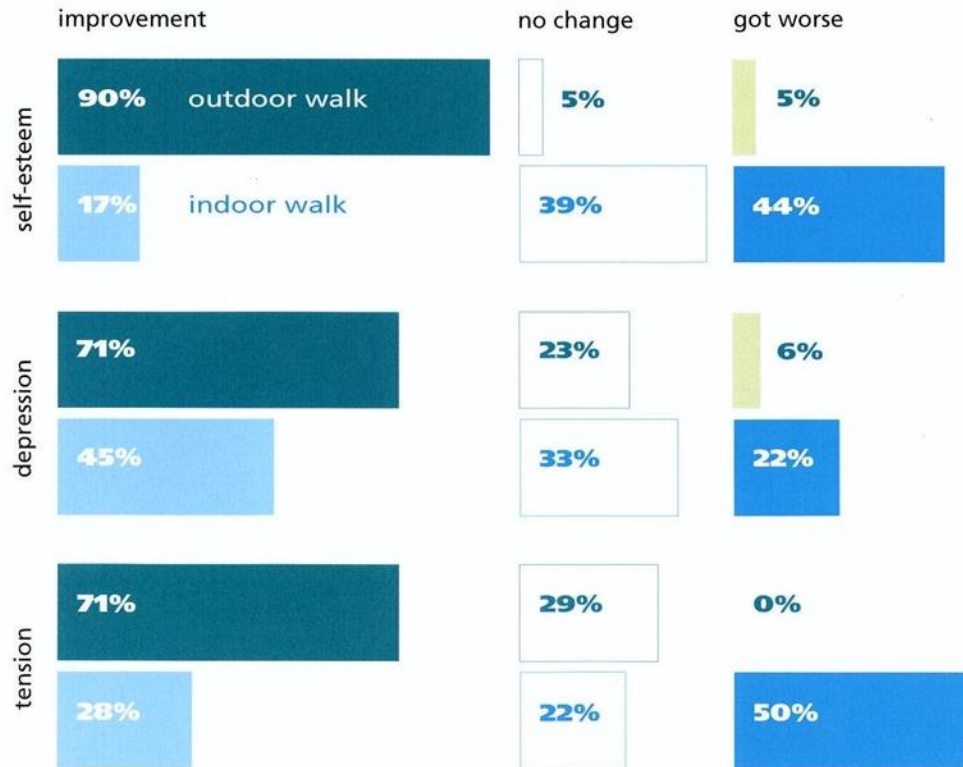
Map taken from the Centre for Cities report into the effectiveness of LEPs to date, titled “Cause célèbre or cause for concern? Local enterprise partnerships one year on”

# Health and Well-Being Boards

- Sit at higher-tier authority level
- Responsible for local-level health priorities and commissioning
- Marmot Review 2010: “Create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities”
  - People living closer to green space have lower death rates and less heart disease.
  - Amongst lower income groups, 1,300 extra deaths occurred each year in areas where the provision of green space was poor. (University of Glasgow, 2008)

# Health and Well-Being evidence

Percentage of people who experienced improvements, no change or worsening in feelings of self-esteem, depression and tension following the outdoor and indoor walks.



If every household in England were provided with good access to quality green space it could save an estimated £2.1 billion in healthcare costs

Our Natural Health Service – The role of the natural environment in maintaining healthy lives  
Natural England (2009)

# Natural Environment White Paper...

## Reconnecting nature

- New Nature Improvement Areas (NIAs), transforming rural and urban areas and providing bigger, connected sites for wildlife to live in and adapt to climate change.
- Biodiversity offsetting – new way for developers to ensure we don't lose wildlife sites and make them better by making and improving other sites.
- New Local Nature Partnerships to strengthen joined-up action across local agencies and organisations.
- Phasing out peat - working with the horticulture industry to phase out peat use, which will help to protect and restore our peatlands, which are valuable carbon sinks, habitats and part of our ecological network.

# NEWP continued...

Connecting people and nature for better quality of life

- Green Areas Designation allowing local communities to give protection to areas that are important to them for recreation, the view or their importance for wildlife.
- Better urban green spaces for the benefit of cities and towns. Support for parks, gardens, and tree planting which benefit people and nature alike
- More children experiencing nature by learning outdoors, through practical support to schools and reducing red-tape for outdoor learning.
- Strengthening local public health activities which connect people with nature for better health
- A new environmental volunteering initiative (“Muck in 4 Life”) to improve places in towns and countryside for people and nature to enjoy.

# NEWP continued...

## Capturing and improving the value of nature

- Natural Capital Committee – an independent body to report to the Government's economic affairs committee to put the value of nature at the heart of the Government's economic thinking, and advise Government about the best way of securing our natural assets for the future.
- An annual statement of green accounts for UK Plc to help measure green growth alongside GDP.
- A business-led Task Force to expand the UK business opportunities from new products and services which are good for the economy and nature alike.

# Town and Village Green (TVG) Consultation

- Main issues:
  - Streamline TVG process through initial sifting
  - Providing land-owners the opportunity to 'deposit' land which cannot then be subject to a TVG application
  - Character test for sites
  - Land designated for development cannot be subject to a TVG application
  - Charge for TVG applications

# National Planning Policy Framework

- Major legislation reducing planning policy from 1300 pages to a succinct 53
- Default presumption in favour of 'sustainable development'
- Only 30% of local authorities in England currently have an up-to-date adopted Core Strategy and none yet have one that "conforms" with the NPPF. This means that there is currently a policy black hole and an opportunity to place weight on the NPPF to justify development.

# Recommendations

- We have to be proactive as a sector – find the contacts in Health and Well-Being Boards, or the contact in your LA, and see if you can present to them the benefits of GI/Health
- Likewise the same with LEPs – find those contacts and get them enthused about high-quality GI and economic growth
- LNPs will also need LA support to deliver large-scale landscape projects
- Join GreenSpace SE and support our work

Thanks