

# GREENSPACE SOUTH EAST REGIONAL FORUM



## UPDATE December 2009

Dear Colleagues,

Happy Christmas first and foremost – I hope everyone is looking forward to a well deserved break and gearing up for the New Year.

### ONLINE DISCUSSION FORUM

Our online discussion forum is almost up and running. This tool will aid quick communication between regional members about day-to-day issues that arise, such as: “Where can I find specifications for a DDA compliant kissing-gate?” or “Can we charge a licence to professional dog walkers?”

By providing this service GreenSpace SE is fulfilling its main role in allowing information and best practice to flow between authorities. Full access to the online forum is free to regional members. I’ll be keeping a close eye on the topics discussed here and providing updates, through this newsletter, to all contacts from our region.

### MY ROLE AND FOCUS



Since starting back in August I have been very busy. It’s been great to meet people across the region who care so passionately for the open spaces they manage, and who want to continue

improving their standards.

As you may be aware GreenSpace is now partner organisation, with BTCV and Keep Britain Tidy, for the delivery of the Green Flag Award. Nationally much work is being undertaken to look at the future of the awards and improve public awareness and knowledge of the scheme. I will be

concentrating on updating you with the latest Green Flag Award news in the New Year.

2010 will bring many challenges, one being funding for our parks. I’m working with Heritage Lottery Fund to run some surgeries relating to ‘Parks for People’ funding for the South East. More information will be coming in the New Year so watch this space.

### REGIONAL FORUM

Our Regional Chair, Rupert Browning from Mid-Sussex District Council, is lucky enough to be taking a sabbatical from work for three months. Rupert will be



back with us in April and in the interim, Mike Dawson, from Surrey County Council acts as Chair. Our best wishes follow Rupert on his three month round-the-world adventure.

### TAES TRAINING

Towards an Excellent Service (TAES) for Parks and Open Spaces, is a parks specific version of the Excellence model that has helped transform the performance of cultural services and the perceptions about their impact on communities over recent years.

Using TAES can be the key to better representation in Comprehensive Area Assessments (CAA), Local Area Agreements (LAA), Multi Area Agreements (MAA), Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnerships (RIEPS), and Regional Cultural Consortia and can help park and green space services compete with other cultural services in the political and economic arenas where the critical decisions about investment priorities are being made.

Currently we have no dates planned for this training in our area. Our London Forum is running an introductory session on the 25<sup>th</sup>

January 2010 and if you would like to attend this please contact me directly.

### WEBSITE

The website is fast becoming a significant resource centre as more case studies, conference reports and member information is added. We have set up a resources page for our regional members, which is password protected. Here information, such as Grounds Maintenance Specifications, from across the region can be found, with more updated as they become available. Our thanks to those who have given permission for this very useful information to be published.

Conferences that I have attended since our last update include:

- Arboricultural, Countryside Forum and Institute of Chartered Foresters, 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2009
- Sussex Biodiversity Partnership, 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2009
- Making it Safe, 17<sup>th</sup> November 2009

Summary reports on these conferences can be found at our website following this [link](#).

### DATES FOR THE DIARY

There are no current events advertised. If anyone would like to keep the region updated about their events via our website please let me know.

### PARKS FROM THE REGION



The recent Bucks, Berk and Oxon meeting provided me with the opportunity to visit Shaw House at Newbury (left). What a delightful venue! This Elizabethan Manor

House has recently been restored with a £6m funding pot from a combination of grants from HLF, English Heritage, Buckinghamshire County Council and Vodafone. More information about Shaw House can be found following this [link](#).

After our meeting we were also given the opportunity to meet a specialist contractor working on behalf of the Environment Agency. Chris Spencer, from Land and Water Services Ltd, took us on a quick tour of SSSI restoration works to the River Lambourn. Further information about the work and project can be found [here](#).

### FROM GREY TO GREEN...

CABE Space launched their campaign *Grey to Green* to shift funding and skills from grey to green infrastructure. Parks and gardens, waterways, allotments, tree-lined streets and green roofs can provide a network of green resources. This green infrastructure could be a powerful tool to help towns and cities to adapt to climate change and improve public health. Yet decades of under-investment in green space services mean there is an urgent need for more people, with the right skills, to manage this living landscape, and turn green features and spaces into a functioning network. From investment in projects like road building and heavy engineering, to investment in networks of green spaces to make towns and cities healthier and more beautiful. CABE Space launched the position statement ([follow link](#)) and associated briefing note entitled 'The Green Information Gap' ([here](#)) to support the campaign.

### FINAL WORD...

The GreenSpace South East Forum represents your ideas and experiences. By getting involved our members will drive forward the green space agenda for the future. If anyone has any questions, ideas, contributions or would like to get involved please don't hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards,

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