

GREENSPACE SOUTH EAST REGIONAL FORUM



UPDATE February 2010

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to the first regional update of 2010. Here you will find the latest GreenSpace information from across the region and nationally.

ONLINE DISCUSSION FORUM LIVE

All 74 local authorities in the South East now have access to the first GreenSpace online discussion forum. Our region is the first to receive such a benefit for our members – now it's down to you to make the tool work.

To get the very best from this tool go to www.green-space.org.uk/southeast/online_forum, use the organisation login details issued to you and login, then save the page to your favourites. You should find that when viewed you are automatically logged in and ready to post or answer queries.

This sharing of information and improvement of knowledge across our region is at the heart of all the work undertaken by GreenSpace South East. In future this will become more and more important in securing funding for the parks, countryside and open space sector (see **IDeA Presentation**).

I have got copies of login details if required, please email if you need these. Your authority will have one person listed as the main contact and login will be via these details. Please ensure that as many people within the local authority who could, or should be using this service are, by passing the login details to your colleagues. Ideally this would be all colleagues within a parks or countryside team, but also planning, regeneration, neighbourhood management etc.

Non-regional members of GreenSpace South East will only have the benefit of the online forum until April 2010.

MY ROLE AND FOCUS



Having worked with GreenSpace SE since August and having met our sub-regional groups, I've got a good idea of how the region feels and where its concerns lie for the future. At sub-regional levels topics as diverse as Village Green applications status to filming rates and car-parking. Minutes of the sub-regional and regional forum can be found on our website.

Of particular concern is how our services will fare in light of reduced central government grants and an efficiency drive. It need not be doom and gloom; an opportunity exists to work collaboratively and innovatively to reduce costs and improve standards. As Martyn Allison explained in his presentation at the National Forum (see **IDeA Presentation**) we need to start talking and planning now.

REGIONAL FORUM

The Chair of the Regional Forum is Rupert Browning from Mid-Sussex District Council. Happily, Rupert is currently in New Zealand on sabbatical, which is nice. In his absence Mike Dawson from Surrey County Council has been acting Chair for the Forum. Minutes from the January 2010 meeting have been posted; items included: membership for Town/Parish



Councils, Green Flag Award and work from the National Forum.

IDeA PRESENTATION

At the last National Forum, 3rd February, we heard a presentation from Martyn Allison, National Advisor for Culture and Sport, from the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA). His talk was focussed around future position of the parks and open spaces sector within the wider culture and sport remit.

His main message was around *Strategic Commissioning* and how this approach is being rolled out across the UK. As a sector we need to begin by gathering robust data, around quality, accessibility and value of green infrastructure to the local community. By starting now, and preparing for the future, our sector will be best able to position itself for this new way of working. There are good opportunities to discuss strategic commissioning at the sub-regional forums.

For further information about strategic commissioning please either contact me directly or visit our website under resources section, reports and presentations.

HERITAGE LOTTERY FUND SURGERIES/GREEN FLAG AWARD Q&A SESSIONS

In response to the amazing statistic that no LA's in our region applied to the HLF Parks for People funding during 2009, we have teamed up with HLF to deliver some bespoke surgeries. This will be an opportunity for a potential 'Parks for People' application idea to be discussed in detail and provide a framework to ensure a good quality application.

At the same events we will be holding Green Flag Awards session. Paul Todd from Keep Britain Tidy, part of the three partner organisations who administer the scheme, will be on hand to provide details and answer questions. For up-to-date information about who has events planned for Green Flag and what parks have this award please see <http://www.keepbritaintidy.org/GreenFlag/GreenFlagAwardSites/SouthEast/Default.aspx>.

The events will be on the 29th April, venue to be confirmed but towards the east of our region, and the second in Reading on the 30th April. Places for the HLF surgeries are very limited so you will need to book early. Please contact me to register your interest for these events.

DATES FOR THE DIARY

2nd March 2010

Sustainable Parks, Sustainable Futures

Organiser: GreenSpace

Location: Merseyside Maritime Museum, Liverpool

Contact: www.green-space.org.uk

A one-day conference focusing on creating and managing sustainable parks and green spaces.

30th March 2010

People Changing Places

Organiser: BEAM, Yorkshire's architecture centre

Location: Auditorium, Berrick Saul Building, University of York

Contact: www.cabe.org.uk

How we can creatively engage communities with the regeneration and improvements of their local areas.

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,

Michelle Parker

GreenSpace South East Forum Manager

Caversham Court, Church Road

Reading, RG4 7AD

Tel: 07898 870859

Email: mparker@gs-se.org.uk

W: www.green-space.org.uk

