

**Minutes of the Meeting of GreenSpace South West
Wednesday 9 March 2005 at 12pm
Livestock Centre, Exeter**

		Actions
1.	Present	
	<p>Jo Bird – Countryside Agency Adrian Cook – Parks and Cemeteries Manager, Mid Devon DC David Crudginton – Landscape Manager, Bournemouth BC Paul Faulkner - Parks and Open Spaces Manager, Exeter CC Karen Hughes – Leisure Development Manager, Taunton Deane BC Nick Jones – Parks Manager, Plymouth CC Ross Kennerley – Landscape & Recreation Manager, South Hams Chris Mulcahy – Parks Operations Manager, Taunton Deane BC Mark Pollard – Parks Development Officer – East Devon DC Matti Raudsepp – Open Spaces Manager, Poole BC Paula Rovira – Parks Technical Officer, Exeter CC (minutes) Richard Taylor – Parks Development Manager, Torbay BC Peter Wilkinson – Parks Service Manager, Bristol CC (Chair) Rachel Young – Countryside Officer, Cornwall CC</p>	
2.	Apologies	
	<p>Chris Adams – West Somerset DC Adrian Akester – North Somerset DC Alan Barber Jackie Bennett Andy Chard Carl Dallison – Weymouth & Portland BC Sarah Moore – GreenSpace Eleanor Mullen – West Wiltshire DC Steve Rippin – East Devon DC Mike Vine – East Devon DC</p>	
3.	Meeting	
	<i>1. Introductions</i>	

Introductions were made, and PW welcomed the new attendees to the meeting. PW confirmed that we are now reaching 25 of the region's 52 councils, in terms of attendance and apologies (up from 22 at previous meeting).

PW explained that SM was absent due to a huge workload. RT questioned whether SM would be getting any additional help bearing in mind her high volume of work. PW replied that GreenSpace have appointed a new officer (David ?) who is picking up the Country Parks work. In so far as GreenSpace thinks the Regional Development Programme and the Country Parks Network have a regional focus, there will probably be some 'blurring' of the roles between David and SM. GreenSpace have also appointed another administrator to cover a lot of the background work.

PW went on to inform the group that he would be attending the EGM meeting at GreenSpace on 14 March (when Green Space becomes a charity) and that he and SM would discuss her work programme for the year ahead, how much time each region has, the need to agree between HQ, Green Space and the group what we want, what we expect, who's going to do it etc.

2. Minutes of the last meeting

PW reviewed the minutes of the previous meeting (25 January 2005); agreed all OK. It was agreed by all that the draft *Terms of Reference* could be improved, but are good enough for the next six months whilst the group gets used to working together. Signed them off for the moment to be reviewed when consultation research (Consultation Questionnaire) complete, as this might, and should, shape the *Terms of Reference*.

PW highlighted the importance of GreenSpace South West being as inclusive as possible to reflect the sub-pyramid SM had previously talked about (Friends Groups at bottom, Government Office at top with RDA). The group must agree on what benefits can be delivered to people at the different levels of this pyramid. Therefore, for the first 12 months, the group would focus more on networking around park managers; the respective representatives should keep parish councils etc informed and aware of what is going on. It was agreed that the group would invite regional organisations, such as the Countryside Agency, to attend meetings should they have the potential to develop a stake in our work. PW stressed that the

	<p>focus is on local authority park management, for the time being.</p> <p>PW to circulate the draft timetable which Sarah had produced.</p> <p>PW updated the group on the last GreenSpace Regional quarterly meeting of all the regional chairs, in Birmingham. Less well attended than the previous meeting. PW gave a presentation on the Section 106. and asked whether there were any other regions of local authorities or other orgs getting involved in any public service agreements around parks and green spaces. Talked about membership – the need to clarify the benefits of being a GreenSpace member and the benefits of being a member of the regional network. Also talked about where GreenSpace going in terms of its general programmes e.g. new project <i>Park It</i>, £1 million programme funded by the Heritage Lottery fund to development and support events in parks (details can be found on GreenSpace web site). Also discussed issues happening at a national level with ILAM and CAGE Space.</p> <p>GreenSpace essentially wants to work in partnership and through consensus regarding the changes at ILAM with respect to parks memberships and future development work.</p> <p>PW encouraged group members to book a space on the next Management Plan Training Course, Ashton Court on 12 July.</p>	<p>PW</p>
	<p><i>3A. Administration / Steering Group</i></p> <p>PF agreed that ECC happy to continue to finance the catering and room hire for GreenSpace South West meetings. Group agreed that better to organise own administration, rather than relying on SM.</p> <p>Data Protection - GreenSpace very cautious about how it utilises its databases – the current approach is that HQ don't want to share databases. PW to discuss this issue with Paul Bramhill (Chief Exec) Group agreed OK to share email addresses (see list attached).</p> <p><i>Steering Group</i></p> <p>PW distributed notes on how the steering group works. Agreed last time to build structure around a county representative, who would sit on the Steering Group. Group to start networking within respective counties. Broad principal was to take the seven counties of the South West, and build steering group around those seven people. Group needs to decide whether that means others from those counties can or can't attend.</p>	<p>ALL</p>

	<p>Essentially, trying to build (within that pyramid) seven people who would take some responsibility for networking with other local authorities in their patch, with potentially other groups such as Wildlife Trust, Friends Groups and parishes etc. There is a need to agree the detail of how group works at the next meeting.</p> <p>PW asked group for their thoughts on the broad structure of the steering group: 1 County Rep 1 Member from an academic organisation (Suggestion that we ask representatives of Countryside Agency, or Ground Work, or English Nature...) The Government Offices, or the RDAs 1 Voluntary Community Member 1 GreenSpace Rep (Agreed last time to invite regional organisations if they want to come with something to offer, not to just sit at the table.)</p> <p>What is the role of that lead person for each county? Need a clearer idea of who to target (which officers?) Keep higher-level politics out of it. Can the representative represent the issues of all the people? How would we organise the voluntary sector representative? How would we identify voluntary and academic groups? PW: All agreed to 'park' this for the moment and focus on local authority initially.</p> <p>PW referred the group to the North West Parks and Green Spaces strategic document. GreenSpace South West to produce a similar document.</p> <p>Group aims to have 7 county reps. and a deputy agreed by the next meeting.</p> <p>Agreed to meet 4 times / year. Organise strategic communications. Sub-groups to work on different themes, mainly around learning and service development. Group to look at fund-raising and think how would manage numbers if turn into conference-size open meeting, perhaps once per year.</p>	<p>ALL</p> <p>ALL</p>
	<p><i>3B. Consultation Questionnaire</i></p> <p>All commented that it could be better organised / presented /</p>	

	<p>structured, but agreed to make the best use of it at present, rather than asking SM to reformat it.</p> <p>PW to speak to SM about the importance of other themes on a national level – e.g. trees and play.</p> <p>All agreed to complete Questionnaire as thoroughly as possible by next meeting; group will then focus on items of work to be picked up.</p>	<p>ALL</p>
	<p><i>4. Draft Benefits</i></p> <p>Document circulated: <i>The Benefits of Parks and Green Space Forums</i>. PW: comments not really needed at this stage on this paper; document provides a good overview and is an interesting marketing tool. SM can send e-copies which group can cut and paste and distribute as necessary to suit own needs.</p> <p>Document circulated: <i>Membership Information</i>. PW: need to sharpen Green Space message re. Membership. PW to discuss this with SM. There is a need to sell benefits in relation to membership costs. PW informed group that a mailshot is due to go out re. renewal subscriptions. PW to find out if there is time to insert information regarding GreenSpace South West within the mailshot.</p> <p>PW asked group for their comments on this document. Need to add a more regional ‘flavour’, and essentially clarify the differences between Green Space and GreenSpace South West membership fees.</p> <p>PW: all need to read through document and feed back comments at next meeting. Cross-border working to be taken forward as another potential benefit.</p> <p>Need to bring councillors to a table. Needs cross-party support, not just Government support. PW to think about amending bullet point 4.</p> <p>Group agreed that there are too many bullet points; they need to be better grouped / themed. Need to highlight the added value of being a member of regional forum. Needs to be</p>	<p>ALL</p>

	<p>tailored to local circumstances; adapt the message. Good idea to give examples of what's happened in other regions: quotes / photos.</p>	
	<p><i>5. Funding</i></p> <p>Group heard from Jo Bird, Countryside Agency, who talked about the restructuring of the Agency. Their role within Green Space has yet to be defined, but there will be some level of commitment. JB referred group to a recent document on www.countryside.gov.uk <i>The Countryside In and Around Towns</i>.</p> <p>PW asked JB if the Agency would be financially supportive; JB could not yet confirm support, but stated that it was a possibility and that it would be beneficial for the Agency to develop stronger links. However, they would need to be clear of the benefits, as they don't tend to fund such groups, although they do fund research and innovation.</p> <p>PW asked if it was worth considering a bid to the Agency. JB to read through priorities and get back to PW.</p> <p>Document circulated: <i>Proposed Pricing Structure</i> produced by SM as a suggested way forward, based on population size. PW to check with SM that North West figures have actually been agreed. There is a need to raise funds to support the regional work.</p> <p>Comments echoed throughout the group: need a clearer indication what each authority would get from the respective fee. Most think they would have difficulty justifying the proposed fee. The benefits need to be clear. A one-off contribution more likely, with a reduced amount in following years.</p> <p>All agreed to consult teams and managers regarding the initial development 'pot' and discuss what would be a more realistic regional fee. By next meeting, ideas on how resources can be pooled. Bring contacts and thoughts, without prejudice.</p>	<p>PW</p> <p>ALL</p>

	<p><i>6. Section 106 Agreements</i></p> <p><i>Bristol City Council, Draft Supplementary Planning Document</i> Permission given to circulate document. GreenSpace to action research to ask key questions re. S106. Local authorities to complete. PW to identify 5 / 10 questions to put on-line. Bristol CC have been told that these rates can be adopted in September. Council policy, but yet to be ratified. It was agreed that this was an important subject that needed more time, and others like Poole and Taunton had experiences to share with the group. This would therefore come back as a key item for the next meeting and members will be asked to contribute to the debate.</p>	
	<p><i>7. Green Flag Award</i></p> <p>PW: an association of judges to be set up to improve the way Green Flag works. PW suggested that each region put forward a Green Flag judge to represent and link back to the forum. This approach to representation seemed sensible, and it was agreed that Green Flag Awards generally should be discussed at the meeting after next.</p>	
	<p><i>8. Any other business</i></p> <p>PW attended meeting with CABE Space re Big Lottery Funding. Timetable not yet confirmed. £600 million / year for next 4 years has been confirmed for overall programme value, but priorities not yet defined. Green spaces likely to feature however. PW to write up consultation notes and forward to those interested.</p>	
	<p><i>9. Date of Next Meeting</i></p> <p><i>Wednesday 18 May, 12pm at Livestock Centre, Exeter.</i></p> <p><i>Key items:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Steering Group representation</i> • <i>Section 106; sharing experiences</i> • <i>Learning and development themes</i> • <i>Funding our Regional Co-ordinator</i> 	