



Green Flag – the next 3 years

Presentation to the
GreenSpace Yorkshire & the Humber Forum
7 May 2009



Green Flag Plus Partnership

- A partnership between BTCV, GreenSpace and Keep Britain Tidy (ENCAMS),
- Keep Britain Tidy to take responsibility for overall administration and leading on:
 - Raising awareness of the Award to the Public
 - Development of the Award Ceremony
 - Undertaking market research
 - Securing sponsorship



Green Flag Plus Partnership

- BTCV to bring 50 years experience of working with, supporting and developing communities to the partnership
- BTCV will focus on developing the Green Pennant Award as well as adding a community perspective to all areas of the partnership delivery
- Responsible for engagement of the voluntary sector in judging and Award development



Green Flag Plus Partnership

- GreenSpace will be responsible mainly for working with the professional sector and for the development of judges including:
 - all aspects of judges development and training
 - support for the Judges Association
 - improvement of regional support for judges, links to regional forums and local improvement groups
- Will have a significant role in the strategic development of the award with the other partners leading in areas of specialist expertise.



A good time to take stock...

- After 10 years there are 743 GFAs and 73 Pennant awards
- It has strong involvement of the local authority sector in the judging process
- Winning a GFA or Pennant is esteemed by managers
- The GFA does get Councillors and Portfolio holders involved in greenspace issues
- It does lead managers to improve their green spaces
- Judging is popular and does promote peer to peer advice although there are consistency issues
- It is being used by many managers as a review tool (up to 70% of those asked)
- It is run in conjunction with the endorsement of a range of well respected strategic organisations



And with Changes in CLG

- Moved from Regeneration to Community
- Completely new team
- A recognition of the need for change to create a more sustainable Award
- An understanding of the importance of the Award for the sector but being aware of the need to derive better value and broader outcomes for the investment
- Willingness to look at new ways of delivering the Award



CLG Aspirations

- 1 “help to ensure the Scheme is able **to increase the extent of GFA winning parks** and green spaces across England.”
- 2 “recognises and **encourages high standards** of management and maintenance of publicly accessible green spaces.”
- 3 “recognises high quality green spaces **that are managed by voluntary and community groups.**”

CLG Aspirations

- 4 “promotes the value of, and **best practice in, the care and upkeep of parks** and green spaces in England that are of local or national historic interest.”
- 5 “**recognise innovation** in the management and maintenance of GFA winning parks and green spaces.”
- 6 “CLG’s urban green space policy aspiration is to improve the quality of urban parks and green spaces, and access to good quality green spaces for all, with a **primary focus on poorer performing areas.**”



CLG aspirations

- 7 “**The overarching aim is to ensure access to, and satisfaction, with local parks and green spaces.**”
- 8 . “A primary commitment to ensure this is **to build capacity among Local Authorities, practitioners and communities** to enable continued improvements in the standard of urban green space.”
- 9 “aim to **increase and maintain satisfaction and confidence in the Scheme** within the green space sector.”



The Partnership Vision

- 50% of greenspaces throughout the country managed to a GFA standard by 2020
- Community/public recognition of GFA
- Active participation of communities in the process
- Strong professional sector driving the award
- Sustainable delivery



3 year review

- Review all aspects of the Award with a view to sustainability and efficacy
- Start with the management of the contract. CLG to run a Programme Board with funders and the delivery partnership
- Reviewing the best mechanisms for advice, engagement and judge liaison



Programme

	Mar 09- Sep 09	Oct 09 – Sep 10	Oct 10 – Sep 11	Oct 11 – Feb 12
Cycle 0				
Cycle 1				
Cycle 2				
Cycle 3				



Green Flag - What is it?

- A national quality standard for parks
- It allows the public to recognise and celebrate good parks
- It provides a vehicle for advocating the benefits and importance of high quality greenspace



A Process





Two year cycle introduced

- For parks that have held scored over 70% last round and have held a Flag for 2 years they can move onto a 2 year cycle of assessment
- Mystery shopping will be introduced to support this approach



Greenspace typology

PPG 17	Site	Representative Bodies/ Networks / Potential Partnerships	GFAs
Parks and Gardens	Urban Parks	GreenSpace Networks, GreenSpace Regional Forums, Cabe Space, HLF grant recipients	377
	Country Parks	Natural England, Country Parks Network, GreenSpace Networks, GreenSpace Regional Forums, Countryside Management Association, HLF	Country Park 112 Rural Park 22
	Gardens and Botanical Gardens	GreenSpace Networks, Regional Forums, Plantnet, English Heritage, RHS, National Trust, HLF	69 Uni Park 3 Winter Gdn 1
Outdoor Sports Facilities	Recreation grounds	GreenSpace membership authorities, GreenSpace Regional Forums, HLF grant recipients, NPFA, Sport England	38
Semi-natural areas and green corridors	Natural areas and local nature reserves	GreenSpace membership authorities, GreenSpace Regional Forums, HLF grant recipients, Natural England, RSPB, Wildlife Trusts, Groundwork, BTCV	LNR 53 SSSI 3
	Woodlands and Community Forest sites	Forestry Commission, Woodland Trust, National Community Forest Partnership, BTCV, GreenSpace Regional Forums	11



Greenspace typology

PPG 17	Site	Representative Bodies/ Networks / Potential Partnerships	GFAs
Outdoor Sports Facilities	Cemeteries and churchyards	GreenSpace Network, Institutes, National Federation of Cemetery Friends, Living Churchyards	28
Provision for children and /Teenagers	Play areas, skate parks, parts of larger parks dedicated to play	GreenSpace networks and regional forums, all other providers that may have elements of their sites devoted to play	0
Allotments, City Farms and Community Gardens	Community Gardens	Federation of City Farms, GreenSpace Community Network, BTCV networks, Living Spaces	1
	City Farms	Federation of City Farms	0
	Allotments	Federation of City Farms, Allotments Societies and national group	0



Greenspace typology

PPG 17	Site	Representative Bodies/ Networks / Potential Partnerships	GFAs
Civic Spaces	Civic places, squares and village greens, promenades	GreenSpace networks, Regional Forums, Civic Trust, Town Centre Management Association, BTCV	Pocket Park 2 Village Greens 5
Amenity Green Spaces	Landscape around housing, industry, Millennium Greens, Doorstep Greens	Registered Social Landlords, Neighbourhoods Green, Greenspace community network, Natural England, BTCV networks	Doorstep Green 1
			Unclassified 13
			TOTAL 740



Develop Partnerships

- Build on the many partnerships and links of the GFPP
- Actively engage land management organisations in the Award
- Continuously review scope of the Award



Governance

- Set up a Programme Board between funders, client and contractor to cover operations
- Review the most effective models for developmental input
- Seek wider engagement of judges



Greater Public Resonance

- Creating stronger understanding of the Award not only amongst greenspace community groups but the public in general



Emphasis on site criteria

- It needs to be obvious to users why a park has won the Award
- There needs to be more focus on site criteria and less on management criteria
- Still need to ensure that good management practice is being undertaken



The Criteria and Sub-criteria

Site Criteria (managers and general public)	Visible site-based criteria	Welcoming Place
		Healthy, Safe and Secure
		Well Maintained and Clean
Management Criteria (Managers and engaged residents/users)	Management 'invisible' criteria	Sustainability
		Conservation and Heritage
		Community Involvement
		Marketing
		Management
Issues to address: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review to ensure comprehensive coverage and simple application 		



Greater Community Feedback and Engagement

- Ensure more emphasis is placed on understanding of the park audience
- Link to supporting satisfaction measure
- Potential to include communities in the monitoring of parks throughout the year as part of the process



GreenSpace

Greater Focus on Judges



Judging Strengths

- Huge volunteer enthusiasm and support for the Award
- Drawn from a broad sector base e.g.
 - Parks Services
 - Countryside Management
 - Conservation Services
 - Voluntary Sector
- The contribution of judges over the last 10 years



Judging Issues

- Current model is unsustainable
 - at under 1000 sites it is starting to creak– the ambition is to reach 15000 sites!
- Still issues of inconsistency mainly around the more complex or harder to assess criteria
- Do judges feel valued?



What changes for Judges?

- Seek to 'give back' to judges, and their employers where appropriate, for their commitment and support



What changes for Judges?

- Increase support via dedicated Development Officer and the creation of regional forum links
- Expand and improve induction
- Continue and expand the benefits of Peer Review



What changes for Judges?

- Recognise status through GreenSKILL
- Seek to reward judging with training vouchers
- Provide broad training opportunities and support through IPGS and links to other institutes



Focus on Regional Structures

- Reinforce the importance and value of Regional Forums - link openly to two meetings per year
- Create stronger links with Judges representation and the activities of the Region
- Explore the development of local improvement partnerships



Whole authority option

- Exploring how multi applicant authorities can benefit from reduced paperwork and greater recognition
- Pilot on peer assessment
- Whole stock evaluation



Green Flag Award Organisations

- Committed to promoting and celebrating GFA
- Undertakes self-assessment of its parks and greenspace using the criteria judged by recognised judges
- Committed to engaging user views on a continual basis to evidence user satisfaction and feedback
- Committed to training and improvement by making sure staff and community groups have the necessary skills



Green Flag Award Organisations

- Committed to continuous improvement and moving towards excellent services, not just individual parks
- Committed to judge development and providing sufficient numbers to self assess and peer review
- Committed to involving communities in the assessment of quality throughout the year



Strategic Added Value

- Safeguard the Award for the Future
- Demonstrate added value to local strategic managers and decision makers (cabinet members, chief officers, LSP boards)
- Active CLG/ Government promotion as part of policy and delivery
 - Placemaking
 - Empowerment
 - Climate Change
 - Wellbeing/ Quality of Life



What changes for Applicants?

- Less bureaucratic process – typology specific, authority-wide approach
- Strong links to current needs of the sector, better trained staff at a time of diminishing training budgets, improved career paths for teams, emphasis on business excellence, clear links to improvement agenda, potential connection to health
- Better engagement with local communities
- Better recognition by the public of achievements

Green Flag 2020

- At least half the parks and greenspace meet the standard
- Great parks and greenspace within equal reach of poorer communities
- Management shared by highly skilled professionals working in partnership with engaged communities
- Parks and greenspace services valued as being at the heart of sustainable towns and cities