



GreenSpace

Green Flag Award Update

Paul Bramhill

24th December 2009





Content

- Brief introduction/reminder of the context
- Outline of what is happening this year
- Overview of the developments looking at multi-applicant approach and the potential for an organisational award



Green Flag Plus Partnership

- A partnership between
 - Keep Britain Tidy
 - BTCV
 - GreenSpace



Scheme Aspirations

- 1 “help to ensure the Scheme is able **to increase the extent of GFA winning parks** and green spaces”
- 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.**”



Scheme Aspirations

- 4 “promotes the value of, and **best practice in, the care and upkeep of parks** and green spaces”
- 5 **recognise innovation** in the management and maintenance of GFA winning parks and green spaces.”
- 6 “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.**”



Scheme 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

- Greater percentage of greenspace managed to the national standard by 2020
- Greater community/public recognition of GFA
- Active participation of communities in the process
- Strong professional sector driving the award
- Sustainable delivery



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				



Feedback

- Strengths

- Learning from Peer Review
- Encourages good practice
- Tool to assess site quality across the greenspace spectrum
- Encourages continuous improvement
- Leverage it provides with Councillors and portfolio holders
- Pride it gives communities, site staff, managers and politicians
- Provides good engagement opportunities with community groups
- Judging is starting to be seen by some as a starting point within the sector



Feedback

- Weaknesses
 - Time inputs required to put in new sites to the process
 - The necessity for a management plan regardless of type of site
 - Variability in judging – or is it in reporting?
 - Time commitment to judging through the Spring/Summer
 - Some of the systems that supported judges could be improved
 - Commitment in a time of recession



Feedback

- Opportunities
 - To develop either more efficient processes and or to deliver greater benefits and outputs from this effort
 - To ensure there is not a focus purely on only a few spaces, currently 0.03-0.05% of greenspace, but that organisations can show how they manage their stock
 - To work with communities around the assessment of sites and through this process engage more fully with local advocates and people that care passionately about the spaces you manage
 - To expand the guidance and assessment to respond better to health, play, heritage, biodiversity etc
 - To ensure that a more sustainable model safeguards the future of the Award



Feedback

- Threats

- Greatest fear is that any new approach will dumb down the quality standard
- A Green Flag Organization could fly a Green Flag over sub-standard parks
- Lack of judges could jeopardize the Award
- A non sustainable model for the Award makes it vulnerable to grant cuts
- A few organisations worried about the next 5 years and the commitment of their organisation to the Award



Current Developments

- Already introduced 70% + 2 year cycle supported by newly developed mystery shopping
- Exploring the sustainability of the Scheme
 - Increased impact of the national standard
 - Better known by the public
 - Greater benefit to applicants
 - Focus on community engagement in the process
 - Support for organisations embracing the principles of Green Flag
 - a type of organisational recognition



Current Developments

- Greater engagement of Regional Forums in the communication process
 - 2 meetings a year to act as information sessions and feedback
 - Liaison with the JAC representative for the region
 - Potential to work with authorities that have struggled to enter to date
 - Link research and feedback to the Partnership
- Change to the Award Ceremony
 - No huge annual awards ceremony
 - Opening of Love Parks Week with a national raising of Flags across the country that allows communities, councillors and officers to celebrate locally?
 - Potential national event for professionals and invitees around the innovation award?



Current Developments

- **Mystery Shopper System**
 - First tranche of Mystery Shoppers have been trained
 - Actively out around the country assessing
- **Skill Register about to be launched**
 - GreenSKILL has been adapted for Green Flag
 - Over the next few months Judges will be asked to add their details to the system
 - For the first time we will have an overview picture of the skills of Judges and where supportive training is most needed
- **Judges Induction Training expanded**
 - Training will be over 2 days
 - Delivered nearer the time of first judging
 - Brings together understanding of typology, criteria and management plans
 - Provides better guidance on how to act as a judge and write reports

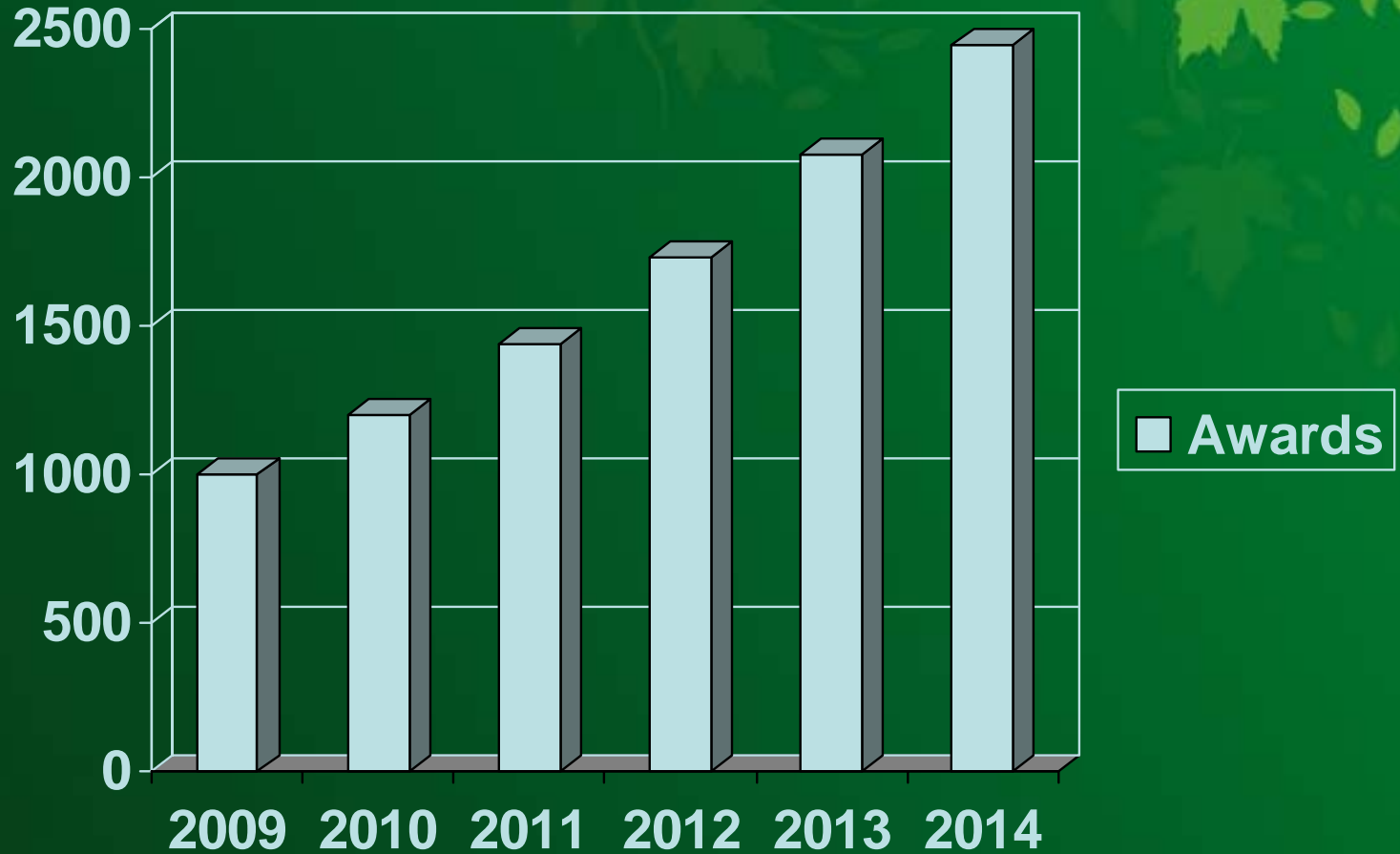


Green Flag 2009-2010

- Business as usual
 - The current system recognising the quality of individual sites
 - Applications made in the usual way via the website
<http://www.keepbritaintidy.org/GreenFlag/>
- In the Background
 - Some form of organizational approach is being developed in association with some of the major applicants. 35 authorities were approached and at the moment around 20 have agreed to join into the project.
 - During the pilot typology, criteria and community engagement will be reassessed.



Green Flag Award Sustainability an imperative





Green Flag Award

Sustainability an imperative

Year	Total Number of Judges
2009	720
2014	1740+



Model Development

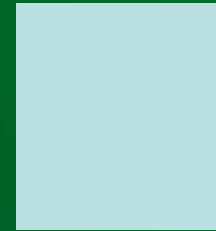
Management Plan



Site Assessment



Organisational Management



Multiple Sites – whole stock





Green Flag Award Organisations

Some form of approach that could include commitment to:

- promoting and celebrating GFA
- undertaking self-assessment of its parks and greenspace
- engaging user views on a regular basis
- exploring how communities could be involved in the assessment
- management improvement
- a mix of judging approaches



Green Flag Award Organisations

Some form of agreement to the approach that could include commitment to:

- promoting and celebrating GFA
- undertaking self-assessment of its parks and greenspace
- engaging user views on a regular basis
- exploring how communities could be involved in the assessment
- management improvement
- a mix of judging approaches



Promoting and celebrating Green Flag Award

- Promoting Green Flag comprehensively in literature, information and in the way the organisation works
- Putting on events across the parks network during Love Parks Week – coordinated flag raising?
- Celebrating with communities successes in Flag and Pennant through local ceremonies and awards



Undertaking self-assessment of its parks and greenspace using trained judges

- Undertake regular self assessment of its parks and green spaces
- Need to establish what spaces are included in the assessment
- Review of typology and the guidance for interpretation of criteria linked to typology
- Review of criteria



Self-assessing all parks and greenspace

- Have to decide which spaces are part of the approach
- Detailed listing of parks – but how detailed?
- Have to classify all the greenspace according to typology
 - E.g. need additional classification for parks
 - Regional Park
 - City / Town Park
 - Neighbourhood Park
 - Local Park etc



Greenspace Typology

Typology	Site
Parks and Gardens	Urban Parks
	Country Parks
	Gardens and Botanical Gardens
Outdoor Sports Facilities	Recreation grounds
Semi-natural areas and green corridors	Natural areas and local nature reserves
	Woodlands and Community Forest sites



Engaging user views on a regular basis

- Ensure more emphasis is placed on understanding of the park audience
 - Community profiles
 - Survey analysis of use
 - Segmentation analysis
 - Audience development
- Satisfaction feedback
 - Survey 'light' to complement more comprehensive reviews
 - Link to more comprehensive surveys on a cyclical basis
 - Whole service survey versus individual site survey



Exploring community engagement opportunities in the assessment process

- Opportunities for community groups to become involved in assessing the quality of parks within their locality
 - Training for such groups
 - Joint judging of sites
 - Annual nature of feedback
 - Techniques for capturing their assessment



A mix of judging approaches

- Ideally there would be a larger judge base within authorities that could both assess internally as well as externally
- Organisations would support mystery shopping
- Explore how 'Friends of' or other groups can contribute to the process?
- Look at the contribution of visitor satisfaction feedback



Management Improvement

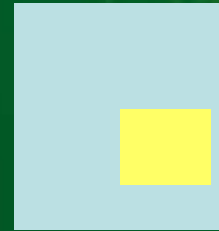
- Focus on sustainability, conservation, heritage, community, marketing and management?
- Link to other international approaches?
- Approach based on reasonable expectation of a well managed organisation
- Adaptation of TAES for Flag?
- Training
- Peer Review



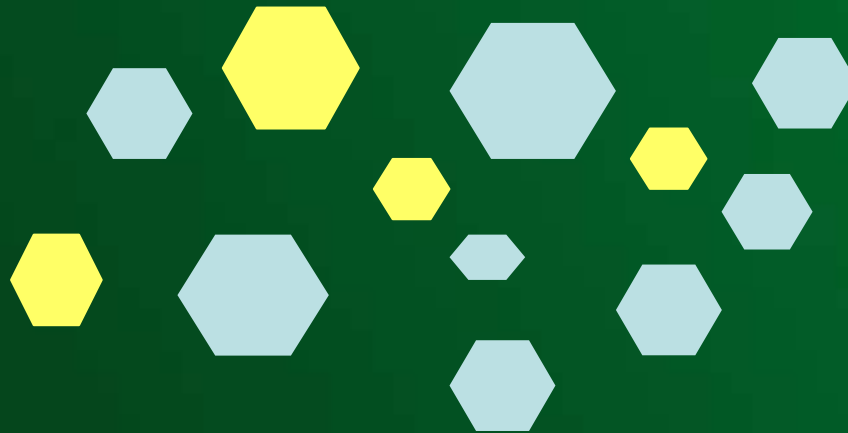
Potential Outcome

Organisational Management

External Peer Assessment



Multiple Sites – whole stock



Strong Community and Organisational Partnership



Green Flag Q & A Session