



Open Forum Our Parks and Green Spaces Society

11th November 2010

Preston Guild Hall, Preston Lancashire



BRITAIN IN BLOOM – COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

**IAN COCHRANE
TAMESIDE MBC**

BRITAIN IN BLOOM COMPETITION

- The Britain in Bloom competition is organised and run by the Royal Horticultural Society.
- The aim of the competition is to encourage communities of all sizes to make positive and lasting improvements to their local areas for the benefit of local people.

IN BLOOM ACHIEVEMENTS

- 2006 and 2008 runners up in National Britain In Bloom Competition – City Category with Silver Gilt award
- 2005 – 2009 Regional In Bloom Champions for Large City Category
- Local Authority Environment Award 2008 and 2009
- Clean Sweep Award 2005 and 2007
- Special Award - Stamford Park 2007

IN BLOOM ACHIEVEMENTS 2010

- National Britain in Bloom Champions – City Category (Gold Medal Award)
- RHS Britain in Bloom Special Merit Environment Award in National Competition
- Also nominated for Discretionary Awards for Best Park and Best Floral Display
- NW In Bloom Large City Category Winners for 6th Successive Year
- Winners of heritage Award in NW Competition
- 25 Community Entries in NW in Bloom

COMMUNITY ENTRIES

2006	:	1 entry
2007	:	2 entries
2008	:	5 entries
2009	:	11 entries
2010	:	25 entries

NATIONAL IN BLOOM JUDGING COMMENTS

- The Tameside in Bloom Family shows your outstanding commitment to In Bloom and the way in which it can make such a positive impact on people's daily lives.
- There are just so many wonderful initiatives taking place under the auspices of Tameside in Bloom
 - 25 In Your Neighbourhood entries
 - Voluntary efforts in the work at Willow Wood Hospice, Churches, Registered Social Landlords and Schools
 - Involvement of Community Payback
 - The Dream Team Scheme

NATIONAL IN BLOOM JUDGING COMMENTS

- Funding and support with the Community Chest money and increasing sponsorship from the business sector are good.
- The effort of the successful HLF bid for Stamford Park will also have a great effect and we look forward to seeing its competition in Spring 2012.
- We were impressed with the designs of the Girl Guides in the centenary beds: why don't you move this on and get them directly involved in the planting too?

CASE STUDY – DUKINFIELD CENTRAL ESTATE

- Reputation of estate in 2006
- RSL purchased flower troughs for balconies
- The residents came together to form a committee and an event was held to plant the troughs
- Children and teenagers on the estate undertook the job of ensuring all the troughs remained watered
- Gone from strength to strength including Gardening Club
- Sustainable benefits to the estate

TAMESIDE IN BLOOM FAMILY

TAMESIDE IN BLOOM FAMILY



WHAT ARE THE IT'S YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD AWARDS?

- A way of recognising the massive efforts made by communities to improve their local areas.
- Approximately 900 entries across Britain.
- Approximately 300 entries in the North West

WHO CAN ENTER?

Any group that is:

- Volunteer-led
- Hands on
- Involved in gardening projects for the good of the wider community.
- Sustainable over time – not a one off project

ENTRIES ARE DEFINED BY SIZE

- **Small Neighbourhood**
 - up to 50 residents
 - » 30 minutes judging time
- **Neighbourhood**
 - 50 - 250 residents
 - » 30 minutes judging time
- **Large Neighbourhood**
 - 251+ residents
 - » 1 hour judging time

WHAT ARE THE JUDGES LOOKING FOR?

Community Participation (40%)

Environmental Responsibility (30%)

Gardening Achievement (30%)

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

- Review of the past year
- Diary of events
- Achievements / Projects
- How have you involved the community outside your group
- Support / Sponsorship

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

- Fundraising
- Partnerships
- Number of volunteer hours
- Show the impact on your community – It's not just about plants

ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

- Conservation
 - Heritage
 - Wildlife
- Street cleanliness
- Recycling
- Minimising use of natural resources
- Creating, maintaining or improving green space.
- Sharing knowledge and skills.
- Addressing
 - Fly-tipping
 - Fly posting
 - Litter
 - Graffiti
 - Dog Fouling

GARDENING ACHIEVEMENTS

- Choice of plants
- Maintenance
- Creativity
- Innovation
- Overcoming site difficulties
- Enhancing the area

QUESTIONS



Katie Lowry

BTCV

Greater Manchester Area Manager

&

Green Flag Communities Advocate.



BTCV

Changing lives and strengthening communities for more than 50 years.

Established in 1959, we enable people to make a difference in their lives and improve the places around them.

Our mission is to invest in a more sustainable future by inspiring people and improving places.



How does BTCV improve Communities?



Practical conservation work with BTCV has many positive effects...



How does BTCV improve Communities?

“Empowering people and Communities”

We support over 600,000 people.

Our volunteers work on over 29,000 environmental projects each year, in the UK and abroad.



How does BTCV change lives?

BTCV makes people healthier.

BTCV improved the health of 138,724 people in 2009-10.
Our Green Gyms have played a big part in this.

If 24% of the UK adult population took part in a Green Gym session once a week the NHS could save over £2 billion a year in treating heart disease, stroke and diabetes.



BTCV gets people into jobs

We helped almost 20,000 people into jobs last year – in the midst of Britain's worst recession.

That's 20,000 people who have regained their independence, confidence and hope through BTCV.



“Closer Communities”

BTCV brings communities together;

We supported 3,500 community groups last year
through our Community Network.

This helps to create lasting green spaces with
sustainability



BTCV helps communities to fight climate change

Creating green spaces helps the battle against climate change.

- Our green spaces provide habitats for endangered species.
- The trees we plant absorb carbon dioxide
- And the areas we create to grow food locally cut down on emissions from food transport.
- As an organisation we cut our own carbon emissions by 14.6% last year.



“Growing together”

BTCV and local food is a strong partnership with case studies all around the country displaying the many ways people can get involved with food growing.

Schools, community groups and local volunteers all get involved to grow delicious local produce.



BTCV Provides training.

We provided 26,679 training days in 2009-10.

With almost 500 accredited courses we are a major provider of environmental conservation NVQs, and the leading UK organisation delivering practical conservation skills to communities.

We are a First Aid training organisation with HSE approval.



Education

BTCV help in deprived communities to educate people of the benefits of nature and the environment.

This is done in a variety of ways:

- Through visits to school grounds
- Through visits to local nature areas
 - Schools' Green Gym
 - Health and Heritage walks
 - Nature walks and clubs



BTCV Promotes high quality green spaces

BTCV with partners Keep Britain Tidy and GreenSpace deliver the Green Flag Award scheme.

The scheme gives awards to high quality green spaces. In 2009, we awarded 917 green flags.



1 November 2010 marks a change of name for the Green Pennant Award.

The Green Pennant Award will now become the Green Flag Community Award.



This will create a more meaningful connection between the name of the award and its purpose.



My Role as Green Flag Community Advocate:

- To promote the Green Flag Community Award to Community Groups and Local Authorities within the North-West.
- To help groups complete the application form for the Green Flag Community Award and gather supporting evidence
- As a Green Flag Judge





Case Studies

We love hearing about the good work that has been done-

Please contact me with and case studies we could work on;

Katie Lowry

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Here is a video case study for your viewing pleasure!

Check out BTCVTV on YouTube for more clips





Green Flag update

Paul Todd

Keep Britain Tidy

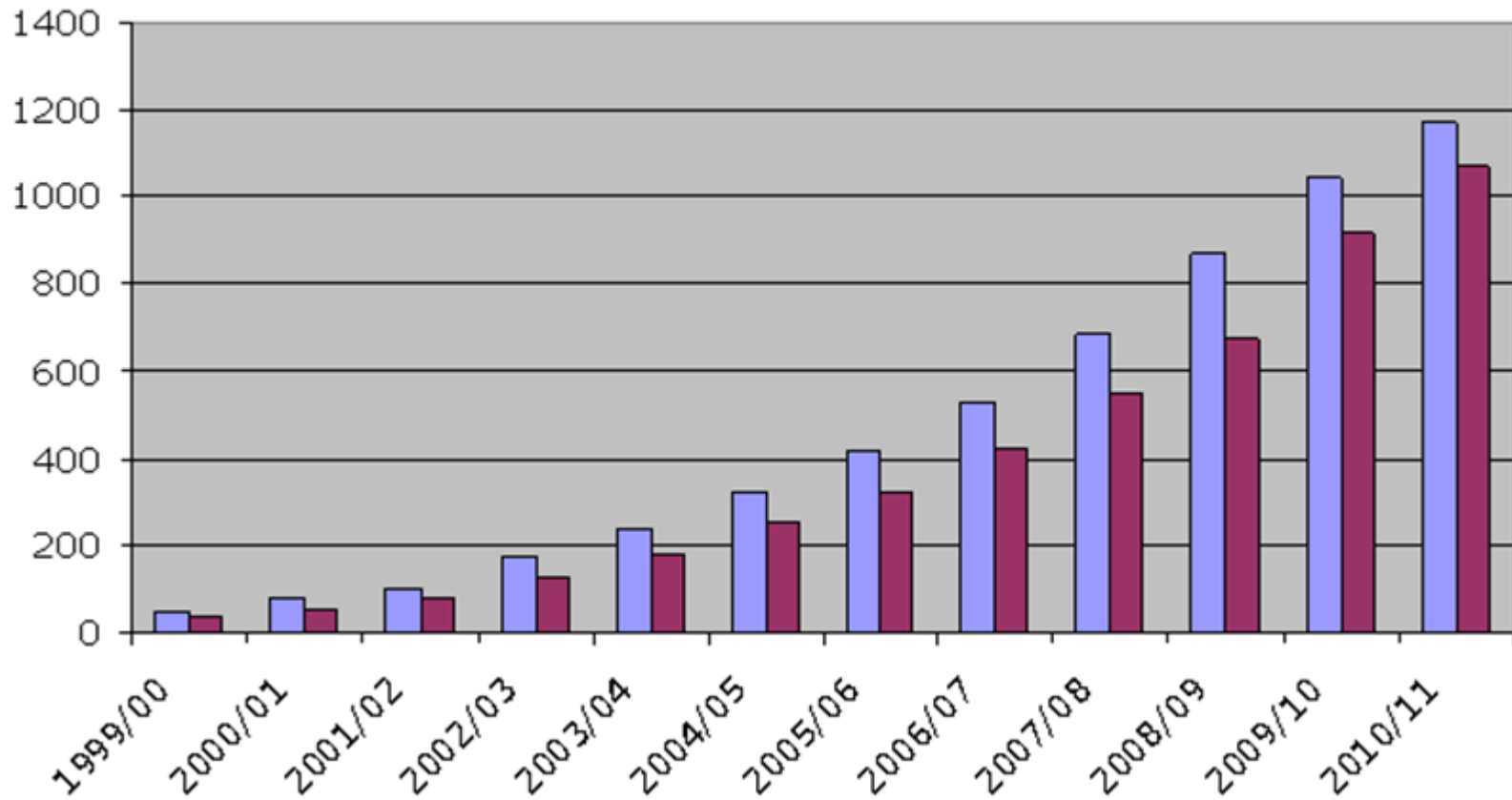




North West Forum 2010



Green Flag Award Growth



Green Flag Award UK

	Applications		Change	Winners		Change
	2009	2010		2009	2010	
England	988	1086	10%	871	994	14%
Wales	36	45	25%	30	41	36%
Scotland	15	30	100%	10	26	160%
Northern Ireland	5	5	0	4	5	25%
Total	1044	1166	12%	915	1066	16.50%



Green Pennant Award

	Applications		Change	Winners		Change
	2009	2010		2009	2010	
England	80	116	45%	76	111	46%
Wales	20	17	-15%	19	17	-10%
Scotland	1	2	100%	1	2	100%
Total	101	135	34%	96	130	35%



Regions

	Green Flag Award		Green Heritage Site		Green Pennant Award	
	2009	2010	2009	2010	2009	2010
East Midlands	63	68	1	1	12	15
Eastern	81	92	6	6	5	8
Greater London	192	223	11	13	25	30
North East	49	55	3	3	4	4
North West	225	245	7	8	12	19
South East	91	112	10	10	6	13
South West	60	73	2	3	4	6
West Midlands	56	67	4	5	4	5
Yorks & Humberside	54	59	2	3	4	11
England	871	994	46	52	76	111

Special Awards for Innovation

- Tarvin Community Woodland, Chester
- Yarrow Valley Country Park, Chorley



People's Choice Award



Future Plans

Marketing

- Elected members
- Public – based on market research
- Potential applicants
- Community groups
- Private sector – shopping centres etc
- Universities
- Contractors

Support for applicants

- Regional Workshops for Flag and Community Award
- Completion of review of Raising the Standard
- Guidance for Green Flag Community Award
- Continued engagement with Regional Forums
- Community Award Advocates
- Information and outreach to local communities.



Applications process

85% found the online system easy to use compared to 63% in 2009

95% of people found the advice given by the Green Flag Award team useful or very useful

- Pennant to become Green Flag Community Award
- Trial of Bronze, Silver and Gold to recognise years of achievement for Community Award in Wales
- Review of Judging Cycle options
- Website adapted to accommodate two languages



Awards process

- Further piloting of group award following review
- Mystery shopping
- Piloting of Community assessment



Announcement of winners

- During Love Parks Week
- Launch event to gain national coverage
- Additional branding



Recruiting, training and supporting Judges

91% of applicants thought judges were suitably qualified to assess their site

92% of judges found the online system easy to use compared to 72% in 2009

- Group Award – Peer review training
- Refresher training to ensure consistency
- Management Plan Training
- Mentoring training
- Criteria specific training linked to review
- Developments of computer based training
- JAC



Selling the benefits

- 91% Public satisfaction with a Green Flag Award site
- 120,000 volunteers engaged with awarded sites
- Total number of visits over 2.5 billion
- 33 million use their green spaces
- Over 50% every week
- Equal access to quality green space could reduce NHS bill by £2.1 billion per year







Questions to the panel





Break Out Session Green Flag Awards

Michelle Walde
Green Space





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Mike Bent

Parks & Countryside Manager, Bury Council
Chair of Green Space North West

Outcomes and Evidence

What are the Outcomes?


What is their Evidence?

How could we go forward?


A Parks and Green Spaces Society

- Just under half (41%), of visits to the natural environment were to parks and green spaces within town and city locations.
- Two thirds (66 %), of visits were taken within two miles of the starting point of the visit highlighting the importance of accessible green space that is close to home. *Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment: The national survey on people and the natural environment Annual Report from the 2009-10 survey*
- If people are satisfied with local parks, they tend to be satisfied with their council. *Urban Green Nation: Building the Evidence Base CABE Space (2010)*
- Only 3% of 5826 respondents disagreed with the statement: "Parks and open spaces are a focal point for local communities" *GreenSTAT visitor survey system: (2010)*
- **Action: consult the community on which service in the Council is most important to them & their quality of life.**

Services


- ▶ Landownership responsibilities – duty of care
 - ▶ Keep the public, users and staff healthy & safe
 - ▶ Make sure all communities have fair access
 - ▶ Make sure there are quality spaces for all people
 - ▶ Ensure infrastructure is right and in good order
 - ▶ Provide the facilities people want and need
 - ▶ Make sure all people, all ages, actively use them
 - ▶ Support all people who want to organise events, exercise, play, relax, learn, volunteer, grow, fish...
 - ▶ Ensure natural resources function for biodiversity, flooding, cooling and pollution mitigation
 - ▶ Look after them, maintain and improve them
 - ▶ Meet all legislation and numerous regulations
- 

Outcomes of Service delivery

- ▶ October 2004, the number of thefts in parks was reduced by 23% as a result of park rangers working with Police Officers on mountain bikes.
 - ▶ Residents in areas with high levels of graffiti, litter and dog mess were 50% less likely to be physically active and 50% more likely to be overweight/obese.
 - ▶ The desire for more pleasant and attractive green spaces with more facilities was common to all interviewees regardless of their ethnicity. Almost half(46 per cent) said they would use their local green space more if it had better facilities.
 - ▶ CABE research shows that if people are satisfied with their local parks and green spaces, they tend also to be satisfied with their council.
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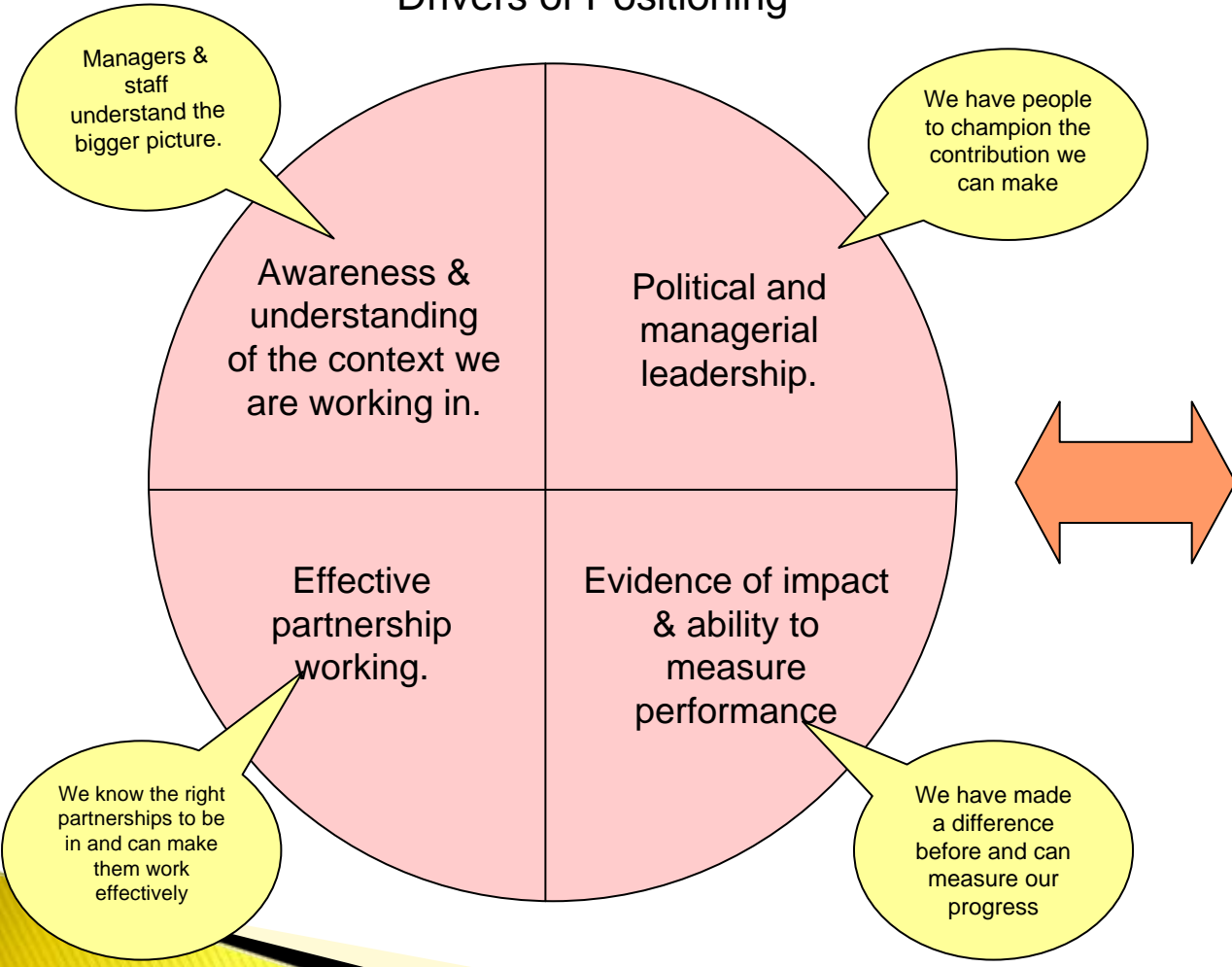
Delivering Outcomes

What the experts say on “More for Less”:

- Focus on contributing to priority outcomes.
 - Increase productivity whilst reducing the cost: Remain resilient and risk manage the beneficiaries.
 - Increase users, participation and satisfaction to generate income: Engage at the outset.
 - Collaborate across many services, suppliers and administrative boundaries.
 - Share assets, services and management arrangements.
 - Respond to commissioning opportunities particularly in health, adult social care and children’s services.
 - Develop and establish new provider models particularly using the private sector, social enterprise and the community and voluntary sectors.
- 

Positioning and delivering Parks and Open spaces in the new world: the main drivers

Drivers of Positioning



Drivers of Good Performance (Culture & Sport Toolkit)

Leadership & governance
Policy & Strategy
Community Engagement
Partnership Working
Resource Management
People Management
Customer Service
Performance Achievement & Learning


Delivering Outcomes

General Advice from others:

Individually:

- Keep up to date, be informed and use evidence.
- Keep your staff, volunteers, peers, managers, executives and members well informed.
- Influence change by responding to consultation papers.

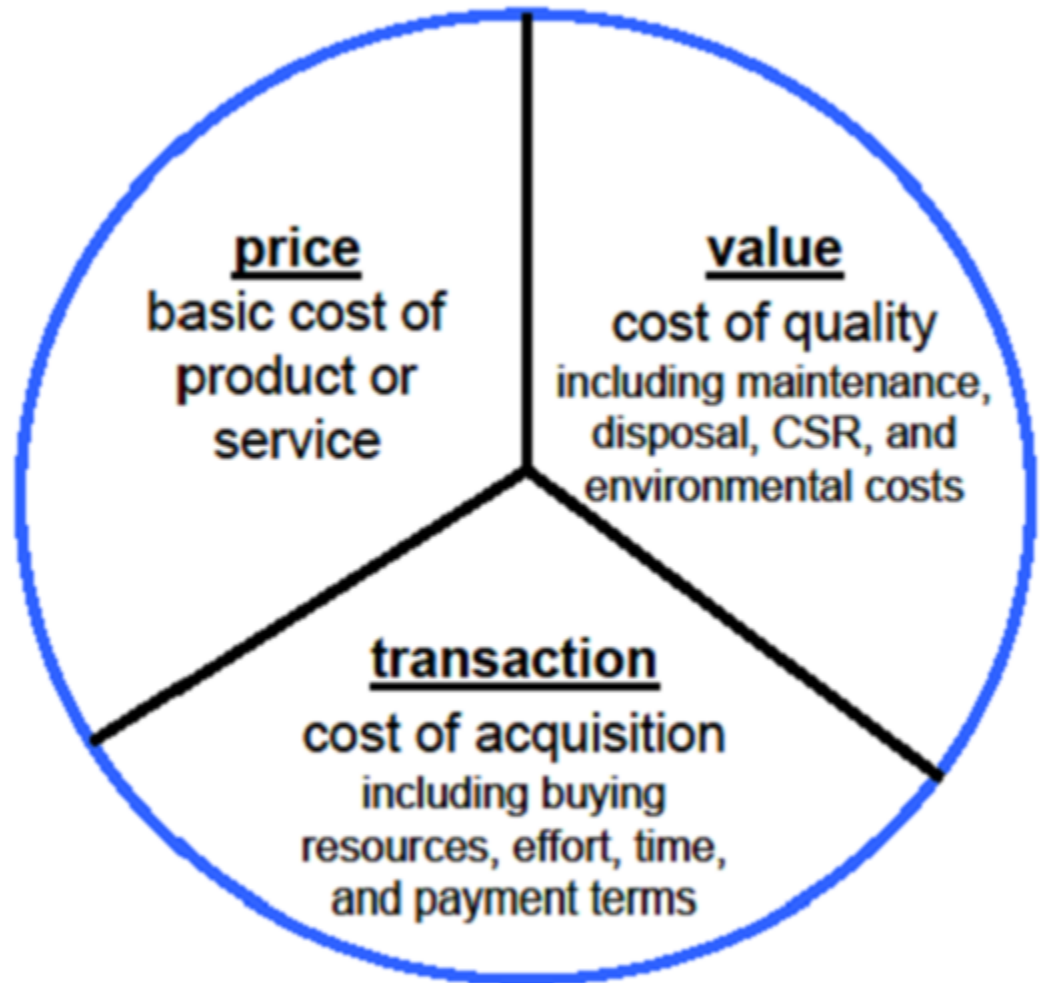
Collectively:

- Form a joint working group of all green space services to realise cuts collectively.
 - Don't wait to respond – plan now; influence and take control; set the parameters; be the case study.
 - Don't reinvent or duplicate; share and seek out others.
 - Know your true and total cost.
- 


Actual Total Cost

Whether buying or selling, **price** is only a part of the **actual total cost**.

Costs of **quality** including maintenance, disposal, CSR (corporate social responsibility) and environmental factors, and costs of the **transaction** including buying resources, effort, time, payment terms, and renegotiations (all largely dictated by the seller's relationship capabilities) must be considered when assessing or comparing **actual total costs** of propositions, products or services.



Evidence on Outcomes

- ▶ The Royal Parks generated over £14m from events throughout the capital in 2009
 - ▶ The contribution of the parks system to tourism in Denver has been estimated at \$18m for 2009
 - ▶ It has been estimated that some 7% of urban park users in England go there for sporting activities - which represents about 7.5 million visitors a year.
 - ▶ From a survey of 42,332 respondents 68% said that: "the care and protection of nature and wildlife that lives in the park and open space", was either good, or very good. Less than 10% thought it was poor or very poor.
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Evidence on Beneficiaries

Volunteers:

- 287,000 volunteers gave 540,178 workdays. Their work on 15,420 sites involved 4,301 communities, improving local environments, both rural and urban, and enhancing biodiversity. *Inspiring People, Improving Places (2008)*
- The annual economic value of the work of community groups in parks and green spaces across the UK ranges somewhere between £17 million and £35 million.
- *Community Networking Project Final Report GreenSpace (2003)*
- Over 7000 community based groups improved biodiversity and the local environment at over 50,000 places, and enriched the lives of over 660,000 people.
- *Annual Review 2007 2008 BTCV*


Health and Well Being and Quality of Life:

- Obesity and related diseases cost the NHS an estimated £4.2 billion a year — a figure that is forecast to more than double by 2050.
- *Future health: sustainable places for health and well-being CABE (2009)*
- 91% of people believe that public parks and open spaces improve quality of life. *Future health: sustainable places for health and well-being CABE (2009)*
- It is estimated that at least 15% of volunteers to community managed green spaces have a disability. *Membership Survey: Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens*
- High-quality green spaces are good for people and places. Adults who live nearer to green space, particularly if it is of high quality, are not only less obese and more active but also live longer. *Sustainable Development Commission (2008)*


Evidence for Green Spaces

- ▶ 10% increase in green cover can potentially eliminate the effects of climate change on increasing surface temperatures
- ▶ Owners of small companies rank recreation, parks and open spaces as the highest priority in choosing a new location for their business
- ▶ 1 hectare of trees and shrubs can absorb 1 tonne of CO₂ – equivalent to 100 family cars – a single tree will produce enough oxygen for 10 people
- ▶ In a survey of 5928 respondents, 97% agreed with the statement: “Trees and open spaces can improve the appearance of the town”.
- ▶ Views of natural landscapes can add up to 18% to property values
- ▶ The rate of run off for surfaces with trees and grass is estimated to be 10-20%, compared to 60-70% for hard landscaped urban areas

Going Forward – what to do now

- ▶ Make sure you are signed up for e-mail bulletins and newsletters and encourage others to.
 - ▶ Join a forum and network to share ideas - don't go it alone.
 - ▶ Make sure a least one person in your team keeps up to date and send on links to all.
-
- ▶ Plot where all the services are that do something in parks and green spaces and contact all.
 - ▶ Begin a joint working group and begin a review; or evaluate if your current review includes all that need to be there. Aim for a real partnership of equal voice and contribution.
-
- ▶ Consult – all; determine what are the required responses, priorities and outcomes.
 - ▶ Research – what are the outcomes; what are the priorities;
 - use the corporate plan; the priority cross cutting strategies; web area information and priorities for your sub-region and region.
 - ▶ Research – what are others doing what have they done? What is new?
- 

Going Forward – what to do now (cont)

- ▶ Start with the parks and green spaces – what from above do they serve and who benefits.
 - ▶ What is the minimum delivery model within reasonable expectations and the model which requires lowered expectations to be communicated. Risk assess those implications.
 - ▶ How will this be met, by who, with what, over how long?
-
- ▶ Where is the wastage/ barriers to efficiency; identify income; who else can do for less.
 - ▶ Cost benefit analysis and present true cost and total cost.
 - ▶ Simplify – Simplify – Simplify.
- 

Sources and Thanks

- Apse; KBT; Natural England; CABE Space; Forestry Commission; Lancashire Wildlife Trust; The Land Trust; GI NW; The Mersey Forest GreenSpace; GreenLink; GreenSTAT; GreenSpace North West; South West; Martin Alyson LGid
- Be Active Be Healthy HM Government (2009)
- Urban parks Do you know what you're getting for your money? CABE Space (2006)
- Paying for parks – 8 funding models CABE Space (2006)
- Community Green using local spaces to tackle inequality and improve health (2010) CABE Space
- The Public Parks Performance Assessment GreenSpace (2004)
- Does Money Grow on Trees CABE Space (2005)
- Returning urban parks to their public health roots (2007)
- Natural England's – NECR049 – Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment, annual report 2009-10 survey
- People, Places and their Green Spaces – A Segmentation of people who use green spaces, Keep Britain Tidy (2010)
- Decent Homes Need Decent Spaces (2010) CABE Space
- Urban Green Nation (2010)
- Blue Sky Green Space (2010)
- The value of public space (2004)
- Parks need Parkforce (2005)
- Start with the park CABE Space (2008)
- The Economic Value of Green Infrastructure (2008)
- Our Natural Health Service, Natural England (2009)
- *Health, place and nature – How outdoor environments influence health and well-being: a knowledge base - Sustainable Development Commission (2008)*

Thank you



Green Flag Session Feedback – Next Steps

Michelle Walde
GreenSpace



Closing Remarks

Mike Bent

Bury MBC & Chair GreenSpace
North West





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