

CRP Lunchtime Launch 11: 'Good Parks for London 2021: Parks and Climate Change'
Thursday 18th November 2021



Question and Answer Sheet

*Q: Are there statistics about parks and air quality?
Ruth Holmes, Vice Chair, The Royal Parks Guild*

A: Please see some more information about green spaces and their link to air quality in CRP's [Greening Out the Grey](#) Guidance document.

*Q: Are there London-wide biodiversity recordings for land/parks/pocket parks? Can we promote this, and if so, how?
Suzanne Morigo, Forum Co-ordinator, Brent Parks Forum*

A: Greenspace Information for Greater London (GiGL) mobilise, curate and share data that underpins knowledge of London's natural environment. Take a look at their [Data Curation Services](#).

*Q: Pocket parks and urban green spaces should be built into every large scale residential, workplace and industrial development. How does the panel think planning regulations should be adapted to enable this to happen?
Olga Astaniotis, Strategic Manager, London Riverside Business Improvement District*

A: Please take a look at the [Urban Greening Factor London Plan Guidance](#). London Plan Policy G5 requires all major developments to include urban greening as a fundamental element of site and building design.

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Q: What lessons can we learn from the contracting out of park maintenance and management services over the last few years which has resulted in a drop in standards in many parts of London?

Tony Burton, Chair, CPRE London

A: The question assumes that contracting out results in a drop in standards, but the situation is far more complex than a direct correlation. LB Lewisham, which scored the best this year, has its parks operations delivered by a contractor. Standards of maintenance vary from borough to borough irrespective of who is delivering the service because it depends on a range of factors, which we seek to tease out through GPfL's 10 criteria. We don't grade the services like the Green Flag award because we are looking at the borough as a whole and the whole service matters.

Q: Education on nature is vital yet there is a total lack of knowledge and opportunities to get schools out into parks and open spaces. How does the panel see the way forward?

Simon Braidman, Environmental Manager and Educator, Harrow Nature Conservation Forum/Harrow Parks Forum/Harrow Nature Heroes

A: Getting schools involved in parks is something we would like to see more of, but it is complex due to a range of factors: travelling to a nearby park takes a lot of organising, needs supervising, has safeguarding risks; and fitting visits into the jam-packed curriculum is often cited as an obstacle. There are a growing number of opportunities to get schools into parks, such as Forest Schools and ranger led events, but it depends on adequate staffing and resourcing. Charities like [Learning Through Landscapes](#) do excellent work within school grounds which overcomes some of these barriers as do organisations like [Let's Go Outside & Learn](#) (Richmond & Hounslow) and many friends' group across London. We'd like to showcase examples of good practice so if you have experience of projects doing this well, and which others could learn from, please get in contact with us.

Q: How can organisations support / share / build on the findings of this report?

Jo Dimitri, Senior Project Manager, National Trust

A: Practically, by visiting our website, contacting us, sharing and getting involved.

Outside of that:

- Be inspired by the case studies, take ideas and concepts that have been shown to work elsewhere and see if they could be applied to your organisation/borough. Speak to Parks for London and we'd be happy to introduce you to the boroughs and organisations featured if you'd like to find out more about a specific project and how it could be applied to you / your area.

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- Use it to make the case for investment in parks – showcase the value of parks and green spaces and the range of complex issues that intersect e.g. climate, health and wellbeing, community, employability, biodiversity...
- Use it to engage elected representatives in parks and green space in the run up to the 2022 local elections
- Use it to thank, recognise and appreciate those within your local parks' department and ground maintenance teams for such extraordinary work over the last 18 months – irrespective of where in the table they fell
- Share it and cascade the learnings down – through voluntary environment groups (e.g. friends' groups), local CVS's, biodiversity partnerships, peer networks.

Q: What are the ecological biodiversity metrics that are currently measured in the parks of London? Are you looking to integrate other environmental sensors in the parks such as acoustics or vision monitoring?

Aude Vuillomenet, PhD student, UCL

A: Current biodiversity data collected is described on p6 of the report. We collect a lot of data for GPfL but we need to make sure that it is not too onerous for boroughs to complete, otherwise they will not participate. We review the sub-criteria annually but do not have plans to include acoustics or vision monitoring.

Q: How is the score for supporting nature and sustainability for each borough calculated?

Aude Vuillomenet, PhD student, UCL

A: Current biodiversity data collected is described on p6 of the report. Boroughs can get a maximum of 6 points in each of the 10 criteria.

Q: Is access for cycle users, notably those with disabilities, a consideration in the awards programme? Some parks like Bushy and Victoria have clubs where people of all abilities can try riding.

Tom Bogdanowicz, Policy Officer, LCC

A: Yes, they are great initiatives. We ask for information about all provision to improve access and inclusion.

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Links from the chat

Rachael, Cross River Partnership:

- Mellison Road Pocket Park case study - <https://crossriverpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Mellison-Road-Pocket-Park-HSE-Case-Study-2.pdf>

Jo, GL Hearn:

- GL Hearn - <https://www.glhearn.com/>

Judy, Black Environment Network:

- Black Environment Network - http://www.ben-network.org.uk/about_ben/intro.html
- Judy's own website - <http://www.judylingwong.co.uk/>
- Judy speaking at COP26 'Net Zero: Solutions for a Gender-sensitive Transition' - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B87cd65RB-8>
- Green Jobs Taskforce - <https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/green-jobs-taskforce>
- Declaration of the UN First Global Stakeholder Forum - https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/documents/2019-07/20190529_new_clean_first_global_stakeholder_declaration_un_habitat_assembly_1.pdf

Tony, Parks for London:

- 2021 Good Parks for London report and all previous reports - <https://parksforlondon.org.uk/resource/good-parks-for-london/>

Cllr Chaudhury, LB Hounslow:

- LB Hounslow: Green & Blue Infrastructure Strategy executive summary - https://haveyoursay.hounslow.gov.uk/parks/green-and-blue-infrastructure-strategy/user_uploads/lbh-executive-summary-of-gbi-strategy---final--july-2021-1.pdf
- Hounslow Greentalk - <https://hounslow.greentalk.io/>
- Resident free tree initiative in Hounslow - <https://hounslow.greentalk.io/order>
- Friends of Bridge House Pond Feltham - <https://e-voice.org.uk/bridgehousepond/>

For more information, please contact:

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