

# Community Taking Action in Birmingham's Green Spaces

Birmingham Open Spaces Forum

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# Birmingham Open Spaces Forum

- Birmingham 591 parks & open spaces
- BOSF was formed in 2004
- Bring together a Community Voice for all open spaces
- Not just parks
- CIO with around 130 groups
- Funded Esmée Fairbairn
- Work closely with Birmingham City Council
- Now 3 part time paid workers
- CEO of the National Federation of Parks & Green Spaces
- [www.bosf.org.uk](http://www.bosf.org.uk)





# What BOSF Offers to Groups

- Starting a new group
- Helping groups with funding bids
- Free Insurance for Member Groups
- Networking, Communication & Data Collection
- Annual Free Conference
- Support member groups
- Social Media & Website [www.bosf.org.uk](http://www.bosf.org.uk)
- Newsletters
- Coffee Mornings & Social Events – now virtual
- Collect in Volunteer Statistics to display
- Workshops – First Aid, Risk Assessment, Data Protection, Heritage Lottery Funding, Social Media etc.
- Partnership working with: BCC, Future Parks Accelerator, Public Health, Wildlife Trust, Keep Britain Tidy, Greener Birmingham, CleanUp UK etc.
- Strategic Voice for Birmingham's green spaces



# How BOSF Works with BCC

- Built a good relationship with Birmingham City Council Parks and Street Scene
- We have the community voice they need & are now a “Critical Partner”
- We are now asked for our advice & input:
  - Regular meetings with Park Managers
  - Main partner for the Future Parks Accelerator
    - <https://bosf.org.uk/projects/naturally-birmingham-future-parks-accelerator-project/>
  - East Birmingham Regeneration Strategy
  - Reports to Scrutiny Committee
  - Partnership with BCC Rangers
  - Birmingham In Bloom
- Joined all relevant networking groups e.g. Greener Birmingham, Natural Capital Round Table, Growing Birmingham etc.
- We help by supplying the Community Voice to speak out for our parks and open spaces





# Community Voice

- Brings in more people & funding
- Helps to save green space
- Strong joined up Community Voice to be heard when Campaigning!
- Joint benefits e.g. Insurance
- Add combined statistics to create a powerful picture of the work of volunteers
- Use this to show the need & worth to Councilors & decision makers
- 2014 we succeeded in saving £2 million from being cut from Parks!
- 2016 we saved all the Rangers & 11 Park Keepers
- 2018 & 19 no budget cuts just income targets



# National Federation of Parks & Green Spaces

- The Need to Network Community Forums
- Representing movement of 6,000 local groups
- Partnership with Love Parks
- Recently received charitable status as a CIO
- Meet quarterly in Birmingham – currently via Zoom
- Attended by representatives from Forums across the country
- To protect UK's green spaces & create a community voice
- Share knowledge & information
- Campaigning for Adequate Resources
- National Petition with 38 Degrees
- HLF State of UK Parks Report
- Member of the Park Action Group (PAG) formed from the Government Inquiry into Parks
- Building up a partnership network with Fields in Trust, Groundwork, GreenSpace Scotland, MHCLG etc.





# Thank You for Listening, any questions?

