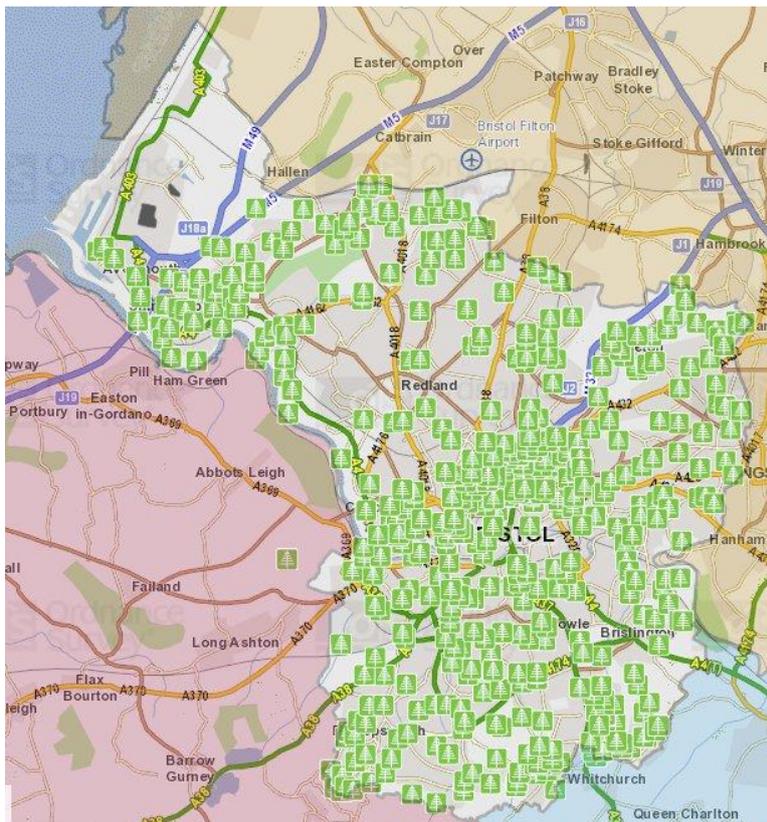


A Manifesto for Parks and Green Spaces

Protecting Bristol's Green Heart

Bristol Parks Forum



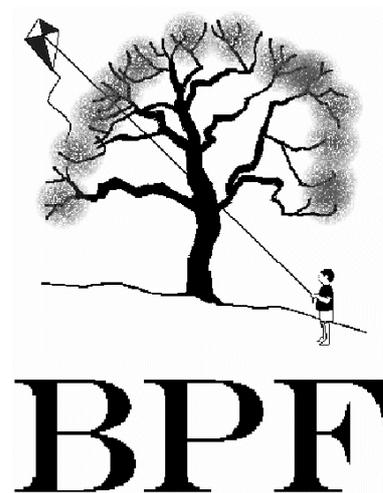
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www.bristolparksforum.org.uk

Introduction

Bristol is famous for and justly proud of its green spaces. Spaces range from the large estates, through traditional parks to small, but highly valued, green spaces in residential areas throughout the City.

There are also several nature reserves and many other 'Sites of Nature Conservation Interest' that are important for the City's biodiversity and form wildlife corridors bringing the countryside to the heart of the City.



Bristol Parks Forum was established by Bristol Parks as an umbrella organisation for community park groups and organisations in the city with an interest in their local green spaces.

The Forum is supported by Bristol City Council but acts independently and is currently the only 'community voice' that is dedicated to all of Bristol's green spaces.

This manifesto sets out the objectives of the Forum, in support of Bristol becoming the European Green Capital in 2015. We call on everyone in Bristol to help us achieve its objectives.



Objectives

Green Spaces for a Green Capital

Support the Bristol Green Capital Partnership to achieve its visions of:

- *A city region that values and nurtures its green open spaces within and surrounding countryside without, working to increase substantially the quantity, quality and diversity of native animals, plants and habitats.*
- *A society in which we are reconnected with each other and our natural surroundings, and living in integrated communities in which we celebrate diversity and value individuals and community involvement.*

Promote Community Involvement

Work with Park User Groups identifying those areas of Bristol where investment and improvements in green space are most needed - helping the council 'spend better'.

Encourage community gardening projects and other ways in which the community can bring about improvements.

Promote and support local groups in producing Management Plans for their green space.

Where no user group is available provide help and support to those who wish to form one.

Encourage the use of green spaces for community events organised by the community.



Protect Green Spaces and their Funding

Lobby local and National Government for the protection of financial resources.

Protect needed green space from development.

Green Space for Health & Wellbeing

Everyone should have access to well-maintained green space within walking distance of their home.

The minimum distances to different types of green space set out in the Parks and Green Spaces Strategy should be met whenever possible.

Visits on foot, by bike or by public transport should be encouraged over visits by car and infrastructure developed to support this.

Encourage greater use and enjoyment of Bristol's green spaces by all sectors of the community.

Encourage active and healthy life-styles and promote social inclusion in our green spaces.

Promote the importance of green space for both physical and mental health.

Encourage schools and youth groups to make use of local green spaces and the opportunities that they present for education.



Protect & Enhance Biodiversity

All green spaces in Bristol are important and serve to enhance and protect Bristol's biodiversity.

The impact on wildlife should be considered in any review of management of sites and opportunities taken to enhance biodiversity.

All nature reserves should have a management plan to ensure they are managed to protect wildlife while encouraging visitors.

Sites of Nature Conservation Interest should be protected and managed to protect biodiversity.

Increase public awareness of the biodiversity in Bristol's green spaces and support research into and recording of the species present.

Increase Tree Canopy Cover

The tree canopy cover in Bristol should be increased to meet the targets set by the Tree Forum and TreeBristol.

We will support properly planned tree planting in green spaces to help achieve this target.



Working in Partnership

Whilst retaining its independence, the Forum will work in partnership with Bristol City Council and all its departments to maintain and protect green spaces within Bristol.

Although primarily concerned with Council managed green spaces (including nature reserves and other spaces not normally thought of as parks), the Forum has an interest in all green spaces in Bristol.

The Forum will actively engage with all community groups (including city wide groups) who have an interest in green spaces.

The Forum shall be a voice of reason and shall offer impartial advice and views to all those who choose to engage.

The Forum is a member of the National Federation of Parks and Green Spaces and will seek to work with and learn from similar organisations across the country.

The Forum has close links with the Bristol Tree Forum and will work with the Tree Forum on issues regarding trees in green spaces.

The Forum supports the aims and objectives of the Bristol Biodiversity Action Plan and will work with members of The Bristol Biodiversity Partnership.

The Forum will support and promote local and national organisations and campaigns that promote the protection and enhancement of green spaces.



Four Key National Campaigns we support:

Green Flag Awards - the awards recognise well managed green spaces for all to enjoy. All public green spaces should be managed with the aim of achieving the equivalent of Green Flag standards.

#nomow - is a twitter campaign run by Project Maya and River of Flowers to encourage native wildflower habitat creation. We want to inspire people to manage their gardens and community spaces for the benefit of wildlife, to plant more wildflowers and to 'not mow'!

Love Parks Week with a simple aim: to encourage people to visit, enjoy and take pride in their local green spaces, driving the message that our green spaces are essential to healthy, happy and strong communities.

RHS Its Your Neighbourhood is a grassroots community gardening campaign helping people to make lasting improvements to their local areas. Groups are supported in their activities with advice and guidance, and receive annual feedback from expert Its Your Neighbourhood assessors, who provide tips on how further improvements can be made.



Bristol Parks Manifesto, adopted by Bristol Parks Forum 12 October 2013