

National Open Spaces Forum (provisional, working title)

- the UK network for area / town Forums of Friends Groups for parks and open spaces

National Open Spaces Forum (provisional, working title) has been launched by area Forums of Friends groups from around the UK in order that we can share our experiences, discuss together a range of issues in order to support each other and improve parks and green open spaces. By discussing it together we can identify and promote best practice throughout the country.

Our aims include:

1. Protection of green spaces
2. Addressing green space deficiencies
3. More resources for green spaces (capital and revenue)
4. Staffing and management issues
5. Full involvement of Friends/Users groups in management of their parks and open spaces

We will support each other by:

1. Sharing ideas and experiences about the way we as various area Forums of local groups work, & about what is successful (both in terms of the way we organise ourselves and in the way we support our parks)
2. Aiding the development of area Friends/Users Forums and networks in all towns and areas of the UK
3. Helping to identify and develop funding for the activities of Friends/Users groups and their area Forums and networks
4. Raising the profile of, and conducting political lobbying for, our aims

Our activities will include:

1. Setting up an email list for reps of all Friends Forums and networks, and developing our own website
2. Sharing minutes of our area Forums and NOSF meetings
3. Forums may wish to volunteer to act as contact points for their area of the UK (eg. Midlands, Wales, NW, NE, Scotland, SW, London etc).
4. Holding regular National Open Spaces Forum meetings
5. Considering holding networking meetings of Forums in differing areas of the UK
6. Making links with other similar national organisations and networks with an interest in protecting, promoting and improving green open spaces

Membership: Any area Forum or network of local Friends/Users groups, run by and for such groups.

Structure: We are a loose network, with decisions made by consensus among area Forum/network reps attending national meetings of the organisation.

Review: This is an initial framework and will be reviewed after the first year.

The above initial founding principles were agreed on March 8th 2008 at a meeting in Birmingham of 9 local/town-wide Forums with a combined membership of 398 local Friends groups