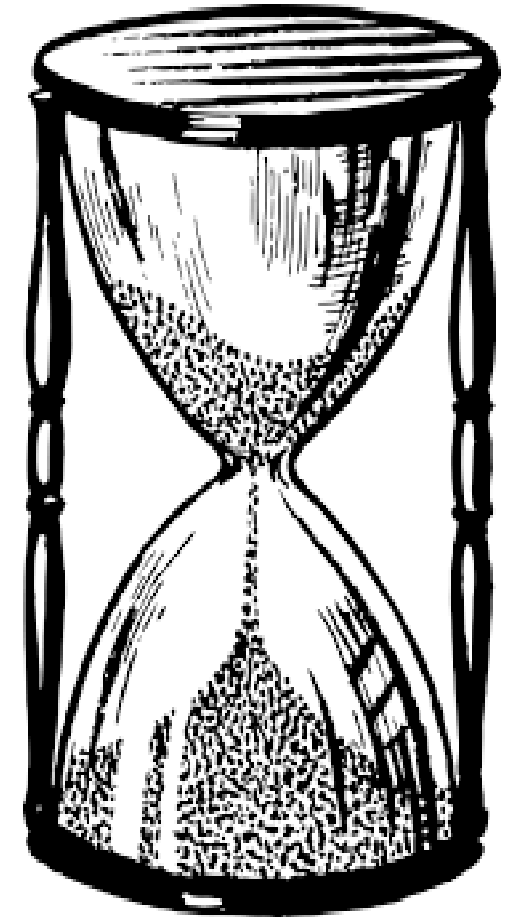


# Income Generation in Parks and Greenspaces



# Threats to Parks Funding

- Already seeing significant cuts/losses to parks and greenspace budgets.
- Newcastle-upon-Tyne has lost 91% of parks funding.
- Areas of deprivation experiencing 'additional' losses.
- Government funding will be severely reduced by 2020.
- Greater reliance on council tax and business rates.
- Phrases such as '*tipping point*' is now becoming common-place.
- Need to consider alternative sources of funding and management models to ensure future sustainability of parks and greenspaces.
- Growing emphasis being placed on importance of greenspaces to public health and wellbeing as well as value of ecosystem services/biodiversity.



# Prosperous Parks

**Prosperous Parks** was intended to be an evolving resource, which would depend on people sharing experiences, best practice and innovative ideas – APSE network

Its aims was to provide community groups, park managers, land owners and local authorities with ideas and information about sustainable commercial income for parks in the following areas:

- Concessions
- Direct commercial activities
- Agricultural income
- Renewable energy
- Asset realisation
- Rents
- Statutory environmental funding
- Ecosystems services
- Biodiversity offsetting



**Taking advantage of these opportunities are more important than ever.**



# 'Sweating the assets'

## **Identify what are the USP's of your parks and greenspaces.**

- Directly delivering commercial activities is riskier than using concessions, however the rewards are greater.
- Direct delivery requires sufficient skills and resources in-house to manage and operate the activity. As such there is more to go wrong than contracting the risk out to an external organisation
- Developing a business plan to establish whether you can profitably deliver the activity yourself, what revenue and capital costs you will incur, what staffing resource the activity will require, potential demand for the activity and what price people will be willing to pay.
- It can be beneficial to compare the proposed activity against organisations who are delivering a similar service. This will help to identify what an acceptable price for the activity is and provide an understanding of the types of business models that are most effective.
- In practice parks and open spaces often use a combination of directly delivering commercial activity and using concessions.
- Examples include:

Cafes/restaurants/Sporting facilities/Holiday and after school clubs/Meeting and conference rooms/Shops and stalls/Mobile caterer

# Case Studies



- **Nottingham City Council** - The Park's and Open Spaces Team is responsible for 136 parks and gardens and generates 50% of its annual budget from commercial income. Colwick Country Park Marina, Nottingham in Bloom sponsorship, issuing fishing licences, hosting events, Pitch and Putt, Boating and sports facilities. All of these activities are provided '**in-house**' rather than contracting with external organisations to supply these.
- Uses **external contractors** to deliver car parking for football matches and its on site cafés and mobile catering.
- New or upgraded catering facilities have often been accompanied by improved playground and leisure facilities.
- Flexible approach to managing its crown green bowling greens. Given bowls clubs the keys to the greens so that they can use the facilities whenever they want, and has a simple charging system of an annual season ticket for members.
- Nottingham in Bloom generates income from sponsorship of traffic islands, parks and competitions.
- income generation is linked to the quality of the facilities available. Facilities need to be a higher standard to attract visitors and to warrant charging for them.



# Advertising

- Parks and open spaces attract a breadth of visitors which can make advertising in them appealing to businesses.
- Examples include:
  - Park leaflets, Park newsletters;
  - Hoardings, Signage boards;
  - Parking tickets;
  - Website;
  - Toilets; and
  - Hard surface stencilling (known as clean advertising).
- Consider the types of businesses you want to advertise on your site
- Need to be able to demonstrate the benefits to the business of advertising on your site.
- Advertising needs to be sympathetic to the site.
- Be flexible in the advertising fee charged and be prepared to negotiate





# Agricultural Income

- **Grazing** - Large parks with meadows, fields and informal grassland can be used for cattle/sheep grazing.(£75 to £200 per acre)
- Where grazing is for recreational and sports uses, e.g. equestrian centres and livery stables. then higher rents ( £200+ p.a.) can be charged as use is all year round.
- Zero grazing is a reversal of traditional grazing. Instead of bringing the livestock onto the site, a livestock owner will come and cut the grass and take it away to feed the livestock.
- Grazing Animals Project (GAP) website and Natural England's regional Grazing Forums.
- **Woodfuel** - A park or open space with an area of woodland could be used create woodfuel.
- The Forestry Commission has been involved in developing the woodfuel supply chain. Their website has information on how the woodfuel supply chain works and available grants to encourage the growth of the sector.



# Ecosystems Services & Biodiversity Offsetting



- Widespread recognition of the value provided by the natural environment in terms of the benefits it provides including food, water, ( including flood prevention), energy, carbon sequestration, waste decomposition and recreation.
- Ecosystem services is not relevant to all sites but worth looking how your areas play a vital contribution to local ecosystems.
- Biodiversity offsetting is a way of providing biodiversity benefits in compensation for losses. It identifies the wildlife value of the land that is going to be impacted by development and ensures another area with the same or better environmental value is created

## **BEAM PARK DAGENHAM**

- **53 acres offering functional flood prevention for businesses, local housing, schools and nearby power station as well as public open space**
- **Neglected site for almost 100 years until its value was recognised**
- **Significant investment ERDF, Veolia Cleanaway Trust, Environment Agency and maintenance endowment.**
- **New pathways, bridge and new access gateways and viewing points made from excavated construction materials.**
- **BAP habitats created – plus wildflower meadows, woodland copses, reed beds and secluded marshes.**
- **Award winning scheme ‘Living Wetlands and best use of brownfield land.**
- **Partnerships key to success.**





# Crowdfunding

- **Spacehive** - Was the first crowdfunding platform for civic space.
- Project uploaded on web page as a tool to raise funds.
- Partners and individuals can support projects they like.
- Local authorities and community groups working together
- Partners establishing match funds
- Examples include:
- Play areas/community farms/village greens/London National City Park/renovating sports pitches/urban forests/re-introduction of red squirrels/community growing spaces/pocket parks.



# Developing and all-round approach

- In 2009 Bournemouth Parks Service was required to make savings of £1.4 million from a revenue budget of £4.8 million over two years. This required being innovative in how money could be saved and income generated.

## Countryside

- The Council has livestock grazing on several of its open spaces. The livestock reduce maintenance costs, because staff are not required to cut the heather and meadows and generate income from grants and sale of meat and breeding.
- **Sporting Activities**
- Bournemouth Borough Council owns many different sports facilities and new approaches have been introduced to manage them differently. Bowls and tennis clubs facilities managed buy users including café and public toilets.
- **Catering**
- Using an external contractor has saved the Council £50,000 per annum and resulted in better service provision.
- The Council has targeted investment at this site to ensure that the cafe operator has the best chance of success. This has included improved changing facilities, toilets and plan for a new playground close to the cafe.
- **Plant Nursery**
- The Council produces all its own bedding plants which it also sells to neighbouring councils.
- Biomass boiler is powered by wood chip which is sourced from the Council's tree maintenance programme. Previously the Council had to pay for the disposal of this wood.
- **The Parks Service was able to exceed its savings target by making lots of small changes throughout its service, rather than having to make one big cut to its activities**
- Innovative charity created to support local projects across Bournemouth's Parks, Gardens and Open Spaces.

# Bournemouth Parks Foundation



- The Bournemouth Parks Foundation is a charity devoted to enhancing Bournemouth's parks gardens and green spaces .
- Part of the Re-Thinking Parks Programme
- independent from Bournemouth Borough Council, the charity goes above and beyond the normal parks maintenance funding projects which aim to transform parks into captivating spaces in which to relax, learn, exercise and play.

## **WHAT DOES THE FOUNDATION DO?**

- An independent charitable organisation founded in January 2015 which supports Bournemouth Borough Council which has overall responsibility to maintain and develop Bournemouth's parks. The Charity works alongside Bournemouth Council to raise much needed funds for improvement and enhancements above what the council provide.

## **WHAT DOES THE FOUNDATION SUPPORT?**

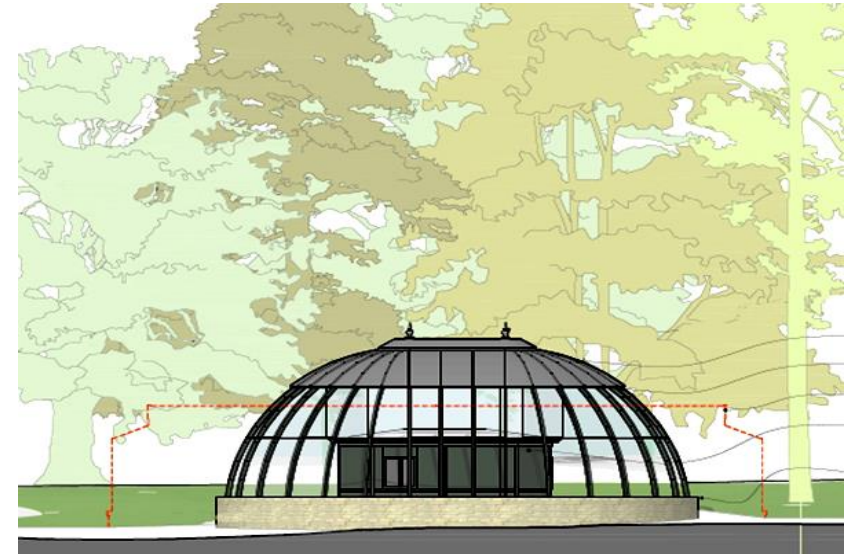
- Raises funding for the following key themes:
- Childrens' play
- Conservation and wildlife
- Art and culture
- Horticulture
- Health and wellbeing
- Sport
- Educational grants for apprentices
- Support for local community groups
- The aim is to enhance Bournemouth's parks and further attract residents and visitors to enjoy them.



# Projects Supported by the Foundation



- Pocket Park -£17,000 **completed**
- Nature Trail £12,000 target (£10,000 raised)
- Sculpted talking bench and way-markers -£10,000 **completed**
- Doggie fountains £2,000 target
- Victorian shelter restoration £20,000 target (£2,000 raised)
- Rebuilding aviary, incl. café and art projects £200,000 (£40,000 raised)



# Supporting the Foundation

- **Donations** – choose a project you wish to support
- **legacy** – ‘bequest in your will is the most popular as it doesn’t get paid during your lifetime’.
- **volunteering** – ‘ranges from office support and administration, event coordination for fund-raising and awareness-raising, marketing and communications activities, to fund-raising at events - like
- **fund raising.** organising your own event to raise funds for the Foundation such as raffles.
- **Partners** – key to supporting development.





# Tea and Trees

apse





**LOCAL SERVICES**  
**LOCAL SOLUTIONS**

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