

Urban Green 'Meanwhile Use' Enterprise Toolkit for Parks Foundations



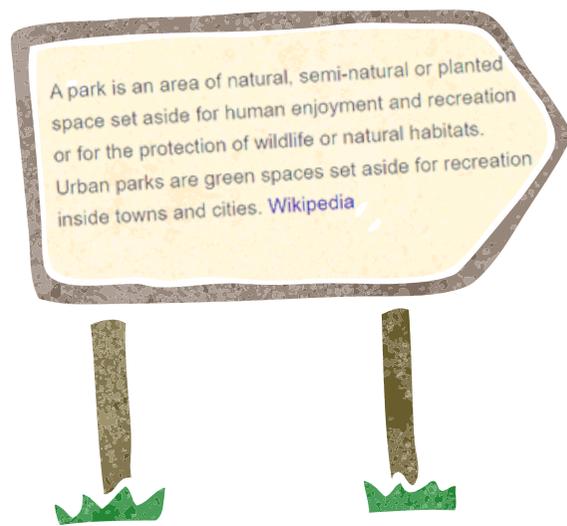
How can we activate local green spaces and generate income to help support the future sustainability of the space?

Brief:

An options appraisal for potential enterprise activity in 'meanwhile spaces' that meets both social and economic outcomes.

The key ambitions are to:

1. Activate spaces; increasing footfall, increasing diversity, reducing antisocial behaviour and connecting people with their local green space
2. Generate enterprising activities; delivering a small income in the medium term to a voluntary community or social enterprise organisation to help sustain park management



A park is an area of natural, semi-natural or planted space set aside for human enjoyment and recreation or for the protection of wildlife or natural habitats. Urban parks are green spaces set aside for recreation inside towns and cities. [Wikipedia](#)

Considerations:

- The income may be held by a Parks Foundation or by a local friends group or local anchor organisation, but it will be used to activate and sustain the spaces in future years
- Footfall to these spaces is likely to be 100-400k visitors per year
- Grant funding may be required to trial some of the ideas
- A crowdfunder may also be required
- Some initiatives/ideas may be delivered by third parties/private sector
- This is not about asset transfer or the setting up of new cafes or buildings



Festivals

- Dog fest
- Pop up beach
- Outdoor theatre
- Live music
- Pop up cinema
- Catering & bars; pub in the park, food festivals and markets
- Old fashioned entertainment; magician, circus activities
- Summer Fayres
- Comedy sessions



Families



- Move & play exercise
- Pop up messy play
- Slip and slide water activities
- Temporary roller blading rink
- Nature days/activities
- Mobile ranger play

Specific Interests



- Art in the park; lessons/open studio events
- Team building/adult play
- Mobile library venue; deckchairs
- Artists; outdoor landscape drawing
- Cubs and scouts hosting
- Sports training/bootcamps/outdoor gym /yoga/pilates lessons

Activities in Local Parks



Educational



- Acoustic music/singing lessons
- Photography/art lessons
- Orienteering
- Horticulture talks
- History walks
- Bug days
- Bat walks
- School visits
- Open fire pit; cooking lessons

Spending



- Chargeable events/activities
- Coffee cart/van
- Pizza van/trailer
- Ice-cream & cold drinks bike/cart
- Merchandise/retail opportunities
- Contactless donations



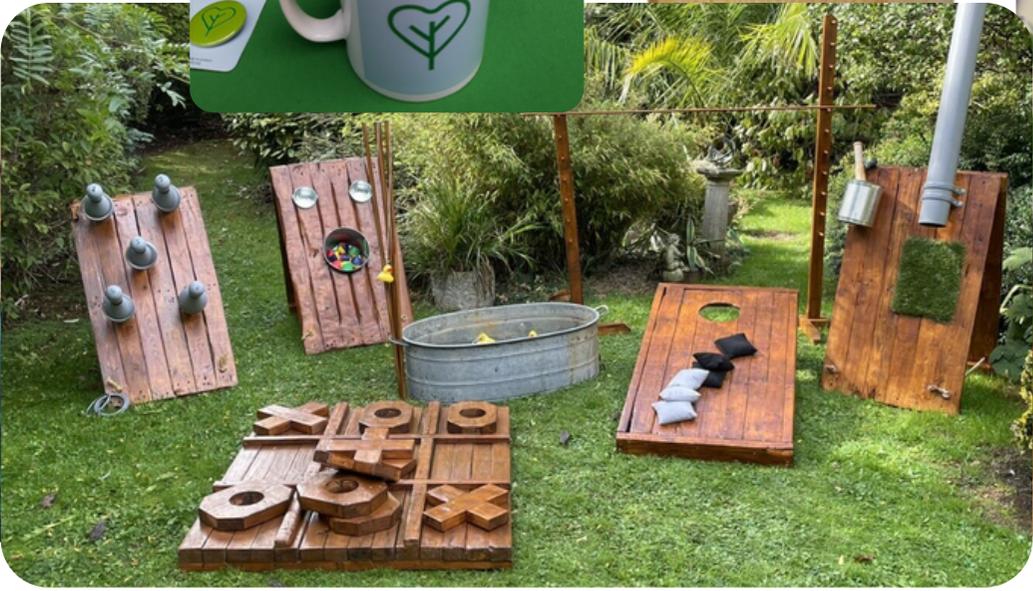
Play



Children still need a childhood with dirt, mud, puddles, trees, sticks, and tadpoles.



Spend



SWOT: Chargeable Events/Activities

Strengths:

- If executed well, this delivers one of the objectives around activating the spaces and increasing footfall
- Activities and events attract people to the space, creating engagement and allowing conversations to start, for example around giving and volunteering
- Can be delivered through partnership with other local organisations, creating opportunities for local businesses and initiatives
- Can be part of a programme of events and weekly activities that draw regular visitors to the space and engender loyalty
- Can offer opportunities to attract new and more diverse audiences to the spaces
- Delivers some income, potentially small, but regular
- Raises awareness of the organisation and the cause through marketing of the activities and the activity itself

Threats:

- Lack of interest from potential delivery partners
- Low levels of attendance and therefore income
- Low standards; lack of control through third party delivery resulting in possible lack of delivery and/or poor PR
- Barriers from other groups or organisations that may want to deliver similar
- External influences such as weather, COVID. Etc.

Weaknesses:

- Outdoor events are always weather dependant and therefore can often only be run throughout part of the year, which is limiting for programming and income
- If delivered in-house creating events and activities require resources, such as staff and relevant materials
- Marketing and promotion needs to be effective to ensure required attendance levels
- The revenue from activities can often be low and result in little profit/contribution to the purpose, although the activity itself may be meeting the objectives in other ways and there may be opportunity for secondary spend
- Public relations; could be seen as exclusive, so pricing and activities need to be carefully considered; access for all strategies need to be implemented

Opportunities:

- Attracting people to the space also creates opportunities for secondary spend such as on food or retail products, as well as potential for donations and promotion of other activities
- Using a free online booking platform can help with managing attendance levels
- Grant funding is often available for programming and activity linked roles to manage this area
- There could be opportunities for larger events and increased income
- There could be opportunities to install a temporary cover structure at some sites to help events take place even during inclement weather; also a good PR story
- Consideration could be given to the installation of temporary structures such as a roller blading rink or water play feature, although elements such as taking payment and supervision need thinking through

SWOT: Contactless Donations

Strengths:

- A visual and accepted call to action which allows the opportunity to engage people with the cause
- A simple and easy way for people to donate by card or using their phone
- Devices can be left unattended, so don't need a permanent staff presence or they can be manned by volunteers
- Proven to increase fundraising income if managed well
- The donation station itself can be branded to increase visibility of the brand/cause and ensure credibility
- The station/device itself can be portable, meaning it can be moved to different locations if required and used more flexibly
- Provides clear and accurate analytics on donations SPH. Etc. helping to manage donation income and targets
- Provides a safer way to fundraise, compared to cash giving which can be vulnerable to theft
- Relatively quick to set up in terms of lead in time to get a device/station
- Short term contracts are available, so this can be trialled before any major commitment and monthly payment plans are available

Threats:

- Devices require a link to the internet/wi-fi, at the very least at the end of the day, which can be tricky in some locations, however there are now 4/5G and offline options to consider, so this shouldn't be an issue
- Theft if using a cash box and GDPR risks to manage

Weaknesses:

- Initial costs to purchase and set up and ongoing service fees and bank costs to consider
- Needs some level of reconciliation/back office management
- Can sometimes be seen as an aggressive form of fundraising, although widely accepted by the public at bigger organisations. i.e. V&A
- Needs the GDPR aspect to be managed
- Perception of donating to 'parks' generally can be seen as paying for a service some believe should be centrally funded

Opportunities:

- Multitude of companies offering slightly different devices to choose from; some specifically working with charitable organisations
- Devices/stations can be hybrid, with a cash box and contactless swipe, attracting both methods of donations
- Suggested donation amounts can be set up to encourage people to round up and to maximise amounts donated
- Gift-aid on donations can increase income even further and is easier to manage with card donations
- Can be a way to encourage/start conversations around more frequent giving, volunteering, membership and legacy giving
- Can be linked with other fundraising options and can form part of a contactless fundraising strategy, also using elements like QR codes for events and online giving
- Opting for flexible options and devices means that donations can be given in parks/greenspaces and at events/activities as well as a more fixed location like a visitor centre/shop

SWOT: Merchandise/Retail

Strengths:

- Mobile, so a retail stall can be set up at any event/activity at a park/greenspace
- Relatively easy to sell, so can be sold/manned by volunteers
- Good quality, attractive branding can help raise awareness of the Foundation and its aims
- Small, low cost, 'impulse buy' item can sell well at events
- Could be part of other activities and events; fits in well as a secondary aspect
- Is an income stream with a relatively low resource requirement
- Once people have bought something it's a reminder of the cause and if they're using it, in the example of a bag or t-shirt, it's free advertising
- The profit margin is reasonable as it's managed in-house

Threats:

- Requires initial investment and a healthy cash flow to continue buying and selling products
- Requires an event and/or indoor location to sell at
- Competition with other organisations merchandise
- Theft of products and/or of cash revenue generated

Weaknesses:

- It requires an initial investment in branding and stock
- The whole process requires some resource to manage
- The branding needs to be attractive and enough of a draw for people to want to buy and potentially wear the products
- Stock levels need to be managed carefully, so that cash isn't tied up in stock sat in a storeroom or in locations where it's slow to sell
- Stock can be vulnerable to theft
- A vehicle or means of transporting stock to various locations is required
- Cash holding and health and safety during events needs to be considered

Opportunities:

- Could be used in conjunction with donations. i.e. 'rounding up' although this needs careful accounting processes
- An online shop as part of the Foundations website can bring in additional income, although it needs resource to manage
- Stock could be sold at other indoor venues and visitor attractions, most likely under a sale or return agreement
- Merchandise and branding can also be adapted to fit with a particular specific temporary cause

SWOT: Pizza Van/Trailer

Strengths:

- Can bring people to the park even when there's no event on. i.e. Wed night is pizza night; come and get your pizza to takeaway every Wed night from 5pm
- Provides a clear and popular way of getting people into the greenspace
- Could be done through partnership with a local company. i.e. renting them the pitch and creating opportunities for a local business
- Could be done as part of a food initiative; subsidised, reducing/re-using waste food, food/health eating educational
- Could be part of other activities and events; fits in well as a secondary aspect
- A high footfall can result in high revenue and therefore a potentially reasonable income to the Foundation depending on profit levels and agreement

Threats:

- There will already be food vans at various pitches in parks and greenspaces, so this needs consideration in conjunction with other contracts and concessions
- It can be difficult to agree a rental/commission amount and difficult to gain visibility of the caterers sales if outsourced
- Theft and vandalism (if in-house or issues if outsourced)

Weaknesses:

- If managed in-house this obviously requires staff, stock, management of health & safety aspects. Etc
- If managed in-house there are ongoing costs for maintenance, but also insurance, licences. Etc
- If managed in-house the equipment needs storage when not in use
- Does require some initial research and work to implement, even if run by a third party
- If in-house; Lone working and security aspect to consider, especially in regards to cash sales/holding
- Needs a specific spot/place to park that is visible, easy access. Etc. and this may not be actually in the park/greenspace due to access and grassed areas
- Lack of control over third party delivery could result in poor standards and PR issues

Opportunities:

- If done in-house can be a good source of income and if managed well, a high level of profit
- If out-sourced it could bring in a relatively easy passive income to the Foundation with relatively low risks
- Opportunities to subsidise or link to other initiatives, particularly around food, could be great for PR
- Can become a regular fixture linked with the cause and help to promote other areas and ways people can support

SWOT: Ice-cream Bike

Strengths:

- Can bring people to the park even when there's no event on. i.e. local ice-cream offer
- Could be done through partnership with a local company. i.e. renting them the pitch and creating opportunities for a local business
- Could be part of other activities and events; fits in well as a secondary aspect
- Less maintenance and ongoing costs than a pizza/food van (no vehicle tax, MOT. Etc)
- Less health & safety aspects to manage than any other food sales
- Can be manned by volunteers as the health & safety requirements and general management needed is low, especially if packaged ice-creams are used
- Can be wheeled around the park/greenspace easily, so can move to where the public are and can be directly located with the activities as it can be wheeled on grass
- On high days and holidays if the weather is right there is potential for a high income

Threats:

- There will already be ice-cream concessions at various pitches within parks and greenspaces, so this needs consideration in conjunction with other contracts and concessions
- It can be difficult to agree a rental/commission amount and difficult to gain visibility of the caterers sales if outsourced
- Theft of cash; both by staff/volunteers and by third party

Weaknesses:

- If done in-house this obviously requires staff, stock, management of health & safety aspects. Etc, however the requirements are less than a pizza or food van
- If done in-house it needs storage when not in use, although obviously this is smaller than a van and could be stored inside; it may need to be plugged into a power source for the refrigeration
- If in-house; Lone working and security aspect to consider, especially in regards to cash sales/holding
- Can be very weather dependent
- Although less of a risk than with other foods, the lack of control over third party delivery could result in poor standards and PR issues

Opportunities:

- If done in-house can be a good source of income and if managed well, a high level of profit
- If out-sourced it could bring in a relatively easy passive income to the Foundation with relatively low risks
- Great to attract children and families to the park, so opportunities for family activities
- A bike has more mobility around a greenspace than a van, so potential to move where the footfall is

SWOT: Built Assets

Strengths:

- A building or structure can obviously provide much needed shelter and a space to offer smaller activities, catering and retail regardless of the weather
- The space could also potentially be used for Foundation staff and storage/other uses depending on the size
- Provides a visible and recognised enterprise space (if in the right location with the right signage. Etc)
- Provides a weather resistant space, so can trade more frequently than if outdoor space was used
- Could be more likely to attract volunteers to work in a fixed, indoor space
- Can help with providing a presence to deter vandalism and unsociable behaviour in that particular greenspace
- Provides a more credible and professional base for enterprise activities
- Provides an easier space in which to manage sales and donations through proper systems and processes
- Retail can be expanded to sell items linked to the greenspace such as outdoor play products

Threats:

- Disputes around usage and potential bad PR if Foundation is not deemed to be the most worthy tenant or any part of the process is not deemed to be fair
- Rent/costs could be too high to be viable
- Theft and vandalism

Weaknesses:

- May require a lengthy and resource heavy procurement process to tender for the usage
- Rent or some payment for usage will be a fixed cost
- Initial investment to ensure it is fit for purpose may be high
- Potential ongoing maintenance costs
- Income from retail and/or catering may not be high enough to pay rent and bills
- Security aspects need to be considered
- Space is unlikely to be big enough to hold events and larger activities, so these may still need to be outside
- Lone working may need to be considered

Opportunities:

- Could provide a hub space/visitor centre to help raise awareness of the Foundation and meet some of its aims
- Depending on size could provide an opportunity to offer more smaller activities than viable in an outdoor space
- Provides an opportunity for a fixed donation point with the potential to raise higher funds due to being able to communicate, engage and promote the cause more effectively
- Provides an opportunity to potentially manage low level catering in-house with less risk than mobile catering and less initial outlay
- Can provide a base from which an ice-cream bike or hawkers can sell ice-creams and merchandise

Examples & Case Studies: Chargeable Activities

A programme of events means that you can offer both free and chargeable events and activities, thereby providing for a mix of interests and disposable incomes.

Rowntree Park in York offers a programme of both free and paid for activities, shown in calendar form on their website and all bookable online, as pictured.

They have also dedicated funding to programming events for audiences that have been shown to use the park less than others, which in 2023 has culminated in the 'Make Space for Girls' programme aimed at older girls from 10 to 18 years old, as research has shown that they are less likely to use greenspaces compared to boys in the same age group.



EVENT

Tree medicine across the seasons - Winter with Scot's pine

A seasonal exploration of our native Scot's pine trees & how to work with their amazing health properties.

- **Date and time:** Saturday 18 November 2023, 10am - 3pm.
- **Price:** £40 (plus booking fee).
- **Location:** Glen Finglas - Glen Finglas Visitor Gateway, Brig o' Turk/Callander, FK17 8HR.

The Woodland Trust offer a programme of events around the UK, some free and some chargeable, such as the events shown. All are available to book online and they remind people when booking the free events that donations are welcome, as below.

Free to use booking systems, such as Eventbrite are perfect for managing activity bookings and many organisations including The Woodland Trust use Eventbrite or similar.

Join us on a guided walk around Samson's stone and hillfort led by one of our wonderful volunteers.

- **Date:** Saturday 5 August, 10am - 12.30pm.
- **Price:** Free, but **donations** to support the management of our woodlands are welcome.

The 2020 report 'Events in London's Parks: The Friends' perspective' surveyed the 600+ parks friends groups in London and provides some useful insight into paid events (albeit in London).

According to the report 'the most common type of paid event was a music festival or fun fair although the number of open-air cinema and theatre shows is rising as they seem popular with locals and don't have too much impact on the park or the users.'

Events such as markets and fun fairs were seen as popular as they brought communities together, although it was noted in these cases that free entry was preferred to promote inclusivity, with the individual activities within the event being charged for along with secondary spends on games, food. Etc.

The report also cited research which shows that 'attending an event in a park will often lead to a person becoming more involved with the site in future; whether that is as a volunteer, a fundraiser or perhaps meaning they take a bigger interest in responding to how the site is managed and suggesting ways to improve it.'

'Make Space for Girls' June 2023

A programme of events and activities in Rowntree Park, York.

We're hosting a month of events in Rowntree Park this June to inspire and empower girls. From sports and fitness classes to art and craft workshops, music and dance performances, and nature related activities. It's time to reclaim the public space, try new things, meet like-minded individuals - and most of all, have fun!

Day	Event	Time
1 May	Early May Bank Holiday	9:30am Gardening
2 May	Music with Cathie	9:30am Spring flow
3 May	10am Willow Weavi	10am Gardening Lc
4 May	10am Friday Forest	9am Tai
5 May	6pm Wild Ones	1:15pm Nature Tim
6 May	7pm Salsa amitheo	6pm MIND Green v
7 May	Bank Holiday for	9:30am Gardening
8 May	10am Willow Weavi	10am Gardening Lc
9 May	10am Friday Forest	9am Tai
10 May	6pm Wild Ones	1:15pm Nature Tim
11 May	7pm Salsa amitheo	6pm MIND Green v
12 May	Bank Holiday for	9:30am Gardening
13 May	10am Willow Weavi	10am Gardening Lc
14 May	10am Friday Forest	9am Tai
15 May	6pm Wild Ones	1:15pm Nature Tim
16 May	7pm Salsa amitheo	6pm MIND Green v
17 May	Bank Holiday for	9:30am Gardening
18 May	10am Willow Weavi	10am Gardening Lc
19 May	10am Friday Forest	9am Tai
20 May	6pm Wild Ones	1:15pm Nature Tim
21 May	7pm Salsa amitheo	6pm MIND Green v
22 May	Bank Holiday for	9:30am Gardening
23 May	10am Willow Weavi	10am Gardening Lc
24 May	10am Friday Forest	9am Tai
25 May	6pm Wild Ones	1:15pm Nature Tim
26 May	7pm Salsa amitheo	6pm MIND Green v
27 May	Bank Holiday for	9:30am Gardening
28 May	10am Willow Weavi	10am Gardening Lc
29 May	10am Friday Forest	9am Tai
30 May	6pm Wild Ones	1:15pm Nature Tim
31 May	7pm Salsa amitheo	6pm MIND Green v

Top Tip:
Promotion and marketing of your events programme is key to the levels of footfall and success (among other aspects!)

Examples & Case Studies: Mobile Play

Gloucestershire Play Rangers:

Play Gloucestershire is a charity, who say they are funded by a combination of grants, commissioned work and donations from charitable trusts and individuals.

<https://playgloucestershire.org.uk/play-timetables/>

Mondays
Buckenham Sports Park, Kingsway

Tuesdays
Mason Road Playing Field, Stroud

Wednesdays
Thistle Patch, Chesterton

Thursdays
Milton Avenue Play Area, Podsmead

Synwell Playing Field, Wotton Under Edge

Aylard Gardens, Barton & Tredworth

Melville Play Area, Bourton on the Water

Archway Gardens Play Area, Stroud

All sessions 4pm to 6pm

Our Play Ranger activities take place outdoors in all weathers and are open access. This means there is no registration, children are free to come & go as they please.

Under 7's are welcome and should be accompanied by a parent or carer.

We believe all children have the right to play. Please talk to us if your child needs additional support to enjoy Play Rangers. We welcome disabled children & their families.

Play Gloucestershire
Transforming lives through the power of play
www.playgloucestershire.org.uk
@play_glos playgloucestershire

Isle of Man Playing Out:

Isle of Play is a registered charity who say their vision is 'to work with local communities to promote and provide opportunities for all children on the Isle of Man to fulfil their Right to Play'. They receive donations and grants and work with local sponsors.

Playing Out is sponsored by Manx Gas.

<https://www.isleofplay.im/playing-out/>

Saturday 4th Mar 2023 - Saturday 27th May 2023
10:30am - 11:15am
Greenwich Park; Greenwich Park Revealed

Bring your family to the park for a fun Move and Play session with Greenwich Dance!

You'll be guided by a professional dance artist who will encourage you to find creative and playful ways to move together, inspired by the natural surroundings of the park.

Suitable for families with children aged 3+.

Every Saturday from 4th March to 27th May.

Location: Greenwich Park Bandstand (What3Words: tips.mouse.bank <https://what3words.com/>)

Places are free but must be booked in advance.

Book Now

The Royal Parks Play Sessions, London:

The Royal Parks is a registered charity who are funded by a combination of income streams including grants and donations.

The Move & Play sessions are part of a programme of both chargeable and free events including Bug Walks, Dance & various lessons

<https://www.royalparks.org.uk/whats-on/upcoming-events>

PLAYING OUT

What is Playing Out?

Our flagship playscheme travels the Island bringing the very best play opportunities to local parks, school playgrounds and glens.

Armed with a van full of resources including ropes, sheets, go-karts, scooters, nets, pipes, old tyres, pots and pans, bows and arrows and many other new and reclaimed; our trained playworkers help thousands of children every year build swings, waterslides, ziplines and dens... the only limit is the child's imagination!

We whole heartedly believe that Play is for everyone. Our unique approach allows children of all ages and abilities to create and play together, and whilst some venues are easier to access than others we will always do our best to make sure that everyone is welcome.

Sessions run twice a day and we operate an open access policy, meaning children are free to come and go as they please; though they should be signed in by a parent/guardian for reasons of safeguarding.

PlayingOut is supported by Manx Gas and is free to access! Donations are accepted and will help us secure Isle of Play as a regular feature in the lives of the islands children for years to come.

Top Tip:

There are many organisations offering mobile play so partnering with them is the best way to deliver a regular activity

Examples & Case Studies: Contactless Donations

The Status of UK Fundraising Report 2019 found that 26% of charities have seen cash donations decrease over the past three years. This number is likely to increase as 34% of people anticipate that the UK will be fully cashless within the next 20 years. 54% of the public also believe that having contactless options would make it easier to donate to charity. Current donors agree, with twice as many seeing the move to contactless as a benefit compared to those who dislike the idea.

A Rethinking Parks report on Charitable Giving in Parks, by Leeds Parks Fund in 2019 found that motivations are strongest to give to parks in the greatest need of improvement as well as community parks and the residents' main park of use.



Costs:

- A podium stand donation point is between £1000 - £3000 depending on the requirements for offline, battery power and design work.
- Handheld or countertop devices can vary from £125 - £500 and all devices can be leased rather than bought outright.
- Transaction fees apply to each donation, typically around 2-3% of the donation.
- Maintenance agreements are usually available at around £15-20 a month.
- A connection to the internet either at the point of donation or at the end of a day is necessary, so transport or a sim card at an additional cost may be required

In Bournemouth The Parks Foundation have used a variety of contactless donation points and found that engendering an emotional connection is key to success; The Aviary unit pictured raises an average of £252 per month as people can directly engage with the cause for which they are being asked to donate. Another unit which tied in with a Christmas tree wonderland event in Bournemouth Gardens raised £2k in 6 weeks, but donation points which have a more general ask to support parks, such as the monkey pictured, can raise less at c£25 per month. Whilst the team have tried handheld devices at events, the successes vary and CEO Cathi Farrer notes that fundraising training for the staff is crucial to make the investment worthwhile.

The talking parrot donation point was funded by Nesta Rethinking Parks at a cost of £5k and it returns c£8.5k annually in donations over a 5-year period turning the initial £5K investment into £40,000 income.

The Leeds Parks Fund report found that 'a common misconception of fundraising is that people simply give to the neediest causes, where often they are giving to causes which have a personal meaning for them.'

Previous studies have also found that charitable giving is influenced by a number of factors, namely: donor tastes, preferences, and passions; their personal and professional backgrounds; their perceptions of charity competence and their desire to have a personal impact and to feel as though their contribution has made a difference .



Top Tip:
Choosing a specific fundraising activity that people can engage with will help with peoples proclivity to giving

Examples & Case Studies: Mobile Food & Drink

Many organisations partner with caterers to deliver food and drink in conjunction with other activities and events. The obvious benefits to this are that the caterers are experts and likely to deliver a high standard of offer and also that they are set up with any initial investment in equipment. Etc. and are ready to provide the offer. A partnership with a local caterer needs to be carefully thought through and you need to ensure that they reflect your values and aims.

PIZZA PICNICS

FRESH FROM THE OVENS OF LOCAL FIRM PROPER PIZZAS!

29 March 2021 - 11 April 2021 | 11am - 3pm

Standard Admission Applies

Back by popular demand. Local firm Proper Pizzas will be back at Kiplin during school holidays in 2021. Pizza are made fresh to order and can be taken across the 90 acres site to be enjoyed at your perfect picnic spot!



"As a passionate horse rider, an industrious individual and having nursed soldiers on the Austro-Italian border in WWII Bridget Talbot (the last owner of Kiplin Hall, credited with saving it for the nation) would have thoroughly approved of a horse-trailer pizza company on her drive!" Sarah Mayhew Craddock, Curator, Kiplin Hall & Gardens



Pizzas served 11am - 3pm or until they sell out.

Please join the mailing list below to keep up to date with news and events at Kiplin. Thank you for your support!

You can find out more about Proper Pizza on their [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) or [Instagram](#) pages.

Kiplin Hall in Yorkshire used a pizza van to supplement their own in-house catering for garden visitors during the busy summer seasons of 2021 and 2022 and felt it added an interesting offer that they wouldn't have been able to provide with good customer feedback as well as a small amount of additional income, but they also noted that it required staff time to manage the relationship and payments.

Catering in itself can also be a draw and there are many coffee vans who will be happy to spend a few hours on a weekend morning at a greenspace which routinely has high numbers of dog-walkers and visitors.

A rent or commission payment (usually based on net sales) can be agreed for the use of the greenspace/attendance at the event, however the caterers will want reassurance that there will be financial benefits to them, usually linked to the footfall at the event and ensuring their potential levels of custom. Getting a deposit payment is also sensible, as chasing debt can be problematic and for one off events, unfortunately can be a common occurrence.



The Little Yorkshire Coffee Company started selling hot and drinks and snacks (& dog snacks!) from their van on the York Knavesmire during Covid and now have a semi-permanent spot on weekends catering to walkers and people out and about on the large greenspace, as pictured.

Many places advertise their activities in parks as free, but still ask people to book online so that they can estimate attendance numbers. If an event is chargeable you may also want to think about a package, so that if visitors are booking and paying online, their ticket includes a free drink or ice-cream, thereby generating some guaranteed income for the catering.

Top Tip

If people are paying for the event/activity they are more likely to spend on catering (and retail) to ensure they get their money's worth

Useful Excerpts

Paying for Parks, Eight Models for Funding Urban Green Spaces, CABE, 2016

Another potential source of funding for green spaces is the opportunity they can provide for hosting environmental initiatives such as alternative energy production. Waste management initiatives such as local green waste recycling and composting could be integrated into the design and management of urban green spaces, and alternative energy fuels could be grown and sold to fund green spaces. This is being developed as a new income source for farmers in Northern Ireland but could be transferred to the green space sector.

Improving Access to Greenspace Review, Public Health England, 2020

Care should be taken in creating sensitively designed materials used to promote and encourage access to greenspace. Visual imagery and wording should aim to be inclusive, resonate with the target groups' views of who they are in the outdoors, and allow them to 'see themselves' in the images provided. The clothing, gender and ethnicities of the people in photos should be carefully considered, as well as testing wording so that it is not perceived as being intimidating or condescending (168). There is some evidence that persuasive messaging techniques may be effective in changing the way people think about activities in greenspace, and help to build their confidence to undertake these (169).

A Practical Guide to Community Engagement, The West Lothian Community Planning Partnership

Overcoming barriers to engagement

When planning an engagement process you need to recognise diversity, identify potential barriers and design the process to minimise barriers where possible. The table below illustrates some potential barriers that may prevent

individuals or groups getting involved and identifies some areas you may want to consider which may help to remove these barriers.

Potential barriers	Design issues to consider
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The capacity and ability of different stakeholders, groups and individuals to participate ➤ 'Hard to reach' groups such as young people, older people, minority groups or socially excluded groups ➤ Levels of community infrastructure ➤ Rural isolation ➤ Gaps in information ➤ Literacy and numeracy levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Techniques and engagement methods to be used ➤ Need for independent facilitation ➤ Location and accessibility of venue ➤ Number and type of engagement events ➤ Transport requirements ➤ Childcare needs ➤ Format and content of communication and publicity material ➤ Use of interpreters and signers

Why Should We Invest in Parks, Evidence From The Parks for People Programme, 2020

Buildings or community hubs form a key part of many successful parks. At Grosvenor and Hilbert the refurbished hub was transformed from a run-down bowls club changing room into a community facility with a cafe and toilets. The bowls club is still there, but many other groups can now use the space. At Boultham Park the cafe, glasshouse and education centre provide an important focal point for the community. However, buildings are costly and require ongoing care and maintenance, so this needs to be taken into account in planning. Community-owned or community managed spaces might find it hard to resource these needs without on-going fund-raising (see Myatt's Field Park), but they also ensure that benefits and any profits are invested back into the park

Parks are livelier, richer places when they **welcome marginalised groups** and include them as part of the community. Saughton Park offered all-ability cycling to people with disabilities and volunteering opportunities for people with learning difficulties, as well as providing an opportunity for Syrian refugees to be involved in putting on events. At Boultham Park the Linkage students were an integral part of the project. Parks can bring people together across class and cultural divides, but these activities need staffing and support – they do not emerge spontaneously

House of Commons, Public Parks Report, 2016–17

Charitable Giving to Parks and Greenspaces, Leeds Park Fund & University of Leeds, 2019

Which aspects of parks and green spaces would you prefer to give to?

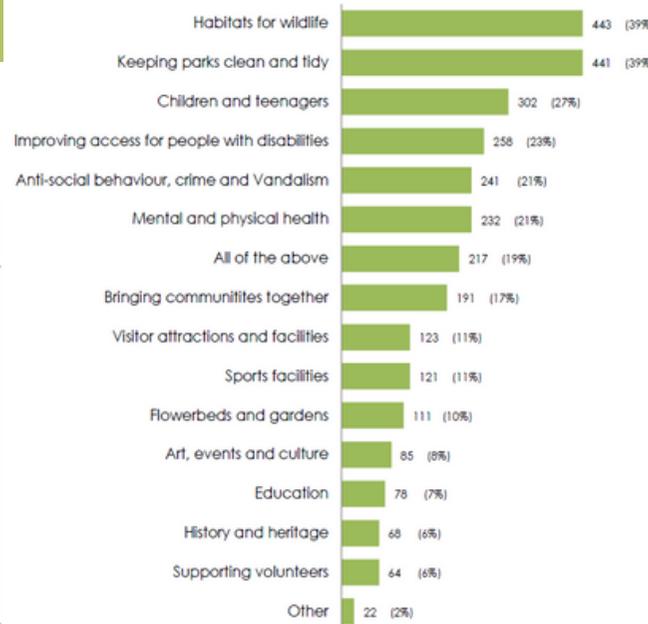
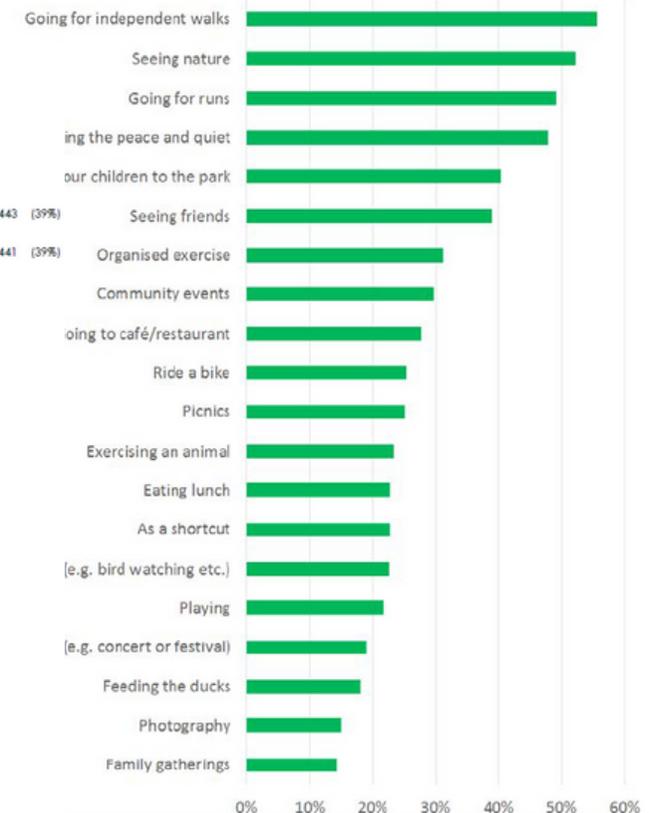


Figure 2: The top twenty most selected uses made of local parks by respondents to our survey





Summary

To activate green spaces, we will generally be talking about delivery of some sort of activity, event or at least providing a reason for people to engage with the space. All of these require resources and often a Foundation may be working with minimum resources, especially in terms of staff time. Whilst there are various ways of delivering activities with low resources, these need to be carefully considered to ensure that they are meeting the Foundations objectives and standards.

One method can be to engage third parties to do the delivery and this can often be a sensible decision as the third party may be experts in the particular activity, while the Foundation may not. An example of this would be catering where the third party will be set up and proficient at delivering this type of activity. However, any third party will also need reassurance that the activity will be beneficial for them and/or their objectives; for instance in the case of catering, they will want to know how many people may be coming to a planned event or in the case of a partner delivering the event, they may want support with promoting the event. Again, this requires resources on the behalf of the Foundation, which generally will be made up of a small staff and volunteer team.

A starting point is to consider the types of activities that you, as a Foundation, feel fit with your objectives and which activities you wouldn't consider. It may be that a local group have put forward some suggestions for activities and you may be happy for them to manage these, but you will also want to look at how these fit with anything else you are planning and where any income may be reinvested, if there is income generated. Consulting with current users and non-users of the greenspaces is an ideal starting point as it helps to ensure that you are meeting your potential audiences needs.

Once you have some ideas for types of activities then you can start to develop a network to help deliver these. Developing a network of organisations and businesses that can deliver some of these activities could also possibly open up new ideas and opportunities, as well as highlight any potential gaps for delivery. It may be that the Foundation decides to fill these gaps and therefore funding for this will need to be considered.

At this stage a clear programme of the activities to engage people should ideally be mapped out, ideally with some sort strategy to explain what the focus and objectives are. This doesn't need to be a long or detailed document, but should tie in with the overall Foundation's objectives and therefore with the 'cause' of supporting the parks and greenspaces.

There are various skills which would be useful when commencing this piece of work and it may be that advertising for volunteers to support with this could be beneficial and/or community groups. Ideally there should be creative involvement to put forward and develop ideas for activities, but there also needs to be some thought to the practical delivery, the finances and the development of relationships with relevant third parties.

Grant funding for posts linked to programming and activities is often available, more so than any funding for commercial roles, so this could be an option to explore, as some of the existing Foundations are currently using grant funded roles such as Activity Programmer, Park Activators and Events Managers.

Overall, it is essential that any activities within the greenspaces not only need to provide an interesting and engaging activity on the day, but also need to make steps towards engaging people on a deeper level with the greenspace/s; whether that is through fundraising and increasing peoples proclivity to giving money or through an event which raises people awareness of the Foundation and its aims.

It is important that the Foundations key message, of supporting the greenspaces, runs through any and all of the associated materials for activating greenspaces from the networking speak to the promotion of events to the reason for donating time or money. However, more pertinent than the general cause of supporting parks, is a specific cause which catches people's attention. If a cause specific to a person's local park can be found, such as the maintenance or creation of something at that particular park, then that person is more likely to have an emotional connection and this increases the likelihood of them supporting the cause in some way.



Useful Documents, Research & Links

Contactless Donations:

- <https://donadonations.com/case-studies/>
- <https://gwd.team/donation-station>
- <https://www.payacharity.com/resources/faqs>
- <https://www.goodbox.com>
- <https://justgiving.com/for-charities/integrations/libertypay>
- <https://blog.justgiving.com/6-creative-ways-that-charities-are-using-contactless/>
- <https://blog.justgiving.com/statistic-round-up-contactless-payments>
- Charitable Giving to Parks and Greenspaces, Leeds Park Fund & University of Leeds, 2019
- Rethinking Parks, Developing a contactless donation unit prototype, Cathi Farrer, CEO Bournemouth Parks Foundation

Play and Events:

- <https://www.popupadventureplay.org/host-your-own/>
- <https://make-do-play.weebly.com/>
- <https://www.isleofplay.im/adventure-playground/>
- The Amazing Benefits of Child-Directed Play, Anna Housley Juster, Ph.D. 2013
- Events in London's Parks, The Friends' Perspective, University of Westminster, 2020

Parks and Greenspaces, General Research:

- Why Should We Invest in Parks, Evidence From The Parks for People Programme, 2020
- Improving Access to Greenspace Review, Public Health England, 2020
- Revaluing Parks and Greenspaces, Fields in Trust Report, 2018
- House of Commons, Communities and Local Government Committee, Public Parks Report of Session 2016-17
- Paying for Parks, Eight Models for Funding Urban Green Spaces, CABI, 2016
- HLF State of UK Public Parks, 2016
- A Practical Guide to Community Engagement, The West Lothian Community Planning Partnership

