

Media release

November 2011 – for immediate release



Love Parks Week 21-29 July 2012

Renowned campaign for parks needs financial support

Parks and green spaces improve the lifestyles of local people; they contribute to health and wellbeing, the local economy, the environment, and to building stronger communities. Access to these spaces is as essential to civilised modern society as education and health care.

Parks charity GreenSpace are appealing for organisations to support a nationwide campaign - Love Parks Week - which raises the awareness of the importance of parks, voicing the need for continual investment and support for such valuable public assets.

[Love Parks Week](#) was launched as a national campaign in 2006 by parks charity [GreenSpace](#). The campaign encourages as many people as possible to get out and enjoy their free local green spaces whilst enabling event organisers, such as local authorities, fitness companies, trusts and community groups to run successfully branded and advertised events in their parks for their local communities.

The campaign has grown year after year, with Love Parks Week 2011 being the most successful yet. It reached a huge level of public participation, attracting one million people across the UK to parks and green spaces, whilst receiving increased sector support and national news coverage. Astonishingly the campaign has achieved these milestones with limited funding and for the last five years operated without a budget, with just time allocated to it from a team of four at GreenSpace.

GreenSpace predicts that the importance of parks and green spaces is moving higher on both people and businesses agenda's and are expecting Love Parks Week to continue growing both with people hosting and attending Love Parks Week events in 2012. Because of this rapid growth, the campaign needs your support.

This is a campaign that has a lot to offer, it brings people together to enjoy and benefit from free local parks and greens paces, it encourages interaction, relaxation, exercise, hobbies, socialising...the list goes on. Love Parks Week is GreenSpace's strongest tool for advocating on behalf of parks.

Funding will go towards both the operations and maintenance costs of the campaign and provide the event organisers on low budgets with materials to promote their activities to communities. The campaign is reaching the minimum of its potential and with some added funds it could grow into something really powerful.

GreenSpace hope that you too can share this vision, understand the need for funding, and see how your company can help support Love Parks Week enabling it to continue to get people loving and using their parks for years to come, and advocating on behalf of the precious green spaces.

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- **Why promote parks:**

1. **Numbers** - Over 33 million people in England choose to use their green spaces, with around a tenth of the population visiting daily.
2. **Health** - A brisk walk every day, in your local park, can reduce the risk of heart attacks by 50%, strokes by 50%, diabetes by 50%, fracture of the femur by 30%, colon cancer by 30%, breast cancer by 30% and Alzheimer's by 25%.
3. **Environmental** - Air quality, air temperature, water and flood management, are all kept within manageable limits because of parks and green spaces.
4. **Play** - Outdoor play and adventure can increase levels of physical activity and fitness, activate higher cognitive processes and healthy brain development.
5. **Older people** - Elderly people who have close access to a place where they can relax and enjoy nature, show significantly greater satisfaction with where they live.
6. **Building communities** - The number one ranked issue for good parks and public spaces is that they give a sense of community.
7. **Economic** - Owners of small companies rank recreation, parks and open spaces as the highest priority in choosing a new location for their business.

See more facts and figures surrounding the benefits of parks and green spaces in our GreenSpace's ['Understanding the Contribution Parks and Green Spaces can make to Improving People's Lives'](#)

- **Six Love Parks Week facts:**

1. The campaign encourages as many people as possible to get out and enjoy their green spaces, celebrate the benefits they bring and voice the need for continued investment and support for these valuable assets.
2. Love Parks Week was launched in 2006 and since the campaign has grown to 1,200 events across the UK during one week in July, attracting one million people.
3. 2011 press coverage reached 28 million people and achieved a £230K editorial value.
4. Supporters of the 2011 campaign included Heritage Lottery Fund, Play England, The Land Trust, Visit England, British Cycling and Natural England.
5. The diversity of events means there's something for everyone, from zumba classes and family BBQs to folk festivals and circus skills classes.
6. The 2012 Love Parks Week campaign will also feature a fundraising drive for the first time through JustGiving which will include text-giving where supporters can text the code "PARK42" to 70070 and the amount they want to give (£1, £2, £3, £4, £5 and £10).

- GreenSpace is a registered charity which works to improve parks and green spaces by raising awareness, involving communities and creating skilled professionals. www.green-space.org.uk.

- For Love Parks Week / GreenSpace press enquiries please contact:

Kelly Caulfield, Marketing & Communications
Manager

T: 0118 946 9066

E: kellyc@green-space.org.uk

Tess Stackley, Campaign Manager

T: 0118 946 9066

E: tesss@green-space.org.uk

- Love Parks Week logo and high resolution photographs are available upon request.