

The background is a solid green color with a faint, light green pattern of leaves and branches in the upper right corner.

# the tangible benefits of parks

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# Background to GSE

- GreenSpace East Forum exists to promote and support a network of accessible quality green space of all typologies with the purpose of contributing towards health, sustainability and enjoyment.
- GSE will support its members and contribute to the regional and national agenda by influencing policy makers

# Why join GSE

- Access to communication network
- Access to research and technical information
- Access to training, best practice, and benchmarking
- A strengthened voice for green spaces

# Why join GSE

- Promotion of your activities
- Links to policy makers
- Links to the Green Flag Award
- Access to funding information
- Contact with other public, private and voluntary sector organisations

# So why are Parks important

- Ninety-one per cent of people say that parks and public spaces improve their quality of life.
- Over 40 per cent of us visit our local green space each week.

**Green Space is a vital part of the public realm. Attractive, safe and accessible parks and green spaces contribute positive social, economic and environmental benefits, improving public health, well-being and quality of life.**

CABE Space 2003

# Benefits of good quality Parks

- Reinforce a local identity and enhance the physical character of an area
- Maintain the visual amenity and attractiveness and develop civic pride
- Raise property values and aids urban renewal
- Boost the economic potential and tourism

# Benefits of good quality Parks

- Contributes to the Health agenda
  - by providing formal and informal recreation activities

# Benefits of good quality Parks

- Health & wellbeing
  - significant reductions in stress and anxiety can be achieved within 5 minutes when viewing green landscapes. This can be measured through positive changes to blood pressure, pulse rate, muscle tension, and brain electrical activity

# Benefits of good quality Parks

- Health & wellbeing
  - hospital patients with a view of green space suffer less pain and recover more rapidly. Their requirement for medium to strong pain-killing drugs can be reduced by 25%

# Benefits of good quality Parks

- Health & wellbeing
  - plants can help reduce the summer energy load on buildings by 20%-40% as their shelter and shade reduce the need for mechanical air conditioning

# Benefits of good quality Parks

- Health & wellbeing
  - the provision of green areas around the workplace has been shown to reduce employee annual sick leave by as much as 23%, it can also reduce staff turnover and attract higher calibre job applicants

# Benefits of good quality Parks

- Offers alternate routes for circulation, cycling, walking and Safer routes to School
- Raise air quality and moderating extremes of temperature

# Benefits of good quality Parks

- Climate change
  - according to research by the Hadley Centre, by 2040 more than half of summers will be warmer than 2003 and by 2100 summer temperatures similar to 2003 will be classed as cool.
  - heat Island effects can be dramatically reduced by having quality parks and gardens within city centres.

# Benefits of good quality Parks

- Climate change
  - In urban areas, just a 10% increase in tree coverage will counter the predicted 4°C temperature rise over the next 100 years caused by climate change and the urban heat island effect

# Benefits of good quality Parks

- Protects the historical, cultural and archaeological heritage
- Provides a wide range of cultural, social and community facilities
- Protects and enhances the levels of biodiversity and ecological habitats

# Benefits of good quality Parks

- Water management and conservation
  - the capturing and storing rainwater
    - amenity value
    - irrigation
    - alleviating flood risk
    - water sport and recreation
    - biodiversity habitats

# Benefits of good quality Parks

- Social cohesion and inclusion
  - improves social and physical inclusion including accessibility, particularly for young, disabled and older people
  - provided opportunity for social interaction
    - sporting
    - cultural

# Benefits of good quality Parks

- Crime reduction
  - buildings which are set in well cared for green surroundings have been shown to suffer 32% fewer crimes
  - well maintained parks encourage visitor numbers
  - it's the difference between no-go areas and let's-go areas

# Benefits of good quality Parks

- Social Return on Investment (SROI)
  - estimated 7:1 return
    - adjacent property values
    - volunteer activity
    - reduction in crime
    - reduction in maintenance
    - health benefits

# Important Corporate Targets

- Community cohesion and local participation (NPIs 1 to 6)
- Crime and antisocial behaviour (NPIs 15 to 46)
- Road traffic accidents (NPIs 47 and 48) and congestion (NPIs 167)

# Important Corporate Targets

- Reducing childhood obesity, emotional health and bullying (NPIs 56 to 58, 69 and 198)
- Employment and Business Success (NPIs 170 to 174)
- Environmental sustainability (NPIs 185 to 198)
- Improved local biodiversity (NPI 197)

# So what are the benefits?

- They contribute to, support or enhance our efforts in protecting our future:
  - social wellbeing
  - adaptation against climate change
  - health and wellbeing of the community
  - social cohesion and security and
  - making the Region a better place for people to live, work and play

Thank you