

Insight from our FPA team

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Hello all, welcome to our second newsletter. What a fantastic time of year – my favourite season is Autumn. It is a wonderful time of year with crunchy, colourful leaves and cooler weather. You may think of Halloween and the countdown to Christmas but there are some amazing things to learn about the very colourful season –

- The season of autumn is also called the aurora season because clear evening skies make for good stargazing.
- The Autumnal Equinox is the two times of the year when day and night are of same length. It happens when the sun is exactly above the equator.
- The full moon closest to the Autumn Equinox is called the Harvest Moon. It was believed to be vital for an abundant harvest – with great harvests of pumpkin, apple and corn.

If I'm not outside playing hockey, you'll find me out walking in the woods, near a lake or along the coast – I love it! I've recently just honeymooned in the Lake District and it was great to be out walking so much and yes, there were obviously a couple of pub pitstops. My new brother-in-law is a fantastic wildlife photographer and has recently signed up to do an Environmental Science Course in the evenings – as a family we now spend most weekends, exploring, talking about the outdoors and planning our next adventure.

Being part of the FPA team is fantastic and it is great to see all 4 areas develop and grow. As part of the Jobs and Skills pilot, I'm learning vast amounts about all of the different jobs within the green sector, whilst working with business and organisations to help promote opportunities and plant the seed to those interested in the green sector.

If you have any suggestions for our newsletter or items to include, please contact Daniel Lloyd, our FPA Project Officer at Daniel.Lloyd@birmingham.gov.uk



Healthy City Framework

We are now offering more nature connected sessions including a meditation and sensory walks in Witton lakes, with the help for the BCC Ranger Service. If this is successful, we'll be making this part of the wider offer to community groups who also want to help their residents connect with green spaces.

A New Governance Model for Birmingham's Green Space

We have some really exciting developments to share from our housing pilot. The team have visited three sites around Birmingham where tenants are interested in setting up communal gardens. One of the sites, in Northfield, has real potential with a group of keen gardeners who want to encourage more residents to connect outdoors. We are planning to co-design the communal space with the residents and connect with local groups to help with maintenance.



Above: Team visits to Northfield

We had a great turnout to our first workshop on 'green infrastructure design' for developments in Birmingham, with over 30 attendees from both inside and outside of the Council. We had some great presentations about what is possible by thinking more about ecology, international examples from Singapore, Amsterdam and Germany, as well as communal gardens. One of the participants simply said, 'That was awesome!'. Two more workshops are now planned for November 20 and January 2021 to help us to identify, key actions for us to test for improved GI.

Finance Framework

We have started an exciting partnership with Birmingham and Black Country Wildlife Trust. We are testing out if our Birmingham citizens would be willing to fundraise towards increasing biodiversity in one of our pilot sites, Dawberry Fields. Fundraising is becoming an increasing source of support for parks and green spaces across the country – we'll be sure to share how to get involved and how the testing goes.

Now we have had our FPA extension confirmed- we are casting for our Sustainable Finance Steering Group that will help us to test and trial alternative funding models for future green space.



Team Building Day

Citizen Involvement Framework

The Children’s Trust’s mentoring programme with children in care is going from strength to strength. The mentors have been undertaking some great training in various green spaces to pickup tips on how to support their mentees whilst connecting to nature. They’ve taken part in a quiz, had 121 sessions and a team building day (all Covid-19 compliant).

One of our mentors said: ‘When I first joined [@Evolve Impact](#) I remember thinking how great it would be to do more outdoor education and mentoring with children and young people. Well now it's happening, thanks to [@NaturallyBirmi1](#) & [@SuttonParkNNR](#) pic.twitter.com/GSI5ciCnKd’

Our mentees have also taken part in a green space competition which asked them to draw/ write/ share how green spaces made them feel – here is our winning entry!



Productive week meeting with mentors in green space and engaging with the schools and community [#greenspace](#) [#communityengagement](#) [#mentoring](#)



Photos from our Mentoring Sessions



Left: Photos from our mentoring sessions. Right: Preparing for Dawberry Fields Nature Trail

Environmental Justice Framework

Nationally DEFRA (Department for Environment & Rural Affairs) has commissioned their consultants to work with 10 trial cities including Birmingham to test their draft green space tools. Birmingham will be adding their environmental justice lens to these trials in the city to provide critical feedback to Government about who should benefit from future green space enhancements; and why.

We are also planning to start a green leadership programme that aims to embed the skills needed to champion green spaces in our staff, partners and wider community, to ensure that parks and nature are high on the Council's agenda in the future - long after the FPA ends. These will take the form of a series of online workshops in the new year that focus on building individual leadership skills and empowering participants to embrace and push for change. If you would like to get involved with this programme, or perhaps just learn more, pop an email to daniel.lloyd@birmingham.gov.uk

Still not had enough of FPA? Why not check out our blogs here?

<https://naturallybirmingham.org/blog/>

You can also read our previous newsletters, which provide more detail of our 5 frameworks: <https://naturallybirmingham.org/read-our-newsletters/>