

FPA NEWSLETTER - JULY 2021

Changes to our Newsletter Approach

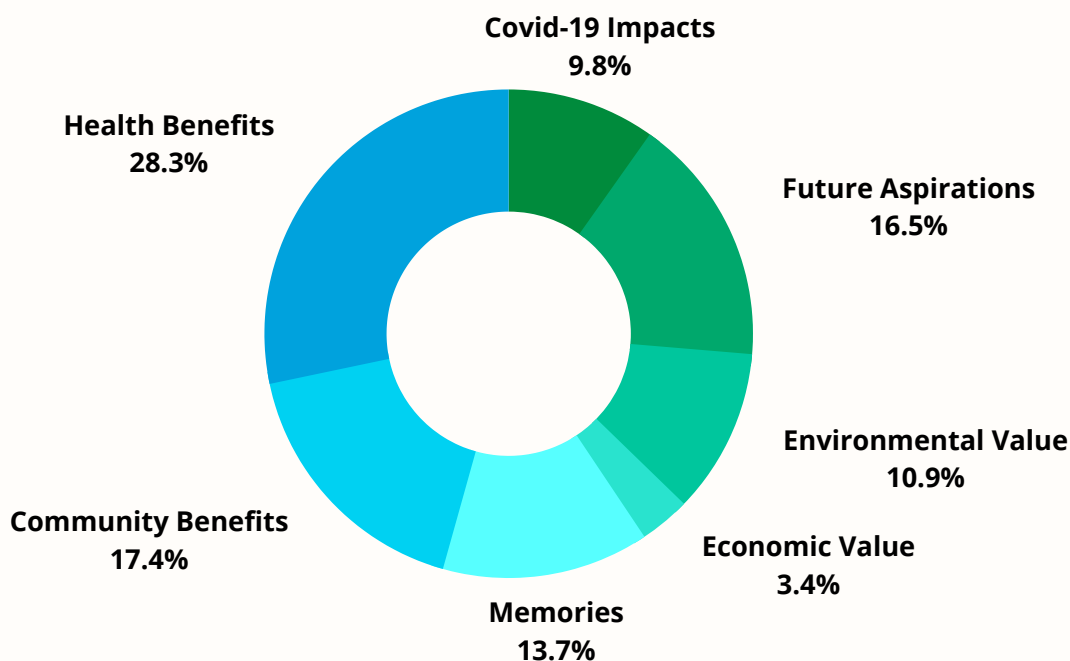
As we move further into the Transition phase of our programme we will be increasingly focusing on embedding our findings and creations into the Council, meaning we will be focussing less on creating new ideas, and more on finding ways to ensure that all we've tested and trialled continues when the Naturally Birmingham project ends. Because of this, every so often we will release a smaller, more focussed 'mini' newsletter (like this one) when there is less to update on. Hopefully you won't miss us too much!

Citizen Involvement

Earth Stories

Our Earth stories project is approaching completion. So far we have processed 150 stories, experiences and testimonials from our residents and it's been fantastic to hear about all the memories people have in our Parks. We analysed these stories using qualitative analysis, which involved categorising and coding each individual story to find the common topics and themes that crop up; we also worked alongside community partners to ensure we were able to hear from hard to reach communities that are often underrepresented in green space conversations.

We were amazed by the sheer variance in the memories and experiences people shared with us. We heard about how green spaces have been a refuge of sanity during lockdowns; how people have met friends for life at exercise classes; memories of exploring nature as a child; the importance of a lunchtime walk for health; and much more! The graph below provides a summary of the topics people were talking about – we're hoping to do a bit more analysis before then creating a summary paper that we will publish later in the year. Stay Tuned!



Green Governance

Communal gardens for Cornerway Sheltered Scheme

A communal garden for tenants living at Cornerway Sheltered Scheme has finally been completed. Work began last October when a number of sites were identified as pilots for the Future Parks Accelerator programme to consider how tenants could be more involved in the green spaces near where they live.

With the hard work of the BMHT, Services for Older People, Resident Involvement and FPA teams as well as Harpers (BMHT developer), a communal garden has now been built. The 10 day build of the garden, including labour and materials, were funded by Harpers and their subcontractors.

This garden was co-designed with tenants at 2 meetings, and they now have the Summer to enjoy this communal space, and grow fruit, vegetables and flowers in the planters.

The next steps are to work further with the BMHT Team to make this a sustainable programme by ensuring we fully utilise the corporate social responsibility criteria in all BCC contracts, and work with tenants at Cornerway to set up a constitutional group so that they can apply for funding to add to and maintain the garden area.

You can see some photos of the new garden below:



Join Helen Ilus, the creator of Greenground maps to learn more about this fascinating project for Birmingham! 10th August @ 3pm!

At first glance, the Greenground map looks like your typical tube map. However, the Greenground map is instead intended to be an inspiration for walkers and cyclists, connecting green spaces, such as parks and woods. The connections to these places are through sustainable forms of transport, utilising canal towpaths, river paths and cycle networks. The Greenground map has been created for cities such as London and Bristol. Birmingham will now have a map which showcases its green spaces. Come and join to find out how this project is developing, and the chances are, you'll find parks and wild sports near your own home that you weren't aware of!

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/introducing-the-greenground-map-by-helen-ilus-tickets-164463263047>

Healthy City

Wellbeing User Guide (WUG) and Link Worker Training Pack

Wellbeing is an integral part of human happiness. Therefore, the team have created a wellbeing user guide (WUG) to help with this. The WUG highlights the importance of green spaces in health and helps direct the citizens of Birmingham to their local green spaces. The WUG also explains how to combat the 5 diseases which are ubiquitous to many different groups across Birmingham. Do you want to improve your wellbeing? Then look no further!

We have also created a training pack with the intention of assisting link workers in their mission to create excellent social prescribing services. The aim is to equip them with the skills to communicate the importance of green spaces effectively to their patient groups. The training pack highlights how green spaces can improve physical, mental and social wellbeing.

You can find both of these resources on our website [here](#).



Environmental Justice

Skills Showcase

We had a fantastic week last week and thoroughly enjoyed getting out and about, bringing our Skills Showcase to life. Over the 3 sessions we were joined by over 30 residents of varying ages who were all interested in finding out more about the Green Sector.

On Tuesday afternoon we were able to get hands on at Forge Mill Farm, learning all about animal welfare and farming. During the session everybody got to have a go at walking the goats and alpacas, grooming the horses and milking the goats – it was great fun. Following on from this session the young people were informed about our Trainee Wildlife Assistant Kickstart Vacancies here at Birmingham City Council and we hope they apply.

On Wednesday we were treated to some fabulous weather and a fantastic private tour of the EcoPark by The Wildlife Trust: Birmingham and Black Country. The team at the EcoPark allowed the guests to get interactive with wood sawing and pond dipping. It was a great session and the young people that joined the session were keen to learn more about the upcoming courses with The Wildlife Trust.

The final session of the week, saw Jane Findlay from Landscape Institute host a full session at Sutton Park. Jane was joined by a variety of people including university students that wanted to know all about the next steps and what's like to work in the landscaping sector – this session was full of interaction and questions – with a cheeky ice cream to finish.

All of sessions were fun, informative and interactive! We'd like to thank everyone that hosted and supported these sessions.

If you missed out on our sessions this time round, don't worry we have 1 more week scheduled in for 9th – 13th August (if you want to join a mailing list to ensure you receive the Eventbrite links, please email Sophie.j.green@birmingham.gov.uk). Some of our sessions for this week, are already confirmed including Winterbourne, Kier and the British Association of Landscape Industries. These sessions are a fantastic opportunity to engage with your local greenspace, learn all about the different jobs and opportunities that are available and meet others that share a passion for greenspace. Sign up now to book your place.

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/naturally-birmingham-33281622897>

And remember, you can always take a look at our online Skills Showcase at

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCxRBfrbayWeTOv9KrHzVchA>.



KICKSTART Green Sector Vacancies

If you love nature and want to work outdoors one of the following roles may be for you! To apply you must be aged 16-24 years old and in receipt of Universal Credit.

If you like the sound of our vacancies and want to apply for a Kickstart Role – speak to your JCP work coach.

Trainee Parks Ranger x 6

Candidates will be given exposure to a range of duties and skills used by Ranger Service Personnel in the protection, promotion and enhancement of nature conservation sites and the wider parks portfolio

Trainee Grounds Maintenance Operative x 7

This role includes carry out light horticulture duties such as planting, pruning and weeding.

Trainee Wildlife Assistant x 4

You will be shadowing the team at the Wildlife Centre, learning all about the daily operations of the centre, whilst working closely with animals.

Future Parks Accelerator Communications Trainee x 1

You will be encouraged to promote the fantastic parks across Birmingham, whilst supporting the project's initiatives and events.

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

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

You can also read our previous newsletters here:

<https://naturallybirmingham.org/read-our-newsletters/>



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