



## Setting up a Friends' Forum

Greenspace friends' and community groups usually find it very useful to be in contact with other similar groups in their area - to share news and experiences, and raise the profile of our activities and

common aims.

There are many Friends' Forums for towns and areas all over the country, with more being created all the time. By working together we can achieve more!

Forums have ensured groups have supported each other, worked together to improve green spaces, helped create green trails, got funding for volunteer training, developed partnerships with Local Authorities, lobbied to protect precious parks services, influenced local policies, and spoken up for their communities.



*Birmingham Open Spaces Forum conference*

### What you could achieve together...

- Meet regularly to discuss views and challenges about green spaces across an area.
- Share experiences and ideas.
- Share resources, such as equipment, expertise or volunteers for specific events.
- Access funding for training, shared events, websites and projects.
- Amplify your voices to, and work in partnership with, the local authority and local greenspace organisations covering the area.
- Lobby for the resources and policies your green spaces need.

### How you can get started...

- Call a meeting with some other groups in your area. A venue could be a café in a park, a quiet pub, or a meeting room.
- Talk about each other's green spaces and see what concerns or issues you share.

- Be inspired by, and learn from, good practice and local success stories
- Create and build up an email list and maybe a Facebook group for all local groups' reps. Most Forums eventually set up website too.
- Discuss what things you could achieve together.
- Speak to the council and/or other supporting environmental organisations and see how they provide information and help.
- Decide on a name eg '[Town] Green Spaces Forum', and choose a secretary as the initial point of contact
- Produce and circulate a report of the meeting, hopefully with a date for the next one!



*Green Tides in Adur and Worthing: celebrating getting funding*

It's all about empowering ourselves and our communities, and working together to improve where we live.

***Together we are stronger!***

**The National Federation of Parks and Green Spaces** is the voice of the movement of over 7,000 local friends groups for public green spaces throughout the UK. We are the umbrella organisation for the area forums and networks of such groups – so far around 70 Forums involving over 3,000 of the groups. We are calling for the setting up of Friends groups for every green space, and Forums of groups for every area and town. Together we can work for the resources, standards and management that all the UK's green spaces deserve!

Visit the websites below to find more information about Friends' Forums, case studies, How To guides, and more.

Info about the Federation and Forums: [www.natfedparks.org.uk](http://www.natfedparks.org.uk)

Info for Friends Groups: [www.parkscommunity.org.uk](http://www.parkscommunity.org.uk)

You can also contact Michelle at [networks@natfedparks.org.uk](mailto:networks@natfedparks.org.uk)