

## Greenspace Groups Forum      Minutes 06

### Meeting held 1/9/14 at Greaves Park

**Present:** Rita Gerard (Poulton the Sands & Morecambe Cemeteries), Simon Gershon (Lancaster Green Spaces), Anna Clayton (Incredible Edible Lancaster), Ian Proctor (Fairfield Association), Brian Jones (Greenbank Gardens), Steve Wearden (Ryelands Park), Helen Ryan (City Council), Sarah Blackler (Greaves Park), Bob, Fiona & Karen (Greaves Park), Roger Frankland (Civic society), Louise Belcher (Thwaite Brow Nature Reserve), Marie Panes-Everill (Friends of Palatine), David Redmore, Paul Bullimore (Community Forester)

**The theme was: "Risk Assessment, Health & Safety, and Insurance"**

### Legal issues

- If your organisation does not have any paid employees, then the Health & Safety at Work etc Act (1974) does not apply – this is written under criminal law. However, there is still a duty of care imposed on the organisation and you may still be prosecuted under civil law if you are negligent. More on this can be found [here](#)

### Insurance

- Nearly everyone used TCV insurance (formerly BTCV), underwritten by Zurich Cost is generally £190p.a. But Fairfield pays £1600 as they are responsible for a playground, chainsaw users and have tools insured. It's possible to get a named chainsaw user added for £60p.a. More details [here](#). New groups can however apply for a start-up/support grants of up to £500
- Several new groups are working under the City Council's own insurance. This prohibits the use of power tools by volunteers and Helen needs to know what work is being done and a Risk Assessment completed.

### Risk Assessments

- HSE say: *The law does not expect you to remove all risks, but to protect people by putting in place measures to control those risks, so far as reasonably practicable. Your risk assessment need only include what you could reasonably be expected to know – **you are not expected to anticipate unforeseeable risks.***
- There are plenty of risk assessment templates; The City Council's form and some others can be found on the LGS website [here](#) and our Facebook page [here](#). After a risk is identified you commonly have to assess the likelihood of an event and multiply it by the consequences of the risk if it occurred. Then you think of measures to:
  1. Completely avoid the highest risk e.g. find another method
  2. Reduce the likelihood of it occurring
  3. Reduce the harm if it did occur
- It can be useful to get volunteers themselves to identify risks to themselves and others and think about the consequences. Greater awareness is likely to reduce accidents occurring.



## Management Plans

- It's obviously better to have a plan! The best plans are short, simple and kept up-to-date. The plan should be shared with all volunteers so that they know how their efforts contribute to the bigger picture in time as well as space.
- Some groups will need to have their plans meshed with other objectives and management plans for the green space, and may need to liaise with other grounds maintenance people.
- It can also be useful to have 'Method Statements'. These set out the procedure to be followed for particular tasks

## Reducing accidents

- HSE say: *'Workers are as likely to have an accident in the first six months at a workplace as during the whole of the rest of their working life.'* Useful guidance for new workers can be found [here](#)
- New volunteers may not be used to handling tools, reluctant to ask for help, have a macho attitude, be less aware of others around them, have medical issues... An induction and/or training is always recommended with new volunteers, plus supervision or buddying-up with someone more experienced.
- New volunteers need to say if they have any allergies or medical issues. Some groups get volunteers to fill out a simple form with contact details etc – these must be kept confidential and secure.
- The ideal is to create a permanent awareness and adoption of safe working practices. Safety is then embedded in the organisation, not bolted-on.

## Events:

- **Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> Sept Greaves Park: 11am-1pm** Shelter building Workshop for Primary School aged children. By Nature Play tutor Hannah Ehlert – pre booking essential, email [timbertales@gmail.com](mailto:timbertales@gmail.com). Then **1-2pm** A picnic in the Park, meeting on the field in front of Parkfield House
- **Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> Sept 1.30-4pm, Fenham Carr, Williamson Park.** Orchard and tree care techniques with David Redmore
- **26/27<sup>th</sup> Sept** – Fairfield Association public exhibition in St Nicholas' arcade, Lancaster
- **Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> Sept 2pm, Greaves Park.** Walk &Talk about trees with David Redmore
- **October is Keep Britain Tidy month** – promotional materials and advice available from the KBT website [here](#)
- **October is also Local Food Month** – look out for grow, cook and eat events – coordinated by Anna as part of Transition City Lancaster

**Publicizing future events** – it would be great to subscribe to a single on-line calendar that groups could embed or link to on their own websites, and any authorised person could post their events to. Maybe [Tockify](#)? **Action: David Redmore to speak to Lucia and see what's possible. Or can anyone else help?**

## Community Forester

- **Paul Bullimore** was introduced to the forum. Until recently he was Lancashire County Council Woodland Officer. He's now employed by the Community Forest Trust on a two year, 3 days/wk initial contract. There will be three strands to his work: Encouraging new planting, getting existing woodlands into better management, and developing new community projects and funding streams. He will work with public and private landowners, and voluntary groups in North Lancashire.
- If you have an idea for a woodland project or feel that your group would benefit from his expertise, Paul can be contacted at: Tel 07884 657844, email [lwp@cf-trust.org](mailto:lwp@cf-trust.org)

## AOB

- Training at CVS - List of current courses [here](#)
- Facebook Greenspaces forum – has a notes & queries page

## Next Meeting

**Monday 20<sup>th</sup> October – Town Hall, Morecambe Meeting time 7-9pm.** The meeting theme will be: **'The Importance of Green Spaces in the Local Plan'** Maurice Brophy and Rebecca Richards (City Council Strategic Planning) will be giving us an overview of the Local Plan. They will be able to explain how the creation, protection and enhancement of green spaces is incorporated in planning policy.