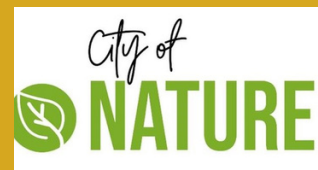




GREEN CHAMPIONS



Healing

Listening to Birdsong: A **study commissioned by the National Trust** found that listening to birdsong, and other woodland sounds was 30% better at increasing feelings of relaxation than a voiced meditation app. The woodland sounds, of which birdsong was by far the favourite of participants, reduced stress and anxiety by a quarter and a fifth, respectively.

Painting Nature

"You know me, I think there ought to be a big old tree right there. And let's give him a friend. Everybody needs a friend."

Bob Ross



Training - Therapeutic Horticulture

Social and therapeutic horticulture is the process of using plants and gardens to improve physical and mental health, as well as communication and thinking skills. Gardening is a wonderfully flexible medium that can transform lives. Thrive offers training in Birmingham, please let us know if you want to find out more.



<https://www.thrive.org.uk/get-training/courses-and-workshops/step-into-social-and-therapeutic-horticulture-workshop>

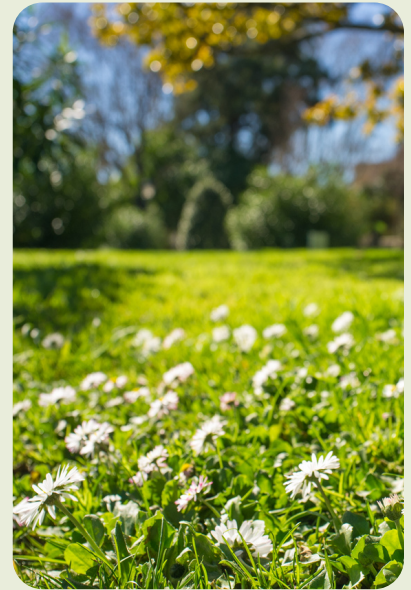
Green Champion Coordinator Update

I have been out and about getting to know some of Birmingham's parks and open spaces and the people who care for and use them.

I am starting with three wards:

- Castle Vale
- Nechells
- Balsall Heath West

We want to find out as much as possible about the parks in these wards. Please get in touch with me, Jackie Easthope, if you can help us get to know these parks better: Cityofnature@Birmingham.gov.uk



Sign up below to find out more about Green Champions and get your monthly newsletter sent by email.

Green Champion Newsletter



Monthly online meet ups



Come and talk to our Green Champion Coordinator - Jackie and the City of Nature Team.

Meetings are online via Teams, every month (third Wednesday) 5.30pm - 6.30pm.

Please click below to get the link.

Join us for an online chat



Get Involved - Friends of Parks

Currently there are more than 130 Birmingham Open Spaces Forum member groups – some are large and organised others are just getting started with 2 people & a dog.

There are areas of the city less well represented than others and we need your help to make sure that all of the city can benefit from what a friends group can offer.

A study undertaken when BOSF was established demonstrated that an open space with an organised friends group could benefit from an average of £35k a year additional funding and some can support volunteering hours that are equivalent to 1.5 additional staff looking after a park



You can find out more about Friends Groups in Birmingham by visiting the Birmingham Open Spaces Website:

<https://bosf.org.uk/>



Birmingham Future Parks Standard

We have developed an audit for Birmingham's parks and open spaces that allows you to check if parks are meeting a "fair standard" and if they don't, how we can make a plan for action of the work that needs to be done.

We call this process the **Future Park Standard**.

We want to make sure that all parks are Fair, Healthy, Green, Valued and that there are opportunities for communities to get Involved in their management and use.

We are looking for volunteers to help us continue to develop this process over the next 12 months. Please email: Cityofnature@birmingham.gov.uk if you would like to help trial this process in your park or green space.



Birmingham's Route to Zero programme

BCC's Places for People project aims to create neighbourhoods that are safer for people to walk and cycle, and are more rewarding to be outside.

You can improve your Carbon knowledge through a :
Free Carbon Literacy Training Opportunity
(birmingham2022.com)

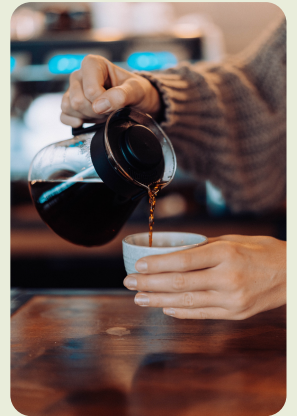
To find out more about BCC's Route to Zero you can contact the team on:
routetozeroarbon@birmingham.gov.uk



Valuing our Parks - The future vision

Many parks have open lawns, mature trees and shrub beds - a basic local park. But the vision is for parks that also have tennis courts, a playground, a community café, food growing spaces, a 5-a-side football pitch, a basketball hoop, an outdoor pre-school, a nature area, public toilets, secluded 'no dog' areas and a band stand / performance area. A kind of "Tardis" park that crams value into a small space. Throughout the day and across the week, these parks will be bustling with people of all ages and ethnicities, from babies to centenarians.

There are already some parks like this in Birmingham, often supported by Friends Groups or small charities, where the value that its local communities receive from its presence outweighs the funding it needs many times over. Collectively, we need to be better at evidencing and promoting the value of this public good, and better at maximising it to address the substantial challenges faced by our towns and cities, and the global challenge of the climate crisis.



<https://naturallybirmingham.org/>

