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**Birmingham**  
City Council



West Midlands  
Combined Authority



National  
Trust

## **East Birmingham Pocket Parks Project**

### **Call for Expressions of Interest**

**Deadline: 5pm on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> September 2024**

#### **Introduction**

Birmingham City Council and the National Trust are inviting community groups in East Birmingham to participate in the 'Pocket Parks' project, which is funded through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. The project will run from September 2024 to the end of March 2025.

Through the project, we will work with organisations in four locations to transform small plots of underutilised land into community green spaces, involving local people in the process of designing and creating these pocket parks. We are seeking expressions of interest from groups who have identified a suitable piece of land for a pocket park and want to collaborate with National Trust and the Council on the project delivery.

We are seeking proposals in the following wards:

- Nechells
- Bordesley & Highgate
- Sparkbrook & Balsall Heath East
- Tyseley & Hay Mills

At the project end, the lead community group will agree to take on responsibility for the stewardship and maintenance of the pocket park going forwards. Participating groups will each receive a £5,000 grant to support their involvement in the project and future care of the pocket park.

#### **Project aims**

- Increase and enhance local greenspace in East Birmingham for the benefit of people, climate and nature through the creation of community pocket parks.
- Engage local people in designing and installing their pocket park, ensuring it meets community needs and creating a sense of ownership.
- Build local people's skills and interest in nature through their engagement in the project and agree an ongoing maintenance and legacy plan for the parks involving community volunteers.



## **Project details**

Birmingham City Council and the National Trust will work with four selected community groups in distinct locations to design and deliver a pocket park in collaboration with local people. The project will involve the following activities:

### 1. Co-creation process

The project will benefit from the resource of a landscape architect who will facilitate the co-design process and manage the pocket parks' installation, including opportunities for volunteer involvement. The costs for co-design activities and creating the parks (including materials, plants and installation costs) will be covered by separate project funding, not by the participating community organisation. Where pocket parks are on council-owned land, National Trust will facilitate discussions with the relevant council department to secure agreement for proposed designs.

Community groups will be required to engage their local audience in the project by promoting and supporting with co-design sessions and community planting/build events, including logistics such as selecting appropriate dates and providing venue facilities. We will deliver a minimum of one co-design session and one planting/build event with each group. Groups will also give feedback on the designs during their development. It is expected that the project will engage 50 participants per location in activities over the course of the project.

### 2. Handover and legacy

Following the completion of the parks, each community group will be required to organise a launch event with local people and stakeholders.

After the project end, community groups will agree to take on responsibility for ongoing stewardship of their pocket park, including maintenance with the help of volunteers and activities to encourage continued engagement with the space. In preparation for this, groups will develop a maintenance and legacy plan to be agreed with the council. Depending on the constraints of the location, the pocket park may be a temporary intervention that can be moved or taken down, upon agreement with the community group.

Groups will be expected to participate in project evaluation to aid with monitoring and evidencing of activities, as well as gathering learnings to inform future work.



### Project Timeline:

- Deadline for Expressions of Interest: 5pm on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> September 2024
- Site visits and meetings with shortlisted organisations: 9<sup>th</sup> - 13<sup>th</sup> September 2024
- Conditions of Grant Aid issued and signed: 20<sup>th</sup> September 2024
- Start-up meeting with groups: End of September 2024
- Community co-design sessions: October 2024
- Final designs developed and agreed: November/December 2024
- Installation and planting of pocket parks, including community volunteering events: February/March 2025
- Legacy plan agreed, handover with groups and launch events: March 2025
- Project end date: 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025

### **Grant expenditure**

To support involvement in the project, selected organisations will receive a £5,000 grant. This should be used to aid organisations in the ongoing stewardship of their pocket park.

Eligible costs include:

- Tools and materials needed for maintenance
- Additional future planting
- Event costs e.g. activities, promotion, refreshments
- Staff time e.g. to develop the legacy plan and organise activities

All grant expenditure must be spent by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.

### **What we're looking for**

Selected organisations are expected to meet the following requirements:

- Capacity to fully partake in the outlined activities during the project period.
- An engaged local audience to participate in the project.
- Previous experience in community growing activities/projects.
- Ideally have a permanent base near the park location with the facilities to support volunteers and maintenance activities e.g. storage of tools, toilets, water supply.
- Capacity to take on the future maintenance and stewardship of the pocket park. This will involve agreeing a maintenance plan with the council and upholding this for as long as the installations are being used by the organisation. Where the park is no longer being maintained by the community, for example due to activities ceasing, the organisation moving away, volunteers not supporting the work, or installations becoming dangerous to use; the group will be responsible for dismantling any interventions and returning the park to its original state.
- A constituted group with its own bank account.



- Public liability insurance to cover the project activities.
- Ability to satisfy the funding requirements and audit trail, including providing full defrayal evidence of spend and robust legal structures, policies and procedures.

Organisations should have identified a proposed piece of land to create their pocket park. This could be an existing grass area or concrete space that can be greened. The piece of land should meet the following criteria:

- Located in one of the following wards: Nechells, Bordesley & Highgate, Sparkbrook & Balsall Heath East, Tyseley & Hay Mills.
- Currently underutilised or derelict with the potential to be enhanced through planting. There should be a demonstrable need for the intervention e.g. lack of community green spaces or growing activities, addressing issues like fly-tipping or antisocial behaviour.
- Accessible to the public.
- Owned by your group or with the possibility of securing permission for the pocket park from the landowner. Where land is council-owned, we can advise on its feasibility and support with securing the required permissions.

### **How to apply**

We encourage groups to have an informal conversation with us before submitting an Expression of Interest – you can get in touch by emailing [alex.morton@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:alex.morton@nationaltrust.org.uk).

To apply to take part in the project, please complete the accompanying Expression of Interest form, ensuring you refer to the project criteria detailed above.

You should submit your completed Expression of Interest form to [alex.morton@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:alex.morton@nationaltrust.org.uk) by 5pm on Wednesday 4th September.

After we have reviewed the Expressions of Interest, we will invite shortlisted organisations to meet with us for a site visit and discussion about the project, before the final selection is made.