

APSE Parks Advisory Group

10 June 2015



The State of Parks Survey 2015 and the role of Natural Capital in Protecting the future of parks.



Key Findings



Answer Options	Agree strongly	Agree	Disagree	Disagree strongly	No opinion
The squeeze on public sector resources is affecting parks and green spaces disproportionately to other service areas	37.4%	37.4%	19.8%	1.1%	4.4%
Reductions in funding has resulted in a withdrawal of maintenance from some land and an increase in unmaintained land	34.1%	42.9%	20.9%	0.0%	2.2%
Lack of investment in parks and green spaces will have health and social impacts	56.7%	36.7%	3.3%	2.2%	1.1%
There is a clear link between parks/play provision and levels of crime/anti-social behaviour	31.5%	43.8%	9.0%	2.2%	13.5%
There's a limit to the extent to which volunteers can be involved in delivering parks and green space services	61.8%	25.8%	7.9%	2.2%	2.2%
The public should get free access to all parks	61.1%	27.8%	7.8%	2.2%	1.1%

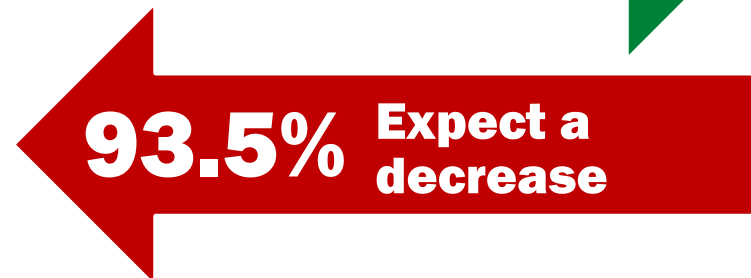
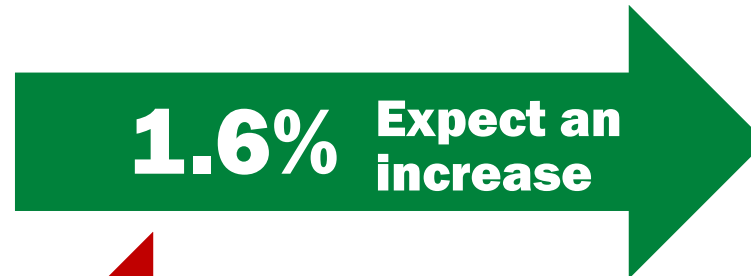
How do you expect the parks and green space budget to change over the next year?



Capital expectations



Revenue expectations



What is your expectation of the level of funding in your service budget in the coming five years?

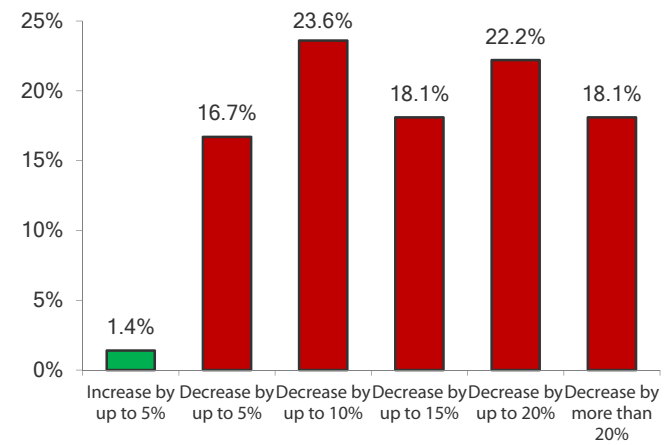


80.5%

of respondents expect to lose between 5% and 20% of their budget over the next 5 years.

18.1%

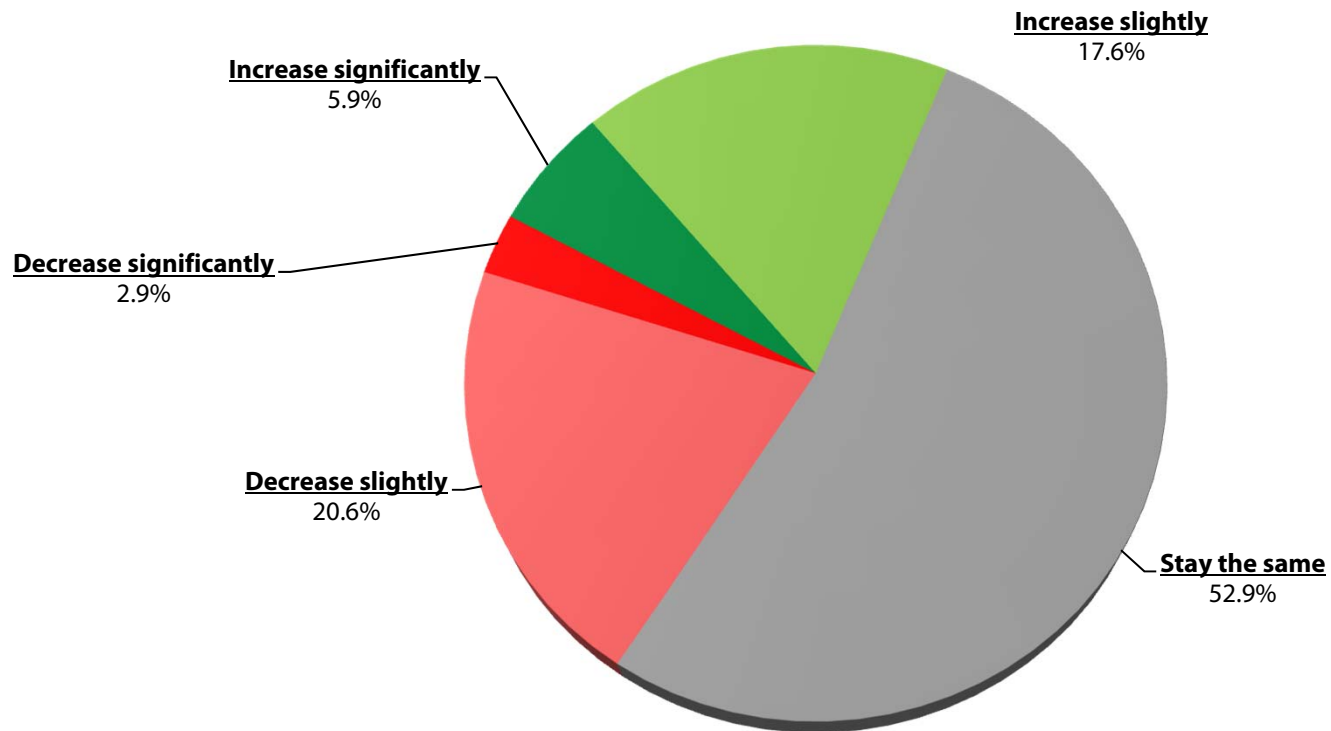
expect to lose anywhere from 20% up to 50%!



Security of asset



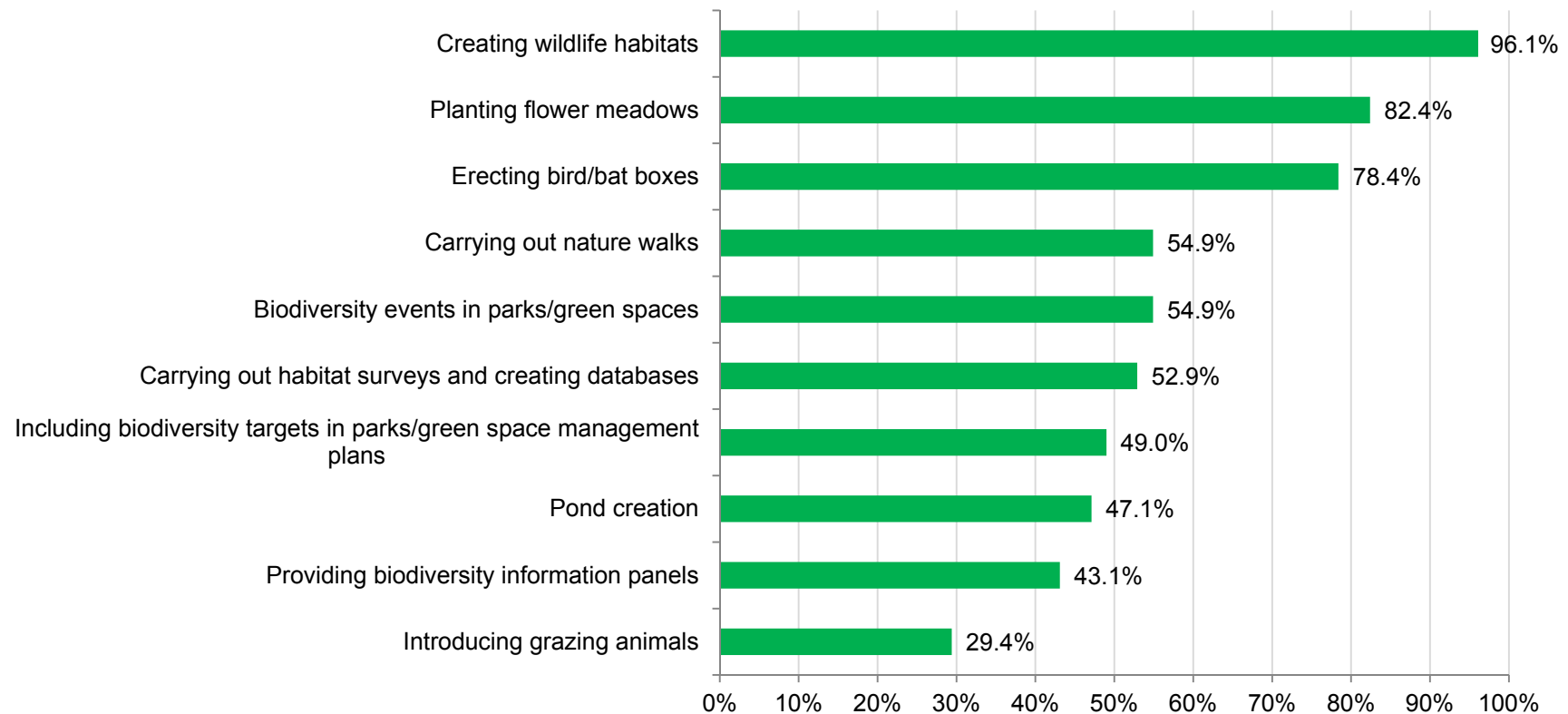
Overall how do you expect the total number of formal parks (including playgrounds) to change over the next year?



'More than flowers and grass'



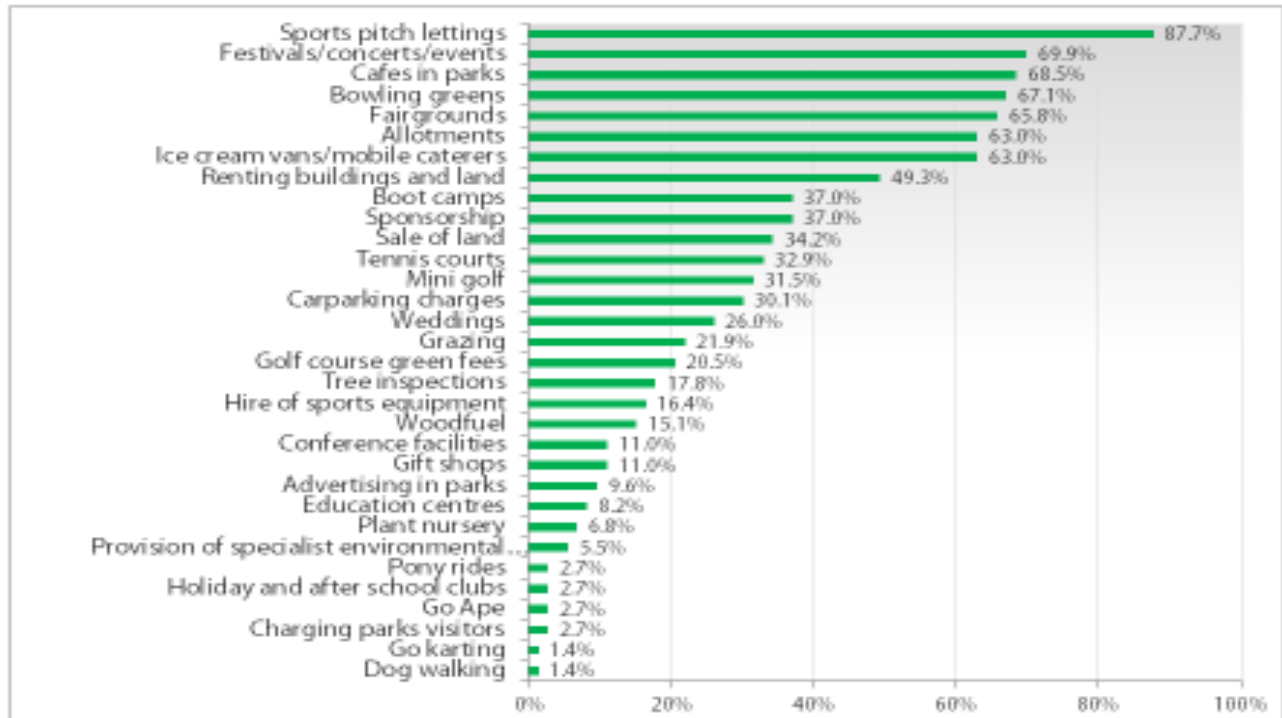
If you make a specific provision for the promotion of biodiversity, which of the following have you carried out?



‘Municipal Entrepreneurialism’



What areas do you currently generate income in through fees and charges?

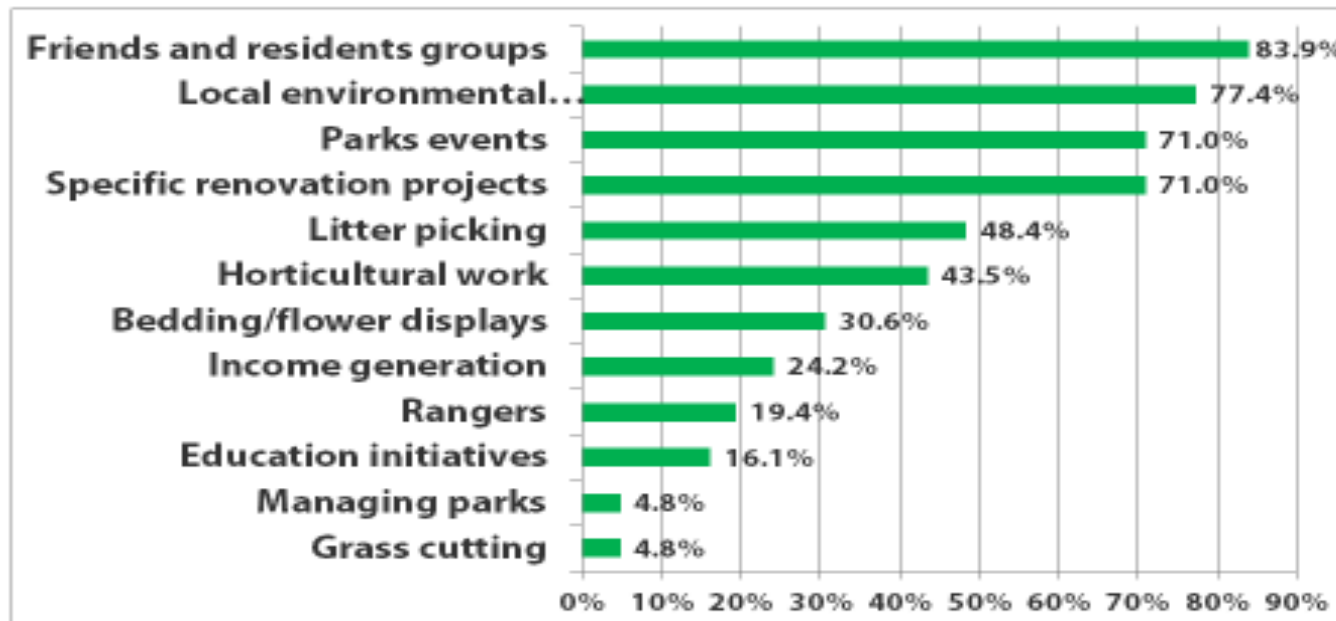


www.apse.org.uk

Public involvement



How are volunteers involved in the parks service?



www.apse.org.uk

Putting a value on a Park



- Difficult to measure
 - Identifying benefits
 - Senior management/Political support
 - 'Easy target'
 - Non-statutory
 - Low profile
-
- **Change the perception !**

Natural Capital

Air, Water, Food & Recreation



The State of Natural Capital – Protecting and Improving NATURAL



- Natural Capital Committee 2012
- Managing the natural wealth of the nation in a sustainable manner
- Unlocking opportunities for sustained prosperity and well being
- Looking at greatest risk and reverse decline of natural capital
- Key aims **measurement, accounting** and **economic valuation**
- Carefully planned investment – VFM and large economic returns
 - Woodland planting
 - Peat land restoration
 - Wetland creation
 - Creating inter tidal habitats and restoring commercial fish stocks.

**Work will be driven through the creation of a
strategy and corresponding 25 year plan**

Valuing Green Spaces



**Build on growing recognition of cross cutting values of green spaces
And their ability to deliver multiple benefits simultaneously**

- Physical and mental health value estimated at £2.1 billion in reduced health costs (c. 7 million people have been diagnosed with mental illness in UK).
- Reduction in sickness means increased labour productivity - impacts on national GDP.
- Help ameliorate urban heat island effect
- Flood alleviation benefits.
- Filtering of local air pollution.
- Carbon sequestration.
- Increased biodiversity.
- Recreational value and well-being.
- Important to national environmental strategies e.g. Pollinator Strategy.
- Cultural, historical and societal value
- Develop a register of natural capital for which the local authority is responsible.



Corporate Natural Capital Accounting (CNCA)



- Accounting for the natural capital you own , liabilities, income and **external benefits that society derives**
- Value of assets/maintenance cost/changes in conditions over time/risks of depleting them/opportunities from utilising them/returns from investment/effects on stakeholders and communities
- CNCA can sit alongside traditional financial and management accounts
- Birmingham City Council is developing its own CNCA which will transform the understanding of key decision-makers on the 'hidden value' of the City's natural environment.
- This approach will allow people to understand the impacts of not investing in natural capital more fully rather than ignoring it has as often been the case in the past throughout the UK, resulting in areas such as green space and urban parks being unappreciated, over-consumed or underinvested in.
- Local authorities need to get better at **valuing** their natural capital assets if they are to ensure their long term sustainability

What is the value of the UK's Natural capital?



£1,573 billion

4% lower than figures for 2007



LOCAL SERVICES

LOCAL SOLUTIONS



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