



Ministry of Housing,  
Communities &  
Local Government

**Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP**  
*Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and  
Local Government*

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Government**

4th Floor, Fry Building  
2 Marsham Street  
London SW1P 4DF

Tel: 0303 444 3450

Email: [PSJamesBrokenshire@communities.gov.uk](mailto:PSJamesBrokenshire@communities.gov.uk)

To all MPs in England

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Dear Colleague

Parks and green spaces provide millions of us with a gateway to the great outdoors, a place to go for a jog, to walk the dog or simply grab a free moment away from the hustle and bustle of urban life. Parks strengthen our communities and make our local areas more attractive places to live and work.

No one wants to see much-loved green spaces fall into disrepair. Quite rightly spending on our parks and indeed all local services are decisions for local leaders, but where they have prioritised park protection, and indeed expansion, they have found the funds to do so.

We recognise that councils continue to face tough spending decisions. In the Local Government Finance Settlement, I confirmed that councils will see their core spending power rise by £1.3 billion this year, taking their overall funding to £46.4 billion for the next financial year. We've also given local leaders more control over the money they raise and the money they spend, including on parks.

However, there has been feedback from the parks sector that they want central government to provide more funding for sites at most risk. So yesterday I was proud to announce further funding of more than £13 million for local authorities and community groups to refurbish, create and protect their parks and playgrounds.

That includes £9.7 million to give local authorities the resources they need to better maintain, protect and increase their recreational spaces. The funding will be paid directly to all local authorities with grant sizes based on population. We will confirm individual local authority allocations and transfer funding in the coming weeks. A further £2.75 million will be made available in our successful Pocket Parks Plus programme - enabling a further 160 community-led projects to create new community green spaces or renovate parks that have fallen into disuse or disrepair.

The Government has also confirmed £1.2 million for a joint project between the National Trust and Heritage Lottery Fund to test new and innovative approaches to managing and funding parks, that will ensure the benefits of public spaces are enjoyed by generations to come.

From day-to-day upkeep to essential playground repairs to the creation of new green spots, this package of funding will give local leaders and their communities tools to better maintain, protect and enhance their open spaces.

Few would argue against the necessity of sufficient funding to support our parks and green spaces, but it would be wrong to think that the future of our parks depends solely on the Government spending more cash. It's also about local communities, the numerous funding bodies, park groups and local and national government all coming together, so we can get more done together with the resources available. To that end, the Government has backed the 'Parks Action Group' with £500,000 to start the ball rolling on getting the sector and government to come together to support innovative ways of funding the nation's green spaces.

Our parks and green spaces are huge assets to our towns and cities, offering precious spaces for all of us to get together, to exercise and to play. Last July, we published our revised National Planning Policy Framework, which reiterates the strong planning protections that apply to parks and green spaces, stresses the importance of access to a range of open spaces for public health, and allows local communities to identify areas of Local Green Space of importance to them:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/740441/National\\_Planning\\_Policy\\_Framework\\_web\\_accessible\\_version.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/740441/National_Planning_Policy_Framework_web_accessible_version.pdf).

With this package of announcements, this Government further demonstrates its support for our nation's parks as vital centres of community life.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'James Brokenshire', is centered on the page.

**RT HON JAMES BROKESHIRE MP**