

## **URBAN GREEN CONNECT:**

### **Helping Urban Green Newcastle shape green space in your city**

*Urban Green Connect: a panel for community engagement for our parks and allotments. Made up of people who want to make a difference, who want to improve opportunities to help shape our green space, and who want to be part of something special.*

### **WHO ARE URBAN GREEN NEWCASTLE?**

Urban Green Newcastle is the new charity set up in April 2019 to care for most of Newcastle's parks and allotment sites. We are passionate about our green, open spaces, and want to make them somewhere that everyone can enjoy. We want to create places which are vibrant, accessible, celebrated, sustainable, and better for both people and nature.

### **HOW WILL WE DO THIS?**

We have big plans! To achieve these, we need to build relationships and work closely with communities and businesses. We want to create opportunities for local people to collaborate. And we want to bring income and investment into our parks and allotments, to provide the funding to help protect and care for our amazing spaces far into the future.

But we can't do this alone, or in isolation. We need to be speaking to people, hearing their views, and understanding what will encourage everyone to get involved and share our passion.

This is so important to us, we have built it into our charitable objectives.<sup>1</sup> Our Trustees need to be supported by a community representation group, that will help guide us on our journey. A group which can advise us on how best to reach people, how to be inclusive, and how we can truly make a difference – together.

That is the idea behind Urban Green Connect – our advisory panel to help us engage with the wider community.

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<sup>1</sup> Section 22 of the Articles of Association for Urban Green Newcastle

## **URBAN GREEN CONNECT - CONNECTING OUR COMMUNITIES**

Urban Green Connect will be made up of enthusiastic people, who will bring different voices, different experiences, and different perspectives around the table. No boring 'talking shop'; instead, we want this to be an inspiring group that excites people. We want you to challenge; we want you to innovate; and we want you to help us become the visionary, inclusive organisation that we aspire to be.

### **WHAT WILL THE GROUP DO?**

It's all about advising us. Telling us who we should be talking to, and how. Providing us with great suggestions to help us reach the community in a more meaningful way so that we can make better decisions. For example, we might ask you who we should talk to so that we can make sure our activities and events have something for everyone. Or how we could be gaining the views of those groups who are seldom heard. Your guidance will be invaluable, and will be formally fed back to our Board of Trustees after each meeting. The difference you are making will form a central part of our annual report to the city, where we set out how successful we have been at engaging with people and communities.

### **WHAT WILL THIS GROUP LOOK LIKE?**

- ✓ There will be up to 15 people on the panel, including two Trustees.
- ✓ You will reflect the amazing diversity of our city.
- ✓ You may be someone who represents a group or a particular set of interests.<sup>2</sup>
- ✓ You will be chaired by one of our Trustees.<sup>3</sup>
- ✓ You will be supported in the group by staff from Urban Green Newcastle.

### **WHAT WOULD WE LIKE FROM YOU?**

- ✓ Your ideas and your enthusiasm! We want people brimming with creative thoughts on how we can connect better.
- ✓ Your knowledge and experience. We need a really diverse group that reflects different parts of the city, different age groups, different backgrounds, different needs and different abilities. You will help us understand how we can reach out to everyone around the city (and beyond), to gain their input into how we make our spaces feel safe, welcoming, and great for people and wildlife.
- ✓ Your time. But not too much (we know how busy everyone is!). We expect to hold around 4 meetings a year; we know you may not be able to attend all of these, but ideally would like your input for at least two. And we would love you to stay on the panel for up to three years.
- ✓ Your willingness. To work collaboratively as part of a group, and to listen and respect the views of everyone else. We want you to ask questions and challenge, but this will always be done in a way which is positive, open and honest. We may be representing different interests and may not always agree with each other, but we will be looking for solutions rather than problems, and treating everyone kindly and fairly.

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<sup>2</sup> We would normally expect this group to be constituted.

<sup>3</sup> Section 21 of the Articles of Association for Urban Green Newcastle.

### **HOW WILL WE APPOINT YOU?**

We will advertise opportunities to join Urban Green Connect locally, and invite you to complete a short form outlining your interests and background. This is not a bureaucratic process: instead we want your passion and commitment, and your expertise! The selections will be carried out by a Trustee and a Director from Urban Green Newcastle, and a member of an appropriate external organisation.

### **HOW WILL WE SUPPORT YOU?**

We are asking you to give us your time and energy, so in return we would like to make this as easy and enjoyable for you as possible. We will hold meetings in places that are accessible (and/or are hosted electronically), and at times that are convenient for as many people as possible (we will need at least seven people to be present to be quorate). We will make sure that you receive all the information you need in advance in a suitable format, and will take notes from the meetings. We will make sure that your thoughts and ideas are fed back to the Trustees. And we will pay your expenses to and from meetings, and provide any specialist support you need during the meeting.

### **WHERE DO I FIND FURTHER INFORMATION?**

If you have any further questions, please don't hesitate to contact us at [volunteer@urbangreennewcastle.org](mailto:volunteer@urbangreennewcastle.org).

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR INTEREST AND SUPPORT!**