



PRESS RELEASE

Cambridgeshire parks and green spaces nationally recognised for the impact they've made in the last year

Issued Thursday 21st January 2021.

National body The Amenity Forum has recognised Cambridgeshire's parks and green spaces this month; in light of its collection of well maintained, thriving outside areas. The accolade also gives thanks to the grounds teams that are responsible for building and maintaining these outdoor environments across the County.

The Amenity Forum accolade for Cambridgeshire acknowledges that well managed parks do not arise by accident, but by the efforts of dedicated staff who are responsible for the detailed planning and maintenance of each space. Professional horticulturalists and grounds teams across Cambridgeshire show an extensive commitment of both time and expertise in activities such as managing weeds, pests and diseases, cutting grass and encouraging new natural habitats. These amenity professionals seek to create safe, healthy and sustainable spaces; for the enjoyment of all across the County.

There are an estimated 27,000 public parks and green spaces in the UK and it has been said that 60% of the UK population regularly use public parks. Across Cambridgeshire, parks and green places played an increasingly significant role in positive physical and mental health for thousands of residents throughout 2020 – a role that is expected to continue in 2021.

Speaking of the significance of the parks and green spaces, Professor John Moverley OBE, Independent Chairman of The Amenity Forum said: "The power of parks maintained by local authorities such as Cambridgeshire has become clear over the last year. However, less focus has been given to the teams that sit behind them; those individuals working each day to keep local parks and green spaces well maintained for the enjoyment of all visitors. Today we acknowledge and thank them all."

The Amenity Forum has confirmed that an increased use of parks is leading to greater public interest in the management of amenity spaces. Communities are seeking assurances that those involved in maintaining amenity areas operate at the highest professional standards, and that such operations are undertaken safely by trained personnel. Authorities supporting the Forum demonstrate such commitment.

John Moverley continued: "The increased use of parks is a clear reminder as to how vitally important amenity management is; the very work that keeps our parks and green spaces safe and sustainable. We call on local authorities to emphasize the critical nature of this work, and demonstrate the pride in what they do and the high standards their teams employ. We hope that our recognition of the importance of work undertaken in UK parks announced this month is the first step in that process."

The Amenity Forum is the UK voluntary initiative promoting best practice within the amenity sector in all aspects of weed, pest and disease management. Amenity management impacts upon every UK citizen every day, and The Amenity Forum's overarching aim is to ensure approaches provide safe and healthy amenity spaces. It is recognised by the UK and national government as a way for industry to demonstrate best practice and drive up standards in this sector.



Notes to Editors

The Amenity Forum is the non-profit making voluntary initiative and the independent body bringing together professional organisations with an involvement in the amenity horticulture sector. This is a very diverse industry responsible for the landscape management of urban areas, highways and rail network, sports grounds, parks, industrial and utility sites. To establish and maintain these areas to a high standard, the sector requires access to pesticides, efficient equipment and trained and qualified staff. The organisation was formed in October 2003 as a key action to support the Voluntary Initiative, an industry led project agreed with Government to reduce the environmental impact of pesticides.

The membership comprises of organisations from across this diverse industry, covering manufacturers, suppliers, trade associations, local authorities, major users, landscape, sport and leisure. Equally important are those members who represent training and qualification standards. The key Government agencies have an important observer role. The objectives of the Amenity Forum are:

- *To promote and encourage proper and responsible use of pesticides and integrated methods for the control of pests, weeds and diseases*
- *To lead, coordinate and encourage achievement of “Best Practice” objectives in weed, pest & disease management*
- *To ensure that all practices are sustainable and protect the environment with minimised risks to public health.*
- *To run a communication programme to support these aims and to promote the image of the sector among stakeholders and the public.*
- *To coordinate and encourage the establishment of sustainable qualifications, training and CPD activity, specifically for the Amenity sector*
- *To organise activities within the Amenity Forum membership and linked organisations, such that Amenity Forum objectives are developed in a coordinated way*

This press release refers to figures taken from the House of Commons Communities and Local Government Committee report “Public parks - Seventh Report of Session 2016–17.”

For further information on this press release or the work of the Forum, please contact the Secretary, Kate Hopkins, or the Chairman, Professor John Moverley OBE. Similarly if you wish to register for future press releases, please let us know.

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