

## Title

**Pocket parks**

## Short description

Pocket parks are small pieces of land (up to 0.4 hectares) which the local community transform into a local amenity in a way that responds to local needs. The city of London created 100 Pocket Parks, making inviting public spaces for all people to enjoy and provide relief from busy urban life. Each Pocket Park is unique, and is designed to fit the needs and constraints of the area it is in.

## Topic

Living- green spaces

## Characteristics (type, level)

Neighborhood, Local/Regional/national Intervention

## Country/Countries of implementation

UK

## Aims and Objectives

To transform neglected urban spaces into green spaces for everyone to use.

The London Mayor's 2012 Pocket Park Prospective stated its objectives as, to:

Get more people using outdoor spaces;

Improve London's quality of life, its recreational offer and its public life;

Support volunteering and public participation and to equip people with skills that they can transfer to the workplace;

Help create jobs and sustain growth by increasing local pride, determination and entrepreneurialism;

Help promote collaboration between the public bodies and local organisations that work hard to make London's public places better;

Make use of the extraordinary design and delivery skills in London.

## Target Group

Local people in urban areas

## Status

Completed (London Mayor's 2013 funding scheme is closed)

National funding scheme was also available in 2016

## Start and Completion dates

2013 and 2016

## Lifestyle and Behavior Change

By encouraging people to use outdoor space in ways that suit the local community

## Effects on:

<b>Health and Wellbeing</b>	Open and usable green space provides a platform for community activities, social interaction, physical activity and recreation, as well as potentially for reducing social isolation, improving community cohesion and positively affecting the wider determinants of health.
<b>Vulnerable populations</b>	In the UK there is evidence that residents of more deprived neighbourhoods tend to experience less favourable living and environmental conditions than people who live in more affluent areas; there is a graded relationship in environmental conditions related to levels of area deprivation. Community-led efforts to improve environmental conditions in deprived neighbourhoods could potentially improve experiences of the local environment.
<b>Environment</b>	The practice has the potential to increase biodiversity and improve air quality in dense urban areas.

### Initiated and/or implemented by

Local residents – to improve local area

### Stakeholders and sectors involved

This varies depending on the situation. Looking at the first example of a pocket park in London, the ‘Edible Bus Stop’, this was initiated by a local resident who garnered support from local people. (Source: <http://www.newlondonlandscape.org/n/8/The-power-of-pocket-parks> ) Local people, landscape architects and garden designers were involved.

### Financial support

The Edible Bus Stop, opened in 2013, was funded by Lambeth Councils Neighbourhood Enhancement Programme and The Mayor of London’s Pocket Park scheme. (Source <http://theediblebusstop.org/kerb-garden/> )

In 2016 central government established a £1.5 million dedicated fund that local groups could apply for to create their own pocket parks, developing small parcels of land. Within this scheme 87 community groups were allocated grants of up to £15,000 to create a pocket park. Pocket parks are defined for this programme as a piece of land of up to 0.4 hectares, although many are around 0.02 hectares – the size of a tennis court. (Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/green-light-given-to-over-80-pocket-parks> )

### Evidence-base

Good evidence exists about the benefits of green spaces for health and wellbeing and the environment

### Main activities

Community mobilization for action in planning and creating a useable open space in an urban area.

### Evaluation

The Pocket Parks evaluation project, set up by University of Salford, Manchester aims to evaluate “the impact of Pocket Parks on health, wellbeing and social inclusion using three key aims:

To describe Pocket Parks through Geographical Information Systems mapping, Audit, accessibility, and qualitative exploration at strategic, community and individual level.

To evaluate the impact of Pocket Park intervention on health and wellbeing as a natural experiment using geo-localisation and longitudinal secondary data.

To undertake an economic evaluation of the cost and the benefits of creating a Pocket Park to improve health and wellbeing of residents (Source:

<http://hub.salford.ac.uk/pocketparks/> )

### Main results

Not available yet

### Key success factors and barriers

Not available yet

### INHERIT Perspective

From INHERIT’s perspective it has potential to improve the availability of green space in urban areas, in a way that contributes to environmental sustainability. Pocket Parks may also improve availability and access to green space in deprived neighborhoods, with potential benefits for health and health equity.

### More information

<http://www.newlondonlandscape.org/n/8/The-power-of-pocket-parks>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/green-light-given-to-over-80-pocket-parks>

<http://hub.salford.ac.uk/pocketparks/>

### Contact