



THE HIDDEN VALUE OF OUR
GREEN SPACES

J A N U A R Y 2 0 1 7

GREEN SPACES... UNDERSTANDING THEIR VALUE

The Land Trust is dedicated to providing free public open space for the benefit of communities. Our green spaces are more than just places for recreation and amenity - they also provide important functions to society.

OUR BELIEF

High quality, well maintained green space benefits everyone and as a land management charity, we know that they:

- Contribute to economic prosperity by helping alleviate costs to businesses and the public purse
- Support and enhance the services provided for 'free' by the natural environment
- Give people a place to improve their own health and wellbeing
- Offer people educational opportunities
- Encourage community cohesion and reduces social isolation.

NATURAL CAPITAL ACCOUNTING

Well maintained green spaces perform important functions which have an economic value, such as absorbing pollution, which provides people with clean air and reduces pressures on public services. These functions are known as 'ecosystem services'.

By understanding what an area of land is made up of, its quality, how it is managed, used and the functions it performs, we can better understand the value it provides to a local or wider area, to businesses, communities and society.

Natural Capital Accounting is a recognised way of demonstrating this in physical and monetary terms.

BRINGING PEOPLE
TOGETHER
CREATING
STRONG
COMMUNITIES



HELPING US BE

**healthy
& happy**

places to
**DISCOVER
AND LEARN**

GREEN SPACES... THE BENEFITS

Well managed green spaces over the long term, deliver services “for free”, which are not usually valued, or their value is not included in decision making.

To further understand the ‘hidden’ values across our green spaces, we are working with partners to recognise their worth and demonstrate how improved management can increase their value. ¹

Using two of our parks, this report highlights the value of well maintained green spaces, not just for amenity and recreation, but the services delivered by soil, grass, flowers, trees and water to provide society and our economy with significant benefits. ²

**CLEANING
OUR AIR**
reducing air
pollution

**SUPPORTING
BIODIVERSITY**
WHICH AIDS
POLLINATION

helping make
LOCAL AREAS
MORE DESIRABLE
to live, work and invest

Storing &
removing
CARBON

**REDUCING &
PREVENTING
FLOODING**
— plus —

**CLEANING
OUR WATER**

GREEN SPACES... HAVE AN ECONOMIC VALUE

Natural capital accounting helps us demonstrate the benefits of well maintained green space in physical and monetary terms.

Using two different parks, Silverdale Country Park in the Midlands and Beam Parklands in London, we can demonstrate the social and economic benefits of green space based on their natural environments, their services, how they are used and managed.

Silverdale's current natural capital value - £2.6m
- is based over the 12 month period of 2015

(estimated to be worth £32m based on a 10 year period). Beam's natural capital value, based on a 99 year period has been valued at £42m.

The values identified highlight that green spaces can generate significant benefits, provided that there is the long term investment to manage them and that they are well maintained.

SILVERDALE COUNTRY PARK

A former colliery in West Midlands, this space is now an 85 hectare country park. Since 2009, the site has been under the Land Trust's ownership, with day to day management by Groundwork West Midlands.

This vast green space comprises the former spoil heap, now transformed to mature trees, woodlands, hedgerows, grassland, wildflower areas, large waterbodies and wetlands, paths, tracks and trails.

Silverdale's annual value is³
£2.6 MILLION

AN INCREASE OF
£2 million
from 2009
THROUGH IMPROVED MANAGEMENT

every £1⁴
invested
returns **£35**
TO THE WIDER ECONOMY & SOCIETY

BEAM PARKLANDS

A 53 hectare wetland park in East London, Beam Parklands has been under the Land Trust's ownership since 2011, with day to day management by London Borough of Barking and Dagenham.

Its primary function is as a flood defence, but it is also a vital asset as a community park with wildlife rich habitats, made up of rivers, ponds, woodlands, hedgerows, grassland, wildflower areas, paths, trails and play areas.

Beam's total value is⁵
£42 MILLION

AN INCREASE OF⁶
£21 million
from 2009
THROUGH IMPROVED MANAGEMENT

GREEN SPACES... REDUCE & PREVENT FLOODING

Our green spaces and our active management helps the land to store and hold water.

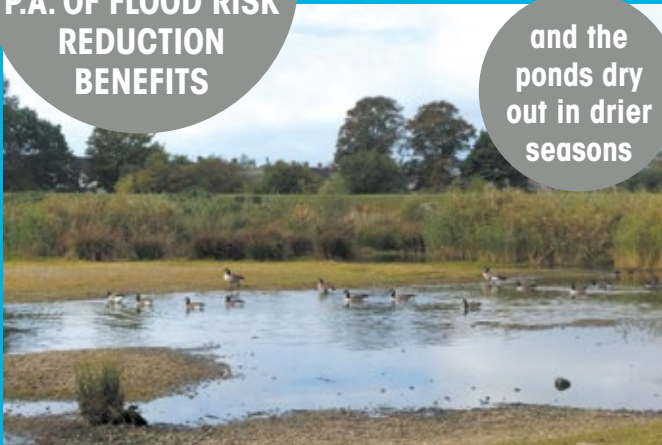
This helps to reduce the risk of potential flooding to nearby homes and businesses, reducing pressures further downstream, alleviating damage, costs, stress and disruption to daily life.

BEAM PARKLANDS



the park stores more water during wetter seasons

the flood defence provides nearly
£600,000
P.A. OF FLOOD RISK
REDUCTION
BENEFITS



and the ponds dry out in drier seasons

SILVERDALE COUNTRY PARK



active management helps control water levels and reduce risk

the lake and wetlands provide nearly
£400,000
P.A. OF FLOOD RISK
REDUCTION
BENEFITS

"the park stops you getting depressed - it clears my head"



GREEN SPACES... CLEAN OUR WATER

Our well maintained green spaces help improve water quality by soaking up rainwater, slowing the flow of water, purifying it and acting as natural filters.

This helps clean our rivers, reduce pollutants, keep the cost of water down, alleviating costs to the public purse, water companies and society.



SILVERDALE COUNTRY PARK



"beautiful - my favourite haven. Your hard work is so appreciated"

£82,000
the annual value of the park and its maintenance to retain and purify our water

GREEN SPACES... STORE AND REMOVE CARBON

By increasing and improving natural habitats, our green spaces act as storage containers which absorb and lock up carbon emissions, helping to remove pollution.

Apart from helping to reduce greenhouse gasses in the atmosphere and global warming, this helps to regulate climate change locally, alleviating additional costs that local authorities, businesses and people may otherwise need to pay for.



Silverdale Country Park absorbs 5,000 tonnes of carbon per year - equivalent to 5% of the Staffordshire Council's carbon footprint.

SILVERDALE COUNTRY PARK



£840,000

THE WIDER ANNUAL
VALUE OF ABSORBED
AND STORED
CARBON

£560,000

estimated increase in
carbon value from
pre-Land Trust
involvement

GREEN SPACES... KEEP SOIL HEALTHY

SILVERDALE COUNTRY PARK



£230,000

THE ESTIMATED
ANNUAL VALUE OF
THE PARK'S ABILITY
TO CYCLE SOIL
NUTRIENTS

"we're so lucky to
have such a nice
place to stroll"

Our green spaces - and our management of them - improve the quality of soil, through enhancing and supporting the various habitats and their conditions.

Healthy soil helps purify water, reduces flooding, stores carbon and creates a healthier nutrient cycle. This also helps support biodiversity and therefore food production, reduce insurance costs and generate economic opportunities.



GREEN SPACES... HELP US BREATHE CLEAN AIR

Our green spaces and our active long term management help improve air quality locally.

Woodlands, grassland and wildflower meadows help remove air pollution, keep us healthy and reduce the risks of respiratory and cardiac diseases. This alleviates pressures on our health services, such as hospital admissions and healthcare costs.

Since 2011, Silverdale's habitats have increased, so air quality and people's health have also improved. Despite good local air quality, Silverdale has still generated some improvement. The park's value associated with the reduced local hospital admissions is £420 p.a., up from £134 p.a. in 2011.



Imagine how much greater the value and benefits are in densely urban areas, where pollution is high!

SILVERDALE COUNTRY PARK



113%

the potential increase
in local air pollution
absorption since 2011
through increased habitats
and improved park
management

GREEN SPACES... KEEP US HEALTHY AND HAPPY

Our well managed green spaces with easy access, paths and community engagement activities provide significant recreation, amenity, education and health benefits and opportunities to local people. They...

- provide opportunities for people to improve their health and well-being
- are outdoor classrooms, offering a variety of educational activities
- are places to come together, removing social barriers
- create employment opportunities
- enable people to connect with nature

BEAM PARKLANDS



**NEARLY
£800,000**

of educational and health benefits to the local community per year

"a nice place to relax and get away from work"

SILVERDALE COUNTRY PARK

**OVER £1
MILLION
PER ANNUM**

the park's educational, social, health and wellbeing value

£700k
of educational benefits

£380k
of health benefits



In conclusion

GREEN SPACES... ARE VALUABLE TO SOCIETY



Well maintained green spaces contribute significantly to maintaining a resilient economy, society and environment. They alleviate costs to businesses and the public purse, and in turn, generate significant benefits, keeping people healthy, happy and productive.

It is important to remember that these values are not 'one off' monetary values or price tags – they are an indication of the worth of green spaces and the benefits they bring to society and the economy.

Therefore the long term investment into green space management and maintenance is essential.

Find out more at www.thelandtrust.org.uk

Green spaces value cycle...



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1. This report has been produced with support from Interserve Consulting, who produced the natural capital account of Silverdale Country Park in 2016, our Managing Partners, Groundwork West Midlands and London Borough of Barking and Dagenham and effec, who produced the natural capital account of Beam Parklands in 2015

2. Natural capital accounts of both parks were undertaken by two organisations, using different natural capital accounting toolkits. Refer to the full reports for full details at www.thelandtrust.org.uk/thebenefits

3. The Natural Capital Account of Silverdale Country Park was undertaken by Interserve Consulting in 2016. The account does not take include all park services, so figures could be even greater. The full report can be found at www.thelandtrust.org.uk/thebenefits

4. Figures taken from Interserve Consulting's Natural Capital Account of Silverdale Country Park are based on the ecosystem services provided, which include pollination, regulation of air, water and soil, food, fresh water and cultural services

5. The Natural Capital Account of Beam Parklands, undertaken by effec in 2015 includes the park's services as a flood defence and the social, economic and health benefits of the green space. It does not include improved air and water quality, which could make the figures even greater

6. In 2009, a baseline natural capital value of Beam Parklands was estimated to be c. £21m. The redevelopment and improved flood defence then took place during 2009 - 2011. It was then valued in 2015 with its present value of net benefits over 99 years as £42m.