

14 December 2015

Community & Health Committee

Green Gym

Report of: *Kim Anderson, Partnership, Leisure and Funding Manager*

Wards Affected: *All wards*

This report is: *Public*

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. Green Gyms are an initiative of The Conservation Volunteers who works with people and communities to transform their health, prospects and outdoor places, for the long term. They aim to create a better environment where people from all cultures feel valued, included and involved. The Green Gyms will provide free outdoor sessions where participants are guided in practical activities such as planting trees, sowing meadows and establishing wildlife ponds. Unlike other conservation projects, the emphasis is very much on health and fitness as volunteers warm up and cool down in preparation for a range of light to vigorous activities to suit all abilities. A number of GPs prescribe Green Gym sessions to patients to encourage them to improve their health and wellbeing.
- 1.2. The report before Members is to explore the possibility and potential of establishing a Green Gym in the Brentwood Borough.

2. Recommendations

That Members agree to:

- 2.1 Officers exploring the possibility of setting up a Green Gym in Brentwood and to report back to a future Committee with full costs and implications.**

3. Introduction and Background

- 3.1 The Conservation Volunteers are a registered charity established for 50 years. They have adapted their work with volunteers to reflect the changing needs of communities in the UK and, by giving people a sense of purpose and belonging, they have empowered them to take control of their lives and outdoor spaces for the benefit of all.

3.2 Green Gyms are an initiative of The Conservation Volunteers who works with people and communities to transform their health, prospects and outdoor places, for the long term. They aim to create a better environment where people from all cultures feel valued, included and involved. The Green Gyms will provide free outdoor sessions where participants are guided in practical activities such as planting trees, sowing meadows and establishing wildlife ponds. Unlike other conservation projects, the emphases is very much on health and fitness as volunteers warm up and cool down in preparation for a range of light to vigorous activities to suit all abilities.

3.3 The scaling up of Green Gyms across the country is being supported by Nesta and the Cabinet Officer, through the Social Action Innovation Fund. The Centre for Social Action Innovation Fund supports the growth of innovations that mobilize people's energy and talents to help each other, working alongside public services.

4. Issue, Options and Analysis of Options

4.1 Officers will explore the possibility of establishing a Green Gym in Brentwood and report back to a future Committee with the costs and implications to the Council.

5. Reasons for Recommendation

5.1 Officers can ascertain the costs of this initiative to see whether it will be sustainable project.

6. References to Corporate Plan

6.1 This sit under the Localism priority enabling communities to do more for themselves and increasing volunteering in Brentwood.

7. Implications

Financial Implications

Name & Title: Ramesh Prashar

Tel & Email: 01277 312513 / ramesh.prashar@brentwood.gov.uk

7.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. Officers will establish the financial implications of this initiative to determine whether it will be a viable project and report back to this Committee with their recommendations.

8. Legal Implications

Name & Title: Christopher Potter, Monitoring Officer & Head of Support Services

Tel & Email: 01277 312860 / Christopher.potter@brentwood.gov.uk

8.1 Any legal implications will be determined in the further report to Committee.

9. Appendices to this report

Appendix A – Information

Report Author Contact Details:

Name: Kim Anderson, Partnership, Leisure and Funding Manager

Telephone: 01277 312634

E-mail: kim.anderson@brentwood.gov.uk