

[Press release: Government to extend Green Flag Award for 5 more years](#)

The government will renew the Green Flag Award licence making sure that Britain's best parks and green spaces will be recognised and rewarded for another 5 years, Parks and Green Spaces Minister Marcus Jones announced today (23 August 2017).

The minister made his announcement in Rugby, a town that boasts not one but four Green Flag winning parks, many of which were originally derelict sites that have been transformed by the hard work of the community and the local council.

For 20 years, the [Green Flag Awards](#) have been recognising the best of outdoors spaces in the UK, allowing visitors to easily find quality parks and other green spaces to enjoy and setting standards for park managers across the country. Many parks have won the award, but winners also include more unusual spaces such as social housing developments, cemeteries, canals, and shopping centres.

The awards are run on behalf of the government by [Keep Britain Tidy](#), an environmental charity that campaigns for people's right to live and work in a place of which they can be proud.

Parks and Green Spaces Minister, Marcus Jones said:

I am very happy to confirm that the Green Flag Awards will be continuing, championing Britain's excellent parks and green spaces and the people behind them.

These awards are valuable not least because they reward local authorities and communities for their dedication to the great outdoors – and give locals and tourists an easy way to find quality spaces to get outside, exercise and play

Award winning parks

Centenary Park in Rugby is an example of a leading Green Flag park. The minister met volunteers who had helped turn a neglected allotment into a space for the whole community. The park now boasts a large play area, a games area, a green gym and nature area, including flowers to attract bees and butterflies.

The Newbold on Avon Community Association and Rugby borough council fought hard to secure over £215,000 to transform the neglected land. In addition to a well deserved Green Flag Award, Centenary Park was also named the most improved park by Fields in Trust in 2016 and received an award from the

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs for providing an excellent home for bees and other insect life.

Another Rugby park benefitted from a share of the Department for Communities and Local Government's £1.5 million to encourage urban communities to turn small, often derelict, pieces of land into 'Pocket Parks' for the benefit of all.

Rugby's Gladstone Green Pocket Park received £10,000 and now contains a vegetable patch for neighbours and a picnic spot to enjoy the produce they've grown themselves. This is part of a wider plan to encourage the New Bilton community to grow their own food. Gladstone Green won a Green Flag Community Award in 2017, a special award created to celebrate the hard working volunteers behind the nation's favourite green spaces.

These are just 2 examples of the almost 1,800 brilliant green spaces in the UK that have been awarded Green Flag status.

Chief Executive of Keep Britain Tidy, Allison Ogden-Newton said:

We welcome the extension to the Green Flag Award licence as we know how important the scheme has been in the renaissance of our parks over the past 20 years.

We are delighted that the announcement is being made in Rugby as they have shown how people benefit from the provision of quality parks and green spaces in particular in encouraging people to live healthier and more active lives.

Parks and Green Spaces Minister, Marcus Jones added:

My visit to Rugby demonstrated how parks and green spaces can breathe life into our towns and cities – contributing to the health and well being of the community.

I am very much looking forward to outlining our future plans to support Britain's parks in due course.

Further information

The [Green Flag Award](#) accreditation scheme is the national quality standard for public green space, used by the vast majority of local authorities and a growing number of communities, universities and social housing providers to maintain and improve the quality of green space.

DCLG has operated the scheme under a concessionary licence to Keep Britain Tidy since 2012 and the current renewal ensures the scheme will continue until 2022. Running the scheme involves no financial investment by government. Any surplus from the fees that are collected is reinvested into

the scheme by Keep Britain Tidy.

In 2016, 1797 Green Flag sites existed across the UK as well as 84 sites across 9 other countries which are currently piloting the scheme.

Since 2012 the scheme has been operating pilot schemes across a number of other countries. Currently there are 9 countries involved including Australia, Germany, Finland and the United Arab Emirates. Internationally the scheme is considered a flagship for the management of green spaces.

Press release: Leeds Flood Alleviation Scheme wins large project of the year at NEC Awards

Phase 1 of the Leeds Flood Alleviation Scheme has scooped the Large Project of the Year award at this year's NEC awards in London.

The awards were announced at a recent NEC Users' Group Annual Seminar.

The driving force behind the award winning scheme is a dedicated project team made up of experts from Leeds City Council, Environment Agency, BMMjv (a joint venture between BAM Nuttall and Mott MacDonald) and ARUP.

Phase 1 of the Leeds Flood Alleviation Scheme is one of the largest river flood defence projects in the country. Led by Leeds City Council in partnership with the Environment Agency, it aims to provide an increased level of protection against flooding from the River Aire and Hol Beck for 3,500 residential properties and businesses in the city centre. The scheme also includes flood risk reduction at Woodlesford.

One of the key aspects of the scheme is the replacement of Victorian weirs at Crown Point and Knostrop in the city, with innovative moveable weirs, which are being used for the first time as a flood defence in the UK. The new moveable weirs can be lowered in flood conditions to reduce river levels and the threat of flooding. The use of this technology has meant lower flood defence walls elsewhere in the city, to help preserve connectivity with the waterfront.

The floods experienced in December 2015 reinforced just how important this scheme is for the city of Leeds. Widespread flooding from some of the highest river levels ever recorded affected more than 2,000 residential properties and nearly 600 businesses.

The scheme was recognised for its 'one team' ethos with members of all partner organisations working side by side on a daily basis. This

collaborative approach between client, contractor and consultant puts the project at the forefront of contract management, resulting in a project which is on programme and within budget despite being affected by some of the worst flooding Leeds has experienced.

The NEC Awards recognise excellence in project delivery and showcase examples of good practice through collaboration from across the world.

The site works for Phase 1 of the Leeds Flood Alleviation scheme started in January 2015 and are scheduled to be completed this September.

The project team is currently working on options for Phase 2 of the scheme, which will adopt a catchment-wide approach meaning the entire River Aire catchment area will be considered to help reduce flood risk in Leeds. Consultation on potential options is due to be carried out from September.

[News story: Pubs Code Adjudicator \(PCA\) Bulletin August 2017](#)

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[Press release: Paul Newby responds after fact-finding exercise finds evidence to back tied pub tenant concerns](#)

Paul Newby, the Pubs Code Adjudicator, has today responded to the results of [fact-finding exercise](#) into tenants' experiences of accessing the Market Rent Only (MRO) option.

He commissioned the exercise to verify the concerns expressed by tenants and their representatives. It has provided evidence of a number of issues that tenants say are creating barriers to them accessing rights under the Pubs Code.

It found that tenants reported almost without exception that to varying degrees the pub-owning businesses are not acting within the spirit of the Code.

In response the PCA is pursuing a range of concerns in more detail with the pub-owning businesses and has issued statements on how the PCA will approach arbitrations. He has stressed that he is less likely to uphold arguments where technicalities have been used to block or delay requests for MRO options.

Mr Newby said: "I commissioned the verification exercise because I have had concerns brought to me and I wanted the detailed evidence that I need to take action.

"This is a comprehensive report and it has raised a number of significant questions about the operation of the Pubs Code in its first year, and the impact on tenants of their pub-owning businesses' actions.

"I am now asking the pub-owning businesses to provide me with further, detailed information about their particular processes and practices. This is also an opportunity for them to set out their positions. I will discuss these responses with the companies and I stand ready to take further regulatory action as necessary.

"The exercise has provided evidence on the impact of delays in the arbitration process on tenants' costs. It has also demonstrated that the effect of pub-owning businesses requiring new agreements for MRO tenancies has created a series of hurdles that, taken together, tenants consider to be insurmountable.

"I am committed to arbitrating every dispute impartially and with an open mind. However, I want to encourage positive negotiation on MRO options. To this end I have issued a number of statements about how I will approach arbitrations in order to increase the number of cases that are settled and do not become disputes brought to me for arbitration."

The statements include the PCA's position on pub-owning businesses using technicalities to reject MRO Notices, the approach to the form of agreement for MRO tenancies and challenges to market rent determinations made by Independent Assessors.

On MRO Notices, the statement says: "In line with the core Pubs Code principle of fair and lawful dealing, the PCA expects pub-owning businesses to take a reasonable and proportionate approach to how they treat MRO Notices.

It adds: "The PCA is aware that some MRO Notices have been rejected without providing the tied pub tenant with an explanation of that rejection. The PCA considers this to be unhelpful and unacceptable behaviour."

Tenants should also be told the reasons in sufficient time to allow them, where possible, to put the Notices right.

On the form of the MRO tenancy, pub-owning businesses have been told that the PCA will require them to be able to show that their approach does not constitute an unreasonable term or condition for individual tenants.

On the issue of unreasonable and uncommon terms, the PCA has said that where tenants challenge a term in a proposed MRO tenancy, the onus will be on the pub-owning business to show it is not unreasonable.

On challenges to independent assessments of market rents, the PCA has said he is only likely to find that a determination is not the market rent where it is outside the range of what is reasonable; he is less likely to uphold arguments made on technicalities.

Mr Newby said: "The Pubs Code is new law and in many cases has been challenged robustly by both sides.

"I am determined that this should be the year that the Code comes into its own and I am making it plain to the pub-owning businesses that I expect them to abide by the spirit as well as the letter of the law."

For further information contact Sheree Dodd on office@pca.gsi.gov.uk.

Notes to editors:

- The report of the independent verification exercise is available on the [PCA website](#).
- The PCA statements are available in the August Pubs Code Adjudicator Bulletin on the PCA website.

[Press release: Britain's track and field stars celebrated at Downing Street](#)

To celebrate the success of the World Para Athletics and World Athletics Championships, the Prime Minister welcomed leading British athletes, coaches and administrators to Downing Street today [22 August 2017].

For the first time ever, both championships were staged in the same city in the same year this summer, with the spotlight being thrown on London, just as with the Olympics and Paralympics five years ago.

Both Championships boasted record ticket sales and London welcomed more than 3,000 athletes from over 200 nations competing in 250 events. Great Britain and Northern Ireland finished third in the medal table in the World Para Athletics Championships and sixth in the medal table at the IAAF World Championships.

Among the sporting stars to meet the Prime Minister, were double World Para Athletics gold medallist (200 metres and 100 metres T38) Sophie Hahn, World Para Athletics 400 metres T38 gold medallist Kadeena Cox, World Athletics Championships gold medallists Adam Gemili and Nethaneel Mitchell-Blake (part of 4 x 100 metre winning team) and silver medallists Asha Philip (part of women's 4 x 100 metres team) and Laviai Nielsen (part of 4 x 400 metre team).

Prime Minister Theresa May said:

Everyone involved in staging both the World Para Athletics and World Athletics Championships should be incredibly proud of what they achieved.

But it's not just about the medal successes and the new records set. London 2017 will help to inspire many future generations to write their own place in the history books and to live healthier and more active lives.

When it comes to opportunity, this government is determined to do everything we can to help anybody, whatever your background, to go as far as your talents will take you.

Through UK Sport, the National Lottery and the government are investing over £38 million to support British Athletics in the four years to Tokyo 2020, to give our athletes the best possible chance to fulfil their potential.

Niels de Vos, Championship Director and CEO of UK Athletics, said:

The Summer of World Athletics was a great success and we are honoured to have been invited to Downing Street to celebrate the achievements of everyone involved, from the British athletes winning the medals to the coaches and mentors behind them to the support and organisational staff making the successes and Championships possible.

We witnessed some fine moments during the World Para Athletics Championships and IAAF World Championships and the response has truly shown the impact athletics continues to have on the UK and beyond. I would like to thank the Prime Minister for welcoming us all to Downing Street for what has been another memorable moment of the summer.

More people attended the World Para Athletics Championships this summer than in all previous championships combined. Meanwhile, the World Athletics Championship set a new Guinness World Record for its ticket sales – with over 700,000 sold, far exceeding the previous record of just over 417,000 for the 2009 Championships in Berlin.

Through UK Sport, the National Lottery and the government are investing over £38 million to support British Athletics in the four years to Tokyo 2020. This funding helped athletes prepare for London 2017 and will also give our athletes the best chance of medal success at the next Olympic and Paralympic Games.

The London 2017 Organising Committee delivered the IAAF World Athletics Championships and World Para-Athletics Championships on behalf of UK Athletics, the Greater London Authority and UK Sport, supported by Department for Digital, Culture Media and Sport, after both events were awarded to London in 2011 and 2012.

Polly Maton, silver medallist in the T47 long jump at the World Para Athletics Championships, said:

It is amazing to be invited to Downing Street to celebrate what were a great World Para Athletics Championships not just for myself but for the whole British team.

It is great to take the time to reflect on what we have all achieved during what has been a special summer for everyone involved in another iconic London location.

From racing in front of a passionate home crowd in the London Stadium to coming to Downing Street, it will all live long in the memory.

Martyn Rooney, bronze medallist in the men's 4x400m relay at the World Athletics Championships, said:

The IAAF World Championships in London were such a fantastic experience and to be invited to Downing Street to celebrate the success of the British team is a great way to round off the summer.

Winning a medal in front of that crowd in the London Stadium is something I will never forget. I have a lot of fond memories from the Championships and this is another moment to cherish.