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26 April 2021

Join the campaign to grant a green

For more than a year now—since the first lockdown in March 2020—people have been discovering how essential their local open spaces are to good health and sanity. But here is the irony: green spaces are under threat from the government’s destruction of the planning system in England, as outlined in the white paper of autumn last year and subsequent ‘consultations’, and in Wales as a result of the outdated planning guidance on open space. The society is deeply concerned that just when we need them most green spaces are at growing risk of development.

There is a simple way to give green spaces greater protection. Many of them are owned by local councils* which, as owners, can voluntarily designate green space as town or village green. Once registered as a green local people will enjoy the right to recreation there—and the space is protected for ever against development. In the last year we have celebrated such registrations at Scorton in North Yorkshire and our home town of Henley-on-Thames in Oxfordshire, where the local councils have acted in the interests of their residents.

We are urging our members—individuals and organisations—to review the land owned by their local councils and to encourage those councils to consider voluntary registration. And we are pressing those local councils that are members of the society to consider taking such action. With local elections coming up, we have an opportunity to invite candidates to pledge support for such action.

This is why we are now launching our **Grant a Green** campaign—to explain and publicise the need for voluntary registration throughout England and Wales.

We must contact every local council in the two nations, through our members and through the county associations of local councils. We must explain the process for granting a green, and some councils will need our expert help with it. We must publish a how-to-do-it guide on our website, and celebrate successes, using these

*Local councils include all parish councils in England, community councils in Wales, and many small-town councils.



The Open Spaces Society 25a Bell Street Henley-on-Thames RG9 2BA



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to encourage others to follow suit. This will cost the society staff time and money, but it will be worth it if we can get those green spaces registered and safeguarded.

Please help by:

- identifying land in your community which might be eligible for voluntary registration and encouraging the owner to register it;
- asking your local council candidates in the election on 6 May to support the registration and protection of open spaces;
- giving to our **Grant a Green appeal** to enable us to continue our vital work to protect those green spaces we hold dear.

With your help, we really can make a difference.

Yours sincerely

Kate Ashbrook

Kate Ashbrook
General Secretary

PS: *We are pleased to accept donations to this appeal as follows:*

1. *Online at <https://www.oss.org.uk/how-you-can-help/appeals/>*
2. *By bank transfer to Account: 00100021 Sort Code: 20-39-53*
3. *By cheque in the post using the enclosed envelope.*

Thank you



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