



PLANTING IDEAS...for a Better Green Infrastructure

Master class series 2010/11

The master classes are an opportunity for all those engaged with the investment and delivery of green infrastructure (GI) across the South West region to further explore and share the multi functional benefits GI provides. Each session is a chance to learn from national academics and experts, discuss issues and apply your knowledge to your place, and aims to help you ensure delivery of better GI in new or regenerated places, and sustainable communities in villages, towns and cities across the South West.

These master classes are suitable for specialists, academics and managers in business, social and environmental sectors, including sustainable development, housing, land management, planning, community development, education and tourism. Also for those directly involved with economic regeneration for the enhanced benefits and increased sustainability that green infrastructure can provide.

Each day will consist of two identical Master Classes for up to 20 people, one in the morning and one in the afternoon: 10.30 am – 12.30 pm and 1.30 pm – 3.30 pm. A networking lunch is included at 12.30 for those who are able to stay/arrive early.

URBAN FOOD...how Green Infrastructure can 'step up to the plate'

Friday, 23rd April, Brunel's Boardroom (next to Temple Meads station), Bristol

Chair: Richard Spalding, Senior Lecturer in Human Geography, UWE and Chair of South Gloucestershire Local Food Partnership

Key Class Leader: Professor Martin Caraher, Professor of Food and Health Policy, City University London

Project presenters include: Food Up Front and Capital Growth; Somerset Food Links

Recently, there has been a marked increase in the concerns about food, including food prices, food miles, the environment, animal welfare and overall health benefits. This has led not only to an increased interest in food, but also in wider food production in the UK and in local food growing and the responsibilities of local government and communities. The interest in food, at a national, and more often, local level, is also on the rise because people want better access to good, healthy and affordable food, and to enjoy the benefits of getting outdoors, cultivating beautiful green spaces and meeting other people.

According to defra Food 2030, published earlier this year, the vision for the UK is 'a low carbon food system which is efficient with resources – any waste is reused, recycled or used for energy generation'. For this to occur, it will take more than the traditional and current agricultural system. Local governments, communities and other organisations working in urban areas need to identify

how urban green infrastructure can 'set up to the plate' to start providing for their populations and supporting truly sustainable communities.

This master class will begin with background information on the current state of UK food production and consumption, and the challenges it will face in the future, in light of a range of factors including climate change projections and energy costs rises. Then speakers and delegates will discuss the role of green infrastructure to help support urban food growing, what is possible to achieve, and how can local areas work in partnership to deliver real progress. We will hear from international, national and regional key projects, including Food Up Front, the award-winning urban food growing network and the Capital Growth campaign, supporting community food growing spaces in London. Using these projects as examples, we will discuss what makes a successful urban food project, identify barriers that need to be overcome and make strong links between the provision of food growing in GI and the health and well being of our local communities. Delegates should go away not only with background information and case studies, but also potential partnerships with other Local Authorities and organisations to help drive this agenda forward.

NATURAL ECONOMY - Unlocking the economic value of the natural environment in the South West

Monday 10 May, the Riverside Centre, Exeter

Chair – Philip Collins (Regional Manager for Advocacy and Partnerships, Natural England)

Key Class Leader– Will Williams (Director, Natural Economy Northwest)

Presenters from SW Region include - Charlie Plowden

The South West Region is recognised for many unique landscapes and the difference they make to the economy of the region. This economic benefit is often described in terms of land management, food production, employment, health, provision for creative industries, tourism. However there is little evidence to show the causal impact between our natural or historical environments and economic benefit.

Green Infrastructure is an essential part of sustainable living, being all the land and water based networks and places and landscapes that provide us with food, clean water, biodiversity, low carbon travel, healthy communities and underpins economic prosperity. In order to make the most of new developments and regeneration potential, this master class is aimed at providing us with more knowledge and understanding about this subject, and giving us the opportunity to apply some of the principles to areas we manage and work together to develop an improved evidence base.

We need to maximise the economic benefit from existing and new investment in the region's natural environment. We also wish to influence the design and development of grey infrastructure through integrating green infrastructure for enhanced outputs and increased sustainability. We hope to draw on expertise from a wide range of specialists and managers working in housing, sustainable development, health, business development and the environment sectors to develop our knowledge and understanding and delivery in this field.

Chaired by Phil Collins (Natural England Regional Advocacy and Partnerships manager), Will Williams will lead the Class with research, delivery and guidance experience from 3 year Natural Economy Northwest programme that was funded by NWDA, Natural England and SITA Trust, and how they may apply in other areas. This will be followed by a study of Exeter and East Devon,

including green infrastructure improvements and proposals, 'Wild Exeter', Seaton wetlands and new growth points. The class will finish with discussion and sharing of practical ways forward to support this agenda across the South West.