



# Green City Post

## Understanding a National Park City

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Policies and programmes to increase greenery in cities introduced Green Infrastructure, then moved on to Urban Forests and Nature-Based Solutions, and now we get designated National Park Cities. What is National Park City (NPC) designation?

**T**he concept of a National Park varies between countries, though is primarily a conservation area, commonly under state ownership, and the impact of people is strictly managed. The NPC introduces a new form of landscape recognition, accepting that much of our modern landscape exists as dynamic interactions between people and the environment, and that the two are inseparable. Part of the motivation is possibly still anthropocentric, however, in that it is now beyond debate that our physical, mental, and emotional well-being depend on quality and quantity of nature, and how deeply we engage with it. Pragmatically speaking, if city populations cannot get

to rural nature, then we must bring nature to citizens.

London is the first NPC, and the Greater London NPC Partnership charter declares ambitions for a better quality of life for wildlife and people through proactive commitment from residents, visitors, and decision-makers. In order to achieve NPC status, London gained majority support of their 649 electoral wards. The support of these smallest and most local political designations strongly implies community support. No new legislative structure empowers this designation. The power of NPC status to effect change relies on the how well the programme motivates and inspires residents. The Greater London NPC Partnership aims to lead on city-wide campaigns, attracting

funding, and building capacity and effectiveness of individuals, communities, and businesses.

Perhaps a core strength of NPC designation is that urban greening is addressed at a coherent, connected, landscape scale, creating connectivity and flow within and between green spaces, and with the aspiration that this drives change.

Two questions remain to be answered: Will NPC status drive changes in policy that dictate urban greening? Or can cities achieve essential transformation through NPC-empowered community action?

The National Park City Foundation aspires to declare 25 NPC by 2025. With little prescribed format for NPCs it will be interesting to see how other cities implement the initiative.

## Speaker line-up confirmed for International Green City Conference

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The International Association of Horticultural Producers (AIPH) International Green City Conference entitled 'Urban Greening for Clean and Healthy Cities' takes place on 11<sup>th</sup> September at the World Ornamental Horticulture Summit 2019 Beijing.

The conference will focus on the role of plants in creating cleaner, healthier urban environments. Eight distinguished experts will present a variety of urban greening projects from around the world. The confirmed programme features keynote speaker Professor Yu Xinxiao of Beijing Forestry University who will discuss the ecological principles of plants and trees, their role in Green City development and their impact on improving the quality of the environment and people's lives. Seven other distinguished speakers complete the full line-up: Mr Yibo Xu, senior architect at Stefano Boeri Architetti (SBA) China; Dr Audrey Gerber,



Technical Advisor to AIPH; Professor Paul Monks of the University of Leicester and chair of the DEFRA air quality expert group; Ms Judith van der Poel of Niek Roozen; Mr Li Zheng, Deputy Secretary of the CPC Chongming District Committee

and Mayor of Chongming District People's Government; and Mr Gao Dawei, Deputy Director General of the Beijing Gardening and Greening Bureau.

For event and booking information visit [www.aiph.org](http://www.aiph.org)