



Britain's parks are at risk. There's no legal responsibility to look after them and squeezed budgets mean our local green spaces - from playgrounds, to the park you relax in on your lunch break - don't have the money they need. [1] **We could end up being forced to pay to use our parks** - or lose them altogether. [2]

A group of MPs are looking into the crisis right now. They're thinking of making protecting parks a legal requirement, and they'll advise the government on what to do. [3] A huge petition, signed by all of us, will prove how much we love our parks. It could convince the MPs to come up with a water-tight plan for protecting them.

Can you sign the petition now and demand that looking after our parks is made a legal requirement by the government? [4] It only takes 30 seconds to add your name:

[**SIGN THE PETITION**](#)

Parks are for everyone. On a summer's day they're filled with families enjoying the sunshine and kids having a kick-about with their friends. **If they aren't protected they could be flogged to private companies - forcing us to pay to visit them and destroying their magic.** Or they could be closed and lost completely.

The MPs are holding a consultation to ask the public their opinion, but it closes soon. If MPs don't hear from us, we could be left with a woolly plan that doesn't fix the problem. But **a huge petition, launched today, demanding the government takes responsibility for looking after our parks, would be hard for them to ignore.** It's the first step in protecting our parks, and showing they matter to us all.

Can you add your name to the petition now?

[**SIGN THE PETITION**](#)

Thanks for being involved,

Trish, Megan, Charlotte and the 38 Degrees team

NOTES:

[1] Heritage Lottery Fund: #parksmatter:

<https://www.hlf.org.uk/about-us/news-features/parksmatter>

Guardian: UK's public parks face 'decline and neglect':

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2016/sep/07/uks-public-parks-face-decline-and-neglect-heritage-lottery-fund-report>

[2] Last year Battersea Park's free adventure playground was bulldozed and replaced by a new adventure playground company that charges between £18 - £33 a session. A new report by the Heritage Lottery shows replacing free parks with charging services is becoming more common:

Guardian: Children are being priced out by 'pay to play' in public spaces:

<https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2015/dec/13/parents-protest-pay-to-play-parks-privatising-green-spaces>

[3] Parliament: Public Parks Inquiry:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/communities-and-local-government-committee/inquiries/parliament-2015/public-parks-16-17/>

[4] Local authorities have a set of "statutory duties" that they have to fulfil and protect. Things like what they prioritise in funding, and what services are their responsibility. Right now, nobody has the responsibility for looking after our parks and green spaces, so local councils see them as an opportunity to move money into other services, or even to make money. By making parks a statutory duty, it would be a legal requirement for them to be protected.

[Data.gov.uk](#): Statutory duties placed on local government:

<https://data.gov.uk/dataset/statutory-duties-placed-on-local-government>