

**Report of The Chief Officer of Parks and Countryside**

**Report to East Outer Area Committee**

**Date: 12<sup>th</sup> February 2013**

**Subject: Annual Report – for the Parks and Countryside Service**

Are specific electoral Wards affected?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):		
Cross Gates & Whinmoor		
Garforth & Swillington		
Kippax & Methley		
Temple Newsam		
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number:		
Appendix number:		

**Summary of main issues**

1. The report provides an area profile of key assets, information on park usage and a customer based perspective of the quality of the assets and services provided.
2. It highlights the current progress towards Leeds Quality Park (LQP) status for community parks in the area. It provides the costs of achieving and retaining LQP status in community parks up to the year 2020.
3. The report details capital improvements in community parks, sport pitches and fixed play in the area for the last 12 months and planned improvements to be delivered in the next 12 months.
4. It gives a detailed breakdown of events and volunteering in the area.
5. It gives an overview of the Streetscene Grounds Maintenance contract considering performance for grass cutting in 2012. It sets out the specification and how this is developing alongside suggesting increased engagement in performance monitoring.

**Recommendations**

6. The Area Committee is requested to note the content of the report and to communicate priorities for investment in community parks, playing pitches and fixed play facilities in light of the issues raised.

## **1 Purpose of this report**

- 1.1 This report seeks to further develop the relationship between the Parks and Countryside service and the East Outer Area Committee, as agreed at Executive Board.
- 1.2 It provides an overview of the service and sets out some of the challenges faced along with key performance management initiatives. In addition it seeks to provide a positive way forward for delivering the extended role of the Area Committee.
- 1.3 In particular it sets out at an area level progress made in attaining Leeds Quality Park standard. It also sets out investment needs to attain LQP standards and to retain them.

## **2 Background information**

### **Service Description**

- 2.1 Leeds City Council has one of the largest fully inclusive local authority Parks and Countryside services, managing almost 4,000 hectares of parks and green space. This includes 7 major parks, 62 community parks and 95 recreation grounds and 391 local green spaces, which include 144 playgrounds and 500 sports facilities ranging from skateboard parks to golf courses, and which play host to 600 events annually. The service also manages a nursery which produces over 4 million bedding plants each year, 97 allotment sites, over 800km of Public Right of Way (PROW), and 156 nature conservation sites, as well as 22 cemeteries and three crematoria.
- 2.2 The 2009 Parks and Countryside residents survey showed that the service attracts almost 68 million visits each year from Leeds' residents alone, and that approximately 96% of these are regular park users. These range from anybody using a park for informal recreation (e.g. walking, observing nature) to people who take part in formal activities (e.g. football clubs, conservation volunteers or to attend events). The user surveys also evidenced that 10m visits are made to our green space by Young People (12-19) compared to 3.6m by Children (5-11).

### **Description of Priority Advisory Function**

- 2.3 The priority advisory function for Area Committees relates to community parks provision that have a wide range of facilities, including general recreation, sports pitches, play and formal and informal horticultural facilities.
- 2.4 Where developments are less significant or only impact on one site then ward members and community groups will be informed and consulted using established procedures. It is important to note that good levels of engagement with ward members exist and this function seeks to enhance this engagement.

### 3 Main issues

#### Area Profile of the Service

- 3.1 The following table summarises community green space assets managed by Parks and Countryside in the East Outer Area Committee:

Asset	Quantity
Community parks	7
Playing Pitches:	
Football	55
Rugby League	7
Bowling greens	9
Playgrounds	22
Multi-use games areas	3
Skate parks	3

#### **Community Parks**

- 3.2 The service undertook a residents survey using the Citizen's Panel methodology during the summer of 2012. Unfortunately this has provided insufficient information to allow the service to update the 2009 survey data with statistical confidence. Options to undertake additional surveys during 2013 are currently being examined to provide an updated dataset for usage and satisfaction.
- 3.3 Analysis from the 2009 residents survey was carried out relevant to the 7 community parks in the area which are;

Site Name	Annual Number of Visits	Total Annual Visits to East Outer Community Parks is 2.2m approx.
Allerton Bywater Sports Ground	130,963	
Barley Hill Park	291,329	
Glebelands Rec Ground	197,121	
Grove Road Rec Ground	18,764	
Halton Dene – Primrose Valley	362,711	
Manston Park	1,114,441	
Whinmoor Park	86,470	

- 3.4 The residents survey provides significant insight into the users of community parks, demographics of users, how they get there and what they do. A detailed insight of each community park is given in appendix 1. The key analysis points are;

- Approximately 68% of visitors are adults with 32% children and young people.
- There are a wide range of reasons for visiting but nearly all visitors at some point go for relaxation or exercise. Other common reasons for visiting are for play and to enjoy the surroundings.
- Nearly 80% of visitors travel to the park on foot of which 71% take less than 10 minutes to travel there.
- Of the 18% who visit by car 65% take less than 10 minutes to get there.

- 39% of visitors go to community parks either every day or on most days, whilst 76% go at least once a week.

3.5 Parks and Countryside provide annual pitch hire for sports teams in the area. The table below shows the number of teams with current bookings playing on pitches in the area; (*note this excludes clubs who have a long term lease in place*)

Age Group	No of Teams
Open Age	18
Juniors	48

### Volunteering in the Parks and Countryside Service

3.6 The Service continues to focus on increasing the number of volunteers and groups working in the area. There has been a significant increase in the value of activities which take place particularly in the area of corporate volunteering. Our emphasis for the next 12 months will be to :

- Seek to increase corporate volunteering working in partnership with Leeds Ahead.
- Continue to improve involvement with the many “in bloom” groups in Leeds.
- It is an ambition to have a volunteer group for every community park where there is a site based gardener.

3.7 It is estimated that volunteers across all groups contribute nearly 3,500 days of voluntary work in the East Outer area over a 12 month period. The tables below give details of works undertaken in East Outer since November 2011 and the active groups in the area Committee;

**Table 1 - Work undertaken by volunteers working with the Rangers;**

Site	Organisation	Task	No. of Vol Days
Halton Dene - Primrose Valley	Leeds Parks Volunteers	Tree thinning	0.8
	Leeds Wildlife Volunteers/ General Public	Volunteer Task: Tree thinning, Scrub Bash	6.9
	Operations Group	Volunteer Task	1.4
Hollinhurst Wood	Daniel Yorath House	Scrub Bashing	2.1
Skelton Wood POS Sports Fields	Friends of Skelton Wood	Glade Management	8.6
		Hedge Maintenance strim paths	2.6
	Skelton Wood Environment Group	boardwalk repair, litter pick	1.1
		ditches, footpath edging and litter pick	4.5
		footpath cutback, orchid survey and litter pick	5.0
		Litter pick / footpath clearance	5.7
		Litter pick, clear ditches, veg cut back.	5.7
		Maintain Ditches, Install benches, veg cutback	5.7
Maintain footpath	5.7		

Site	Organisation	Task	No. of Vol Days
Temple Newsam Estate	Leeds Wildlife Volunteers	Rhododendron removal	6.4
Town Close Hills	Daniel Yorath House	Litter Pick	1.4
		Path Clearance and Litter Picking	1.5
		Remove broken fingerpost	1.5
		Dead hedge laying	1.4
		Meadow Management	0.9
		Scrub bash	1.1
		Scrub Bash and Litter pick	1.7
	Leeds Wildlife Volunteers	Scrub Bashing	7.7
<b>Total</b>			<b>79.4</b>

**Table 2 - Corporate volunteer actions;**

Site	Organisation	Task	No. of Vol Days
Barleyhill Park	Corporate group	Paint / tidy Barley hill playground	10.0
Halton Dene - Primrose Valley	Corporate group	Litterpicking and Footpath work	7.1
Kippax Meadows	Corporate group	Clearing footpaths and stone feature, repair fence, cut back	6.4
Letchmire Pastures	RSM Tenon	Footpath scrape and widen, fence/gate/sign painting	47.1
Temple Newsam Estate	First Direct	Balsam Bash	12.9
	Vodafone	Tree Planting	11.1
Town Close Hills	BT	Footpath cut back, install sign posts, notice board	10.0
<b>Total</b>			<b>104.6</b>

**Table 3 - Educational work within the East Outer area:**

Site	School	Activity	No Of Children
Temple Newsam Estate	<b>Shadwell Primary School</b>	The Tudors	28
	<b>Temple Newsam Halton Primary School</b>	The Tudors	31
	<b>Temple Newsam Halton Primary School</b>	The Tudors	31
	Tickhill St. Mary's Primary School	The Tudors	20
	<b>Swillington Primary School</b>	The Tudors	19
	<b>Adel Primary School</b>	The Tudors	31
	<b>St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School</b>	The Tudors	24
	Meadowfields Primary	Survival Skills	48
	<b>Harehills Primary School</b>	The Tudors	30
	<b>Lidgate Primary</b>	Farm Food - Healthy Eating	30
	<b>Lidgate Primary</b>	Farm Food - Healthy Eating	31
	<b>Harehills Primary School</b>	The Tudors	30
	<b>Harehills Primary School</b>	The Tudors	30
	<b>Kippax Ash Tree Primary School</b>	The Tudors	22

Site	School	Activity	No Of Children
Halton Dene - Primrose Valley	Cullingworth Village Primary	The Tudors	29
	Scholes Primary School	The Tudors	32
	St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Primary	The Tudors	17
	Myrtle Park Primary School	Meet The Animals Guided Tour	49
	Willow Tree Primary	Meet The Animals Guided Tour	50
	Chapel Allerton Primary	The Tudors At Temple Newsam	27
	Chapel Allerton Primary	The Tudors At Temple Newsam	26
	West End Primary and Nursery	Meet The Animals Guided Tour	49
	Scholes Primary	The Tudors At Temple Newsam	28
	Bowling Green Primary, Halifax	Meet The Animals Guided Tour	24
	Chapel Allerton Primary	Meet The Animals Guided Tour	60
	St. Joseph's Catholic Primary	The Tudors At Temple Newsam	30
	Methodist Junior & Infant School	The Tudors At Temple Newsam	28
	Pudsey Bolton Royd Primary	Meet The Animals Guided Tour	33
	Pudsey Bolton Royd Primary	Meet The Animals Guided Tour	33
	Willow Tree Primary	Meet The Animals Guided Tour	72
	Willow Tree Primary	Meet The Animals Guided Tour	52
	Spring Bank Primary	The Tudors At Temple Newsam	29
	Lawns Park Primary	The Tudors At Temple Newsam	15
	Lawns Park Primary	The Tudors At Temple Newsam	15
	Ferney Lee Primary (Todmorden)	Mini Beasts, Nature walk	75
	Leeds Visually Impaired Group	Story Telling	6
	Mill Hill Primary Northallerton	The Tudors At Temple Newsam	25
	Mill Hill Primary Northallerton	The Tudors At Temple Newsam	25
	St. Peters C of E Harrogate	The Tudors At Temple Newsam	28
	St. Peters C of E Harrogate	The Tudors At Temple Newsam	28
	St. Peters C of E Harrogate	The Tudors At Temple Newsam	27
Deighton Gates Primary, Wetherby	The Tudors At Temple Newsam	24	
Halton Dene - Primrose Valley	Crossgates Primary	Site Visit: Nature Walk	20

Site	School	Activity	No Of Children
	Corpus Christi Catholic Primary	Habitats / Predators / Foodchains	27
	Corpus Christi Catholic Primary	Habitats / Predators / Foodchains	23
Corpus Christi Catholic Primary, Halton	Corpus Christi Catholic Primary	Habitats and Community Workshop	50
Meadowfield Primary, Halton Moor	Meadowfield Primary	Survival Skills, den building, bushcraft	48
	Meadowfield Primary	School Assemblies	300

**Table 4 - Summary of the groups who are active in the East Outer area :**

Group Name	Number of Volunteers	Estimated Volunteer Days
Daniel Yorath House Conservation group	8	20
Friends of Billy Wood	8	3
Friends of Temple Newsam	50	1180
Skelton Woods Environment Group	8	96
Friends of Primrose Valley	15	40
Leeds Parks Volunteers	4	78
Leeds Voluntary Footpath Rangers	6	130
Leeds Wildlife Volunteers	12	216
<b>Total</b>		<b>1763</b>

**Table 5 - Existing in bloom groups within the East Outer area;**

In Bloom Group	Number of Volunteers	Award Won (Yorkshire in Bloom)	Estimated Vol. Days
Allerton Bywater	10	Urban Community – Silver Gilt	200
Garforth	20	Town – Gold (Category Winner)	400
Great & Little Preston	18	Large Village – Silver	360
Kippax	25	Urban Community – Gold (Category Winner)	480
Ledston	2	Small Village – Silver	40
Methley & Mickletown	12		240
Micklefield	3	Large Village – Silver	80
Swillington	8	Small Town – Silver	160
<b>Total</b>			<b>1960</b>

## Events

- 3.8 The bookings and licensing team has introduced improvements to the application process for events that occur on parks. They are providing greater assistance in helping community groups organise events with particular emphasise on ensuring legal and safety requirements are met but do not deter groups and organisations from organising activities. The table below shows a list of events held in the outer East area in 2012:

Site Name	Month	Event	Total
Allerton Bywater Sports	July	Leeds Youth Service	2

Site Name	Month	Event	Total
Ground	August	Leeds Youth Service	2
Church Lane Sports Pitches, Methley	June	Methley United Gala	1
	August	Methley Fest	1
Colton Lane	December	Airienteers	1
Firthfield POS	June	Diamond Jubilee Gala	1
Glebelands Rec, Ninelands Lane	June	Garforth Gala	1
	July	Leeds Youth Service	2
	August	Leeds Youth Service	2
	November	Garforth Bonfire	1
Halton Dene - Primrose Valley	June	Groundwork Leeds	1
Kippax Common (Green Lane)	April	(16th - 23rd) Funfair	1
	August	(6th - 13th) Funfair	1
Manston Park	July	(23rd - 29th) Funfair	1
		LCC Multi Sports Days	1
		Swarcliffe Childrens Centre	1
	August	LCC Multi Sports Days	7
Neville Road Playing Field	March	(26th - 3rd) Funfair	1
	August	(30th - 7th) Funfair	1
		East Leeds Unity Day	1
		Mini Breeze Event	1
Saville Road Recreation Ground	August	Leeds Youth Service	1
Swillington POS	July	Leeds Youth Service	2
	August	Leeds Youth Service	2
Temple Newsam Estate	February	Arriva Bus photo shoot	1
	March	Social services fun day	1
	April	Leeds Templars Scouts	1
	May	Leeds Advocacy Sponsored Walk	1
		White rose Pony show	1
	June	Barnardos Toddle	1
		Helicopter	1
		LCC Disability Week Picnic in the Park	1
		Olympics	1
		Race for Life	1
		Scouts Sports Day	1
		July	Airienteers
	Breeze on Tour		1
	One Breeze Event		1
	Opera in the Park		1
	Outback Events Cocoon (2nd to 13th )		1
	Party & Opera on site		1
	Party in the Park		1
	Rachel Dean Art Performance		1
	Summer Bands		1
	August	(20th - 28th) Funfair	1
		Wedding & Reception	1
	September	LCC Disability Week Picnic in the Park	1
		Sue Ryder Midnight Walk	1
		Transport Cycling event	1
		Wedding & Reception	5
	October	Seacroft Wheelers	1



Site Name	Month	Event	Total
		Wedding & Reception	1
	November	Best Parties Ever	1
		Wedding & Reception	1
	December	Wedding & Reception	3
<b>Total</b>			<b>73</b>

### Community Parks – Leeds Quality Park Status

3.9 The Parks and Green Space Strategy was approved at Executive Board in February 2009 and sets out the vision and priorities to 2020. One of the key proposals contained in the strategy is the aspiration for all community parks to meet the Green Flag standard for field based assessment by 2020. The Green Flag Award Scheme represents the national standard for parks and green spaces. It has been developed around eight key criteria as follows;

- **A welcoming place** - how to create a sense that people are positively welcomed in the park
- **Healthy, safe & secure** - how best to ensure that the park is a safe & healthy environment for all users
- **Clean & well maintained** - what people can expect in terms of cleanliness, facilities & maintenance
- **Sustainability** - how a park can be managed in environmentally sensitive ways
- **Conservation & heritage** - the value of conservation & care of historical heritage
- **Community involvement** - ways of encouraging community participation and acknowledging the community's role in a park's success
- **Marketing** - methods of promoting a park successfully
- **Management** - how to reflect all of the above in a coherent & accessible management plan or strategy and ensure it is implemented.

3.10 The Parks and Countryside service reports annual performance against two local indicators based upon the Green Flag Award scheme;

- *The percentage of Parks and Countryside sites assessed that meet the Green Flag standard.*
- *The percentage of Parks and Countryside community parks which meet the Green Flag standard. Performance against these indicators is illustrated in section 3.31.*

3.11 The indicator includes an assessment of each community park which has particular relevance to Area Committee engagement. The scheme is known as the Leeds

Quality Park (LQP) standard. The following table provides a summary of these assessments for the East Outer Area Committee.

Site	Year Assessed	Welcoming Place	Healthy, Safe, Secure	Clean, Well Maintained	Sustainability	Conservation / Heritage	Community Involvement	Marketing	Meets Standard?
Allerton Bywater Sports Ground	2011								No
Barley Hill Park	2011								Yes
Glebelands Rec Ground	2012								Yes
Grove Road Rec Ground	2011								No
Halton Dene – Primrose Valley	2012								Yes
Manston Park	2011								Yes
Whinmoor Park	2010								No

**Key:**

Meets Leeds Quality Park Standard on average for this key criteria	
Below Leeds Quality Park Standard on average for this key criteria	

3.12 From this table, there are 4 parks identified that meet the Leeds Quality Park Standard in the area, with 3 not reaching the standard. This is an increase of 2 parks (Glebelands Rec & Halton Dene) since the previous Area Committee report.

3.13 The residents survey in 2009 enables an assessment of visitor numbers and satisfaction rating (scored out of 10) for a number of criteria for each park, set out in the following table:

Site	Design and Appearance	Cleanliness and Maintenance	Ease to Get Around	Range of Facilities	Horticultural Maintenance	Nature Conservation	Facilities for Families	Sports Facilities	Overall Impression
Barley Hill Park	6.7	5.8	8.0	5.1	6.8	5.8	5.6	5.8	<b>6.4</b>
Glebelands Rec Ground	4.5	4.8	7.2	2.7	5.7	5.6	3.0	5.7	<b>4.3</b>
Halton Dene – Primrose Valley	6.3	6.3	8.6	6.3	7.7	7.1	4.6	7.1	<b>6.6</b>
Manston Park	7.9	7.8	8.8	6.2	8.6	7.5	7.1	6.9	<b>7.8</b>
Whinmoor Park	5.2	6.4	7.6	2.5	7.2	6.8	2.8	3.6	<b>3.2</b>

Note – Allerton Bywater Sports Ground and Grove Road Rec Ground had insufficient responses to be able to accurately produce satisfaction data.

**Key:**

Generally meets LQP expectations	7.0 - 10	
Generally below LQP expectations	0.0 – 6.9	

This table broadly correlates with the professional audit undertaken for the Leeds Quality Parks assessment set out in paragraph 3.11. In particular scores and visitor numbers are higher for the parks that meet the LQP standard. There are however

issues identified with the range of facilities and facilities for families offered in many of the parks.

### ***Playing Pitches***

- 3.14 The residents survey in 2009 allowed respondents to rate sport facilities in parks. The results are shown in the table below;

<b>Rating of Sports facilities</b>	<b>2009 (East Outer)</b>	<b>2006 (East Outer)</b>
Fair to very good	80.2%	71.5%
Poor or very poor	19.8%	28.5%

The results show an increase in those rating sports facilities as fair or higher. This data is related to the table set out in paragraph 3.13.

### ***Fixed Play***

- 3.15 The residents survey in 2009 allowed respondents to rate facilities for children and their parents. The results are shown in the table below;

<b>Rating facilities for children</b>	<b>2009 (East Outer)</b>	<b>2006 (East Outer)</b>
Fair to very good	80.1%	79.8%
Poor or very poor	19.9%	20.2%

Results show a minimal increase in those who rated facilities as fair, good or very good.

- 3.16 The following play areas have been refurbished during 2012;

- Swillington POS – New skate park (£74k).

- 3.17 The following improvements have been carried out to sports pitches in 2012;

- Barley Hill Recreation Ground – works are ongoing on the installation of drainage and flood alleviation bowl to the football pitches. (£144k).

- 3.18 The following table provides a perspective on the minimum level of investment required to achieve the LQP standard for the five remaining parks. It also includes the level of reinvestment required across all the community parks in order to sustain the LQP pass up to 2020;

<b>Site Name</b>	<b>Cost to Achieve (excluding fixed play)</b>	<b>Reinvestment (excluding fixed play)</b>
Allerton Bywater Sports Ground	£8,000	
Grove Road Rec Ground	£27,000	
Whinmoor Park	£118,725	
<b>Total to achieve LQP</b>	<b>£153,725</b>	
Average annual reinvestment		£22,720
<b>Total reinvestment to 2020</b>		<b>£181,760</b>
<b>Overall Total Investment to 2020</b>		<b>£335,485</b>

- 3.19 Reinvestment levels are estimated according to the expected lifespan of equipment and infrastructure as set out below;

Description	Timescale for Recurring Investment
Signage and interpretation	5 years
Fixed play (including MUGA's/skate parks)	10 years
Bins and benches	15 years
Paths and infrastructure	25 years
Landscaping	25 years

- 3.20 In terms of fixed play, work has been undertaken to set out refurbishment requirements over a 10 year rolling programme in support of the outcomes of the Fixed Play Strategy. The average cost of a new playground is currently about £120k; Multi-use games areas and skateparks are slightly cheaper on average at about £90k each. The table below shows the capital investment required on an ongoing basis to fund the area committees existing fixed play sites;

Fixed Play Type	No.	Total Replacement Cost £'s	Required Average Annual Spend £'s
Play Areas	22	2,640,000	264,000
Multi Use games Areas	3	270,000	27,000
Skate Parks	3	270,000	27,000
<b>Totals</b>		<b>3,180,000</b>	<b>318,000</b>

#### **Area Committee funding for additional on site gardeners**

- 3.21 A number of area committees provide additional funding for gardeners to increase site based presence at parks in the area.
- 3.22 Analysis shows that complaints to both Ward Councillors and the Parks and Countryside Service have declined on sites with increased daily presence. In addition, the service has observed an increase in the number of residents using parks and open spaces which is backed up by the residents survey data.
- 3.23 The site based gardeners increase working relationships with users, local residents and community groups. These site based staff further increase users satisfaction and support the aspiration to increase volunteer groups working within parks.

#### **Streetscene Grounds Maintenance**

- 3.24 Following a procurement exercise the streetscene grounds maintenance contract was awarded to Continental Landscapes Ltd (CLL) with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2012. This contract covers sites that are located alongside the highway network or amongst residential streets managed by the council's Arms Length Management Organisations (ALMOs and BITMO). The specification requires the contractor to undertake litter removal from sites they maintain at each visit supporting the council's wider efforts to maintain clean streets. The table below shows the asset breakdown of contract items for the East Outer area committee:

<b>Asset Type</b>	<b>Annual Visits</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Measure</b>
Amenity Grass	13	M <sup>2</sup>	660,764
Premium Grass	26	M <sup>2</sup>	106,462
Rough Grass	3	M <sup>2</sup>	48,605
Sight Line	3	M	55,904
Rough Linear	3	M	83,552
Primary Network	6	M <sup>2</sup>	38,142
Shrub Beds	2	M <sup>2</sup>	14,696
Hedges	3	M	6,574
Rose Beds	2	M <sup>2</sup>	570
<b>Total</b>			<b>1,015,269</b>

3.25 Despite 2012 being one of the wettest summers ever recorded the contractor has completed grass cutting operations as required by the contract specification. During June the specification was revised to increase the mowing frequency on grass plots adjacent to sheltered housing and this has proven to be very successful in addressing issues of grass length and overspill of cuttings in these areas. Regular monitoring of the contractors work is undertaken with a target sample size of 10%. Analysis of city wide performance for the 2012 mowing season shows that the contractor achieved an average failure rate of less than 1%.

3.26 The Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny Board Working Group examined the contract during the summer and produced a number of recommendations that are currently being considered or have already been introduced. These include:

- Increasing frequencies to 16 grass cuts and 6 shrub/rose visits.
- That any proposed removal of shrub/rose beds are consulted on with ward members and parish/town councils prior to removal.
- That options to increase 'joined up working' with locality management are explored.
- To examine options to increase efficiencies by better utilisation of contractor resources during the winter.
- That parish and town councils are encouraged to engage in contract performance management.
- That an improved communications strategy is developed.
- That area committees are provided with performance information relevant to the area.
- That contract management efficiencies are sought alongside increased consistency of approach.
- Establishing funding to address problem sites until ownership can be established.

3.27 From 1<sup>st</sup> September 2012 management of the contract passed to Parks and Countryside and work has commenced to restructure the contract team to achieve increased coordination and efficiency from grounds maintenance and weed spraying contracts. It is proposed that officers attending the area committee environment sub groups will provide regular updates on performance and any proposed changes to the contract.

3.28 As a result of the ALMO review currently underway, arrangements regarding the provision of ALMO elements of the contract may change.

### **Coordinated Working with Environmental Services**

3.29 The Parks & Countryside Service move to the Environments & Neighbourhoods Directorate has given opportunities to improve collaborative working. In particular improvements in horticultural land management, cleansing and more efficient use of resources in regard to;

- Co-ordination of weed spraying activities with the grounds maintenance contract with a consistent approach to monitoring.
- Traffic Management arrangements co-ordinated to minimise costs and disruption of the highway.
- Litter collection in the vicinity of community parks, and as part of normal operations site based gardeners undertake an initial litter pick of the park which is being expanded to include some areas outside the curtilage of the park. Conversely, street cleansing staff now assist with emptying litter bins in parks on a weekend when parks staff are not always present.
- Work is underway to map all maintainable ginnels and establish work requirements to draw up an annual co-ordinated work schedule. Work is already co-ordinated to undertake weed-spraying where the locality team have already cut back vegetation, and removed detritus from the surface of the path.
- Locality Managers have led on consultation and worked with Parks and Countryside on developing proposals around dog control orders in Leeds.
- The Parks and Countryside service has a number of welfare facilities and yard space available in most community parks distributed throughout the city which has provided an opportunity for the locality based teams to use these facilities for staff welfare provision and as operational bases.

3.30 Specific coordinated working relevant to the East Outer Area Committee has occurred at;

- **Manston Park** – Parks and Countryside to empty litter bins outside the shops on Pendas Way and Church Lane during the week. Environment to empty bins between the entrance to Manston Park and up to and including the playground.
- **Barley Hill Park** – Facility sharing with street cleansing teams. This allows the cleansing staff to operate more efficiently in terms of productive time and transport savings.

### **Parks & Countryside Key Performance Indicators**

3.31 The following table highlights key performance indicators relevant to the service;

PI Code	Description	2010/11 Actual	2011/12 Actual	2012/13 Target	2013/14 Target
LKI-GFI / CP-PC50	The percentage of parks and countryside sites	23%	26.2%	29.4%	32.6%

PI Code	Description	2010/11 Actual	2011/12 Actual	2012/13 Target	2013/14 Target
/ EM38	assessed internally that meet the Green Flag criteria	(Target 23%)	(Target 26.2%)		
LKI-PCP 22	Overall user satisfaction with Parks and Countryside (from the user survey)	N/A	N/A	7/10	N/A
New	The percentage of parks and countryside community parks which meet LQP status	33.9%	38.7% Target (40%)	47.5%	55%

## 4 Corporate Considerations

### 4.1 Consultation and Engagement

4.1.1 Close liaison with community and ward members is already in existence, utilising a variety of mechanisms, for example through residents' surveys, multi-agency meetings and community forums. In addition volunteers, Friends of groups and local residents are regularly consulted on local projects with input on design and physical implementation of a wide range of site improvements.

### 4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

4.2.1 This report does not have an impact on equality and diversity. Further information is available on analysis of the residents survey 2009 specifically regarding equality issues on request.

### 4.3 Council Policies and City Priorities

4.3.1 The contents of this report set out how the Executive Board requirements can be met by taking a more proactive approach to involve and engage Area Committees in matters relating to community parks.

4.3.2 The information within the report contributes significantly to the sustainable economy and culture city priority plan.

### 4.4 Resources and Value for Money

4.4.1 The central government's Comprehensive Spending Review has had significant impact on local government budgets and it is anticipated that the budget allocation for Parks and Countryside will continue to be very challenging.

4.4.2 The service undertakes to sustain and develop the services provided to the public and has traditionally used a number of sources of financial support to achieve developments. These include grants from bodies such as Green Leeds Ltd, Sustrans, Natural England, National Lottery funding and developer contributions via section 106 (S106) funds.

### 4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

4.5.1 This report has no legal implications and is not subject to call in. There is no information which is confidential or exempt.

## **4.6 Risk Management**

- 4.6.1 There are no significant risk management issues contained within the report, its conclusions and recommendations.

## **5 Conclusions**

- 5.1 Community green space contributes in many ways to the delivery of the Corporate Priority Plan. They provide places for relaxation, escape, exercise and recreation. They bring communities together and make a positive contribution to the local economy, education, improve public health and well-being, and generally make a better place to live, work and visit.
- 5.2 Improvements to community parks, fixed play and playing pitches remain a priority, and there already has been investment made to deliver improvements along with further schemes identified. Issues are being addressed through the Parks and Green Space Strategy along with implementation of the Fixed Play Strategy and Playing Pitch Strategy.
- 5.3 Community engagement remains a key activity for the service with regular correspondence, attendance at meetings and briefings, along with more localised consultation where required. As described at 3.2 options to undertake additional surveys during 2013 are currently being examined to provide an updated dataset for usage and satisfaction.
- 5.4 A programme of activities is planned for which updates and reports can be provided to the Area Committee to help inform, consult and influence community green space management.

## **6 Recommendations**

- 6.1 The Area Committee is requested to note the content of the report and to communicate priorities for investment in community parks, playing pitches and fixed play facilities in light of the issues raised.

## **7 Background documents**

- 7.1 Area Committee Roles, Outer East Area Committee, 4<sup>th</sup> July 2011.
- 7.2 Annual Report for Parks and Countryside Service in East Outer Area Committee, Outer East Area Committee, 18<sup>th</sup> October 2011.
- 7.3 Parks and Greenspace Strategy, Executive Board, February 2009.
- 7.4 Fixed Play Strategy, Executive Board, September 2002.

<sup>1</sup> The background documents listed in this section are available for inspection on request for a period of four years following the date of the relevant meeting. Accordingly this list does not include documents containing exempt or confidential information, or any published works. Requests to inspect any background documents should be submitted to the report author.



## Appendix 1: Detailed Residents Survey Information

### 1.1 Total Number of Annual Visits

	Community Parks	Other P&C Sites	Total
East Outer	2,201,799	3,257,819	5,459,618

### 1.2 Reasons for Visiting – respondents select their five main reasons (The 24 choices have been grouped in this table)

Reason	Barley Hill Park %	Glebelands Rec %	Halton Dene – Primrose Valley %	Manston Park %	Whinmoor Park %	East Outer Total %
Exercise	45	43	100	85	100	76
Play	64	64	57	54	20	53
Dog walking	27	29	86	22	0	28
Enjoy the surroundings	18	7	86	56	20	45
Family outings	36	36	43	36	20	34
Relaxation	73	50	71	92	80	82
See Wildlife	18	7	29	8	20	12
Sport related	64	36	0	32	60	33
Other	18	0	0	17	20	15
Events	0	43	0	7	0	10

### 1.3 Age Profile of Visitors

Site	Age 20 – 39	Age 40 – 59	Age 60+
Barley Hill Park	42%	58%	0%
Glebelands Rec Ground	23%	46%	31%
Halton Dene – Primrose Valley	43%	29%	28%
Manston Park	26%	28%	46%
Whinmoor Park	50%	33%	17%
<b>East Outer Total</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>37%</b>

## How visitors get to the parks and how long it takes to get there

### 1.4 Visitors on Foot – Journey Time

Site	% of visitors on foot	Less than 10 mins	10–20 mins	20-30 mins	30+ mins
Barley Hill Park	64%	71%	29%	0%	0%
Glebelands Rec Ground	100%	69%	23%	8%	0%
Halton Dene – Primrose Valley	86%	100%	0%	0%	0%
Manston Park	76%	66%	27%	6%	2%
Whinmoor Park	80%	75%	25%	0%	0%
<b>East Outer Total</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>1%</b>

### 1.5 Visitors by Car - Journey Time

Site	% of visitors by car	Less than 10 mins	10–20 mins	20-30 mins
Barley Hill Park	36%	75%	0%	25%
Glebelands Rec Ground	0%	~	~	~
Halton Dene – Primrose Valley	14%	100%	0%	0%
Manston Park	21%	60%	40%	0%
Whinmoor Park	0%	~	~	~
<b>East Outer Total</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>65%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>5%</b>

### 1.6 How long do visitors stay. (Detailed information on each community park is available on request).

Time	Summer Stay		Winter Stay	
	Weekend	Weekday	Weekend	Weekday
Less than 30 Minutes	16%	27%	39%	47%
30 minutes to 1 hour	44%	46%	42%	42%
1 to 2 hours	27%	24%	13%	4%
2 to 4 hours	11%	1%	1%	0%
4 or more hours	1%	0%	0%	0%
Do not visit	1%	1%	4%	7%

**1.7 How often do visitors go. (Detailed information on each community park is available on request).**

	Summer	Winter
Every Day	15%	12%
Most Days	24%	14%
Once or Twice a week	37%	31%
Once every two weeks	11%	6%
Once a month	13%	29%
Seldom or never	0%	8%

**1.8 Information taken from comments made in the survey.**

Site	General satisfaction comments	What would make you stay longer or encourage more use	Any other comments
Barley Hill Park	Broken glass on hard surfaces is only regular comment.	More things to do.	Lighting and park wardens required to stop anti-social youths.
Glebelands Rec Ground	Mainly concern over decline in play area (play area has been refurbished since survey).  Playing pitches well maintained but have drainage issues.	Improve play area (carried out since survey).  More seating available.  Toilet facility.	Would like the open spaces to be more visually attractive rather than just mown grass.
Halton Dene – Primrose Valley	Anti-social behaviour needs sorting out.  Lack of dog bins/general littering issues.	Play area.	Lack of feeling safe at times.
Manston Park	Tennis courts are not up to the high standard of the rest of the park.  Many positive comments about continued improvement.  Irresponsible dog	Refreshment facilities.  Toilets.  A more noticeable park warden presence within the park.  More seating and bins.	Growing concern over youth presence on an evening causing intimidation and making a mess.

Site	General satisfaction comments	What would make you stay longer or encourage more use	Any other comments
	<p>owners.</p> <p>Play area is a little boring.</p>		
Whinmoor Park	The park is okay but lacks a play area.	A play area.	