

Report of: Director of Communities, Hsg & Environment

Report to: Outer West Community Committee
[Calverley & Farsley, Pudsey, Farnley & Wortley]

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Date: 16th February 2022

To note

Outer West Community Committee – Parks & Countryside Service Update

Purpose of report

1. To provide members with feedback on previous years Community Committee funded projects.
2. To talk through the changes to bedding and floral decoration in parks and greenspaces in the Outer West area.
3. Further and at the request of the subcommittee chair to present a proposal and instigate a discussion about gardening resources in the Outer West and provide an overview of the service today and, suggest how the OWCC might assist the service to the benefit of parks and green spaces in Farnley, Wortley, Pudsey, Calverley and Farsley.

Main issues

Last years completed projects:

Calverley In Bloom £3,194.95

4. We installed the usual 16 x hanging baskets in the village centre. These were watered and maintained by Parks & Countryside for the duration. What people may have noticed are the missing hanging baskets that we used to put up in the park which have always been provided and paid for by P&C. These were cut this year as a part of the efficiencies the service has had to make.

Farsley In Bloom £2,960.78

5. We have installed the usual 12 x hanging baskets on lamp posts and 5 x floral troughs on the roadside. These were watered and maintained by Parks & Countryside for the duration. This is what we have done in past years so there shouldn't be any noticeable difference in Farsley.

Pudsey In Bloom £5,001.74

6. We have installed 13 x hanging pots and 35 x barrier troughs around the centre and bus station. We did realise through our investigations however that the hay racks around the leisure centre building that we would normally plant out were not done because at the time of our staff bedding out the hay racks were missing. We did make some enquiries as to where they might be, and it was our intention to find out where they were and plant them out, but they couldn't be found and so have not been included in the usual floral display. Therefore, the claim at Pudsey will be reduced by £400 to reflect this.

New Farnley In Bloom £1,000.00

7. The New Farnley in Bloom group spent £428.00 on their summer bedding and a further order has been fulfilled by our nursery for a further £296.00 for their autumn bedding. A total of £725.00 to date. This project has an end date of March '22 so is still ongoing.

Site based Gardener (SBG) at Tyersal Park and New Farnley Park £13,807.15

8. The site-based Gardener had been in position since 24th May 2021, working a five-day, 37-hour week for 6 months of the year, undertaking gardening duties in Tyersal Park and New Farnley Park.
9. The SBG has provided horticulture enhancements at Tyersal Park and New Farnley Park. The sites were able to receive a higher frequency of visits carrying out additional; grass cutting, pruning, de-littering, emptying of litter bins, removing fly tipping, marking out sports pitches, inspection of play equipment, maintenance of park infrastructure, planting and sweeping paths.
10. These additional visits ensured the team were able to keep the sites maintained to a high standard and ensuring the areas were prepared for winter maintenance. All outputs were met, and P&C were not aware with any reportable issues. The project was monitored constantly by Parks Area Officers. Local ward members received an email from the New Farnley Park Bowling Club praising the work the gardener has done.

Planned Well Being applications to the Community Committee for this financial year 2022/23

11. The following funding applications will be submitted for year 2022/23.

- Site based Gardener (SBG) at Tyersal Park and New Farnley Park £14,114.00
- Calverley in Bloom £3,290.80
- Farsley In Bloom £3,049.60
- Pudsey in Bloom £5,151.80
- New Farnley In Bloom £1,030.00
- Additional litter collections in Pudsey Pk - 10 x weekends £1,183.30

Seasonal Bedding and Floral Decorations Report

12. Members were sent a briefing paper in September 2021 which outlined changes to seasonal bedding displays and city centre floral decorations. This was in response to climate change issues and would take effect from spring 2022 with some preparations commencing during autumn/winter period of 2021.

13. Here I've tried to summarise an already short report to catch the gist of what the proposal sets out to achieve.

14. To help achieve climate change objectives as well as contribute to the medium-term financial plan, proposals were approved at Executive Board in December 2020 to save £134k on the cost of seasonal bedding. Following a consultation exercise early in 2021 there is now a proposal to create over 1 hectare of new pollinator friendly wildflower areas in place of traditional bedding displays.

15. The following table indicates the historic proportion of bedding displays for each type of setting before disruption during the coronavirus pandemic:

Setting	Percentage
Roundabouts	25.0%
Community parks	22.7%
Major parks (Golden Acre, Kirkstall Abbey, Lotherton Estate, Middleton Park, Roundhay Park and Temple Newsam Estate)	17.6%
City centre	13.5%
Highway verges	9.4%
Cemeteries, crematoria, and war memorials	8.3%
Local green spaces and recreation grounds	3.5%

16. The intention is to replace some bedding primarily with wildflower displays but also to include where appropriate the removal of beds, reduction in size of existing beds or perennial planting. The following table sets out how this will be achieved based on the table above.

Setting	Current Proportion of Bedding	Proposed Wildflower Replacement	Comment
Roundabouts	25.0%	25%	Replace with wildflower displays
Community parks	22.7%	12.7%	Mix of bedding and additional wildflower displays
Major parks	17.6%	3.6%	Largely retain bedding with additional wildflower displays
City centre	13.5%	5.8%	Mix of bedding and additional wildflower displays
Highway verges	9.4%	9.4%	Replace with wildflower displays
Cemeteries, crematoria, and war memorials	8.3%	0%	Retain bedding
Local green spaces and recreation grounds	3.5%	3.5%	Replace with wildflower displays as appropriate
	100%	60%	

17. Given the short timescale to complete this work citywide, our operational teams had to implement these proposals straight away, so work is now complete, and the beds have been reduced, replaced, or removed now. However, officers would welcome meetings with ward members about any thoughts and comments they may have for future plans for seasonal bedding in individual parks and greenspaces in their ward.

18. All the planned wildflower beds/meadows will be sown in late spring 2022.

Outer West CC additional area wide gardening resources.

19. Following the recent sub-committee meeting and at the request of the chair, P&C officers have given some thought to additional gardening resources across all three wards in the Outer West Community Committee (OWCC) area.

20. In addition to the year on year support the service receives from the OWCC for an additional gardener to attend to Tyersal Park and New Farnley Park, the service would further benefit if a similar resource was made available in other parks and greenspaces within the OWCC area.

21. Our proposal is;

- 1 x gardener to attend to and be deployed between Farsley Rec, the Cathedral, Town Street and Westroyd Park.
- 1 x gardener to attend to and be deployed between New Wortley Rec and Western Flatts Park.

22. The current costs for 1 x gardener for six months from April to Sept is £14,114.00 so the total cost for these 3 x additional gardeners over a six-month period would be £42,342.00
23. Also, and for the Community Committee's information, as a part of the collaboration work, we have undertaken with the DWP we have engaged 7 x Kickstart placements. These placements were interviewed after showing interest in horticulture. They were chosen from a group of job seekers who were in fear of becoming long term unemployed.
24. One of these placements will be working as part of the Area West team at Farnley Hall for six months. This will add to our resources and aid our work in parks in the Outer West Community Committee areas.
25. Officers of Parks & Countryside would welcome any questions and further discussions about this proposal and any particular issues or concerns members have in their ward parks and green spaces.

Recommendations

26. The Outer West Community Committee is asked to note the contents of the report.