



**Report of the Chief Recreational Officer**

**Inner West Area Committee**

**Date: 20<sup>th</sup> September 2007**

**Subject: WEST LEEDS COUNTRY PARK AND GREEN GATEWAYS**

**Electoral Wards Affected:**  
 Armley  
 Bramley and Stanningley

Ward Members consulted  
 (referred to in report)

**Specific Implications For:**

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

Council Function

Delegated Executive Function available for Call In

Delegated Executive Function not available for Call In Details set out in the report

**Executive Summary**

This report outlines the progress made with the West Leeds Country Park and Green Gateways project since the last WLCP Forum meeting on the 11<sup>th</sup> June 2007, and also intended future progress.

**Purpose Of This Report**

1.1 This report is intended to update the Inner West Area Committee on progress made with the West Leeds Country Park and Green Gateways since the last WLCP Forum on the 11<sup>th</sup> June, with emphasis on activities in the Bramley and Stanningley and Armley Wards.

**2.0 Background Information**

2.1 The last WLCP Forum saw the distribution of the final two compartments of the draft management plan, and the full suite of draft Action Plans, with a request that Forum members provide feed back where appropriate by the 17<sup>th</sup> July.

The distribution of a list of proposed short term objectives for the period 2007 – 2008 to cover the whole of the project area.

An update on interpretation / waymarking for the WLCP Green Gateways Trail.

A proposal for a photography competition and 2008 WLCP calendar, which will include the 12 best photos sent in from the competition.

### **3.0 Main Issues**

#### **3.1 Management Plan.**

Following the close of the second phase of consultation for the draft management plan on the 17<sup>th</sup> July, all received comments have been considered, and most incorporated into the plan.

At the next WLCP Forum on the 17<sup>th</sup> September, the entire revised draft document will be distributed for the final consultation, and once this is complete, it is intended that this will then become a working document.

#### **3.2 Interpretation.**

The second and third parts of the WLCP Green Gateways Trail leaflet, covering a stretch of the Trail which takes in Rodley, Calverley and Woodhall have been consulted on, revised and the artwork delivered to Robrook Press in Morley. 5 000 copies of each have been ordered, and are expected to be available for distribution at the next Forum meeting (17<sup>th</sup> September).

Notification has been received that the interpretive boards for the stretch of the WLCP Green Gateways Trail along the canal from the city centre to Pollard Lane are nearing completion, and once they have arrived, they will be installed, in co-operation with British Waterways.

In addition, the boards for the second part of the Green Gateways Trail, including the stretch of the WLCP Green Gateways Trail from Pollard Lane to Calverley have been designed and ordered from Shelley Signs, and are awaiting construction.

#### **3.3 West Leeds Walking Group.**

We are working with the West Leeds Walking Group to support them with this years walking festival, for which they asked the West Leeds Country Park and Green Gateways Officer to attend and launch.

The group hope that our support will continue with the proposed 2008 festival, for which they have asked to use Farnley Hall Park.

The walking group have documented a number of their popular routes, which are suitable for a range of abilities. These will be suitable for developing as Community Green Gateways, and along with a leaflet and route waymarking, which will promote and facilitate their use, they will encourage people in the Armley, Bramley and Stanningley areas to explore the parks and greenspaces close to home and beyond.

#### **3.4 Bramley Fall Woods.**

Following on from the interpretive boards already located in Bramley Fall, and the request for a promotional leaflet for the woodland during initial consultation for the WLCP project, it is intended to develop a new Bramley Fall leaflet. This will cover the local history of the woods, together with its wildlife and a map with some suggested walking / riding routes.

We also hope to approach local groups who have knowledge about the history and wildlife of this site to contribute in order to help to maintain our partnership working local groups.

### **3.5 Working with Groups.**

We have been involved with a number of groups and initiative within the Inner West area, including the Friends of Houghley Gill, again in terms of making links with the WLCP Green Gateways Trail with Community Green Gateways through Houghley Gill and down towards the canal and Gotts and Armley Parks.

West Leeds Walking Group, in terms of improvements they have identified and suggested, including the repair of the Edwardian steps in Armley Park, leading down to the canal. This will improve the safety of a potential Community Green Gateway route, but one which is popularly used in any event.

Leeds Involvement Project in terms of auditing the canal towpath and other potential wheelchair friendly routes to provide access for all, and on the back of this, to produce leaflets to guide users on accessible trails.

## **4.0 Implications For Council Policy And Governance**

4.1 The West Leeds Country Park and Green Gateways project takes an holistic approach to managing the parks and greenspaces within its boundary, in order to offer recreational opportunities for local communities and encouraging them to use the greenspaces on their doorsteps, whilst also ensuring that any management also benefits the wildlife and its supporting habitats, which contribute so much to the enjoyment of the WLCP by the public.

This approach helps to meet the main aims of the Vision for Leeds by providing attractive greenspaces for people throughout West Leeds, which are in close proximity to where they live and work, thus improving their sense of wellbeing. The provision of defined walking routes for all abilities, as well as cycling and riding routes helps to improve health. Collectively these contribute to our Going up a League as a city by helping to improve quality of life, as well as narrowing the gap by making sure provision is made for a broad spectrum of citizens to enable and encourage them to enjoy these places.

## **5.0 Legal And Resource Implications**

5.1 Improvements outlined in the management plan and associated action plans have financial implications, although these are offset to a greater extent by funding currently invested by Parks and Countryside to manage and maintain areas of parks and greenspace.

In addition a sum of £210 000 has been secured to help develop recreational facilities within the WLCP and to conserve and enhance the wildlife habitats it supports.

On top of this, a further £49 919 has also been secured from Green Leeds to fund the current and ongoing interpretive projects.

## **6.0 Conclusions**

6.1 The West Leeds Country Park and Green Gateways project continues to develop, and increasingly is reaching out to the community and user groups who make use of and value it, in order to offer support and to seek their views and aspirations, and to involve and consult as widely as possible.

## **7.0 Recommendations**

7.1 The Inner West Area Committee is requested to note that developments are currently being made with the West Leeds Country Park and Green Gateways project, in terms of progress of the management plan and its broad objectives; ongoing provision of interpretive material; development of Community Green Gateways and the general liaison with and support of community and user groups