

**Date: December 15<sup>th</sup> 2016**

**Subject: Parks and Countryside Outer West Community Committee update**

## 1 Purpose

- 1.1 To provide the Outer West Community Committee with an update on the Parks and Countryside service activities in the Community Committee Area.

## 2 Background

- 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 around 3 million bedding plants each year, 97 allotment sites, over 800km of Public Right of Way (PROW), and 156 nature conservation sites, as well as 23 cemeteries and 3 crematoria. Area profile of the Service - The following table summarises community green space assets managed by Parks and Countryside in the Outer West Community Committee:

Asset	Quantity
Community parks	9
Playing Pitches:	
Cricket	6
Football	19
Rugby League	2
Bowling greens	8
Playgrounds	16
Multi-use games areas	3
Skate parks	2

## 3 Community Parks

- 3.1 The community parks in the Outer West area are as follows:

Calverley Park  
 Farnley Hall Park  
 Hainsworth park  
 New Farnley Park  
 New Wortley Recreation Ground  
 Pudsey Park (Green Flag)  
 Tyersal Park  
 Western Flatts Park  
 Westroyd Park

## 4 Sports Pitches

4.1 Parks and Countryside provide annual pitch hire for sports teams. 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	11
Juniors	36

## 5 Volunteering in the Parks and Countryside Service

5.1 The service continues to focus on increasing the number of volunteers and groups working in the area to achieve the following:

- To increase corporate volunteering working in partnership with Business in the Community and 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.

5.2 It is estimated that volunteers across all groups contribute 1175 days of voluntary work in the Outer West area over a 12 month period. The tables below provide details of volunteering in the area in 2016:

5.3 Voluntary work supervised by Parks and Countryside staff:

Site	Organisation	Task	Volunteer Days
Post Hill, Pudsey	Leeds Wildlife Volunteers	Scrub clearance	9
Nan Whin's Wood	Leeds Wildlife Volunteers	Bench and step installation	3
<b>Total</b>			<b>12</b>

5.4 Local business volunteers supervised by Parks and Countryside staff:

Site	Organisation	Task	Volunteers
Pudsey Disused Railway	Lloyds Banking Group	Cutting back vegetation on footpath	15
Pudsey Cemetery	Lloyds Banking Group	Removal of saplings from graves and path maintenance	35
Pudsey Cemetery	YBS	Removal of saplings from graves and path maintenance	8
Wortley Park	Telerealtrillium	Painting playground	15
<b>Total</b>			<b>73</b>

5.5 Volunteer groups working independently in the Outer West area:

Group Name	Number of Volunteers	Estimated Volunteer Days
Farsley Community initiative	10	20
<b>Total</b>		<b>20</b>

5.6 Existing in bloom groups within the Outer West area;

In Bloom Group	Number of Volunteers	Award Won	Estimated Volunteer Days
Calverley	12	Gold	576
New Farnley	5		110
Pudsey	8	Silver Gilt	384
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>		<b>1070</b>

## 6 Events

6.1 The bookings and licensing team provides assistance in helping community and other groups organise events with particular emphasis 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 West area in 2016:

Site Name	Month	Event	Total
Black Carr Woods	February	Pudsey Pacers	1
	October	Pudsey Pacers	1
	November	Pudsey Pacers	1
Calverley Woods	February	Airenteers	1
	July	Summer Bands	1
	August	Mini Breeze	1
	August	Summer Bands	1
Farnley Hall Park	December	Calverley Light Switch on	1
	May	Puppy in the Park	1
	June	Summer Bands	1
	July	Summer Bands	1
Hainsworth Park	June	Farsley Festival	1
New Farnley Rec	July	Summer Bands	1
	August	Summer Bands	1
New Wortley Rec	June	Summer Bands	1
	July	Summer Bands	1
	August	Mini Breeze	1
		Agile Filming	1
Post Hill, Pudsey	March	Pudsey Pacers Fun Run	1
Pudsey Park	March	PBSG Easter Egg Hunt	1
	June	PBSG Queens Tea Party	1
		Pudsey Pacers	1
		Summer Bands	1
	July	Pudsey Pacers Fun Run	1
		Summer Bands	3
		Outer West Dog Education	1
	August	Yorkshire Day Giveaway	1
		Summer Bands	2
	November	Pudsey Light switch on	1
Queens Park, Pudsey	May	Funfair – Pudsey Carnival	4

Site Name	Month	Event	Total
Victoria Park, Calverley	June	Summer Bands	4
		Queens 90th Birthday	1
	July	Calverley Parkside School Summer Fair	1
		Summer Bands	1
August	Summer Bands	1	
Western Flatts	June	Summer Bands	1
	August	Summer Bands	1
Westroyd Park	June	Summer Bands	1
	July	Summer Bands	1
	August	Summer Bands	1
<b>Total</b>			<b>48</b>

## 7 Community Parks – Leeds Quality Park Status

7.1 The Parks and Green Space Strategy approved at Executive Board in February 2009 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.

7.2 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 below.

The indicator includes an assessment of each community park, the scheme is known as the Leeds Quality Park (LQP) standard. In 2015/16, 31 of the 62 community parks (50% of the total) achieved Leeds Quality Park standard, with 13 out of 29 reaching the standard (45%) in 'Inner' areas compared to 18 out of 33 (55%) in 'Outer' areas.

The target for future years to 2020/21 is as follows:

2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
66%	73%	81%	87%	94%	100%

- 7.3 The following table provides a current profile of these assessments for the Outer West Community Committee. Please note that the results of the latest 2016 LQP assessments are being gathered and will be reported to all Community Committees in the new year.

Community Committee	Number of LQP assessed green spaces	Achieved LQP Standard 2014/15	Achieving LQP standard 2015/16	Pass rate (%)
West Outer	11	6	6	67

- 7.4 Community Park LQP Results 2015 – (assessed each year pass mark 48)

Site	Typology	Score
Calverley Park (Victoria Park)	Community Park	50.9
Farnley Hall Park	Community Park	51.7
Hainsworth Park	Community Park	42.8
New Wortley Recreation Ground	Community Park	44.7
New Farnley Park	Community Park	54.7
Pudsey Park	Community Park	GF
Tyersal Park	Community Park	44.4
Westroyd Park	Community Park	49.9
Western Flatts Cliff Park	Community Park	48.7

- 7.5 Non Community Parks (a number assessed every 3 years)

Site	Typology	Assessed	Score
Farnley Cemetery	Cemeteries	2015	43.3
Pudsey Cemetery	Cemeteries	2015	40.1
Upper And Lower Wortley Cemetery	Cemeteries	2014	31
Chatsworth Recreation Ground	Local Green Space	2013	37
Farnley Reservoir	Local Green Space	2014	37
Farsley Recreation Ground	Local Green Space	2013	44
Post Hill	Local Green Space	2014	36
Woodhall Lake	Local Green Space	2013	49
Brookfield Recreation Ground	Recreation Ground	2014	53
Farfield Recreation Ground	Recreation Ground	2013	37
Roker Recreation Ground	Recreation Ground	2014	31

Site	Year Assessed	Welcoming Place	Healthy, Safe, Secure	Clean, Well Maintained	Sustainability	Conservation / Heritage	Community Involvement	Marketing	Meets Standard?
Calverley Park	2015								Yes
Farnley Hall Park	2015								Yes
Farnley Cemetery	2015								No
Hainsworth Park	2015								No
New Farnley Park	2015								Yes
New Wortley Rec Ground	2015								No
Pudsey Cemetery	2015								No
Pudsey Park	2015								Yes
Tyersal Park	2015								No
Western Flatts Park	2015								Yes
Westroyd Park	2015								Yes

**Key:**

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

From this table, there are 6 parks identified that meet the Leeds Quality Park standard.

7.6 All community parks have been assessed in 2015, with a selection of non-community parks assessed in line with the three year cycle of judging. Assessments have taken place in 2016 and the results will be available shortly. Improvements to parks and green spaces in the Outer West Community Committee Area which took place during 2016 are as follows:

- Western Flatts Cliff Park – Fencing repairs to MUGA
- Post Hill Woods – Access improvements from Troydale entrance
- Calverley Park – Improvements/refurbishment works to cricket pavilion and outside seating
- Tyersal Park – Boundary fence renewed
- Pudsey Park – Main entrance improvements with new gates and pillars, creation of picnic area and improvements to access.
- Queens Park, Pudsey – Removal of old changing room

7.7 Planned and proposed improvements for the next 12 months currently are;

- Brookfield Rec – Drainage improvements, wildflower meadow and benches.
- Calverley Park – Installation new play equipment and outdoor fitness equipment

- 7.8 Community Committee funding for additional site based gardeners. Outer West Community Committee provide additional funding for gardeners to increase site based presence at parks in the area. For 2016 this funding totalled £12,244.78 for site based presence at Tyersal Park and New Farnley Park.
- 7.9 Since the introduction of site based gardeners, 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.
- 7.10 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.

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

- 8.1 The Parks and Countryside Service moved to the Environments & Housing Directorate in 2012 giving opportunities to improve collaborative working. In particular improvements in horticultural, land management, cleansing and more efficient use of resources. The service continues to work closely with Environmental Services in a number of areas such as;
- 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 assists with emptying litter bins in parks on a weekend when parks staff are not always present. This includes the maintenance of some high profile ginnels on a more scheduled basis.
  - 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.

- 8.2 At a meeting in July 2105 the Outer West Community Committee Chair requested that the Environmental Services Locality Team (ESLT) and the Parks & Countryside Area Team (P&C) consider how they might work better together initially on litter bin collections and to look specifically at where efficiencies might be made in doing so. Representatives of each service were asked to work up a proposal that might free up some resources in either service and present these proposals at a future meeting.
- 8.3 At a meeting of the Environment Sub Group in Feb 2016 the principles of a proposal were discussed and officers were asked to work up the practicalities of the scheme and report back to the next Sub Group meeting. Officers subsequently undertook a mapping exercise and shared information between services in order to agree the finer details.
- 8.4 Commencing on the weekend of 13/14th August 2016 the ESLT committed to de littering duties and litter bin emptying in Pudsey Park on a weekend and Bank Holidays. This freed up P&C staff that would usually undertake these tasks on a Monday morning and meant that they could get straight on with their gardening and other duties. In return P&C committed to cutting back, littering and looking after the footpath/ginnel that runs from Pudsey Leisure Centre car park down to Ratcliffe Lane. This ginnel had proved difficult to keep on top of for the ESLT and so would relieve them of the task.
- 8.5 The start of this trial was however delayed due to some concerns raised by ESLT Union Representatives but it finally got underway on the weekend of 20/21st August. With the exceptions of the weekends of 17/18 Sept, 24/25 Sept and 1st/2nd October when ESLT operational issues meant the work was not done on these weekends, the park has been de littered and the bins emptied on subsequent weekends. In return P&C staff have inspected and undertaken any work necessary to the footpath/ginnel to Ratcliffe Lane on every Thursday since the start of the trial.
- 8.6 ESLT have reported that the bins around the bowling green/aviary are sometimes not very full and they only need emptying once in the afternoon. The bins around the playground are emptied twice a day each weekend. ESLT have also recently appointed a member of staff to work in Pudsey and this person also goes into the park to check all is well when they're doing their rounds. The trial period for this initiative was set at 6 months and a further update on this initiative will be due in January 2017.



## **9 Conclusion**

- 9.1 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.
- 9.2 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.
- 9.3 Community engagement remains a key activity for the service with regular correspondence, attendance at meetings and briefings, along with more localised consultation where required.
- 9.4 The scheduled Parks & Countryside annual report will be provided to all of the Community Committees after February next year.