

Dawstone Park Management Plan 2022-2027

(Actions updated January 2025)



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1. Introduction

This management plan is intended to provide a framework for the development and improvement of Dawstone Park. If you wish to find out further information about this document or submit any suggestions, please email:

christinesmyth@wirral.gov.uk

**Wirral Council
Parks, Allotments & Countryside Service
Grand Entrance
Birkenhead Park
Park Road North
Birkenhead
CH41 4HD**

For further information about the park or to help volunteer visit the council's website here:

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/leisure-parks-and-events/parks-and-open-spaces/dawstone-park>

2. Wider Policy Context

Wirral Council's Parks and Countryside Service are based within the Neighbourhood Services Department of Wirral Council. The content and structure of the management plan has been informed by the following guidelines:

[Raising the Standard: The Green Flag Awards Guidance Manual \(Keep Britain Tidy, 2016\)](#)

Corporate Objectives

The Wirral 2021-26 plan is available online here: <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/council-plan/our-vision-and-themes>

Parks and Countryside Service Objectives

The department's role is to protect the environmental quality of key locations across the borough to influence investors to operate their businesses and encourage new investors. Parks and countryside site maintenance and land uses will be re-aligned where appropriate to achieve resource and economic efficiencies whilst promoting health, social and environmental benefits to our communities.

The service also intends to contribute to the environmental sustainability and biodiversity of Wirral to achieve a good balance by protecting habitats while supporting economic growth.

Environmental Initiatives

Wirral Council is committed to carrying out its work in an environmentally responsible manner.

Wirral Council declared an Environment and Climate Emergency at Council in July 2019 and through this committed to action to address the ecological and climate crisis that we face.

The commitment to action aims to:

- cut climate damaging pollution locally in line with global targets, whilst developing resilience to more extreme weather patterns and rising sea levels that impact Wirral
- protect and enhance biodiversity

As a local authority, we can have a positive influence through:

- how we organise our operations and services
- the regulations and policies we set
- the goods and services we buy
- the investments we make
- the example we set to others.

Tackling the ecological and climate crisis presents major opportunities locally to improve quality of life, health, wellbeing and the economy.

More information on the Climate Emergency Declaration maybe found at:

[Climate Emergency Declaration](#)

To deliver against these aims Wirral Has developed 'Cool Wirral'. The Cool Wirral campaign is aimed at encouraging local climate-related action in support of the delivery of the 'Cool 2 Climate Change Strategy for Wirral.

The Cool Wirral Partnership (formerly the Wirral Climate Change Group) co-ordinates local action on climate change. The partnership is supported by Wirral Council and a variety of partnership.

More information on the Cool Wirral Partnership may be found [here](#)

Some key initiatives include:-

Designating Pollinators and wildflower sites

A large proportion of pollinators are flies, including more than 250 species of hoverfly. Bees make up about a quarter of the pollinating insects and in the UK alone there are approximately 250 species of bee, 24 species of bumblebee, 225 species of solitary bee and just one species of honeybee. Butterflies and moths are also pollinators as well as bugs and beetles.

In line with the council's Climate Emergency Response, steps are being taken to prioritise pollinators. Dependant on the location of a verge, pollinators are prioritised in various ways, these methods can include:

- planting pollinator friendly plants
- not mowing grass verges when wildflowers of significance are in season
- reduced weed removal in the area of pollinator sights

More information can be found online here: [Pollinators](#)

No Mow May

Throughout the month of May, the council takes part in the National Now Mow May scheme <https://www.plantlife.org.uk/campaigns/nomowmay/> which is about stopping mowing in general grass areas in parks to help bees, butterflies and wildlife.

Trees, hedgerows and woodland

The council have been working with partners and stakeholders to develop a 10-year strategy to consider how we manage and respond to the borough's current trees and the future provision of trees. In the ten-year span of this strategy over 210,000 trees will be planted, at least 21,000 per year. In doing so we will replace many times over the number of trees unavoidably lost. The trees that are planted will see Wirral's tree canopy cover doubled by the time they are fully grown.

We will adopt the principle of 'the right tree for the right place' to ensure the most resilient tree population possible. We will establish a clear picture of Wirral's tree stock

and its benefits. We will work constructively with individuals and groups to deliver this vision.

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/about-council/climate-change-and-sustainability/trees-hedgerows-and-woodland>

3. Dawstone Park

3.1 Description and Location

Name: Dawstone Park

O.S Grid Reference: 268815

Address: Dawstone Park, Dawstone Road, Heswall, Wirral, CH60 0DL

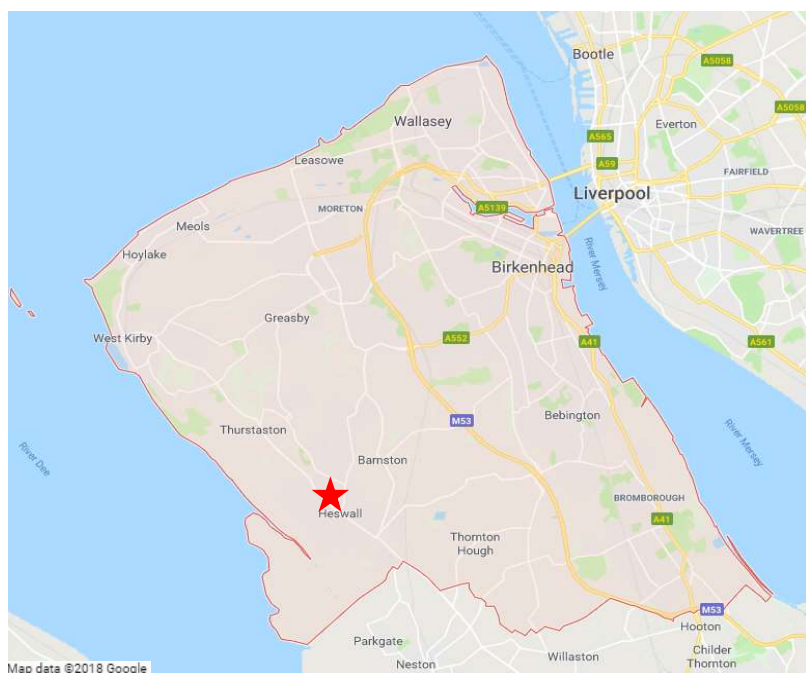
Primary Classification: Local Park

Ward: Heswall

Size: 0.68 Hectares

Primary purpose: Intensively managed park used primarily by local people, providing accessible, high quality opportunities for formal and informal recreation and children's play including community events

Location Plan:



Site map:



Description:

Dawstone Park is situated on the westerly slopes of the Wirral Peninsular, overlooking the Dee Estuary. The Park benefits from having a very proactive Friends' group hold regular work parties in the park and have spent a great deal of time and effort including re-instating and maintaining some of the original flower beds, re stocking the borders and adding a welcome splash of colour to the park.

The park is completely enclosed, by either railings, hedging or a sandstone wall and as such, is favoured by parents with small children.

Dawstone Park is very well used by the local community, either for peaceful recreation, events or as a pre-school/after-school stop off destination for parents with young children. The park is also used by the local infants and primary schools as an outdoor classroom.

The Friends' of Dawstone Park play a prominent role in the maintenance of the park. With assistance from Dr Hilary Ash (Wirral Wildlife) and from the Local Team Leader have developed a variety of ecological projects.

The park also attracts elderly visitors, who find the well surfaced paths and plentiful seating an added bonus. Local youths also use the park on a regular basis. It is also the ideal venue for holding community events. The Friends' Group also hold regular task days in the park that are always very well attended.

3.2 Facilities and features

Facilities and features:

- Picnic Tables
- Seats
- Log Walk
- Children's Play Area
- Flower Beds
- Well Surfaced Paths
- Litter Bins
- Information cabinet
- Notice Boards
- Volunteering Opportunities
- Sloping South facing topography
- Views of Dee Estuary and Welsh Hills
- War Memorial (*sits just outside the park and is managed by Wirral Council's Business Services / asset surveyor / war memorials*)

3.3 Tenure

Dawstone Park is owned and managed by Wirral Council's Parks and Countryside Service.

3.4 Users of the Park

Key Users and partners:

- Friends' of Dawstone Park
- Elderly visitors
- Parents with young children
- Schools /cubs/ brownies etc.
- Local residents
- Bird watchers
- Local youths
- Picnics
- Opportunity for Voluntary Work
- Community Events

- Heswall Society
- Grounds Maintenance Staff
- Wirral Wildlife



3.5 Access

This local park is easily accessible on foot or by bicycle from the town centre and surrounding residential properties. Regarding vehicular access there is limited on-street parking surrounding the park.

Public Transport

Nearest Public Transport stop is: 38m from School Hill Access Point

Bus number 174 Heswall Circular

Bus number 22 West Kirby to Chester

For further information regarding public transport visit: www.merseytravel.gov.uk

DDA Access:

Due to the slopping nature and steep gradients of the park wheel chair access is challenging. However, the well surfaced paths and the plentiful seating do make the park ideal for elderly visitors or visitors with mobility issues.

3.6 Historical Significance

DAWSTONE PARK HISTORY

A sandstone plaque in Heswall Park on the boundary wall with Dawstone Road commemorates its opening on 1st July 1931, the realisation of a special project by the Heswall cum Oldfield Parish Council. The park today, situated centrally between the Lower and Top villages, is a major asset to Heswall much enjoyed by children; their parents appreciate its compact size and its sloping terrain which allows easy views over the whole area, and the secure boundaries separating it from surrounding roads. Dog walkers appreciate it for the same reasons, and older teenagers use it as a place to meet and let off steam. Residents and visitors alike never tire of the panoramic view over the Dee to the Welsh mountains, which makes it a popular picnic site. Ever since it opened it has been famous for its flower beds with their colourful displays of bedding plants. The commemorative plaque is inscribed with the phrase “ Floreat Sanctis Sactorum” which could be translated as “A very special place blossoms” , the religious allegory of the phrase may have been inspired by the view of St Peter’s Church visible from the park. When the snow comes the park becomes a toboggan run and enjoyed by young and old alike, with the added excitement of avoiding a holly bush at the bottom of the park for those who misjudge their speed or direction! The children’s playground is being renovated to a very high standard thanks to the efforts of our local councillors who have helped obtained grants from the South Wirral Constituency Committee to supplement the funding available from the Parks Department. The Cammell Laird apprentices have helped with this work. The railings along School Hill have been replaced and look very smart. However in spite of this really welcome investment in the park, its unique character is under threat, a problem shared with all parks and open spaces on Wirral, as Wirral Council struggles to maintain all its recreational spaces whilst facing huge reductions in available resources due to cuts in government funding. Future maintenance will be restricted to mowing the grass and emergency tree work, and the glorious flower beds can no longer be planted. Ivy and bindweed have taken over the borders, even threatening to engulf the commemorative plaque. The Heswall Society encouraged and supported the formation of the Friends’ Group, which was set up in spring 2015.

The Edge family settled on the then common land which covers both the existing area of the park, and also the land to the north east where the first houses in Dawstone Road are now built. The Tithe map of 1851 shows Samuel Edge occupying the Dawstone Park area and William Edge the north easterly land. The map shows a number of buildings on the site of Dawstone Park, consistent with its use as a small holding.

The tithe map was produced as part of the Enclosures Acts which consolidated the ownership of common and waste land and caused new roads to be built. One of these roads was Dawstone Road, which took its name from a hamlet called

Dawstone, part of the Parish of Heswall cum Oldfield. The house called Dawstone at the top of Brow Lane was believed to be originally a small farm. Brow Lane was a route from the Lower Village across Heswall Heath to reach Pensby and Liverpool.

The name Dawstone could derive from the Old English words dal (a division) and stan (stone), possibly representing a boundary stone to mark the division of land. In 1924 the War Memorial was opened at the junction of Dawstone Road and the Mount. This gave a panoramic view across the small holding occupying the area which is now the park. At this time the land was occupied by Thomas Swift, the son of Joseph Swift who had married Alice Edge. The buildings on the site were becoming derelict, and the Parish Council decided to convert the land, which was now in their ownership into a park. In November 1930 they issued Joseph Swift an eviction order for him and his son to vacate the land within 3 months. There was correspondence between the Swift's and solicitors representing the Council, and Barry Adams states that ultimately the Swift's did not have the financial assets to contest ownership. It is a poignant reminder of events still to come that the Chairman of the Parish Council, Major H Kerr Wilson must have surveyed the land from the War memorial, not knowing that his son would be added to the Second World War list of names on the memorial, after he was killed in his Spitfire in France in 1940.

Work on the park commenced on 23rd February 1931. The old buildings were demolished and the good stone used to build the walls adjoining School Hill and Dawstone Road and the rockeries constructed where the land sloped the most steeply must have consumed the rest. A well was filled in, and the whole site landscaped. 12 seats were provided, and paths laid. A small strip of land along Dawstone Road was given to Cheshire County Council so they could construct the footpath which gives such magnificent views today, causing many passers-by to pause and contemplate the scenery. Seven labourers, 2 masons, and a joiner were employed over a period of 13 weeks, at a total cost of approximated £380 pounds including materials. G Chamberlain was appointed full time caretaker and keeper of the park (plus handyman for the Parish) on a wage of £2.50 per week. How things have changed.

In a report of the subcommittee dated 23rd May 1931, just before the park opened, the following comments were made *"The subcommittee have spent considerable time in the course of the development of this land, and no effort has been spared to retain the truly rural aspect of the situation, and have worked consistently with the attainment of this object in view, mainly to provide a rural sanctuary of seclusion for the elder people, in the midst of bricks and mortar, and also the provision of a small open space, free from danger, for the younger children to enjoy their pastimes."*

Their achievement still speaks for itself today, even though over 80 years have passed since the above was written. A few changes have happened since then-the rockeries have disappeared and there are fewer flower beds.

Information taken from Friends' of Dawstone Park/Heswall Society web site

4. Green Flag Analysis and Assessment

The intention is for Dawstone Park to continue to achieve the standards as defined by the Green Flag Award Scheme.

Assessment Criteria

- 1) A welcoming place
- 2) Healthy, safe and secure
- 3) Well maintained and clean
- 4) Environmental management
- 5) Biodiversity, landscape and heritage
- 6) Community involvement
- 7) Marketing and communication
- 8) Management

Dawstone Parks action plan can be found in Appendix 1.

Assessment

A Welcoming Place

Dawstone Park is a small local Park on the westerly slopes of Wirral with good clear entrance signage, well surfaced paths, children's play area, picnic tables, seating, flowerbeds and well laid out lawns.

There are three gated access points:

- Dawstone Road
- School Hill (suitable for assisted wheelchair access)
- Brow Lane (suitable for assisted wheelchair access)

The surface of the footpaths is tarmac and is in good condition, which is suitable for buggies or assisted wheelchairs (from School Hill or Brow Lane Access points).

Signage:

There are two pedestrian yardage signs pointing to the park from the town centre. There are also "Welcome to Dawstone Park" signs located at either end of the park.



Noticeboard

There is a main noticeboard at the top of the park, where park and local information, aswell as volunteering and event information is displayed. The Friend groups regularly update the display.

This management plans details ways in which the council and its partners endeavour to keep the park and surrounding areas safe, secure and of good quality.

Anti-social behaviour

Please telephone the police.

Wirral Council's Community Patrol provides a reactive response to calls from the public and Council staff, generally they do not undertake routine patrolling. Problems of a persistent or on-going nature however can be raised with the team.

To report an issue please visit:

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/anti-social-behaviour/report-anti-social-behaviour>

Wirral council emergency contact numbers:

Monday to Friday

8am to 5pm:

0151 606 2004

Outside of these hours:

0151 647 7810

Play area

Play areas are inspected, maintained and repaired to ensure that they are safe and all equipment is in working order in accordance with the relevant British Standard or other relevant standard.

Refer to British Standard EN1176 Part 1-7 and 1177 of Accidents R.P.I.I (register of play inspectors international LTD) for guidance on all aspects of play area and play equipment maintenance; in particular, their information sheets for:

- inspection and maintenance of playgrounds
- regular inspection of playgrounds
- legal aspects of safety

This information is available from <http://www.playinspectors.com/>

Only trained and competent staff, who have attended a recognised and appropriate course run by R.P.I.I (register of play inspectors international LTD) or similar training body, carry out maintenance operations in a safe and thorough manner.

Minor repairs and adjustments are carried out to play equipment, gates and safety surfacing to ensure that they are safe and usable at all times including weekends,

bank holidays and public holidays. Any play equipment, gates and safety surfacing that cannot be repaired immediately will be made safe until an effective repair is undertaken.

Minor repairs include replacement of swing seats, chain, links, bearings, and loose-fill safety surfacing and rubber tiles.

Painted and timber surfaces must be treated on a regular basis to ensure good condition and presentation. This includes all play equipment, gates and furniture.

There is an annual independent recorded inspection of all play areas by R.P.I.I or similar accredited organisation. The inspection is a full mechanical and physical examination and include a risk assessment for each play area and indicate compliance with the Equality Act.

- Site safety.
- Suitability and condition of ancillary items.
- Standard compliance, suitability and condition of equipment.
- Dimensional compliance, suitability and condition of surfacing.

The park is covered by Byelaws, made under Section 164 of the Public Health Act.

Safety Inspections

Parks staff carry out regular inspections to identify defects within the park that present a safety problem for staff, users and adjacent residents. The local team leader carries out a annual site inspection with the following being appraised:

1. Paths, steps, ramps
2. Walls, fences, gates
3. Buildings
4. Furniture – signs, seats, litterbins
5. Soft landscape – grass, planted areas, water features
6. Trees

Members of the Friends' Group also report problems to the Local Team Leader or to park staff member, they provide an 'eyes and ears' service which supplements the work of paid staff, and represents a valuable contribution to the running of the park.

Based on site safety inspections and for amenity reasons four benches were replaced with brand new benches in 2019.



New Benches installed in 2019

Arboricultural Maintenance

Tree safety inspections are conducted by the councils appointed professional arboricultural specialist. Work is then contracted out and conducted on a priority basis.

A procedure has been written which describes the basic steps when a member of staff has concerns regarding a specific tree or trees. The staff member should report the tree to the Local Team Leader. The team leader then passes the information onto the Tree and Woodland Officer or Area Manager, who will instruct a contractor to do the work if required.

Members of the Friends group will also report any tree issues to the Team Leader or General Manager

Litter, cleanliness and vandalism

Litterbins are sited at the entrances and throughout the park with the design standardised over the last few years following initiatives in other green flag sites.

Litter inspections and bin emptying are undertaken by a parks staff member. The bins are usually emptied twice a week but depends on season and usage. Litter is picked up at the same time. The Friends group play a valuable role in helping to keeping the park well maintained and free from litter.

Ongoing Maintenance

Horticultural maintenance is carried out in accordance with the Dawstone Park Service Requirement'.

A mobile team of gardeners undertake a range of grounds maintenance operations including grass cutting. The Friends Group also play a significant role in the maintenance of the park and hold regular Saturday work parties. The Friends' undertake such activities as: flower bed and shrub bed maintenance, hedge cutting and litter removal.

The children's play area is inspected each week by a dedicated play area safety inspection team. During the inspection visit the condition of the equipment is assessed and any repair considered necessary is undertaken or the equipment isolated until a permanent repair can be made.

Dog Issues

The park has signs at the entrances indicating that it is a 'clean it up' area. Dog walkers are advised to wrap the droppings and place in a litterbin. Dog fouling is classified in law as litter for street cleaning purposes and can be disposed of correctly wrapped in Council litterbins, consequently dedicated 'dog waste only' bins are not provided by the Council. Dog walkers do use the litterbins for the disposal of removed faeces and dog fouling is not a major problem within the site.



Environmental Management

Wirral parks and countryside team put sustainability at the heart of decision making and service delivery. We seek to have a positive impact on the environment, both now and for the future. Our key commitments are:

- Improve our sustainable performance
- Comply with environmental legislation
- Purchase sustainably
- Use natural resources sustainably
- Travel sustainably
- Minimise waste
- Manage land sustainability
- Raise Awareness
- Work in partnership

These key commitments are adhered to in all of Wirral Council's parks, including Dawstone Park.

Peat Usage

Any plants or trees for the park are bought in and is produced, to the Council's specification, using compost that is 100% peat free.

Green Waste

The friends' group have created their own composting area, where leaves and other green waste is allowed to mulch down and then reused in the park as compost.

This is a very environmentally friendly way of reducing transport of green waste and means that far less compost has to be bought in.

Items unsuitable for composting such as logs or branches are brought back to the councils depot. Any waste timber or metals recovered are also separated for reuse/recycling.



Compost bins in Dawstone Park

Chemical use

Chemical usage has been severely restricted in 2019/2020 and is now only used in exceptional circumstances or to deal with invasive non-native species. Glyphosate is no longer used anywhere in Wirral's parks.

Chemical storage and usage comply with requirements as defined in the current herbicide handling legislation. Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) assessment records of all chemicals are retained at Ashton Park depot.

Sustainable Materials

Sustainable materials are utilised in the park as much as possible with the main item being seating. Some of these are of a robust steel design and others of iron and wood design. A programme of wood replacement is under way as necessary on existing seats. All wooden furniture is purchased from suppliers that can certify that timber is from a sustainable source.

Climate Change Adaption

Wirral Borough Council in 2019 has declared a Climate Emergency on 15th July 2019. As part of this it is a developed climate change adaption strategy, which has two main goals:

- to substantially cut climate pollution associated with Wirral
- to adapt Wirral to unavoidable climate change

Biodiversity, Landscape and Heritage

The original design and layout of the park has changed little over the years. The recent re designing of the children's play area bringing it up to modern safety standards, being a notable exception. The newly restored wrought iron gates are a key feature along with the original sandstone plaque commemorating the opening of the park. The park is bordered on the Dawstone Road section by a sandstone wall. On the inner side of the wall (the park side) there is an historic plaque commemorating the opening of the park on 1st July 1931 (see section 3.6.)

Infrastructure

A recent addition to the park is a children's eco-friendly log walk close to the children's play area. In 2016 The Friends' of Dawstone Park planted a Midland Hawthorn Tree in the Park to mark the occasion of H.M the Queens 90th birthday. In 2020 another commemorative tree was planted, this time to recognise the 100-year anniversary of the Women's Institute (Cheshire Federation of Women's Institutes). In 2016, all existing litter bins were replaced with more aesthetically pleasing ones and two new period style picnic tables were installed. In 2019 four new benches were installed (details in section 4.2.2.).

Biodiversity and Landscape

The area to the southern boundary (Brow Lane) has been developed an area for biodiversity, by planting native British woodland flowers e.g. fox glove, wood anemone, lesser celandine and a serpentine woodland walk has been installed. To add to the woodland aspect, the friends' group have also added new bird and bat boxes.

The sweeping views across the park, down towards the Dee Estuary and across to Wales are one of the main features of the park.

In 2020 funding was obtained to remove a series of shrubs adjacent to the walkway along the Dawstone Road edge. These have been planted up with less dominant species that promote biodiversity and are more aesthetically pleasing.

DESCRIPTION

Dawstone Park

removal of 4 'blocks' of Viburnum adjacent to the walkway along the Dawstone Road edge. All arisings will be removed from site and the root balls dug out. All Waste material will be takewn to a licenced green waste facility.

1. Remove Viburnum and retain Berberis
2. Remove Viburnum and Holly
3. Revome Vibernum and retain Holly
4. Remove Vibernum and retain Holly



Throughout the month of May, the council will take part in the [No Mow May campaign](#), which is about reducing mowing in general grass areas to help bees, butterflies and wildlife. Selected areas will be left to grow from the end of April until the mid-June.

Community Involvement

The Dawstone Park Friends' Group

The group has in excess of > 50 members and are actively involved in the park and with its decision making.

The group carry out regular task days within the park from litter clearance to planting up the flower beds. The group also hold a very successful public events at the park which are extremely well attended.



Dawstone Park “Fun in the Park” event

At Dawstone Park, as with many parks throughout the country, the local authority is struggling to provide the necessary resources needed to maintain and develop the site. For this reason, the friends of the park are ever more important role to play in the park’s future.

Members of the Friends’ committee keep in regular contact with the Local Team Leader to discuss or highlight any issues that affect the park. There is at present no fixed format for site visits - the Local Team Leader and General Manager are available to meet the group as necessary.

Dawstone Park falls within the parliamentary ward of Wirral South. The local Team Leader and committee members from the Friends’ also work closely with the South Wirral Constituency Officer. Following detailed discussions and site meetings with all parties, in 2015 a plan of improvement work was agreed upon and with £15000 of funding from the constituency office the programme was implemented and completed by 2016. In 2020 further funding was obtained to remove large shrubs, during 2020.

The Heswall Society also takes an active interest in the park.

<http://www.theheswallsociety.org.uk/>

Marketing and Communication

Marketing of the park

Dawstone Park is widely advertised, and site information is available across the following platforms:

- [Wirral Council website](#): Includes information on opening hours, facilities, access information, contact details and link to the Green Flag management plan for the site.
- [Friends of Dawstone Park Facebook Page](#) : Regular and up to date info on the friends activities in the park and how the public can get involved.
- [Heswall Society Website](#): Info about the park and links to the Friends websites.
- [Green Flag Award website](#): Gives a great overview of the site, alongside park facilities and contact details. Allows people to see online that the park has achieved this prestigious award.
- Dawstone Park has been rated on google reviews as a 4.6 (according to 40 reviews).

Marketing support is also given by Wirral South Constituency Committee.



Marketing locally, event websites and Facebook for events such as "Fun in the Park"

Management

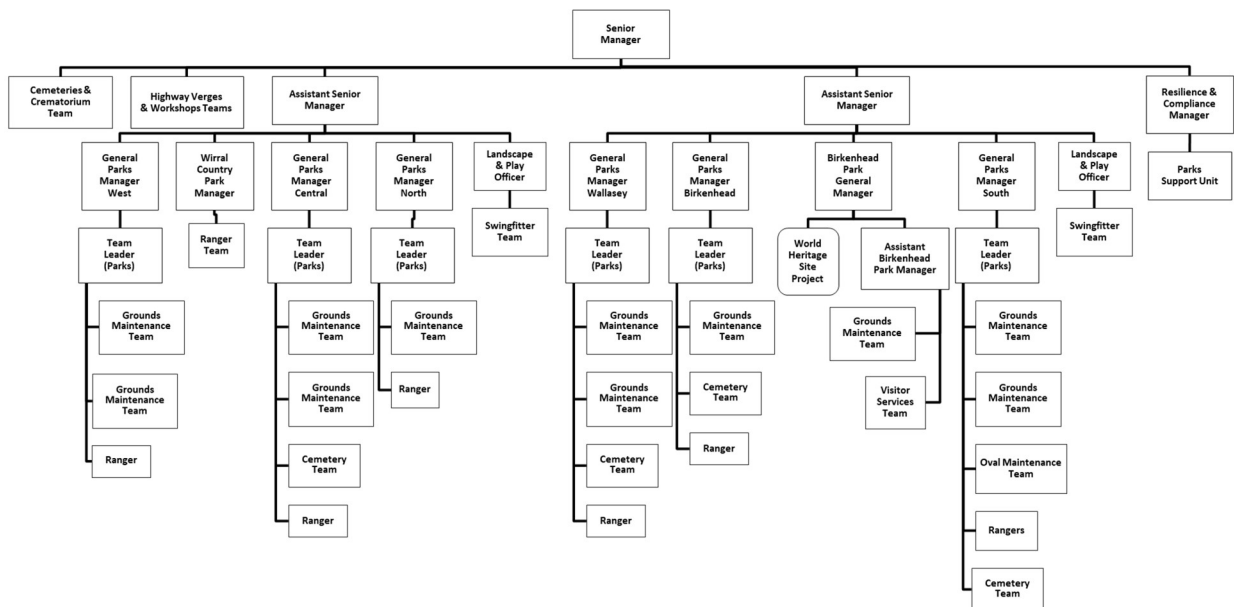
The local team leader and onsite ranger (Parks Allotments and Countryside Department) is responsible for the management and maintenance of the site.

This management plan aims to inform staff and members and the public about the aspirations of Wirral Council.

The Parks and Countryside Service like other public services around the country is experiencing budgetary pressure and face challenging times to deliver service improvements.

Enquiries regarding the management and maintenance of the park can be made directly to the General Manager: christinesmyth@wirral.gov.uk

Current Wirral Parks and Countryside Service organisation chart



5. Appendices

Appendix 1: Action Plan

	Action	Lead Officer	Funding Source	Target Date	Objective Achieved
1	A Welcoming Place				
1.1	Remove Shrubbery from pathway adj. to Dawstone road to aid welcoming entrance	Team leader/ supervisor	Constituency Funding	2020	√
1.2	Bulb planting across Park	Friends/ Team leader/ supervisor	Requires Additional Funding	Ongoing	√
1.3	Provide standardised seating through donation scheme or authority funded	General Parks Manager	PPM/ Donations	2019	√
2	Healthy, Safe and Secure				
2.1	Carry out weekly inspections of play equipment	Swing Fitters	Council	Ongoing	√
2.2	Enhance links between park staff/ community patrol / rangers and Friends'	Area Parks Manager /Team Leader	From Existing Resources	Ongoing	√
2.3	Ensure all anti dog fouling signs are in place	Supervisor	From Existing Resources	Ongoing	√
2.4	Retain and develop links with youth organisations, schools, other user groups and police	All Parties	From Existing Resources	Ongoing	√
2.5	Continue rolling programme of footpath repair, to include widening of foot path in area of double gates at bottom of brow lane to allow large plant on to site of maintenance work to be carried out.	Area manager/ Landscape officer	Council	Ongoing	√
2.6	Tree Safety Inspections	Tree and Woodland Officer	Tree safety budget	Every 3 years or when problem arise	√2023 2026
2.7	Review the safety of the gate onto Dawstone Road including consideration of self-closure or additional barrier	Landscape officer / Area manager	Existing resources	2024 Signage installed	√2024
2.8	Conduct annual site safety inspection and ensure remedial works are completed in good time	Area manager/ Team leader	Existing resources	Annual	√2022 √2023 √2024 2025 2026

2.9	Remove out of date slide unit and pursue funding for replacement	Landscape officer /Friends group	Existing resources and community fund raising initiative – project underway	2024/5	√2024 2025
3	Well Maintained and Clean				
3.1	Network with other organisations to promote the park	All Parties	From Existing Resources	Ongoing	√
3.2	Ensure speedy reporting and removal of graffiti	Supervisor/ Team Leader/ GMOs/ Friends	Council	ongoing	√
3.3	Maximise the use of external grants to facilitate improvement work	General manager/ Friends'	Requires Additional Funding	Ongoing	√
3.4	Install new benches to improve safety and look of park	Local Team Leader/ Landscape Officer	PPM	2019	√
3.5	Repair tarmac on top path	Area manager/ landscape officer	PPM parks budget	2026	
4	Environmental Management				
4.1	Separate green waste for composting within Park	Friends of Dawstone Park	Voluntary	Ongoing	√
4.2	Monitor water consumption	General manager	From Existing Resources	Annual	√
4.3	Continue sourcing furniture from sustainable sources	Area manager	From Existing Resources	Ongoing	√
4.4	Plant native British bulbs in woodland area to improve biodiversity	Friends	From Existing Resources	Ongoing	2016-2019√
4.6	Trial of No Pesticide usage	Area manager	From Existing Resources	From 2020	√2020
4.7	Implement no pesticide usage	Area manager	From Existing Resources		2021 onward√

5	Biodiversity, Landscape and Heritage				
5.1	Encourage wildlife and diversity through the installation of bird/bat boxes	Friends/ Ranger	From Existing Resources	Ongoing	√
5.2	Establish wildflower areas in Park Using native British species	Team Leader /Friends	From Existing Resources	2016/17	2016 2017√
5.3	Review wildflower areas and implement 'no mow may'	Team Leader/ Supervisor	From Existing Resources	2021 and annually	√2022 √2023 √2024 2025 2026
5.5	Introduce a woodland walk	Friends'	Voluntary	2016/18	√
5.6	Remove, restore and re hang three sets of wrought iron gates	Constituency officer	Council	2016	2016 √
5.7	Plant a larger variety of plant species in beds closest to Dawstone rd. to aid species diversity	Team Leader/ supervisor	Friends group	2023	√2023 √2024
6	Community Involvement				
6.1	Continue working with Friends', user groups and the community groups	All Parties	From Existing Resources	Ongoing	√
6.2	Deliver annual programme of events	Friends	From Existing Resources		√2022 √2023 √2024 2025 2026
6.3	Seek external funding for events and park improvements	Area manager/ Friends'	From Existing Resources	Ongoing	
6.4	Encourage sponsorship of replanting and furniture improvements	Area manager/ Friends	From Existing Resources	Ongoing	√
6.5	Develop links with schools and youth organisations in the park	Friends/ Rangers	From Existing Resources	Ongoing	✓
7	Marketing and Communication				
7.1	Improve council's website	Parks team	From Existing Resources	As required	
7.3	Undertake market research with a visitor survey	Friends'	Voluntary	2021	Delay due to covid-19
8	Management				
8.1	Achieve Green Flag status through continuous improvement	All Parties	Council, voluntary and grants in partnership	ongoing	√2022 √2023 √2024 2025

					2026
8.2	Maintain a management plan to deliver short-term and longer-term improvement to the quality of the park	Area manager	From Existing Resources	Ongoing	√
8.4	Pursue funding for improvements	All Parties	Requires Additional Funding	annual	
8.5	Pursue funding for future events	Friends	Requires Additional Funding	annual	

Appendix 2: Wirral Parks and Countryside Service – Sustainability

WIRRAL PARKS & COUNTRYSIDE TEAM

WIRRAL PARKS & COUNTRYSIDE SERVICE — SUSTAINABILITY

Aim : Wirral Parks & Countryside teams putting sustainability at the heart of decision making and service delivery.

Key Commitments:

In all our activities, We will :

- **Improve our sustainable performance** review, annually report, and continually improve our sustainability performance , including progressing on carbon reduction.
- **Comply with environmental legislation,** regulations and relevant codes of practise.
- **Purchase sustainability.** Select and promote goods and services , using purchasing criteria which balance economic, social and environmental factors, requiring our suppliers to address similar issues.
- **Use Natural resources sustainably.** Implement an efficiency programme to reduce energy and water demand and promote and install low carbon technologies in our buildings/ other constructions where possible, requiring contractors to address similar issues e.g. supplier miles, procurement, local labour etc.
- **Travel sustainably .** Encourage sustainable travel by staff, service users, contractors, residents and visitors.
- **Minimise waste.** Reduce, re-use and recycle resources, as far as is practicable, and ensure responsible disposal of all its residual waste.
- **Manage land sustainability.** Protect , conserve and enhance our natural and built environment, safeguarding heritage , enhancing habitats and biodiversity and the amenity value of the parks and countryside.
- **Raise awareness** of this policy and related sustainability issues amongst employees , contractors, service users, residents and visitors.
- **Work In partnership** with other organisations to promote wider responsibility towards sustainability, highlight best practice, share information and encourage joint working.



WIRRAL

Appendix 3: Green Flag Feedback

 Site Quality Evaluation (Mystery Shop)				
Name of Site	Dawstone Park, Wirral		Managing organisation	Wirral Council
Weather Conditions				
Date of assessment	20/11/2023		Time (from – to)	10.00 to 10.40am
Overall Result	Green – Meets the standard with no concerns raised Amber – Meets the standard but with some minor areas of concern Red – Does not meet the requirement with major issues identified			
Result: (✓)	Is the site of Green Flag Award Standard? Green ■ Amber ■ Red ■			
Grading		Strengths and Recommendations		
Each question is graded Green, Amber or Red NG (not graded) is used when the question can't be answered or is not applicable – for which an explanation is provided.		Strengths and recommendation are provided to support grading. Photographs can be included throughout, or at the end of report to support the feedback from the judge(s) in relation to both strengths and recommendations. Please refer to the Raising the Standard guidance manual for further information on the criteria.		
A Welcoming Place				
1. Is the site welcoming?	NG	G	A	R
2. Is the site easy to find?	NG	G	A	R
3. Is signage in good condition?	NG	G	A	R
4. Is the site accessible to all users?	NG	G	A	R
Healthy, Safe and Secure				
5. Are facilities on site in good and safe condition?	NG	G	A	R
6. Did you feel safe during the visit?	NG	G	A	R
7. Are dogs being controlled and the site free of dog fouling?	NG	G	A	R
Well Maintained and Clean				
8. Is litter, waste and recycling managed?	NG	G	A	R
9. Is there a good standard of horticulture maintenance?	NG	G	A	R
	NG	G	A	R

8. Is litter, waste and recycling managed?	NG	G	A	R	All waste is recycled appropriately
9. Is there a good standard of horticulture maintenance?	NG	G	A	R	Horticulture and maintenance are to a good standard.
10. Is there a good standard of arboriculture maintenance?	NG	G	A	R	All looks good.
11. Are buildings and infrastructure such as walls, paths, steps and structures in good condition?	NG	G	A	R	All buildings and infrastructure are in good condition.
12. Is equipment used by the public and staff in good condition?	NG	G	A	R	
Environmental Management					
13. Is there evidence that the site is managed to have a positive impact on the environment?	NG	G	A	R	All waste is recycled in the appropriately
Landscape and Heritage					
14. Are heritage and/or landscape features in good condition?	NG	G	A	R	All appear to be in good condition.
Community Involvement					
15. Is there evidence of community involvement and engagement?	NG	G	A	R	There is a friend's groups with appropriate notices.
16. Is user feedback positive?	NG	G	A	R	
Marketing and Communication					
17. Is there evidence of marketing and promotion, including events? e.g. notice boards, in buildings, website & social media.	NG	G	A	R	Events advertised in notice board.
18. Is the correct year flag flying and certificate on display?	NG	G	A	R	All correct.
Overall Result (✓)	Is the site of Green Flag Award Standard? Green  Amber  Red 				
Final comments The site is of Green Flag Standard.					

Dawstone Park Feedback Response 2024

Name of Site	Dawstone Park, Heswall
Managing Organisation	Wirral Council
Date of Assessment	11 April 2024

OVERALL RESULT	Pass	☒	Fail	☐
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NOTES ABOUT THIS REPORT

Strengths and recommendations are provided for each criteria.

Photographs are included, where appropriate, to support the feedback from the judge(s) in relation to both strengths and recommendations.

Please refer to the Raising the Standard guidance manual [here](#) for further information on the criteria.

DESK ASSESSMENT

(Management plan and supporting documentation)

Criteria	Strengths	Recommendations	Response
Presentation	Clear to read and comprehensive. Green Flag criteria used. Good section on the history of the park. A comprehensive action plan included.	Include some additional photos to illustrate improvements carried out. Keep this up to date and remove any works completed unless ongoing	The management plan is reviewed and updated every 5 years. We use the management plan as a useful reminder, to keep a record of works previously carried out.

			The work programme is updated annually
Health, Safety & Security	Park well sited and on a bus route so easy to access. Paths good width and well surfaced. Small play area is regularly inspected and made safe if anything cannot be repaired. Regular inspections carried out to hard surfaces, furniture and fencing. Tree inspections carried out every 3 Years by the Council's arborist. Friends also report any issues.	Suggest include the location of the nearest defibrillator. Would be good to include an example of a typical risk assessment for the Council's and the Friends activities as an appendix.	We wouldn't include the nearest defib as the plan is only updated every 5 years. Defib may be offline or out of use. Defib best located by users, with app, which shows to up to date information on which defibs are online and working. All risk assessments also subject to annual review and would want to avoid giving out of date information.
Maintenance of Equipment, Buildings & Landscape	Includes a clear description of maintenance responsibilities with the grass cutting and hedge cutting carried out by the Council's mobile gardeners and the Friends carrying out some weeding and litter collections.	Nothing to add.	Thankyou for your comments
Litter, Cleanliness, Vandalism	Litter bins sited at entrances and emptied twice a week and any litter picked helped by the Friends. Dog clean up signs on paths. Despite the small size of the park, fouling is rarely a problem.	Keep this up. Include more site specific information relating to climate change such as use of electric vehicles and battery operated tools.	Thankyou for your comments
Environmental Management	Compost used is peat free and the Friends carry out composting of green waste for mulching. Very little chemical usage and no glyphosate is used. Weeds are hand pulled. Waste timber and	Keep this up.	The management plan is reviewed and updated every 5 years.

	metals are recycled. Wood is from a sustainable source. The Council has a sustainability policy, has developed a Cool Wirral campaign and declared an environmental and climate emergency in 2019.	Include more site specific information relating to climate change such as use of electric vehicles and battery operated tools	The work programme is updated annually We don't use electric vehicles or battery operated tools in this park
Biodiversity, Landscape & Heritage	Bird and bat boxes installed by the Friends and some wildflower planting undertaken. Ecological projects carried out with the help of Wirral Wildlife. The Council has developed a 10 year tree strategy and is taking steps to prioritise pollinators. No Mow May introduced on site and grass left uncut to Mid-June.	Try to be more site specific. Continue this and possibly include any community feedback.	Thankyou for your comments
Community Involvement	Active Friends group with about 50 members help with maintenance, fundraising and organising events. Regular task days organised on Sundays including litter picking, planting and making compost from green waste. Wirral Wildlife advise on biodiversity. The Heswall Society take an active interest in the park and helped form the Friends group. Park used as an outdoor classroom by local primary school	Very good local involvement for a small park. Keep this up.	Thankyou for your comments
Marketing & Communication	Wirral Council website includes details of the park and its facilities. Notice board regularly updated by Friends for events, task days and publicising Friends Facebook page. Facebook page contains some good photos of the park	Keep this up.	Thankyou for your comments
Overall Management	Well managed park appropriate for its size and location.	Keep this up and carry on supporting the Friends group	Thankyou for your comments

FIELD ASSESSMENT

Criteria	Strengths	Recommendations	Response
A Welcoming Place	Brown and white directional signs. Entrances welcoming with good signage and a notice board at the Dawstone Road entrance which is tidy with clear information. Three access points ensuring good connectivity to the surrounding residential areas. Attractive views from the upper part of the park over the Dee estuary towards North Wales. Plenty of seats and one picnic table.	Although the other two gates are accessible, access by wheelchairs is challenging due to the steep gradient. Consider widening the top gate to Dawstone Road to make this accessible too as the Action Plan mentions making this safer	We wouldn't want to encourage access for wheelchairs at top gate, due to the steep gradient, and because the gate is a historical feature of the park. Sign 'please close the gate' has been added this year.
Healthy, Safe & Secure	Small play area well sited in an enclosed part of the park. Equipment consisting of swings and a see saw in safety surfacing and an adjacent log play trail appears safe. Sign with contact details	Missing slide should be replaced as soon as possible. Consider a notice either on site or on the notice board explaining why there is a gap and that funding is being	Discussions are going ahead to update the play area, with support funding from the community. Details available shortly.
Well Maintained & Clean	Grass recently cut despite recent wet weather and edges fairly tidy. Shrub beds tidy with some weed. Some gaps but beds due to be replanted including the Britain in Bloom bed. Adequate bins. No litter or dog waste seen. 'Clean up' dog symbols on paths.	Keep up this standard.	Thankyou for your comments

Criteria	Strengths	Recommendations	Response
Environmental Management	No pesticides used. Some battery powered equipment being used/trialled. Plenty of compost bins well-sited to the rear of a wall.	Extend this if possible and include some details in Management Plan.	The management plan is reviewed and updated every 5 years. The work programme is updated annually
Biodiversity Landscape & Heritage	Some more relaxed borders under trees at lower part of site with some native plants to encourage wildlife. Some good mature trees which appear well managed. Surveys carried out in house every 3 years and specialist contractors do any tree works. Trees checked after high winds. Friends report any issues such as broken limbs. 'No mow May' extended to mid-June used for the whole of the grassland with only path edges cut. Park within Conservation Area. Stone boundary walls and exposed rock faces form key landscape features giving the park character.	Consider a few carefully sited new trees to replace those lost subject to agreement with the community.	Replacing trees is challenging in this small park, consideration is being given, borough-wide to locations for tree planting. This will continue.
Community Involvement	Active Friends Group keep notice board up to date and organise regular task days and events. Local primary school close to site and use park.	A few of the Friends group are retiring from the committee and there is now a need to promote the park and try to attract some new members. Consider some interpretive information.	There has been discussion with the group, and new volunteer leader has been found in 2024

Criteria	Strengths	Recommendations	Response
Marketing and Communication	Notice board used to promote events and details of the Friends Facebook page which appears to be main vehicle for promoting the park	Keep this up.	Thankyou for your comments
Management	The park is well managed by Wirral Council despite funding constraints. The Friends group are also managed and supported.	Keep this standard up.	Thankyou for your comments

Summary and additional comments: (Highlighting the result, and the main areas of strength and recommendation)
A lovely small, enclosed pocket park in the residential area of Heswall with good connectivity. An attractive setting with mature trees and lovely views across the Dee estuary. The park is well used by all ages and is respected and valued by the local community. It deserves to retain its Green Flag status Thankyou for your comments, which are much appreciated