Wirral Council

Parks Allotments and Countryside Service

Ashton Park

Management Plan (2017-2022)

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<td>Christine Smyth and the Friends of Ashton Park</td>
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<tbody>
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<td>Mary Worrall and Anthony Bestwick</td>
<td>January 2017</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Contents

Introduction

The Wider Policy Context

Site Information

A Brief History

Green Flag Criteria and Assessment

Action Plan

Appendices

1. Location plan
2. Aerial photograph
3. Ashton Park Service requirement
4. Green Flag Award judges feedback
5. Project bank
Introduction

Wirral Council has produced this document in conjunction with the Friends of Ashton Park to provide a comprehensive framework for the future development of the site.

We encourage suggestions from park users and the wider community to this plan.

For further information or to submit any suggestions contact the Parks and Countryside Service at Wirral Council on 0151 606 2004 or email christinesmyth@wirral.gov.uk or write to:

Wirral Council  
Parks Allotments & Countryside Service  
Cheshire Lines Building  
Canning Street  
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CH41 1ND

Friends and Officers from across the Wirral celebrating Green Flag status in 2012
The Wider Policy Context


- protecting the most vulnerable
- driving economic growth
- improving the local environment

Followed a major restructure, the Parks, Allotments and Countryside Service is now located the Community Services section of the Delivery hub. The Service is specifically featured in the Council’s Culture Strategy, which itself has 3 main priorities:

1. Promote and celebrate Wirral’s parks, coast and countryside for leisure activities
2. Encourage people to take part in sports, leisure and social activities
3. Increase pride in Wirral’s communities and encourage more residents to volunteer.

The Parks, Allotments and Countryside Service is well-placed to support delivery of a variety of the Council’s 20 pledges.

PARKS AND COUNTRYSIDE SERVICE OBJECTIVES FOR 2014/24

The Parks and Countryside Service have produced a 10 year Parks and Open Spaces Strategy that will inform and direct the next 10 years for the service. It is available online at: [https://www.wirral.gov.uk/my-services/leisure-and-culture/parks-beaches-and-countryside/parks-development-and-maintenance](https://www.wirral.gov.uk/my-services/leisure-and-culture/parks-beaches-and-countryside/parks-development-and-maintenance)

The Strategy sets out how Wirral Parks and Countryside Service will aim to attract and retain investment in the borough through provision of attractive and well managed parks and open spaces, whilst being accessible; and providing positive and healthy activities for all local people, communities and visitors to enjoy. 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.
Site Information

Name: Ashton Park

Typology: Major Park

Primary purpose:

Intensively managed park of greater than local significance, providing accessible, high quality opportunities for formal and informal recreation and children’s play including community events.

Location plan:

Address: Westbourne Road, West Kirby, Wirral, CH48 7EX

Grid reference: 321583 386418

Ward: West Kirby and Thurstaston

Size: 5.22 Hectares

Brief description:

Ashton Park is a premier park in Wirral both in terms of standards (has had Green Flag status since 2003), use, and the number of events that take place.

Ashton Park is separated into the upper and lower sections by the Wirral Way Country Park, which was formed from the redundant West Kirby to Hooton railway line in 1974. The Wirral Way combines with Ashton Park to offer users an attractive town park and an eleven-mile trail through the Wirral countryside parallel to the foreshore of the River Dee.
Access:

The park has a gate linking directly into the adjacent Westbourne Hall Community Centre and to the Guide Hut with which close partnerships have been formed. The Guide Hut provides the focus for visits from guide groups from all over the country.

The park is a short walk from the town centre, promenade, railway station and bus stops.

The Wirral Way is a linear country park running from the town centre for 13 miles all the way to Bidson.

Cycling and walking connections are excellent.

While the park has no dedicated car parking there is plenty of space available in surrounding streets.

Tenure

The majority of the park is owned and managed by Parks Allotments and Countryside Service. A section alongside Church Road remains within the Diocese of Chester ownership and includes the lodge. Wirral Council leases this church land, known as Glebeland.

Features and facilities:

- Children’s play area
- Multi use games area
- 2 bowling greens with bowling pavilions
- 5 grass and 2 tarmac tennis courts
- Rose garden
- Lake
- Formal and informal gardens
- Park lodge
- Imposing gateways
- Teashop and toilets
- Grass junior football pitch
- Variety of native and non-native trees
- Footpath links to Wirral Way
- Litter bins
- Benches
- Picnic tables
- Finger post signs
- Notice boards
- Interpretation boards
A Brief History

The park was first mentioned in the minutes of Hoylake and West Kirby Urban District Council in 1896 and was laid out between 1899 and 1901. Henry Ashton, a wealthy Liverpool merchant who, in 1841, lived at Manor Farm in the Old Village of West Kirby, originally owned the land. The land was later leased from a Miss Emma Mary Ashton, his granddaughter, with the addition of a section of church Glebeland along the Church Road boundary. Initially both areas of land were leased but eventually on the death of Miss Emma Mary Ashton in 1935, then resident in Kensington, London, the Hoylake and West Kirby Urban District Council purchased the bulk of the land.

The Friends continue to research the history of Ashton Park and the background to the Ashton family as local landowners, Liverpool merchants and Wigan industrialists. This research has been used to issue an Ashton Park historical trail and subsequently publish a new account of the history of Ashton Park replacing Barbara Mason’s book “A Little Oasis”

Progress was slow and the Upper Park was still being laid out in October 1901. In 1901 the Lodge was constructed and the first head gardener appointed. A number of sports were introduced only after the opening including quoits, tennis, bowling and croquet. The park was used for various events and entertainments such as Coronation celebrations, bands, carnivals, flower shows and children’s sports. A further activity was introduced in 1981 with the setting up of the Wirral Model Boat Club. A tradition of international tennis tournaments grew up initially in the 1970’s with Virginia Wade, Margaret Court and Yvonne Goolagong. Displays and interpretation boards are set up in the Upper Park notice board to inform people of the history of Ashton Park.

They were revived in the 1990’s when stars such as John McEnroe and Boris Becker visited as a warm-up to Wimbledon. The history of tennis in the park is currently being researched and photos, old programmes and other information is being collected. However in general the tradition of events in the park had, by this time, long-passed.

West Kirby – The town has grown from a small coastal village of local significance only. During the late 19th century, the area developed (aided by the arrival of the railway) into a wealthy commuter suburb and day-tripping centre with a promenade, open swimming pool and marine lake. Its role as a commuting suburb for the Wirral and Liverpool has continued to grow. The town falls within two administrative wards – West Kirby and Thurstaston and Hoylake and Meols containing approximately 32,000 people in total with a further ward (Royden) providing a hinterland to the built-up area of West Kirby containing a further 16,000 people.
Formation of the Park Friends Group

The Friends of Ashton Park was formed in 1991 largely to promote the renewal of the playground in partnership with Wirral. The centenary of Ashton Park was marked in 1996 (somewhat prematurely as this date reflected the date when the park was first suggested at a local Council meeting rather than the opening of the new park in 1901) with a May Fair and a week of events and the May Fair has continued uninterrupted since then.

The actions of the Friends and Wirral Council have reflected the results of market research. There has been a steady increase in activities reflecting a strategy of gradual growth of activities in line with the resources of the Friends.

The development of community links has been a priority of the Friends frequent talks are given to local groups and societies on Ashton Park and its history and the group aims to foster good working relationships with the community.

In recent years the FOAP have become more active in arranging events (in part stimulated by the results of market research) and the range of events has expanded as the membership, experience and confidence of the group has grown (now some 120 members).

History of Usage

Ashton Park is a very well used facility with over 500,000 users a year and in a typical week over 10,000 persons use the park (more when special events are held). The main findings of the 2003 market research (utilising counts and the circulation of 1200 questionnaires) were: -

- Of the 10,000 persons a week using the park, 5,000 are children, 2,200 adults of working age and 2,800 retired.
- Sundays have the highest use.
- The park has strong links with the Wirral Way in terms of usage.
- 42% of people use the park on a daily basis, 75% on a weekly basis.
- The park has a strong role beyond West Kirby – only 39% of users come from West Kirby, 62.5% from the rest of Wirral, 2.5% from the rest of Merseyside and 6% from outside Merseyside.
- The park was highly rated by respondents with the bowling facilities and playground particularly appreciated.
- There was support for the retention of its current character.
- Areas of concern were maintaining standards of maintenance and security, improving the water quality of the lake, improving the toilets and teashop, extending the playground and providing more entertainment and events. These were all addressed in the Management Plan and it is interesting to look back and see that good progress has been made toward these goals.

A further market research exercise was undertaken in 2009 covering user characteristics and views on the park and future improvements. This confirmed the popularity of the park and high approval rating but also underlined the desire to see improvement of the following: toilets, seats, flowers/shrubberies/bulbs, the condition of the lake, maintenance of railings and gates, security, the teashop and tennis facilities.

New and updated information is always required to keep market information up to date.

Further information about the recent development of the Park and its uses is available in the previous management plan for the site.
Green Flag criteria and assessment

The intention is for the park to continue to meet the required standards as defined by the **Green Flag Award Scheme**; further details concerning the scheme can be found at [www.greenflagaward.org.co.uk](http://www.greenflagaward.org.co.uk).

The following Green Flag assessment criteria will be used as a focus for the development of the park.

1. A welcoming place
2. Healthy, safe and secure
3. Clean and maintained
4. Sustainability
5. Conservation and heritage
6. Community involvement
7. Marketing
8. Management

### 1. A welcoming place

Ashton Park provides a draw for people from all over the Wirral attracted by the facilities, its atmosphere and feeling of safety; on average 10,000 persons a week use the park. The Friends of Ashton Park and Wirral are working together to improve the quality and range facilities as well as organise more events and entertainment.

Most of the street entrances have substantial original sandstone pillars and iron gates. The original park-keeper’s lodge near the entrance off Westbourne Road is tenanted and well maintained.

All eleven entrances provide easy access for the mobility-impaired, including wheelchairs.

#### Entrances improvement programme

A programme of improving and replanting entrances is ongoing.

Access between the upper and lower park was poor, so to address the problem Wirral Council constructed a new cross-park access in 2005 to provide a clear, mobility-impaired route to the correct standards and to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act 1997.

The Wirral Way was upgraded in 2011 to a standard that provides a safe mobility-impaired route to the park from West Kirby. The elderly and park users with scooters and wheelchairs have praised these improvements. Easy access on the pathways within the park is extensive and a programme of repair of the tarmac where roots have lifted the surface is undertaken every winter on a rolling programme basis.

In 2014 the main Wirral Way entrance to Ashton Park was upgraded with sponsorship by the FOAP and Wirral Council. It included new fencing, raising the pathway (to prevent flooding), a soak-away, clearance of undergrowth and the installation of a carved oak gateway. This welcomes people into Ashton Park and references its railway line heritage.

The local information map at West Kirby station shows the park and the route to it; entrance posts on the Wirral Way direct visitors to Ashton Park.
Signage the main entrances on Westbourne Road and Carpenters Lane have large Ashton Park signs to welcome users.

Heritage style fingerposts have been erected at strategic locations to guide new visitors and remind people the park is in two sections.

Highway signage gives directions to the park from the promenade and Grange Road.

Noticeboards throughout the park are used for various displays of information, including the advertisement of community events.

Activities in the Park have been highlighted in successive market research exercises. Support for maintaining its quality and traditional feel while providing more activity was emphasised – so one of the aims of this plan is to expand activities and further reinforce the role of Ashton Park as a welcoming place for the community.

A balance is provided between quiet and noisier activities – football and tennis are grouped together in the Upper Park, the Secret Garden provides for quiet contemplation, the playground,
family kick-about and picnic area are within a single field - the lakeside and bowling-greens provide further quiet areas.

Screening from trees and hedges reinforces the separation of activities without significant conflict between users, and without compromising the feeling of personal safety.

**Toilets:** Toilets are open on weekdays and Saturdays (staff hours) and are also opened on weekends when the Friends or Bowling Club are present. A new toilet block was installed in 2014.

**The Friends of Ashton Park Tea Shop:** The Friends staff the teashop on Sunday afternoons. Funds are raised to improve the Park. Other community groups are encouraged to run the teashop on Saturdays and in school holidays.

![Tea Shop Sign](image)

**Pavilion Refurbishment** Back in 2007 pavilion refurbishment was seen as a medium-term objective, and it is a testament to the consistent vision of those involved that the improvements have become a reality.

Outline designs for the refurbishment of the pavilion were presented to Wirral Council for inclusion in works during 2015/16. The vision was to extend the teashop working area, provide a new bowlers kitchen, convert the central room into a large multi-purpose room for use by the bowlers, Wirral Council and FOAP, as a meeting room, for historical displays, training room for gardening staff and a room for teashop users in winter.

**Seating** Wirral Council accepts donations to dedicate new benches to loved ones. New seats are being installed to a standard design, with the eventual aim of a full suite of matching benches. 3 picnic tables were installed in the playground as a response to comments from families using the playground.

**Staff training** is important to raise the standards of the park and encouraging staff to be ambassadors for the park. Volunteers are also encouraged to engage with users. In 2014 Wirral’s Friends Groups were given Green Flag training, including representatives from Ashton Park.

**Achievements 2015/16**

Fingerpost Sign installed
Mural – Children’s Playground
Provision of Wirral Way Gateway
Wood-carving – Fairy Castle – in fallen pine tree: nature carving in Secret Garden
2. Healthy, safe and secure

Dog fouling

The whole of the Wirral Borough is designated under Dog Control Orders (that implement section 55 and 56 of the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005) these provide increased levels of enforcement for five offences prescribed in a dog control order, these are - failing to remove dog faeces, not keeping a dog on a lead, not putting a dog on a lead when directed to do so by an authorised officer, permitting a dog to enter land from which dogs are excluded and taking more than a specified number of dogs onto land. Failure to comply can result in a prosecution and a maximum fine of up to £1,000. Alternatively offenders may be offered a £50 Fixed Penalty Notice. Wirral’s Community Patrol Officers have been authorised to issue notices. A media campaign ‘Don’t give a dog a bad name’ was launched to highlight the new powers.

Signs are provided at entrance points indicating the park is a ‘clean it up’ area at the entrances. 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. Many dog walkers do use the park's litterbins for the disposal of removed faeces. The siting and type of waste bins has been improved during 2010 utilising a ‘hooded type’ as they are also used for dog waste. “No Dog” signs have been installed round the tennis and football areas in the Upper Park.

Daily emptying of bins is undertaken which hold dog faeces.

In 2016 two fixed penalty notices were issued in Ashton Park for dog fouling offences, by Wirral’s anti-social behaviour team.

The mess left by the increasing population of wildfowl has been noted and population levels are being monitored. The need for special cleaning of wildfowl faeces off the main lakeside path will be kept under review.
Anti social behaviour

Wirral Council’s Community Patrol is established to provide a 24 hour response to any concerns notified to them regarding anti-social behaviour occurring within Council owned land. The Patrol provides a reactive response to calls from the public and Council staff and generally they do not undertake routine patrolling. Problems of a persistent or on-going nature however can be raised with the team. The Patrol can be contacted on telephone number 0151 666 5265.

The Friends encourage their members to report incidents of anti social behaviour and vandalism to the police. They provide extra ‘eyes and ears’ for Wirral Council.

Graffiti incidents are quickly reported by the gardeners or the Friends for quick action. An immediate response is instigated for graffiti of an offensive or obscene nature.

The Gardens are covered by Byelaws, made under Section 164 of the Public Health Act, 1875.

Incident reports compiled by Wirral Council’s Community Patrol are made available to the Parks and Countryside Service and are provided to the Area Parks Manager.

Tree Inspections

Vulnerable trees are identified by the site staff as part of daily patrols and reported to the Area Manager, whereupon urgent safety work is carried out directly as needed.

Conservation and amenity tree work is carried out where resources allow, by the operations teams as part of the winter works programme.

For details on council owned trees near to or overhanging private property, please refer to the councils policy published on the Council website available at http://www.wirral.gov.uk/my-services/transport-and-streets/roads-highways-and-pavements/highway-maintenance/highway-trees

Infrastructure

Site staff carry out regular inspections to identify defects within the park that present a safety problem for users, staff and adjacent residents. The following items are appraised:

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

The Council’s day-to-day repair system and relevant contractors or onsite staff undertake any repairs requested.

Any major repairs or refurbishment can be included or considered as part of the council’s planned preventative maintenance programme or included on the Council’s capital programme.

An audit of condition of all the pathways has been undertaken by the FOAP identifying repairs required based largely on risk and the need for programmed renewal. An annual submission by the Friends is now submitted to Wirral Council to assist in the framing of programmes.
Accumulations of leaves can create risks in the autumn and these are cleared with blowers and brushes by the site-based staff.

**Wirral Council’s Health and Safety Policy** is regularly reviewed and updated. Annual safety inspections are carried out by the Team Leader.

**Activities:** A range of activities are accommodated, for example – walking, running, orienteering, bowls (Victoria, West Kirby Ladies and West Kirby Park Bowling Clubs), model boating, tennis, junior football, five a side football, U3A bowls, LTA sponsored tennis training, children’s playground and basketball. These are largely contained in different areas insulated by paths, grass and trees. The scope for more is limited without creating an over-population of activities. It is the aim of Wirral Council and Friends to maximise use within these constraints while protecting the existing and future character of the park.

The children’s playground is the most popular attraction in the park. The safety of the playground is of crucial importance and is inspected weekly by trained playground maintenance operatives. Necessary repairs are undertaken immediately or the item is taken out of use. A written log of each inspection is kept and defects logged and actioned.

The playground was reconstructed in 1996 and a further upgrade was undertaken in 2009 meeting the latest standards with input on new equipment from the local guides and major funding from the Department for Children, Schools and Families and Awards for All and an additional activity unit was provided for very young children in 2010.

**Cycling** is discouraged because of the threat to children and older people on the pathways and generally incidents are few.

A sense of security is provided by site based staff gardeners who help to reduce the potential for misuse or anti-social behaviour. This feeling is reinforced by the high use of the park and its use as a route to and from the town centre. The increased use of the park is a priority for the Friends in organising activities and events and marketing. The feeling among people that it is safe and secure are the foundations of a popular park. Well-used parks are safer and most importantly feel safer.

Security is an issue for all age groups and happily the incidence of security concerns and incidents is small although the perception of people is difficult to change. The presence of the gardeners assists in this, bowlers during the season, opening of the teashop on weekends and the presence of Friends as regular users of the park.

Good sightlines allow better supervision of areas such as the Upper Park bowling green that can on occasions suffer misuse. Key sightlines have been identified and have now been opened up as part Winter Works tree programmes – the two main areas addressed have been the view over the Upper Park bowling green and over the lake from the pedestrian footbridge.

Shelter provision is limited to one shelter in the upper park which is mainly used by young people. Consideration of its demolition and replacement is ongoing as resources allow. The policy is to provide seats as much as possible in areas that are open and supervised by other passers-by.

The gardeners hold a **First Aid** kit and staff have attended a basic course. A first aid kit is also held in the Friends teashop.

**Pest control** is provided via a monthly service contract with the Council’s Pest Control Team that ensures rats are kept under control and any increase in population is addressed.
Achievements 2015/16

Pathway repairs – various (none in 2016)
Pavilion Refurbishment completed
New Toilets opened
Reopening of Pavilion as improved teashop and joint user building
Tree work – 2 dangerous trees taken down
Church Road fence renewal
Lawn Tennis Association Partnership set up – usage monitoring
New dog signs fabricated for tennis area in consultation with Anti-social behaviour team

3. Clean and well maintained

Considerable investment took place in the park in 2016/17 to establish it as a base for the West Kirby, Hoylake and Meols Parks Local Area Team. It is hoped that the increased presence of managers and staff will lead to improvements in maintenance of the park.

Horticultural maintenance is carried out in accordance with the ‘Ashton Park Service Requirement’ (Appendix 3).

Resources Available for Maintenance of the Park

Day to day park maintenance is managed by the Local Area Team Leader for West Kirby, Hoylake and Meols with a mobile team based in the park consisting of one grounds maintenance supervisor, six gardeners and one ranger (see section 9). The team were relocated into the park in 2017 following a major re-organisation of the Parks Service along geographical lines, and it is hoped that this change will bring benefits to the park.

In view of the close relationship between Council staff and the Friends Group, frequent inspections are held involving the Local Team Leader, and the Chairman and Treasurer of the Friends. This is a chance to talk over all issues relating to standards, specific tasks, development plans, Friends projects and problems with users. The aim of these inspections is to develop teamwork and
understanding between all the parties and ensure togetherness rather than an “us and them” atmosphere.

**Horticulture**

The Friends and the Guides undertake some gardening work, planting bulbs and primulas, maintaining the Memorial Garden and developing the show of hydrangeas adjacent to the Lower Park Bowling Green.

There are 28 rose beds in the park, replanting is undertaken when the condition of each bed merits it.

The condition of the shrubberies, invasive ground cover and self-sown saplings is continually in need of improvement and this is now being addressed through the replanting programme as part of a rolling programme of clearance and cleaning up of shrubberies. A rolling programme is focusing on filling gaps in past planting, pruning and shaping over-sized shrubs, and upgrading the planting at all the entrances. It is recognised that this will take some years.

The park has a substantial level of hedging and privet. Internal hedges are regularly cut or shaped by a trained gardener. Those externally are cut by a mechanical trimmer as necessary.

![The lake in January](image)

**The lake** requires occasional dredging due to accumulation of silt, rotting leaves and bread used as duckfood. This has not been undertaken for many years and as a result the water quality deteriorates in the late summer months. The FOAP installed fountain which has relieved this problem over the past decade but the level of silt now blocks the pump. Emergency oxygenating pumps are used when necessary.

Dredging is an expensive operation which requires planning. At time of writing additional resources are being sought, as the cost of dredging cannot be covered by available maintenance budgets.

**Seating** is being replaced gradually to a consistent design. Members of the public can apply to the Team Leader or the Friends Group if they wish to make a donation toward a new bench. A rolling programme of refurbishment is underway.
Footpaths have in places been invaded by tree roots and erupted – a reflection of the age of the park and the amount of trees. Sections are identified for repair and removal of the roots on an annual basis and included in the Winter Works programme.

Buildings maintenance

Buildings on the site are the responsibility of the Council’s Asset Management Team. Repairs are carried out via the Council’s day-to-day repair system or the planned preventative maintenance and renewals programme. Day-to-day repairs (such as vandalism or leaks) are recorded on computer and issued to in-house tradesmen or contractors on a pre-selected list. Significant renewals (such as the work necessary on the pedestrian footbridge over the Wirral Way) are the subject of bids for inclusion in planned preventative maintenance programmes.

The building stock found in the park includes the main services block / lower bowls pavilion, the ladies bowling pavilion, a tennis pavilion, upper park toilet and storage shed and compound storage units used by model boaters and Friends.

A considerable amount of work has been undertaken on buildings in recent years – retiling of the tennis pavilion in 2011, repair of flat roofs on the Lower Park and Upper Park pavilion, the Upper Park toilet roof (2015), repainting of Upper and Lower Park pavilions (2014/15), refitting of the Upper Park Pavilion kitchen (2015) and the refurbishment of the Lower Park Pavilion (2016).

Achievements 2015/16

Replacement of 2 Memorial Benches – Cherry Avenue and upper lakeside
Renewal of other benches
Railings and Gate Repair and Painting
Bulb planting
Shrub planting
Overgrown Bed Clearance
Bowling Green drainage works – Upper Park
4. Environmental Sustainability

Water and energy consumption at the park is monitored and where necessary modification is made to minimise wastage, thereby achieving economies in usage in line with the Council’s Environmental Policy and Carbon Reduction Programme ‘Cred’.

Pesticide usage at the park is confined to non-residual Herbicide for the control of weed growth on pathways.

Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (C.O.S.H.H.) assessment records of the chemical based products used within the park together with pesticide records are retained at the district depot at Arrowe Park. Chemical storage and usage within the park complies with the requirements defined within the current pesticide handling legislation.

Motorised mowing equipment used at the park is checked for emission levels.

Green waste is separated and composted where possible for reuse in the park. Any waste timber or metals recovered are also separated for reuse/recycling at the depot.

There are plans to construct bays for the recycling and reuse of green waste at the park.

Pest management is delivered under contract with that service within the Council and complies with the required regulations.

All tree brash resulting from arboriculture work within the park is chipped on site and stored within the compound for re-use.

The main rose beds are mulched with well-rotted farmyard manure during the winter.

Sustainable materials are utilised in the park as much as possible with the main item being seating.

A review by the FOAP of the opportunities for solar power on the teashop, other buildings suggests that there is not a viable or practical basis for using these technologies at the present and that limited resources are better applied to the repair, renewals and improvement of buildings but opportunities will be reviewed as part of these schemes.

Achievements 2015/16

Development of plans to improve lake water quality
5. Conservation and heritage

The design of the park was laid down many years ago and this design still suits the function of the park and range of activities.

The original design features that were laid down in 1901 remain although the green landscape has matured. More recently shrub beds and trees have become over mature in some areas and require replacement as and when funds become available.

Some of the original built features remain including the prominent and welcoming sandstone gateposts with iron gates and lodge.

The character and landscape of the park is to be retained (this approach is backed up by the results of market research) while seeking improvements that respect the heritage and character, using materials, fittings, plants and facilities that lie comfortably within this template.

Nature Conservation:

The ranger is available to lead groups, give walks and talks on the topic of nature conservation, for example regular early evening bat walks.

There are many informal areas set aside for nature conservation, and the site is adjacent to the Wirral Way.

Ashton Park Lake

The lake is one of the principal features of the park except during hot and dry periods when the water condition can deteriorate. The lake gradually accumulates leaf fall that affects the condition of the water. The installation of a floating fountain has improved this situation, however when the lake is full of silt the fountain cannot be operated due to blockages.

The lake requires periodic dredging. This is an expensive operation which requires planning. At time of writing additional resources are being sought, as the cost of dredging cannot be covered by available maintenance budgets.

Marginal vegetation at either end of the lake provides interest, and encourages more insect life (such as dragonflies) and will help to improve water quality. However to date the planting has not taken, possibly because of uprooting of the plants by ducks or water quality.

The willows growing out of the banks of the lake are a feature that is enjoyed by many visitors, however they require periodic cutting back to reduce silting and they have a negative effect on the historic stone edging.

The levels of Canada Geese and mallards in some years can become a problem and this is being monitored. The Canada Geese and Mallards occasionally breed on the island. Occasional species such as Grey Wagtail, Tufted Duck, Pochard, Black Swan, Mute Swan, Mandarin, Snow Goose and Shoveler visit.

The installation of small roosting and nesting boxes on the island will, it is hoped, protect the smaller species and encourage new breeds. Measures to encourage restraint by visitors in the feeding of bread have been taken - the sale of wildfowl food has commenced at the teashop to encourage responsible feeding.
An information board has been installed by the Dunraven Road entrance close to the lake to increase understanding of the wildfowl species on the lake and a display on wildflowers has been posted on the upper park notice board. Rotating displays covering events, the railway, tennis tournaments and projects are posted on the upper park noticeboard.

Trees

There are a wide variety of trees and these have been surveyed. An annual survey of the condition of tree stock is undertaken and pruning, removal and replanting is actioned as part of the Winter Works programme.

Replanting takes place on an ad hoc basis according to availability of funding. While memorial trees are not permitted in the park, donations to replace trees are accepted. A mixture of indigenous and introduced species is being used to widen diversity and colour.

There is no formal tree replacement plan in place, although this is an aspiration of the management plan.

Ground Flora

Wildflower planting was carried out in the Secret Garden in 2005 with guidance and seed mixes from the National Wildflower Centre, however the meadow now requires re-instating and options are being considered.

A good range of wildflowers can be found despite the substantial area of maintained grassed areas. A survey and photographic record has been undertaken and the production of a leaflet will be considered.

The Friends and local Guides have planted cowslips and primroses on the lakeside and they have remained well established. The guides continue to maintain the memorial garden that includes a variety of flowers and shrubs and the fencing to the rear has been replaced to prevent trespass over the beds from the Wirral Way.

Bulb planting is a priority and English Bluebells, snowdrops, aconites, cyclamen and daffodils have all been planted involving Friends volunteers, the St Bridget’s Sunday Club and local children.

A wide range of fauna is present including grey squirrels, hedgehogs, foxes, voles, mice, pipistrelle bats as well as a wide variety of birds. Bird boxes were first installed in 2005. Further
batches have been directed at more special varieties of birds such as tawny owls, house sparrows, treecreepers and nuthatches. Bat boxes have also been installed.

Log piles are left in secluded areas to encourage diversity of fungi and insects.

**Built Heritage:**

Original artefacts from the built environment remain - sandstone gateposts, gates, the cast-iron box by the Dunraven Road entrance, sandstone edgings to the lake, as well as assorted pavilions and buildings. The pedestrian footbridge over the Wirral Way, refurbished in 2011 is believed to have been installed in 1925.

Building maintenance is the responsibility of the Council’s Asset Management team. The park has benefitted from extensive recent investment in the upper and lower park pavilions (2015/16), and the creation of a new depot at the park to house the Local Area Parks Team (2016).

There is no evidence that there was ever a bandstand in the Upper Park although there may have been a temporary performance platform. Nevertheless it remains a long term aspiration of the Friends to introduce a bandstand for use in their programme of concerts and other events.

In 2014 the FOAP began taking part in Wirral’s annual ‘Heritage Open Days’ event covering the history of the park and its development. Consideration will be given to preparing a set of historical display boards on the park to be housed in the refurbished Lower Park Pavilion in particular for Heritage Open Days in conjunction with the nearby West Kirby Museum. A heritage trail leaflet has been published and guided walks organised.

Events are publicised on the Council’s tourism site ‘Visit Wirral’ [http://www.visitwirral.com/whats-on/heritage-open-days](http://www.visitwirral.com/whats-on/heritage-open-days)

Appeals are regularly made for information and photos of the park in the past to assist in research and publications/talks on the history of the park. Purchase of old photos, postcards and maps commercially supplements this source.

Research into the history of the park progressed to a point in 2017 where the Friends were able to begin installing interpretation boards around the park covering topics such as the development of the park, the early years of the park, Why Ashton Park, tennis, the West Kirby tank, bowling, the lake and the railway.
Achievements 2015/16

Heritage Guided Walk – part of Wirral Heritage Open Day
Heritage Leaflet published
Display on Ashton Park at West Kirby Museum (Autumn 2016)
Continued research on Ashton Park and publication of topic papers/articles
Talks on History of Ashton Park
Acquisition of bat detectors
Bat walks and talks
Ranger introduced as part of the staff team
Information Boards – drafts prepared – history, railway, Ashton name and family, early days of the park, bowling, tennis, lake, tank. Lectern boards being manufactured
7. Community involvement

The role of community stakeholders in Wirral’s Parks and Countryside Service

Friends and stakeholders are increasingly an integral part of the way the Council wants to take forward the Parks and Countryside Service.

In 2013 a new ‘Parks and Countryside Partnership and Performance Board’ was launched, with membership from a range of stakeholders. The Board meets on a quarterly cycle. Members receive, assess and provide feedback on reports about the performance of Wirral Parks and Countryside Service, measured against agreed performance standards and indicators from the Green and Open Space Strategy. The Board provides expert stakeholder input and advice to support the service and will participates in performance monitoring.

A Wirral Green and Open Space Strategy Key Stakeholder Workshop was held in 2013 to discuss the following topics: the ten year vision; the future role of Council, Friends Groups, volunteers and other partners; and the health, education, environmental sustainability, biodiversity and economic benefits of green and open spaces. The workshop summary can be viewed on the Council website https://www.wirral.gov.uk/leisure-parks-and-events/parks-and-open-spaces/parks-development-and-maintenance

Wirral’s Parks Friends groups are invited to attend a Park’s Forum held twice a year. This presents an opportunity for the various groups to network and share their experiences. Collectively the Friends of Wirral Parks produce a quarterly newsletter with contributions from all friends groups.

Sometimes the Mayor of Wirral holds a Civic Reception at the Town Hall in recognition of the efforts and contribution made by the friends and community groups on behalf of the Borough’s parks.

The role of the Friends of Ashton Park

Community involvement involves a good understanding of the market the park serves, involvement in the park to make it an inclusive part of the community, opening up of the park to as wide a range of activities as possible. It also involves seeking out grants and trust funds that will support the activities of the FOAP in organising events and funding improvements to the park.

Audience for brass band concert
Market research by the Friends, most recently in 2009 has formed the foundation for improved links with the local community within West Kirby and farther afield and has assisted in creating the management plan. Studies always require updating.

The formation of the Friends in 1991 gave a community voice in the management of the park and the committee aims to maintain the profile and ambition of the Friends as a group of people with the desire to make a difference within the local community. The Friends seek to maintain their understanding of the community needs by expanding membership, joining other local organisations, presenting a welcoming face to the public through the teashop, encouraging events and by a frequent presence in the park. This work is supported by Wirral Council staff and local councillors.

Involvement in local issues and the establishment of links with various organisations is a priority for the Friends. They are represented at all West Wirral Area Forums that are organised to promote local debate and provide a public and local interface between councillors, Wirral officers and the public. Through this medium the Friends are able to influence local decision-making and ensure the needs of Ashton Park and other open spaces are taken into account.

**Model Boating Club:** Wirral Model Boating Club are based in the park, and have regular events on Thursday afternoons. They also hold special events on weekends throughout the year.

**Bowling Clubs:** Three bowling clubs occupy the two bowls pavilions in the park.

**The Park as a focus for community activity**

The achievements of the Friends group have been exemplary: open-air theatre, cinema, brass band and jazz concerts reintroduced, the fairs have been expanded in size and attractions, a grassed performance area created near the teashop, fingerpost signs installed, new notice boards and interpretation signs have been erected for information, information provided on wildlife and topical issues, a feature fountain in the lake and good progress is being made on replanting to improve the appearance and interest in the park.

The holding of concerts has been eased with the purchase of a performance tent and a public address system and the conversion of the disused shed in the Upper Park for the storage of the tent and chairs. Electricity was reconnected adjacent to the tennis courts in 2016 to facilitate the open air cinema. The supply will also help with other events in the upper park.
The Friends group aim to open the tea shop on Saturday and Sunday afternoons throughout the year, staffed entirely by volunteers, to raise money for the park.

The May Fair is a major local community attraction, with 3000-4000 people attending.

Community organisations take an interest with carol concerts, club tea parties and days out.

**Sports development**

The competition tennis courts have been converted into a junior league football pitch (hired by West Kirby Panthers).

A multi-use games unit containing a five a side football pitch and basketball court was completed in 2007 and has proved to be incredibly popular with all ages.

Buggy fitness classes are popular, and take place in the park in the summer lead by Council staff from West Kirby Concourse Leisure Centre. [https://www.wirral.gov.uk/leisure-parks-and-events/leisure-centres/find-class-or-activity/classes/buggy-park-fitness](https://www.wirral.gov.uk/leisure-parks-and-events/leisure-centres/find-class-or-activity/classes/buggy-park-fitness)

An orienteering course has been set up with assistance from the Deeside Orienteering Club. The course is aimed at introducing schools, guides, scouts and other groups to the sport.

A Boules court was built in the upper park in 2013. It is hoped that a team can be established who can use the tennis pavilion.

A tennis development plan was launched in 2017 in partnership with the Lawn Tennis Association, with a programme for people of all ages, to encourage participation in the sport.

**Education provision**

The ranger for West Kirby, Hoylake and Meols is available to lead educational visits; the newly renovated pavilion is a resource which has the potential to support education use.

The ranger also supports volunteers and students working towards Duke of Edinburgh Awards at various levels.

Recent years have seen a gradual expansion of links with community, school and youth organisations (such as the guides, beavers, St Bridget’s School and other primary schools, St Bridget’s Sunday school, First Contact and the Churches Together.

The FOAP and a local artist developed the design for the mural in the children's playground, with artistic input from St Bridget’s Primary School (2015).

Active Drama were undertook youth drama workshops and put on a performances on local history in the park (2011).

The Friends developed a tree trail that is on sale at the cafe.

A series of interpretation boards are in various stages of planning and design (see action plan).
Work Placements for Students

In 2016/17 two students were given work experience placements with the West Kirby, Hoylake and Meols gardening team in partnership with Reaseheath College and Wirral Metropolitan college. Further information is available on request.

Achievements 2015/16

Maintaining Activities in the Park:
5 Band Concerts
May Fair, FOAP teashop and working parties
Batwatch and Mothtrapping
3 Bowls Clubs, Model Boating Club, West Kirby Panthers Junior Football, Mother and Baby Fitness
Xmas Fair (2015)
Continued operation of teashop
Boules – U3A group start using the court in 2016
Encouragement of other organisations to use teashop
New Activity - Moonlight Flicks (2016) Staffed partly by volunteers
Mentoring other Parks Groups– Dawstone Park and Sandlea Park (both now set up)
Lord Lieutenant’s Visit
Work placement students are being trained
8. Marketing

The Wirral Council web site www.wirral.gov.uk has information about Ashton Park. The Parks and Countryside Service’s homepage now includes links to information about Wirral’s Green Flag parks.

A website was set up by the Friends in 2005 http://www.ashtonpark.btck.co.uk/ Work is always needed to keep the website up to date.

Market research is the basis of any marketing in giving an understanding of the users and their needs. Market research was undertaken in 2003 and 2009 and the analysis report is available for inspection on request. Further work is always needed to keep the information up to date.

Community links have been expanded by the Friends to reach the community more effectively. A newsletter (available to non-members in the teashop) has been produced twice a year since 2003, and in 2014 an additional e-mail newsletter covering topical issues and events was launched. An AGM is held for members including a topical guest speaker.

Also Barbara Mason’s book “A Little Oasis” is on sale in the teashop.

The Friends give talks on the park’s history, nature and activities.

Information on events is important to ensure good attendances, raise funds and give credit to our sponsors and grant agencies. Press coverage is issued for events and posters are posted extensively in the local area and farther afield.

A Community Notice board has been erected by the teashop for other organisations to use. It is hoped this will further raise the profile of the park in the local community.

In 2014 the FOAP began taking part in Wirral’s annual ‘Heritage Open Days’ event. Heritage Open Days are an opportunity to acknowledge and celebrate the local history and heritage. It is an opportunity for the doors of history to be opened and the heritage inside to be revealed and celebrated.

Every year, in September, the Heritage Open Days offer an opportunity for the public to discover the heritage that shapes where we live now, and the lives of our forefathers.

The event is publicised on the Council’s tourism site ‘Visit Wirral’ http://www.visitwirral.com/whats-on/heritage-open-days

Achievements 2015/16

Newsletters ongoing
E-Mail News Bulletins ongoing
Maintenance of Website
9. Management

Resources available for maintenance and management of the park

The management of the park is the responsibility of Wirral Council’s Parks, Allotments and Countryside team. Following a major restructure in 2015 the parks service was reorganised on into geographical areas. The local team is managed by the Local Team Leader for West Kirby, Hoylake and Meols. The Local Team Leader, Grounds Maintenance Supervisor and a mobile team of 6 Gardeners and one Ranger are based on-site at the park.

- West Wirral Area Parks Manager
- Local Team Leader for West Kirby, Hoylake and Meols based in the park
- Grounds Maintenance Supervisor
- 6 Gardeners
- 1 Ranger
- Range of tools and machinery
- 2 flat back vans with trailers
- Further tools, machinery and storage at Arrowe Park depot
- Vehicle repair and maintenance depot in Birkenhead
- Support from Wirral West winter tree team
- Wirral asset management team who maintain buildings
- Volunteers, placement students

Enquiries about the management of the park should be directed to the West Wirral Area Parks Manager on: 0151 606 2004. Email: christinesmyth@wirral.gov.uk

The Parks and Countryside Service like other public services around the country is experiencing budgetary pressure and face challenging times to deliver service improvements. Increasing emphasis on commercialisation will be a challenge for council staff and voluntary groups alike.

The Friends of Ashton Park play an integral part in the management of the park with regular communication in person, by email and at regular monthly meetings.

Implementing the management plan

The Friends meet regularly on the first Friday of each month with Wirral Council Staff, and hold an annual meeting to agree updates to the management plan as part of the annual Green Flag reapplication process.

Some recent achievements:
- Extension of the children’s playground
- Refurbishment of playground
- Continued replanting programmes and planting bulbs and primulas
- Improvement of sightlines and shrub beds
- Creation of a new mini-performance area with landscaping and wood-carvings
- Refurbishment of the Footbridge over the Wirral Way
- New notice boards and interpretation boards
- Fingerpost signs
- Gateway to the Wirral Way
- Accessible toilet facilities
- Refurbishment of Lower Park pavilion
- Creation of planets trail
- Events programme and fund raising activities
- Woodcarving
List of grant organisations from which funds have been received:

- Awards for All
- Department of Children, Schools and Families
- Grassroots Grant
- Green Machine
- Merseyrail and Merseytravel
- Grassroots Grant
- St Bridget’s Church Community Fund
- Wirral Community Initiatives Fund / Funds for All
- ‘Your Wirral’
- West Wirral Community Fund

Achievements 2015/16

New local Management and supervisory structure introduced
Area Depot and Compound – Area office, gardener’s accommodation, equipment store, FOAP and model boating stores, recycling and composting locations
Drainage of compound, new sewer, water and electrical connections
### Action Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Lead Officer</th>
<th>Resource</th>
<th>Target Date</th>
<th>Objective Achieved</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A Welcoming Place</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue rolling programme of entrance planting improvements</td>
<td>Area Team Leader/ Friends</td>
<td>Council/ Friends</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>2017 2018 2019 2020 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide entrance signage (welcome boards) to three entrances –the lodge, Carpenters Lane and Wirral Way with maps of the park</td>
<td>Area Team Leader/ Friends</td>
<td>To be established</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Replace large entrance boards at the Lodge and St Bridgets</td>
<td>Area Team Leader</td>
<td>Council, as resources allow</td>
<td>2017</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide standardised (Broxap) seating through donation scheme</td>
<td>Area Team Leader</td>
<td>Aim for self-funding through public donations</td>
<td>Annual replacement</td>
<td>2017 2018 2019 2020 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undertake tree surgery to assist under storey planting</td>
<td>Area Team Leader</td>
<td>Parks team</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>2017 2018 2019 2020 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plant specimen fruit trees in the secret garden</td>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>Friends/ Park staff</td>
<td>2017</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue bulb planting across Park</td>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>2017 2019 2021</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclude works to pavilion, including the toilet, teashop and central facilities block</td>
<td>Asset Management</td>
<td>Asset management/ Parks service</td>
<td>2017</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue wood carving programme in performance area and secret garden on animals in literature theme</td>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>Voluntary</td>
<td>2017 2018 2019 2020 2021</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Healthy, Safe and Secure</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repair the orienteering course</td>
<td>Ranger and D of E volunteers</td>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>Feb 2017</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retain the pest control contract</td>
<td>Area Team Leader</td>
<td>Parks service</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erect Dog signs in sports area</td>
<td>Area Team Leader</td>
<td>Parks service</td>
<td>Feb 2017</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retain and develop links with youth organisations, schools and police</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Council, aim for self funding</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue rolling programme of footpath repair</td>
<td>Area Team Leader / Landscape Officer</td>
<td>Parks team PPM budget</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>2017 2018 2019 2020 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renew electrics in upper pavilion</td>
<td>Asset Management</td>
<td>Council</td>
<td>2017</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task Description</td>
<td>Responsible Party</td>
<td>Related Party/ Program</td>
<td>Action Takers</td>
<td>Expected Completion Year(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review sightlines on an annual basis and undertake remedial pruning as required</td>
<td>Area Team Leader</td>
<td>Parks service</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>2017 2018 2019 2020 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clean and Well Maintained</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Replacement of tennis court chainlink fencing with steel mesh</td>
<td>Area Team Leader</td>
<td>As funds become available</td>
<td></td>
<td>2017 2018 2019 2020 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitor lake wall condition as part of annual site safety inspection</td>
<td>Area Parks Manager</td>
<td>Parks service</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>2017 2018 2019 2020 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain metal heritage features on a rolling programme</td>
<td>Area Team Leader / Friends</td>
<td>As funds become available</td>
<td></td>
<td>2017 2018 2019 2020 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address drainage problem on upper bowling green and continue to monitor</td>
<td>Area Team Leader</td>
<td>Within existing resources</td>
<td>2017 and</td>
<td>2017 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renew and replace platforms in the lake</td>
<td>Ranger/ Model Boating Club</td>
<td>Parks Service</td>
<td>March 2017</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue bench and notice-board restoration in partnership with Star Design</td>
<td>Friends/ Area Team Leader</td>
<td>Friends</td>
<td></td>
<td>2017 2018 2019 2020 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plant specimen fruit trees in the secret garden</td>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>Friends / Parks team</td>
<td>2017/18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Replant rose beds</td>
<td>Team Leader/ Friends</td>
<td>Friends/ parks team</td>
<td>In winter as</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Replant hedge along Church Road</td>
<td>Team Leader</td>
<td>Parks team</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepare a tree replacement plan</td>
<td>Team Leader</td>
<td>To be determined</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sustainability</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construct compost bays to aid recycling of green waste within the park</td>
<td>Area Team Leader / Ranger</td>
<td>Parks service</td>
<td>Dec 2018</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aim to reduce and source plants grown in peat free compost</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue monitoring gas, electricity and water consumption</td>
<td>Area Team Leader</td>
<td>Council</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue sourcing furniture from sustainable sources</td>
<td>Area Team Leader</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitor lake water quality and improve bio-diversity in the lake by planting and control of wildfowl</td>
<td>Area Team Leader</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obtain quotations for removal of silt from lake</td>
<td>Area Team Leader</td>
<td>Costs examined for pumped removal</td>
<td>January 2017</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investigate sources of funding for removal of silt from lake</td>
<td>ALL</td>
<td>To be established</td>
<td>January 2018</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erect morepermanent signage for advisory duck-feeding stations</td>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>June 2017</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sell specialist duck food in the teashop to reduce the use of bread by the public</td>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task</td>
<td>Responsible Party</td>
<td>From/With</td>
<td>Time Frame</td>
<td>Notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue to minimise pesticide usage</td>
<td>Area Team Leader</td>
<td>From Existing Resources</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mulch roses with well rotted FYM</td>
<td>Area Team Leader</td>
<td>Parks service</td>
<td>Every other year</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Replace electricity supply in upper bowls pavilion</td>
<td>Asset Management Team</td>
<td>Council</td>
<td>2017</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conservation and Heritage</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage wildlife and diversity through the installation of bird/bat boxes and maintain</td>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>To be established</td>
<td>Annual maintenance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-establish further wildflower areas in Park</td>
<td>Area Team Leader</td>
<td>To be identified</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue tree pruning / replanting to aid longevity and re-establishment</td>
<td>Area Team Leader From Existing Resources</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>2017 2018 2019 2020 2021</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Produce a suite of heritage interpretation boards for the park (tennis, WWI tank, bowling, railway etc)</td>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>April 2017</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Install heritage interpretation boards around the park</td>
<td>Area Team Leader</td>
<td>Parks team</td>
<td>April 2017</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Install new displays in the pavilion (historical and topical subjects)</td>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>To be determined</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restore the Hilda Shipman memorial bench</td>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>April 2017</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progress display of historic Tennis Tournament scoreboard</td>
<td>Friends/Team Leader</td>
<td>To be determined</td>
<td>July 2018</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community Involvement</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All groups to work together in a positive way, and maintain constructive relationships</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deliver a varied annual programme of events</td>
<td>Friends/ Area Team Leader</td>
<td>Aim for self-funding</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue to seek external funding for events and park improvements</td>
<td>Area Team Leader/Friends</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue working with schools and youth organisations in the park</td>
<td>Ranger/ Friends</td>
<td>Aim toward self-funding where possible</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiate tennis development programme in partnership with the Lawn Tennis Association</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>LTA/Council aim for self-funding</td>
<td>2017</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task</td>
<td>Responsible Party</td>
<td>Funding Type</td>
<td>Strategy Period</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase use of tennis courts</td>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>Aim for self-funding</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage use of boules court, refurbish the court and rules plaque</td>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>Aim for self-funding</td>
<td>2017/18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research outdoor table tennis installation</td>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>Aim for self-funding</td>
<td>2017/18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reintroduce drama in the park</td>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>Aim for self-funding</td>
<td>2017?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Marketing**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Responsible Party</th>
<th>Funding Type</th>
<th>Strategy Period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Upgrade information on the Wirral Council website</td>
<td>Service Manager</td>
<td>Parks service</td>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refresh the Friends website</td>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>Volunteer time</td>
<td>2017/18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refresh market research</td>
<td>Friends/ Area Team Leader</td>
<td>Parks service, volunteer time</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Install leaflet racks inside and outside the pavilion</td>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take part in Heritage Weekend event</td>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>Friends/ voluntary</td>
<td>Annual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publish regular newsletter and email bulletins</td>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>Friends/ voluntary</td>
<td>Seasonal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Management**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Responsible Party</th>
<th>Funding Type</th>
<th>Strategy Period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maintain Green Flag status through continuous improvement</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Parks budget, income generation schemes, Grants</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain a management plan to deliver short-term and longer-term improvement to the quality of the park</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Parks budget, volunteer time</td>
<td>Annual review as part of GF reapplication process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pursue funding for events and improvements, and generate income for the park through new projects</td>
<td>All Parties</td>
<td></td>
<td>Annual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish Ashton Park as the working base for the Local Area Parks team by redeveloping the works yard</td>
<td>Council Parks Service and Asset Management Team</td>
<td>Transformation budget, Asset Management and Parks Service</td>
<td>December 2017</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8. APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Location Plan
Appendix 2: Aerial Photograph
Appendix 3: Ashton Park Service Requirement

Cleansing: litter, rubbish & leaf collection

Collect and remove litter and refuse from all of the sites included within the service requirement. In the case of adopted highway verges this responsibility is limited to the occasions immediately prior to grass cutting activities. Government guidance and Regulations for the disposal of noxious or hazardous waste, for example empty chemical containers or ‘sharps’ shall be followed.

Inspect and empty all litter bins, and dispose of the rubbish, clear all litter from around each bin.

The Environmental Protection Act 1990 does not specify frequencies and this requires the requisite standards to be maintained by:

- Ensuring familiarity with site plans and locations
- Programming works effectively
- Applying resources appropriately

Litter control shall conform to the Environmental Protection Act 1990: Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse (updated November 2006).

The park shall be maintained to Grade B standard in accordance with the Code of Practice Part 1: litter and refuse

- Predominately free of litter and refuse apart from some small items

The maximum response time to restore to Grade A standard (no litter or refuse) if it falls below Grade B shall be 1 day; this means by 6pm the following day.

Ensure that all staff uses their reasonable endeavours to collect and minimise the effects of litter on the sites, whenever it is encountered in the pursuance of their duties, whether or not those duties are primarily litter control.

Sweeping and cleansing

This requirement is applicable to all surfaces other than grass within all sites. The entire surfaces of all tarmac, concrete or paved areas, rubberised surfaces and tiles, including play facilities and safety surfaces and other surface areas including loose surfaces such as bark and shale shall be kept clear in accordance with the Environmental Protection Act 1990: Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse (updated November 2006) to Grade B standard.

Sweeping, including gutters and drainage channels within the surface areas, shall be carried out by appropriate methods that do not damage or disrupt the surface.

Surfaces shall be washed down whenever necessary in order to maintain a clean and useable area.

All paths and hard surfaces shall be swept at even intervals and be kept cleared of grass cuttings following mowing operations.

All slippery surfaces caused by whatsoever nature, shall be made safe by the removal and / or treatment of the hazard.
All hard surfaces shall be maintained in a substantially weed free condition including moss and algae growth.

**Fallen leaves**

Fallen leaves shall be regularly cleared from areas of:

- Main entrances and key pedestrian routes and paths
- Visitors’ centres and attractions
- Ornamental grass areas
- Soft horticultural features such as bedding and herbaceous borders
- Surfaces within play areas
- Grass sports pitches and facilities
- All weather sports pitches and facilities

Leaf clearance shall take place so that the features remain:

- In good horticultural condition
- And / or useable for sports play
- And / or with a safe, well drained hard surface

Any leaves that have accumulated into drifts or are unsightly or damaging to plants and bulbs shall be removed as a priority.

The operation shall be carried out frequently throughout the autumn in order to facilitate shrubbery and rose bed cultivation, and to prevent leaves from spreading back onto lawns, paths, hard surfaces, sports and horticultural features. Where necessary, after leaf clearance, beds shall be lightly pricked through to remove footmarks.

The final clearance of all autumn leaves shall be completed by the end of December in each year of the contract period.

**Graffiti and fly-tipping**

Information on graffiti and fly tipping shall be collected. Data shall provide such data to the Service Manager on a weekly basis as part of his weekly inspection reports.

Data for incidents of graffiti shall include:

- Date
- Location
- Surface type
- Paint type
- Description including offensive characteristics

Offensive or racist graffiti shall be reported as a priority. This shall be reported to the Service Manager within one hour of identification, to enable this to be removed by the Employer’s specialist operator within 24 hours.

Fly tipping shall be defined as any single quantity of tipped material that cannot be lifted by two members of staff and removed from the site. If tipped material can be lifted by two members of staff, it is deemed to be covered by the litter control clauses of this service requirement.

All instances of fly tipping shall be reported to the Service Manager.
Grass maintenance

The use of growth regulators will not be permitted.

All grass cutting machinery used across the entire range of standards shall be appropriate and fit for the purpose of achieving the specified standard.

On each occasion that grass cutting takes place the following shall be achieved:

- An even, uniform sward to the requisite height across 100% of the surface area, including all obstacles, grass margins, weed growth, seed and flower spikes and bents.
- Litter on areas to be mown shall be removed immediately prior to mowing.
- Any litter subsequently shredded as a result of the mowing operation, shall be collected and removed

Should grass exceed the maximum permissible height, the grass shall be brought back into conformance by frequent repeat mowing.

The use of herbicides around obstacles and margins shall not be permitted on ornamental and associated grass areas. The use of appropriate herbicides to kill growth around obstacles and margins in other areas shall be permitted unless otherwise stipulated in the relevant site management plan or by instruction from the Service Manager. In such areas, the maximum bandwidth of kill shall not exceed 50mm.

The edges of turf adjacent to hard surfaces, cut backs, planted borders, beds, channels and kerbs shall be kept maintained to a neat even line. On each occasion of re-cutting all finished bed edges shall be sharp, neat and vertical.

In the case of ornamental lawns all cuttings, clippings or other mowing arisings, no matter where they fall, shall be removed for recycling or reuse immediately on completion of the operation.

All cuttings, clippings or other mowing arisings across the complete spectrum of grass mowing operations which land on hard surfaces, shrub borders or flower beds shall be cleaned up and removed immediately on completion of mowing.

Arisings that fall on general grass/amenity grass, highway urban verges and rural verges shall not normally require removal, unless excessive growth has occurred, in which case arisings shall be collected and removed for recycling or reuse.

Unless otherwise stipulated in the relevant site management plan, grass areas over naturalised Narcissus, Galanthus and Crocus bulbs etc, shall remain uncut from the commencement of the grass cutting season to the third week in May, unless the bulb leaves have died down sooner, at which time the grass and bulb tops shall be cut and removed and the areas brought into conformance with the surrounding areas. Subsequently these areas are to be maintained to the same standard as the rest of the area.

In drought conditions, subject to the approval of the Service Manager, the height of cut shall be adjusted so as not to cause added stress and damage to the sward. If grass growth is at a standstill an obligation remains to control grass and weed flower spikes by cutting.

On resumption of mowing operations after adverse weather conditions have caused them to cease, ensure that a return to the appropriate standard is achieved by increasing the frequency of mowing.
**Premium ornamental and ornamental grass**

Premium ornamental areas and ornamental areas shall be maintained so that they are substantially free from weeds, coarse grasses, moss and algae by cultural methods and the application of approved pesticides. Cutting machines shall be cylinder type for fine turf maintenance. For premium ornamental areas the arisings shall be boxed off and recycled or reused. For ornamental areas there is no requirement for boxing off arisings.

All premium ornamental and ornamental grass areas shall be maintained within the specified height range:

- Minimum height 8 mm
- Maximum height 15 mm

Premium ornamental and ornamental grass maintenance shall include all necessary:

- Pest, disease and weed control
- Fertilising
- Scarifying
- Aeration
- Rolling
- Irrigation
- Seasonal renovation

**General/amenity grass**

All general/amenity grass areas shall be maintained within the specified height range:

- Minimum height 25 mm
- Maximum height 60 mm

Hard landscape infrastructure: hard surfaces – roadways, pathways, car parks; parks and green spaces site infrastructure – benches, lighting, fencing, walls (see also Cleansing: litter, rubbish & leaf collection)

Undertake a rolling programme of condition surveys of the hard landscape infrastructure of parks, open spaces and other sites.

**Hard surfaces weed control**

Undertake a programme of effective weed control on all hard surfaces including roads; footpaths, car parks, steps, ramps and bridges Including the bases of all walls and fences where adjoining hard surfaces, along kerbstones and around landscape and park furniture. The use of residual herbicides shall not be permitted.

**Hard surfaces gritting, salting and snow clearance**

Hard surface gritting, salting and snow clearance is required to ensure that, where reasonably practicable, safe passage along a road or footpath is not endangered by snow ice.

Although there is no requirement to treat all roads and footpaths there are locations where this is required. The sites and areas to be treated are limited to those where essential only access is required which includes to cemetery chapels, access for planned burials, visitor and community centres and known problem locations and hazardous gradients.
Treatment shall include pre-treating to prevent ice from forming and post treating when ice has formed or snow has accumulated.

**Benches and seating**

All benches and seating, including picnic benches & tables, shall be kept clean at all times, and in good order through the use of such means as repainting or re-staining surfaces according to type of material.

**Fences, railings, walls, gates, handrails, stiles, boardwalks, revetments and bollards**

Any minor repairs such as loose bolts, protruding nails and sanding of sharp edges shall be undertaken. All other repairs must be reported to the Service Manager.

Defects, which represent a hazard that cannot be repaired immediately, must be made safe until an effective repair can be undertaken.

Regularly maintain gates, locks and mechanisms to ensure good working condition.

**Notice boards and signs**

Keep all signs, signposts and notice boards clean at all times and in good order through the use of such means as repainting or re-staining surfaces according to type of material of construction.

**Shrubs, roses, herbaceous and annual bedding**

Maintain shrub beds attractively presented, free of litter, weeds, other unwanted vegetation, and pests and diseases. The use of residual herbicides shall not be permitted.

Shrubs shall be maintained by pruning and training using the best horticultural practices to allow the development of each shrub in keeping with its habit, location and purpose.

Cultivation work in weather or ground conditions that would be harmful to the soil condition and its structure shall not be undertaken.

Observe that the purpose of pruning is to establish a strong framework of branches, keeping the shrubs healthy and vigorous, maintaining the size, shape and balance, whilst ensuring the maximum amount of flowering wood and fruit are produced.

Carry out the pruning of individual shrubs and roses appropriate to the requirements of each species or cultivar.

**Annual spring and summer bedding**

*General requirements:*

Herbicides shall not be used in beds that are used for annual bedding Cultivation. Work in weather or ground conditions that would be harmful to the soil condition and its structure shall not be undertaken.

The original shape of the bed shall be maintained and all work performed in a manner that protects the bed and its turf edges.

Replace and clean up any plants damaged by minor acts of vandalism.
Replace any plants damaged during maintenance operations.

Remove all stones, weeds, roots and other debris generated by the cultivation and planting operations.

*Annual Spring and Summer Bedding - Plans and Schedules:*

By June of the previous year submit to the Service Manager for approval his proposed schedules of bedding cultivars and designs to be used. This will be based on existing bedding plans and bed quantities.

*Annual Spring and Summer Bedding - Supply of Plants and Bulbs:*

Have responsibility for the supply, delivery, quality, quantity and health of all plants and bulbs

- From delivery
- Throughout the distribution and planting process
- Whilst in-situ in beds
- Until the plants are stripped at the end of the appropriate flowering season

Bedding plants shall be high quality fully finished plants, acclimatized and ready to plant out. Plants shall be well rooted, of uniform growth, and pest, disease and weed free.

Bedding plants shall conform to amc 6 pack size for main bedding plants and amc 9 for all edging plants. Specimen and dot plants shall be in individual pots.

Any plants that are damaged, that die, or are vandalised, stolen or fail to establish, shall be replaced within 48 hours of discovery.

Be fully responsible for the storage and/or disposal of all containers, boxes and pots.

*Annual Spring and Summer Bedding - Density of Planting:*

On completion, beds shall be fully stocked to sufficient density that the bedding foliage covers at least 80% of the surface area leaving no more than 20% as exposed soil.

*Annual Spring and Summer Bedding – Clearance:*

The previous season's bedding shall be cleared twice per annum, normally in May and October, when individual spring and summer bedding displays have finished flowering.

*Annual Spring and Summer Bedding - Planting and Maintenance:*

Bedding plants, including edging plants, specimen or dot plants, corms, bulbs or tubers, shall all be planted in accordance with good horticultural practice.

Planting of all beds shall be carried out within two weeks of clearance of the previous season's bedding. Plants and bulbs shall be positioned and planted in accordance with the planting schedules.

Preparation and maintenance for annual bedding displays shall include all necessary:
Cultivation
Incorporation of organic matter
Fertilizing
Levelling and consolidation
Adjustment of soil levels
Irrigation
Dead heading/removal of dead and damaged foliage
Weed control
Staking and tying
Pest and disease control
Removal of early flowering bulbs

Hedges – ornamental and non-ornamental

Maintain all ornamental and non-ornamental hedges to their previously cut height, width and shape, ensuring that the top and sides of each hedge are cut neatly so that all growth is removed to the point of the previous cut on the old wood. Maintain hedges to ensure the safe and free flow of motor traffic along adopted highways and other vehicle routes, and to ensure the safe and free flow of pedestrians and cyclists along adopted highway footpaths and all other access routes across sites.

All trimmings shall be removed for recycling or reuse.

The base of the hedge shall be left clean, tidy and vegetation free on every occasion the hedge is cut.

Be aware of his obligations when undertaking any work on or near a highway with regard to public safety and traffic regulations.

Planting areas general – replacement, renewal and new planting

Where requested by the Service Manager proposals for replacement, renewal and new planting of shrubs, roses and hedging shall be submitted.

Children’s play areas

Play areas shall be 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 and to the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) 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 www.rospa.com

Inspection shall be recorded either manually or electronically and logged with the Employer within the week following the inspection.
Only trained and competent staff, that has attended a recognised and appropriate course run by RoSPA or similar training body, shall carry out maintenance operations which shall be undertaken in a safe and thorough manner.

Minor repairs and adjustments shall be 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 shall be made safe until an effective repair is undertaken.

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

Major repairs identified during the inspection shall be reported immediately to the Service Manager.

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.

Arrange for an independent annual recorded inspection of all play areas by RoSPA or similar accredited organisation. The inspection shall be a full mechanical and physical examination and include a risk assessment for each play area, and indicate compliance with the Equality Act.

**Public toilets**

Be responsible as key-holder for opening, closing and securing the buildings.

Maintain public toilets to a sufficiently high level of cleanliness to protect public health and maintain good appearance.

Toilets shall be kept free from unacceptable odours. All sanitary ware shall be kept free from all, stains; dirt and any build up of lime scale or dry germ. A streak and smear free finish shall be achieved.

Replace where necessary all consumables such as toilet rolls.

Use best endeavours to conserve supplied utilities including electricity and water, and arrange access for the reading of meters by the utility suppliers.

Store all equipment and materials in a safe condition and provide and display the necessary warning signs/barriers to ensure public safety during cleaning operations.

Remove any graffiti as part of the cleaning operation.

Comply with all the responsibilities and requirements on waste collection and disposal.

Inspect the premises after each cleaning operation and notify the Service Manager immediately of any fitting or part of the building requiring repair or replacement.

**Trees and woodland**

All tree work shall be undertaken in accordance with BS 3998: 2010 ‘Recommendations for tree work’. Be responsible for making all necessary checks to determine if there are any laws and regulations, including Tree Preservation Orders that would affect any work proposed, and to ensure that all permissions and licences are gained prior to proceeding with work.
All persons employed to undertake tree work, shall be suitably trained and qualified and shall be in possession of appropriate certification.

Consider all paths, grassed areas, pavements, kerbs, approach roads, manhole covers, fences, walls, overhead cabling etc that are either adjacent to or on the work area. These are to be preserved in good condition and make all necessary arrangements to make good any damage to the entire satisfaction of the Service Manager.

Include for stump removal and subsequent surface reinstatement following tree felling in highways locations. Stumps intended for permanent retention should be cut at a specified height and left free from snags.

On completion of all tree work ensure that the work area is thoroughly cleaned and is left in a condition appropriate for its intended use.

All timber and brushwood resulting from tree work shall be disposed of. The only exceptions to this shall be at woodland locations where the Service Manager may instruct timber and brushwood to be retained on site. The Service Manager may on occasion instruct delivery of brushwood chippings to sites within the Borough where these materials are required for composting, mulching, or creating footpaths or bridleways.

All trees and woodland – emergency and out of hours call out service

Provide a 24 hour, 365 days a year, emergency and out of hours call out response service for trees or limbs that have collapsed or are in a dangerous condition. A response unit consisting of a minimum of two suitably trained staff with appropriate vehicle and equipment shall be provided within one hour’s notice following notification of an event by the Service Manager or emergency services authority. Incidents of this nature are often associated with high winds, collision damage, root severance and acts of vandalism.

Provide sufficient labour, vehicles and equipment required for emergency tree work operations. Heavy lifting equipment and cranes will need to be obtained as soon as reasonably practicable for special operations.

Trees in parks

Have a duty of care to ensure that users of parks, green spaces, cemeteries, churchyards and golf courses and all adjacent land and neighbouring properties are not at unreasonable risk from possible failure of trees. As part of the regular site health and safety inspections assess and act on any tree related risks.

Individual trees in parks and green spaces – arboricultural management

Undertake reactive management of selected trees in parks, green spaces, golf courses, cemeteries and churchyards in response to hazard risk identification, through an agreed programme of work. This may be supplemented by requests/complaints received from members of the public and others.

Individual trees in parks and green spaces – replacement and renewal

Undertake occasional requests for commemorative and other tree planting within cemeteries, parks and green spaces.

Vandalism and third party damage (see also Cleansing: litter, rubbish & leaf collection)
Work with community stakeholders and partner organisations to reduce vandalism and anti-social behaviour in sites covered by the service.

**Soft landscape**

Rectify minor incidents of vandalism or third party damage to soft landscape features including trees, planted and grassed areas within 24 hours, inclusive within his routine maintenance activities. This shall include any minor incidents of damage caused by any other source.

**Hard landscape infrastructure**

Rectify minor damage to fencing, gates, walling, furniture, signage, notice boards, lighting and surfacing and other hard landscape infrastructure resulting from any act of vandalism or third party damage within 24 hours, inclusive within his routine maintenance activities. This shall include any minor damage caused by any other source. Minor damage shall be defined as requiring no more than 1 hour of labour per occasion to rectify with a minimal requirement for materials.

For more significant incidents of vandalism or third party damage make safe immediately.
## Appendix 4: Green Flag Judge’s Feedback and response

### Ashton Park
**Wirral Council**
**Green Flag Award 2013/2014**

### Band scores

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Desk Assessment</th>
<th>0-9</th>
<th>10-14</th>
<th>15-19</th>
<th>20-24</th>
<th>25-30</th>
<th>55-59</th>
<th>60-64</th>
<th>65-70</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Field Assessment</td>
<td>20-29</td>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>40-44</td>
<td>45-49</td>
<td>50-54</td>
<td>55-59</td>
<td>60-64</td>
<td>65-70</td>
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<tr>
<td>Overall score</td>
<td>30-44</td>
<td>45-54</td>
<td>55-59</td>
<td>60-65</td>
<td>66-69</td>
<td>70-74</td>
<td>75-79</td>
<td>80+</td>
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</table>

### Status - Pass

**Overall band score 75-79**

#### Desk Assessment Feedback

**Band score 20-24**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Recommendations</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Presentation</strong></td>
<td>A good clear document which has been updated since the last inspection. It puts the site into its local context.</td>
<td>Would be useful to have a staffing structure to help understand where responsibility lies.</td>
<td>In Plan Appendix 4, at time of writing a new staff structure chart is awaited.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health, Safety &amp; Security</strong></td>
<td>The on-site staff and police and community support officers assist in giving reassurance to users.</td>
<td>There should be programmed tree inspections rather than reactive work only.</td>
<td>Funding for an Arboriculture Resource has been agreed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Maintenance of equipment, buildings &amp; landscape</strong></td>
<td>Regular checks in place. Good reports of fast graffiti removal as described.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Litter, cleanliness, vandalism</strong></td>
<td>Dog free play area. Site litter picked daily.</td>
<td></td>
<td>No further comment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Environmental Sustainability</strong></td>
<td>Borough wide policies in place. Good balance between ‘best practice’ and pragmatism.</td>
<td></td>
<td>No further comment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conservation of heritage &amp; nature</strong></td>
<td>Awareness shown of heritage features in the plan and of biodiversity opportunities.</td>
<td></td>
<td>No further comment.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Field Assessment Feedback

**Band score 50-54**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Recommendations</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A Welcoming Place</strong></td>
<td>Good entrances with signing and reassuring tidy appearance.</td>
<td>No further comment.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Healthy, Safe and Secure</strong></td>
<td>Dog free play area. On site staff provide a reassuring presence and police observed walking through; high levels of positive use recognised as way to deter possible misuse..</td>
<td>Tree inspections needed. Address worn exposed concrete haunching to wall in play area.</td>
<td>Actioned.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clean and Well Maintained</strong></td>
<td>Very clean site with good standards of maintenance. Good partnership approach to identifying priorities for budgets.</td>
<td>Continue to address weeds which are occasionally present.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sustainability</strong></td>
<td>Relatively little taken off site.</td>
<td>No further comments.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conservation and Heritage</strong></td>
<td>Good to see distinctive turnstiles painted and</td>
<td>Consider further opportunities to</td>
<td>Bat and bird boxes are already erected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Involvement</td>
<td>Excellent levels of involvement from Friends who have wide range of community interests and ideas for provision.</td>
<td>Continue to ensure younger persons interests are catered for.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>The provision of information through notice boards and through involvement of people is strong and appropriate for this site.</td>
<td>No further comment.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>The partnership between the Council’s on-site and office-based staff and the Friends works particularly well on this site with good provision and high standards.</td>
<td>No further comments.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Additional Comments.**
Ashton Park has an exemplary Friends Group whose energy and commitment is commendable. The Council’s commitment to work in partnership is similarly to be commended. The Park is a great example of community involvement to ensure provision meets a very wide range of possible demands and ensure a real asset for the locality.

**Mystery Shopping - Interim Quality Assessment**
Answer the questions below providing detailed feedback that will benefit the site. All ‘No’ responses require comments.

**Name of Site:** Ashton Park  
**Managing Organisation:** Wirral Council  
**Date, time and duration of visit:** 3pm 14th June 2016  
**Weather conditions:** overcast  
**Name of Judge:** Cath Sheil

1. **Was the site easy to find e.g. directional signage?**  
   Yes ☐  No ☐  N/A x  
   Comments: Used a local alley way entrance however there was good signage on main entrances

2. **On approaching the site were you encouraged to enter?**  
   Yes x  No ☐  N/A ☐  

49
3. Were entrance signs visible announcing the site and did they provide contact details for complaints/praise?
   Yes x  No   N/A  □
   Comments: Notice board by main entrances with up-to-date information. Great to see range of activities and bands in the Park

4. Were entrances safe and accessible to people of differing abilities?
   Yes x  No   N/A  □
   Comments: Entrances were open and accessible

5. Were entrances and car parks clean, litter free and well maintained?
   Yes x  No   N/A  □
   Comments:

6. Were signs throughout the site of good quality, well maintained, and displaying up to date and relevant information?
   Yes x  No   N/A  □
   Comments: good directional signage through out park

7. Were paths in good condition, clean, unobstructed and accessible to people of different abilities?
   Yes x  No   N/A  □
   Comments: Some paths require patch repairs - this may be picked up in management plan – on the whole paths in a good condition

8. Were any staff on site easily identifiable to the public, knowledgeable and approachable?
   Yes □  No  □ N/A x
   Comments: No staff seen however - Clear notices in notice board about staff and when toilets and cafe were open.

9. Were facilities such as toilets, cafés etc. clean, well maintained and open as advertised?
10. Were buildings, structures and features such as walls fences etc in good condition and free from graffiti?
Yes x  No  □  N/A □

Comments: very little graffiti – very small bit on bowling shelter

11. Was all children’s play equipment well maintained and clean?
Yes x  No  □  N/A □

Comments: Play area being well used and range of equipment

12. Were benches, bins etc. well located, clean and in good condition?
Yes x  No  □  N/A □

Comments: Range of benches - some good quality others need a paints / stain and repair. (maintenance schedule may be reflected in management plan ) Lots of benches which was great to see

13. Was safety equipment present, fit for purpose and in good condition (if provided)?
Yes □  No □  N/A x

Comments:

14. Was lighting, CCTV and other security measures in good condition (where provided and able to be assessed)?
Yes □  No □  N/A x

Comments:

15. Did litter bins appear to be emptied regularly and was the site litter free?
Yes x  No  □  N/A □

Comments:

16. Was dog and other animal fouling adequately controlled?
Yes x  No  □  N/A □

Comments: very little evidence of dog fouling
17. Were horticultural standards being maintained?
Yes ☑ No ☐ N/A □

Comments: Rose beds were a good feature

18. Did trees appear to be safe and in good condition?
Yes ☑ No ☐ N/A □

Comments:

19. Were features requiring or undergoing maintenance made safe with appropriate signage?
Yes ☑ No ☐ N/A □

Comments:

20. Did you feel safe during your visit?
Yes ☑ No ☐ N/A □

Comments: Park was well used, lots of site lines and open feel to paths.

21. Was the site flying its Green Flag, and was the flag in good condition and recognisable and was a certificate displayed?
Yes ☑ No ☐ N/A □

Comments: certificates were displayed in notice board

22. Did you obtain feedback from park users and/or staff?
Yes ☑ No ☐ N/A □

Comments: Park was being well used school children walking through, football being played and bowls.

23. Would you like to make any additional observations?
Yes ☑ No ☐ N/A □

Comments: Park had a lovely well used feel and was busy with people using the park as well as walking through from school. Wood sculptures a great addition and signage helped to cross the Wirral way back into the Park.

Overall is the Green Flag Award standard being maintained on the site?
Yes ☑ No ☐
If no please indicate the main areas that require action to achieve the standard.

Comments
## Appendix 5: Project Bank

### PROJECT BANK

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>‘Ballpark’ cost estimate (inc design and contract management fee)</th>
<th>Justification, policy fit and evidence of need</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consider options for the provision and funding of a bandstand in the Upper Park</td>
<td>£150k</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remove shelter from upper park – replace with sculpture reflecting history of the park – tennis player from day of International Tennis Tournament?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fitness machines un upper park alongside tennis/football area.</td>
<td>Unsuccessful NHS bid (2014)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refurbish old tennis pavilion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>