



REPORT FROM: NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES MANAGER

TO: BARROWFORD & WESTERN PARISHES COMMITTEE

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FOR INFORMATION

PARKS, RECREATION AND GREEN SPACES UPDATE

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform Members of current Parks, Recreation and Green Spaces work and upcoming plans/developments for Barrowford & Western Parishes.

ISSUE

To keep members up to date on what is going on in terms of Parks, Outdoor Recreation and Green Spaces, we provide six monthly reports to all Area Committee's detailing current work in addition to outlining future plans and proposed developments.

The Green Spaces section of Neighbourhood Services provides strategic, outreach and developmental work in relation to Parks, Playing Fields, Local Nature Reserves, Play Facilities, Countryside Access and Open Spaces. We continue to work closely with Environmental Services, in particular the Landscape Maintenance section to ensure that the above sites/areas are managed and maintained proactively and in line with strategic aims and objectives in general.

The report provides detail on generic Parks, Recreation and Green Spaces related work that impacts all area committees across Pendle in addition to Barrowford & Western Parishes specific developments/issues. This list is not exhaustive of all work ongoing but highlights the most significant ones at this present time.

Japanese Knotweed

The treatment and monitoring of Japanese Knotweed (JK) is undertaken by the Environmental Action Group (EAG).

In 2013, the EAG in conjunction with Ribble Rivers Trust started to compile a list of all sites throughout Pendle that had Japanese Knotweed. During the past 3 years we have identified and

treated 163 sites throughout Pendle including some sites in Burnley where the watercourse crosses the Burnley and Pendle border.

Of those 163 sites:

- 26 are clear of JK
- 29 have produced 5 or less shoots
- 57 have produced 10 or less shoots
- 51 have more than 10 shoots

Overall, the original list of sites is now showing 90-95% reduction in JK.

A comprehensive list of knotweed treatments for 2017 has been produced with associated costs. The treatment of all existing sites (including the monitoring of clear sites – these have to be monitored for 3 years once they are classified as clear!) will start in earnest in May and will continue through to October.

The EAG are doing an excellent job of keeping this invasive weed at bay and year on year the annual budget set aside to deal with JK reduces.

Pennine Lancashire Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS)

The PPS is now complete and was approved at the Council's 25th August 2016 Executive Committee meeting. The PPS will provide a strategic framework for maintaining and improving outdoor sports pitches and their associated facilities across Pendle over the next 10 years.

The full 'Supply and demand assessment of Pendle Council pitches' under the guise of the **Assessment Report** and the **Playing Pitch Strategy & Action Plan** are now on the Council's website. You can access both from the following weblink:

www.pendle.gov.uk/pps

Transfer of Services to Parish/Town Councils

Work is ongoing in terms of the transferring of services and facilities to Town and Parish Councils. The Council has agreed in principle to the transfer of Barrowford Park and the freehold of the Heritage Centre to the Parish Council.

Neighbourhood Services Officers are involved in the Member/Officer Working Group.

Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO's)

PSPO's are now in place and enforceable around dog control at Barrowford Park's War Memorial (dogs are banned from this area). In addition, the dog control policies pertinent to Barrowford Cemetery have also been transferred to new PSPO's for all Borough of Pendle Cemeteries.

Consultation is ongoing regarding PSPO's for sports grounds that are due to come in to force from April 2017. These include rules around dog control and include relevant sports pitch bye-laws that will be transferred from the old Parks and Recreation bye-laws.

Green Flag Awards

The Council attained 8 Green Flag Parks in 2016 with two of these being in Barrowford & Western Parishes. These are:

- Barrowford Park (The Park has held the award for 9 years)
- Victoria Park (The Park has held the award for 8 years)

Applications for this year will be submitted by the end of January 2017. As Barrowford Park was mystery shopped in 2016, it will be formally judged this year. Victoria Park was formally judged in 2016 so it will be mystery shopped this year.

Steven Burke Sports Hub - Phase Two

Since May 2016, we have been successful in securing approximately £20,000 towards phase 2 of the Steven Burke Sports Hub (the development of a Pump Track and junior training area/car parking). In addition to Barrowford and Nelson Committee's Capital Programme contributions of £2,000 each, £10,000 has been provisionally allocated from Bradley Big Local. The remaining £6,000 is made up of PBC and Cycle Sport Pendle (CSP) contributions.

The total cost of the project is circa £130,000 but we have broken the larger scheme down in to smaller chunks to enable us to apply for funding for smaller amounts. We are concentrating on securing funding for the Pump Track element first with a couple of funding applications for different amounts submitted recently to:

- Lancashire Environmental Fund (£30,000)
- Newground (£10,000)

CSP have recently been successful in securing £9,595 from East Lancashire Clinical Commissioning Group's Prescription for Well-being programme. Although this will not fund the building of the Pump Track, it enables CSP to run a BMX section and hold regular sessions on the hub. The funding has been used to make a small BMX track loop within the velodrome area of the hub, the purchase of a stock of BMX bikes (approximately 10) and will pay for coaching recruitment and training of new and old club volunteers.

We intend to submit a further funding application to Sport England's Community Asset Fund in early 2017.

The Hub has been recognised as a 'Centre of Excellence' in the joint bid to the Department of Transport's Access Fund between LCC and Blackburn with Darwen for East Lancashire. Pendle is a partner local authority within this bid which potentially could bring significant active and public transport investment in to East Lancashire.

Barrowford Park

The Coin operated toilet at the Bowls Pavilion that had suffered from vandalism in April 2016 was eventually brought back in to working order in October 2016. The work cost circa £2,000 and was paid for from Pendle Council revenue budgets. We have had no further instances of vandalism since it re-opened and the toilet is open to the public between 7.00am and 5.30pm (October to March) and 7.00am to 9.00pm (April to September). The toilet automatically locks through the night.

Costs for the lake management recommendations as identified by Stillwater Management Consultancy's report were received in July 2016. These were then taken to the 1st August Friends of Barrowford Park Group's meeting to discuss and agree a way forward.

It was resolved that a bespoke scheme based on 75% of the report's recommendations be pursued and that Pendle Council's Engineering Services section be asked to develop a scheme

with drawings and associated costs. We are looking at a project around the £25,000 mark with an intention of applying for external funding for approximately half this amount. The other monies would come from a mixture of Pendle Council and hopefully the Lifestyle Festival. The organiser's of the event stated that they would put some of the profits from the 2015 event back in to the Park and we identified this project as the place we wanted their money to contribute to.

As yet, the bespoke scheme has not been completed although we are expecting this to be delivered to us by the end of January 2017.

The Kingfisher sculpture that will be positioned on the side of the lake (opposite side to the shelter/bowling green near the wood chip path) has been completed and we hope to install this in early 2017.

At the August Friends Group meeting, it was also decided that the two remaining picnic tables on the top elevation of the Park be transferred to the old putting green area next to the Bowling Green/War Memorial. This is as a result of vandalism to one of the picnic tables (pieces of the table were sawn off!) during the summer and other anti-social behaviour taking place in and around the picnic table areas. Due to their secluded location, the tables were unfortunately receiving unwarranted attention and as such we feel the move to the grassed area between the war memorial garden and the Heritage Centre car park will be less problematic as they will be more visible and will be better suited to this area of the Park. The work will take place in early 2017.

The Ribble Rivers Trust has recently undertaken some minor repair works to the Fish pass in the Park. As a result of the floods in December 2015, the weir's crest was damaged and it had affected the fish pass. As such, a temporary wooden crest has been installed which will allow low-moderate water flow. A more permanent fix will be forthcoming in the future.

We have had some surface water drainage issues on the footpath between Bullholme and the play area in the Park resulting in pools of water forming and a thick patch of mud, leaves and other debris left once the water has dissipated. Subsequently, we asked the Environmental Action Group to create a couple of drainage holes in the wall above the river. This minor piece of work has been successful in alleviating the problem markedly.

As part of 2017's Green Spaces Team's Events Programme, we will be running three working days in the Park. These will be in February, June and October and will consist of environmental and conservation tasks such as litter picking, replenishing woodland paths, shrub work and cleaning of parks furniture. All these working days will be organised in co-ordination with the Friends of Barrowford Park Group and will be advertised to volunteers from other organisations and the general public via email, social media and posters.

The Barrowford Lifestyle Festival took place in the Park on the 2nd July. Although the weather wasn't as nice as the previous year, the event was deemed a great success and the turnout was very good. We also had the 'Paws in the Park' charitable dog walking event in the Park in early October. This was the first time this event had taken place and was in aid of Pendleside Hospice. Again, the event went really well and without any glitches.

Victoria Park

The bandstand improvement works were completed in May 2016 in time for the UK Music Day event on the 21st June which utilised the bandstand. This was our first live music event and although it was fairly small in scale because of the great weather it attracted a good turnout and we received lots of positive feedback.

The Pendle Youth Orchestra also performed in the Park's bandstand in July as part of a practice session. Again we were extremely lucky with the weather which made for a pleasant night for the people who came along to listen.

We are looking to have similar events in 2017 and are actively encouraging local people to use the bandstand and its surrounding area on a casual informal basis as well as for more formal events/activities.

Unfortunately, Trash the Dog from the **Vicky Witch Family Sculpture Trail** was vandalised during the summer. Consequently, it had to be taken out and we had to commission a replacement. The new one was installed in October 2016.

We are aiming to install two more feature benches within the storytelling area in spring with plans to develop a magical fairy style garden in the Sunken Garden area in 2017.

Victoria Park Pavilion Community Interest Company (CIC) continues to work closely with us on the Vicky Witch Trail and other events/activities. It is a huge asset to the Park and has gone from strength to strength in terms of attracting customers to the café but also as a community hub where a number of different users/groups meet and/or utilise the building.

An example of this was the successful Whitefield Tea in the Park event in September 2016 which was organised by Whitefield Community Association and the Pavilion CIC. This was a family community event that attracted local residents and included activities/attractions such as a Bouncy Castle, Birds of Prey, Dogs in Need, Arts and Crafts, etc. The organising committee are looking to run this event again in 2017.

Unfortunately, the pavilion was broken in to at the end of July via a small window at the back of the building. A laptop, £200 cash (the float and petty cash) and the tips jar for the volunteers was stolen plus the stock in the ice cream freezer was ruined as a result of the intruders leaving the freezer open.

Subsequently, we have worked with the Pavilion CIC to improve the security of the building including the erection of more grilles, the bricking up of a door and two windows and the installation of new electronic roller shutters on the front and rear doors. There have been no further incidences pertaining to the building.

We have a number of small scale projects lined up for the Park in 2017 including improvement works to the old bowling green area behind the pavilion and improving the Surrey Road/Cricket Ground entrance to the Park to make it more attractive and welcoming.

Bullholme Playing Fields

As a result of a resolution by the Council's Executive in 2016, the Council signed up to Keep Britain Tidy's 'We're Watching You' dog fouling campaign.

Due to the on-going problems we have had with dog fouling at Bullholme, we chose it as one of our pilot sites. The scheme started on the 21st November for a period of 5 weeks initially (up to and including Christmas week). The signs are really clever and have slogans that are designed to play with people's conscience. They glow in the dark and have some fairly scary eyes which are very disconcerting along with three different messages. We used approximately 12 signs around the Bullholme site in addition to some bin stickers.

The success of the scheme will be reported to Senior Officers and members in January 2017. We are hopeful that the same reduction experienced elsewhere will happen in Pendle. We have had a few problems with the signs not having enough charge initially so the glow in the dark mechanism

wasn't as effective so we may extend the time we use the signs at Bullholme for another 5 weeks as we have not had the full effect from the signs and the site does have a recognisable problem with dog fouling.

£2,200 was allocated from Barrowford's 2016/17 Capital Programme in December 2016 towards the resurfacing of the tarmac surface on the bridge from Wilton Street on to Bullholme Playing Fields car park. The road has a number of potholes and has gradually got worse in the past year. It is in a poor state of repair and we were concerned that the potholes may cause damage to cars and due to the uneven surface, cyclists and pedestrians may fall/trip causing injury.

Through resurfacing the road and improving the surface we will be negating the chance for injury to users (of which there are many) and any potential insurance claims against the Council.

We hope to carry out the work in January 2017.

IMPLICATIONS

Policy: None

Financial: None

Legal: None

Risk Management: None

Health and Safety: None

Sustainability: None

Community Safety: None

Equality and Diversity: None

APPENDICES

None

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

None