

REPORT FROM: Neighbourhood Services Manager

TO: West Craven 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 West Craven.

RECOMMENDATIONS

(1) That the report is noted.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

(1) To keep Members informed of Parks, Recreation and Green Spaces work across West Craven.

ISSUE

To keep members up to date on what is going on in terms of Parks, Outdoor Recreation and Green Spaces, we endeavour to 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 West Craven specific developments/issues. This list is not exhaustive of all work ongoing but highlights the most significant ones at this present time.

Mayoress' Charity – Friends of Parks Groups

The new Mayoress of Pendle, Barbara Whalley, has chosen the Friends of Pendle's Parks as her charity for the current mayoral year (May 2017 – April 2018).

Funds will be raised throughout the mayoral year for improvement projects the individual groups want to undertake.

This is a real coup for our Parks and a recognition of all the great work the Friends Groups and volunteers do to help keep our Parks looking as good as they can be.

A number of events have already taken place where collection buckets have been passed around and donations made to the charity. At the end of the year the total amount raised will be divided equally amongst the eight Parks Friends Groups (with Valley Gardens being one) and the Philip Wright Crown Green Bowling Academy (who are based in Alkincoats Park) for them to make improvements in their respective parks.

In addition, Pendle Movie Makers were asked to produce a short film by the Mayoress highlighting the good work that the Councils Park Keeper Team, their partner organisations, e.g. The Good Life Project, the Friends Groups and volunteers do through our regular volunteer working days. This resulted in a 12 minute film being made that will be shown at any charity events the Mayoress has during the year. The film has also been forwarded to Council Officers and the respective Friends Groups for them to watch and use at their discretion.

Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO's)

PSPO's are now in place and enforceable around dog control and smoking at the 6 play facilities transferred to Barnoldswick Town Council last year. In addition, the dog control policies pertinent to Ghyll, Earby and Salterforth Cemeteries have also been transferred to new PSPO's for all Borough of Pendle Cemeteries.

The PSPO's for sports grounds have been agreed by all Area Committee's and are currently with legal. These should be in place and enforceable before the end of 2017. These include rules around dog control and include relevant sports pitch bye-laws that have been transferred from the old Parks and Recreation bye-laws.

In terms of West Craven sites, Springfield and Earby Recreation Ground will be dog free apart from in the designated dog walking area at the latter.

Work is also ongoing in relation to the development of PSPO's for Parks across the borough. Proposals and options for PSPO's in relation to Letcliffe, Victory and Sough Parks and Valley Gardens were taken to the June 2017 West Craven Committee meeting for discussion.

It is the Council's intention to consult with the general public and relevant organisations/groups that use the Parks via an online survey and detailed correspondence with partners, including the Town and Parish Councils in the coming months.

Green Flag Awards

The Council attained 8 Green Flag Awards in 2017 with one of these being in Barnoldswick. This is:

- Valley Gardens (The Park has held the award for 9 years)

Applications for next year need to be submitted by the end of January 2018. As Valley Gardens was formally judged in 2017, it will be mystery shopped next year.

Steven Burke Sports Hub - Phase Two

So far, we have been successful in securing approximately £60,000 towards phase 2 of the Steven Burke Sports Hub (the development of a Pump Track and junior training area/car parking).

In the last 6 months we have secured funding from the following sources:

£30,000 – Lancashire Environmental Fund

£10,000 – Newground

The Newground funding is £5,000 capital with £5,000 worth of officer time to help with community engagement in the locality.

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 progress with the development of the pump track first. We have the requisite funding available to complete this element of the project and as such a tender is currently out for the design and build of the track.

Dependent upon the tenders coming back within the budget and the working group being happy with the design, we are aiming to get the track work completed by the end of October 2017. This will tie in with the removal of the temporary pump track that is currently located within the Steven Burke Cycle (as per an agreement we have with British Cycling). The new BMX arm of Cycle Sport Pendle will then transfer its training sessions from the temporary track to the purpose built one.

Victory Park

The interpretation boards for the Wheelchair Walk and Family Friendly Cycle Route were installed in March 2017.

At the January 2017 West Craven Committee meeting it was confirmed that the Lock-On Skate Park group, that had shown an interest in taking over ownership of the Wheels Park, were no longer interested in pursuing this. Subsequently, it was resolved by members that no other transfer of park facilities, such as the Wheels Park, be considered until the Park had been transferred over to Barnoldswick Town Council in 2018.

Valley Gardens

Two new recycled plastic benches were installed in the Park in spring 2017. Additional work on the concrete bases will be forthcoming in the short term. This will involve the laying of cobble setts around the edge of the concrete to make it more attractive.

The annual Summer Fayre took place on the 17th June 2017. This was organised primarily by Barnoldswick Town Council and the In Bloom Group in co-ordination with the Working Group. Some input (in the form of litter picking and some orientation activity) was provided from the Council's Park Keeper Team on the day of the event. The event went well and there was a decent turn out from local people.

Further work has been forthcoming (in partnership with the Working Group) at the bottom of the terraced planting area where it has been recently weed sprayed, dug up and planted with wildflower seed. This is the remaining part of the terraced garden that needed planting. It will be spring 2018 before all the work is completed and the fruits of the above work's labour are seen.

As part of 2017's Green Spaces Team's Events Programme, we organised a volunteer working day in the Park in July. Unfortunately, the volunteer turn-out was low but we managed to carry out some litter picking, cleaning of parks furniture and weeding.

We have also recently serviced the flag pole that fly's the green flag from it. The new 2017/18 flag was attached and raised in August 2017 after the official Green Flag winners announcement from Keep Britain Tidy on the 18th July 2017.

A lady from Barnoldswick was fined £225 for a dog fouling offence in March 2017 relating to Valley Gardens. With costs and a victim surcharge this amounted to £385 in total. This was viewed as a real victory for the Council in our fight to combat dog fouling in the Park but generally across the borough and sends a message out to other irresponsible dog owners that we will not tolerate this type of behaviour.

We are still having issues with general anti-social behaviour in Valley Gardens including drinking and drug taking. The most recent serious incident though involved the use of a large knife to strip the bark of a maple tree. As a consequence, the tree was severely damaged and although it is still in situ it will probably die in the near future.

Letcliffe Park

Work, organised by the Council's Drainage Officer, was undertaken in April to repair a damaged stone culvert and blocked sewer at the lower end of the Park (behind Overdene off Manchester Road) which was causing flooding issues. This was causing a backup and the manhole covers and gullies were overflowing. On investigation the sewer was badly blocked and had a stick wedged between the two manholes.

This was cleaned out and jetted and everything is now running fine including the gullies on the side of the path.

A volunteer working day was organised in the Park at the end of July 2017. Again the volunteer turn-out was low but we managed to carry out some improvement works (removing moss and grass from the cobbled path) to the public right of way that runs along the edge of the Park in co-ordination with the Council's Countryside Access Officer as it was part of an organised walk included in the Walking Festival. Some litter picking and weeding was also carried out.

Sough Park

Applications forms and associated paperwork were submitted to Fields in Trust (FIT) in January 2017 for the Memorial Gardens part of Sough Park (that includes the war memorial, bowling green and changing rooms) to gain Centenary Field status and for the 'Holme Playing Field' part of the Park (that includes the Football pitch, Play area, Tennis courts and Skate Park) to gain Carnegie Field status.

In early August 2017, we were informed by the FIT that the legal paperwork had been completed and the deeds had been signed for both dedications. As such, the commemorative plaques for both dedications have been ordered and we are expecting delivery of these before the end of September 2017.

Once we receive these, we will endeavour to organise the unveiling of these plaques and appropriate press.

A new defibrillator has been installed at Sough Park. The code accessible cabinet is located on the external façade of the Changing rooms. The Council worked in partnership with Kelbrook &

Sough Parish Council (who sourced the defibrillator and cabinet from the British Heart Foundation) and North West Ambulance Service (NWAS) to provide this valuable life-saving resource.

Neighbourhood Services will manage and monitor the defibrillator in the long term to ensure that it is working to full capacity and ready to use if needed.

Earby Recreation Ground & Springfield

Both these sites have been transferred to Earby Town Council. Although the Town Council own the sites, they are not in a position at the present time to be able to manage and maintain either sports ground. As such, Grounds Maintenance Agreements have been agreed whereby Pendle Council's Grounds Maintenance Team will continue to maintain the sports fields for the next 3 years. As part of the agreements, Earby Town council pay PBC an annual charge for their services.

There is also a service and maintenance agreement in place for the management of the changing rooms at Earby Recreation Ground. This is very similar to the above agreements whereby an annual charge is made to the Town Council. The only difference being that the Green Spaces Manager is responsible for this aspect of the site.

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