

## Greenspace Update

Portfolio	Business
Ward(s) Affected:	n/a

### **Purpose**

**To receive a detailed update report on the Council's Greenspace Service.**

### Background

1. The Greenspace Service is split between directly employed staff and contracted out services that are responsible for a wide range of activities that maintain our boroughs green spaces providing safe, clean and welcoming spaces for everyone to enjoy.

### Areas of responsibility

#### **Grass cutting**

2. The team regularly cut 1.3 million m<sup>2</sup> of grass around the borough. There are 8 grass cutting regimes ranging from golf courses and ornamental cutting with the grass being cut every other week, to meadow and woodland grass, which has a single end of season cut. Two thirds of the total grass cutting can be accounted for by the amenity cuts which are in the parks, open spaces and verges in the borough which would be cut monthly during the growing season. In addition to the general grass cutting we cut all Borough and County owned road verges and roundabouts grass.

#### **Hedge cutting & Vegetation maintenance**

3. We maintain 1.1 million m<sup>2</sup> of vegetation across the borough (which is the equivalent to 159 football pitches) ranging from intensive maintenance (i.e. bowling green's maintenance) to light maintenance in the woodland scrub. Along with this we maintain 6632 metres (a little over 4 miles) of hedges across the borough.

#### **Sports pitches**

4. The team maintains a number of pitches, courses and courts including 3 x bowling greens, 4 x rugby, 24 x football (5,7, 9 and 11 a-side), 13 x tennis and 5 x cricket. This would also include the borough's All-Weather 3G pitch.

#### **Children's Play Areas**

5. The borough has the responsibility for 40 playgrounds, 3 skate parks and a BMX track across the borough. The play areas range from those within our premier parks to smaller local play areas usually located

within housing developments. We regularly inspect and maintain all of these play areas however some of the areas and equipment are either end-of-life or reaching this point. As such, we are fortunate to have been able to release capital funds to embark on a 3 year equipment replacement programme for 11 playgrounds. At the time of writing, two play areas have been complete using the Wellington Park commuted sums account. There are a further two areas in mid-consultation (Deanside and Cheylesmore) and we are just about to commence consultation on a further 2 being the one at Lightwater Country Park and the other at Evergreen Road.

### **Dog Waste & Rubbish Collections**

6. There are 269 bins (138 park litter bins and 131 dog waste) in the borough with a number of these needing daily emptying. Whilst greenspace collect refuse from park and greenspace bins it is the waste collection team that collect refuse from pavement refuse bins. We have recently welcomed changes that allow dog waste to be put in regular waste bins. This gives us the opportunity to streamline the service and remove the need for duplicate bins, collections and ultimately, cost.

### **Municipal Planting**

7. This includes hanging baskets, planters and borders and all ongoing watering and maintenance of these floral displays.

### **Park Pavilions & Public Toilet**

8. There are a number of pavilions, some with catering outlets others are maintained and provide changing facilities for sport pitch bookings. Other pavilions are used as rentable space and for ad-hoc seasonal events e.g. Camberley carnival, theatre in the park etc. Our park toilets are maintained and open all year round.

### **Tree Inspections and resulting works**

9. We are obligated to ensure our trees are inspected regularly and are healthy, safe and maintained. Resultant works post the inspection are then undertaken to manage, treat, remove and replace our trees for which we are responsible for in excess of 50,000 trees across the borough. Trees ageing from recently planted saplings all the way through to enormous 200 year old beech trees in Chobham!

### **Weed Spraying**

10. We control the weeds on our hard surface including, pavements, paths and gully's, hardstanding and courts through regular spraying. We undertake this duty for not only for Borough related hard surfaces but

also receive a contribution from County to undertake this work on their behalf.

### Contractors

11. A majority of the above operational areas above are contracted out to our Main contractor, (Glendale) and County's contractor (Bill Kear) we undertake checks, inspections and contract management to ensure contractor performance and that we maintain standards across our greenspaces.

### Rangers

12. The 3 rangers directly employed to work in the greenspace team have particular specialisms and responsibilities which allow us to:
  - manage our conservation sites in order to maintain their status as Sites of Specific Scientific Interest and, in continuing to do so, obtain the funding that it unlocks. This is specifically in reference to Lightwater Country Park and Turf Hill;
  - manage our Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspaces (SANGs) which are the Special Protection Area (SPA) mitigation sites and Countryside sites of which there are 13 that we directly manage and a further 3 that others manage on our behalf;
  - provide ranger activities at our premier parks and Countryside sites which include working with groups of children, hosting walks, talking about conservation, bush craft, land management, nature and specialist advice;
  - attracting and managing the volunteers and their associated work programmes which help us complete some of the ongoing conservation activities on all of our sites;
  - arrange and/or undertake Inspections, both statutory and non-statutory in all of our pavilions, out-buildings, toilets, centres and playgrounds;
  - grant applications to release funding to continue to improve facilities. Working closely with like-minded groups and associations to seek advice and support for our conservation work;

- ad-hoc greenspace projects, e.g. community garden, Hampton court flower show etc;
- tree inspection and works; this is of a responsive nature where there is a more pressing need. For example where a tree has been hit by lightning and is causing concern. Larger area inspections or groups of works would be quoted for and be completed by an external contractor;
- respond to resident requests reporting concerns and incidents through our Contact Centre that involve greenspace land and activities undertaken by contractors;
- traveller incursions; we react to the likely or actual incursions by increasing security measures, clearance of sites post an incursion;
- treat invasive weeds (Japanese Knotweed) across the borough for both the council and County. Our rangers are certified to apply the necessary pesticides to undertake this work;
- specialist advice on all things 'greenspace' e.g. working with groups to accomplish improvements in their areas a good example of which would be the work in Frimley high street on the planters and hanging baskets;
- awards & recognition – Green flag award in the park, Natural England assessments on our Countryside sites;
- along with undertaking these duties for the borough we also perform similar Green space activities for Windlesham Parish Council along with extra elements including grave yard activities;
- events; supervision and assisting the set up and take down of events, making sure all necessary insurance and assessments are in place and adhered to. E.g. Circus, Fun fair, park run etc.

### Surrey Heath Premier Locations

13. The following are the Surrey Heath Premier locations

#### **1. Frimley Lodge Park**

## Summary

Frimley Lodge Park is a 24 hectare site that boasts a range of facilities; it has been awarded the prestigious Green Flag award for the last 16 years.

## Financial summary

		<b>2014/15</b>	<b>2015/16</b>	<b>2016/17</b>	<b>2017/18</b>
Park	Expenditure	60,826.73	67,841.40	53,435.85	<b>34,085.59</b>
	Income	-50,733.17	-46,212.37	-62,033.35	<b>37,820.21</b>
3G	Expenditure	3,768.00	29,186.58	45,275.28	<b>18,278.57</b>
	Income	-11,377.49	-74,145.53	-103,387.94	<b>22,309.76</b>
Pitch and Putt	Income	-15,116.83	-18,548.47	-17,156.55	<b>9,357.02</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>-12,902.76</b>	<b>-41,924.22</b>	<b>-83,866.71</b>	<b>21,197.83</b>

*Green Figures are figures as of Aug17*

## Activities already available at the park

- Free Parking
- Two children's playgrounds
- Trim trail
- Miniature railway
- Grass football and cricket pitches
- Artificial 3G pitch
- Pitch and putt golf course available for Foot-golf or mini-golf
- Café
- Community Garden
- Function Room
- Free Library
- BBQ Area
- Corporate Hire Space
- Memory Tree
- Wildlife pond
- Millennium Beacon
- Wildflower meadow and bug hunting areas
- Events throughout the year including, music festivals, exercise and fun fairs.

## Activities proposed for 2018

- Kids activity trail
- Cycle hire
- Replacement of playground

## 2. Lightwater Country Park

### Summary

Lightwater Country Park is situated on the edge of Lightwater Village and extends to 59 hectares. The Country Park is predominately heathland habitat, but there are also ponds, woodland, meadows and areas of scrub.

### Financial summary

		<u>2014/15</u>	<u>2015/16</u>	<u>2016/17</u>	<u>2017/18</u>
Park	Expenditure	11,296.61	17,211.75	14,416.66	7,617.89
	Income	-20,736.09	-20,541.11	-13,801.21	-13,001.58
<b>Total</b>		-9,439.48	-3,329.36	615.45	-5,383.69

*Green Figures are figures as of Aug17*

### Activities available at the park

- Free Parking
- Playground
- Café
- Conservation volunteering
- Conservation areas
- Walking trails
- Grazing livestock
- Fishing
- Education service
- Leisure Centre – Tennis courts/Gym/Sports Hall
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### Activities proposed for 2018

- Fixed workout equipment
- Replacement of play area
- Improvements to the fishing pond
- Kids activity trail
- Ranger Activities
- Bee Keeping