

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Climate Change

PRIDE IN PARKS UPDATE 20231. Purpose of Report

To update Members on the progress of the Pride in Parks programme.

2. Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to NOTE progress to date and the results of the 2023 parks consultation and RESOLVE that the alignment of the 2024/25 maintenance programme with the Play Strategy review in 2025 be approved.

3. Detail

In 2017, the Council's Play Strategy (2017-2025) identified a programme of high priority improvements required for the Borough's play facilities. Since April 2018, the Council has approved £1.4 million pounds' worth of investment in parks and open spaces. Some of this funding (£250,000) was shared with the Town and Parish Councils to facilitate the maintenance of their own park facilities.

It is important for parks and open spaces to meet the required standard outlined in the Council's Corporate Plan. This uniform standard is viewed as a fair and positive approach to enhance the quality and visitor experience of these spaces. Annually, the Environment team undertake a consultation process on 20% of its parks and open spaces. The results from this year's survey are provided in appendix 1.

The current Pride in Parks programme has delivered improvements or refurbishments in 23 play areas, across the Borough and includes:

- Addition of play equipment.
- Play area resurfacing to improve accessibility.
- Replacement of old equipment.

These works were achieved through a combination of Council (£782,000) and external (£618,000) funding bids. The Pride in Parks delivery programme, along with associated costs are detailed in appendix 2.

By the end of the 2023/24 financial year, all play improvements identified through the Pride in Parks programme will have been completed.

In 2025, the Council intends to refresh its Play Strategy and develop a Pride in Parks programme that aligns with this. Asset management inspections will prioritise necessary works including for example paths, fences, gates and seating which were not included in the Play Strategy and therefore have received limited investment.

It has been recognised that a more comprehensive approach needs to be undertaken for the 2025 Pride in Parks programme which will include the Play Strategy review.

The wider asset review completed in 2023, has highlighted a number of maintenance issues that require attention in the 2024/25 programme. These are detailed in appendix 3.

4. Key Decision

This is a key decision.

5. Financial Implications

The comments from the Head of Finance Services were as follows:

There are no additional financial implications to consider with activity being contained within existing capital and revenue budgets. Any significant budget implications in the future, over and above virement limits, would require approval by Cabinet.

6. Legal Implications

The comments from the Monitoring Officer / Head of Legal Services were as follows:

Whilst there are no direct legal implications arising from this report, Local authorities have a number of different statutory powers in relation to parks and green spaces, including the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, which gives wide powers to provide recreational facilities. The 1976 Act also permits the Council to make recreational facilities available for use by such persons as the authority thinks fit either without charge or on payment of such charges as the authority thinks fit.

7. Human Resources Implications

The comments from the Human Resources Manager were as follows:

Not Applicable.

8. Union Comments

The Union comments were as follows:

Not Applicable.

9. Climate Change Implications

The Council's Pride in Parks programme focuses on enhancing the infrastructure of parks and open Spaces. By doing so, it creates an opportunity to promote,

nature based solutions that mitigate the impacts of climate change. Improved access and enhanced facilities at these sites can help to inspire and educate residents about climate change adaptation and resilience.

10. Data Protection Compliance Implications

N/A

11. Equality Impact Assessment

N/A

12. Background Papers

Nil.

APPENDIX 1

Broxtowe Parks Standard

As part of its commitment to protect the 'Environment for the Future', the Corporate Plan emphasises the importance of ensuring that **all** parks and open spaces meet the Broxtowe Parks Standard. Having a uniform standard across all the sites is seen as a fair and positive way of improving the quality and visitor experience of the parks and open spaces.

The questions asked in the survey are as follows:

1. What is your overall impression of the park/open space?
2. How effective is the signage?
3. How would you rate the standard of cleanliness?
4. How clean is the site in terms of dog fouling?
5. How easy is it for you to get around? (for example, are there enough paths and in the right places)
6. How would you rate the standard of grass cutting?
7. How would you rate the play facilities provided? (Not applicable for Brinsley Headstocks, Pit Lane and Watnall, as these sites are nature reserves)
8. How do the current facilities meet the needs of your activity on the park/open space?
9. How are issues with vandalism and anti-social behaviour dealt with?
10. Thinking about the approach to nature and wildlife, how would you rate this aspect of the park/open space management? (For example tree planting, wildflowers)
11. How likely are you to visit the park again or recommend it to friends and family? (1 being very unlikely, 5 being very likely)

In 2022, the parks and open spaces consultation received 531 responses, which resulted in three spaces failing the parks standard. These were:

- Hetley Pearson Recreation Ground, Beeston
- Jubilee Park, Eastwood
- Redbridge Drive Open Space, Nuthall

Any failures from the previous year get carried over to the following year's consultation process. In the late summer of 2023, a consultation was undertaken to evaluate a further 20% of the parks and open spaces across the Borough (including the three failures from the previous year).

The consultation process involved an online questionnaire, which received 381 responses. This is a 28% decrease on the previous year and is a normal fluctuation, dependant on when different parks and open spaces are consulted on.

The survey was promoted on the Council's website, through social media and with posters displaying a QR code at all the participating parks and open spaces.

All sites are also inspected by officers from the Parks team to assess any concerns raised through the consultation process. This was to ensure that the scores achieved truly reflected the condition of each site.

Analysis of the 2023 Parks Standard Consultation

Fourteen parks and open spaces sites selected at random were assessed in the late summer of 2023. Two sites failed to achieve the standard, these were:

- Redbridge Drive Open Space, Nuthall (Second year)
- Archers Field, Stapleford

The detailed results are shown in table 1 below.

Area	Site Name	Fair and above (85% pass rate)	Good and above (45% pass rate)
Beeston	Beeston Fields Recreation Ground	90%	56%
Beeston	Hetley Pearson Recreation Ground	91%	59%
Bramcote	King Georges V Park	90%	79%
Brinsley	Brinsley Headstocks	89%	71%
Chilwell	Cator Lane Recreation Ground	90%	59%
Chilwell	Sherman Drive Open Space	90%	63%
Eastwood	Jubilee Park	85%	48%
Nuthall	Redbridge Drive Open Space	79% - F	44% - F
Stapleford	Archers Field Recreation Ground	75% - F	53%
Stapleford	Ilkeston Road Recreation Ground	86%	54%
Stapleford	Queen Elizabeth Park	85%	59%
Toton	Manor Farm Recreation Ground	91%	59%
Trowell	Pit Lane Recreation Ground	88%	49%
Watnall	Watnall Green Open Space	86%	73%

Table 1: Results from the 2023 Parks Standards Survey. F = Fail.

Parks and Open spaces failing to achieve less than 85% (Fair and above)

- Redbridge Drive Open Space, Nuthall (79%)
- Archers Field, Stapleford (75%)

Parks and Open spaces failing to achieve less than 45% (Good and above)

- Redbridge Drive Open Space, Nuthall (44%)

Consultation comments for each site

Beeston – Beeston Fields Recreation Ground. Positive comments about the new section of path, which opened up access. Users would like to see more shaded areas and requested more tree planting.

Beeston – Hetley Pearson Recreation Ground. Users have suggested the following improvements: A circular loop path, which could be used in all weathers, more trees and additional play equipment. Concerns were also raised about the ease of access for unauthorised encampments. This is being addressed separately.

Bramcote – King George V Park. A high scoring site. Users found this a great place to exercise and to walk dogs. They thought the park was a well maintained space, which provided a safe environment for children to play in. More wild flower planting was requested.

Brinsley – Brinsley Headstocks. Another high scoring site. Users liked how well maintained this space was and commented on how beautiful the planting was.

Chilwell – Cator Lane Recreation Ground. A number of improvements to this space have been welcomed by users, these include the development of ‘no mow’ areas and the planting of fruit trees. Feedback was to plant more and to install signs inviting people to pick the fruit.

Chilwell – Sherman Drive Open Space. Users liked the provision of good walking routes that were supported by well-maintained paths. Some areas of the park need to be addressed in terms of drainage, as they tend to get boggy in wet weather. Generally, a great family space.

Eastwood – Jubilee Park. Users commented on how nice this park was to take young children, but would like an access path from the Cemetery to make getting onto the Park even easier for local people.

Nuthall – Redbridge Drive Open Space. This is one of the two spaces that failed the Park Standard. Users wanted more play equipment and a skate park. They felt that the utilisation of space could be improved upon. During the consultation process 381 responses were received, with seven of these commenting specifically on this recreation space. The low number of responses received from the survey for this site (including that of the previous year (8)), render the resulting negative outcome as statistically insignificant.

Stapleford – Archers Field Recreation Ground. This was the second space to fail the Parks Standard. Some users did not like the additional tree planting areas that are currently being installed and wanted further paths improvements to be undertaken. There were some positive comments about the tranquillity of the space and users utilising it for their mental health and well-being. During the consultation process 381 responses were received, with 34 of these commenting specifically on this recreation space.

Stapleford – Ilkeston Road Recreation Ground. This space has become much busier since the introduction of the cycle track and play road. Users appreciated these facilities but would like to see more wild flowers and the introduction of fruit trees within this space.

Stapleford – Queen Elizabeth Park. Users would like to see more ‘no mow’ and wildflower areas across the park. This is a sentiment echoed across other park and open spaces areas.

Toton – Manor Farm Recreation Ground. Like other areas, users would like to see the addition of fruit trees across the site. For Manor Farm, this would reflect the history of the site. Very positive comments received about the maintenance of the space by Council employees.

Trowell – Pit Lane Recreation Ground. Users like the space for dog walking, but felt there was little to do for children.

Watnall – Watnall Green Open Space. Users found it a great safe space to socialise dogs. Generally, really positive comments but would also like to see additional ‘no mow’ areas and the planting of wildflowers/trees.

APPENDIX 2

Investment in the Pride in Parks programme

Table 2 below, shows the level of investment in the Pride in Parks programme from 2018 to 2024. The investment levels also include external funding.

Financial Year	Investment
2018/19	£361,000
2019/20	£320,000
2021/22	£222,000
2022/23	£145,000
2023/24	£360,000

Table 2: Pride in Parks investment

Improvements delivered by the Pride in Parks programme

Tables 3,4,5,6 and 7 below, shows the number of improvements delivered by the Pride in Parks programme from 2018 to 2024. The investment levels also include external funding (FCC, United Living and Section 106 contributions).

2018/19

Site	Improvement	Cost
Beeston - Broadgate Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refurbishment of the play area. • Bark replaced with an accessible rubber surface. • Sand and water play. • Dish roundabout. • Easy transfer group swing. • In-floor trampoline and toddler items. 	£90k
Beeston - Leyton Crescent Recreation Ground	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A refurbishment of the play area. • Bark replaced with an accessible rubber surface. • Giant steel frame with nets and various play activities installed. • Inclusivity and accessibility considered with the inclusion of low level play activities. 	£110k
Eastwood - Jubilee Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance and cleansing of equipment and surfacing. 	£1k
Eastwood - Mansfield Road Recreation Ground	<p>This scheme was funded from Section 106 allocations from the Rippon Homes Development at Peacock Drive, Eastwood.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50% replacement of the bark surface with an accessible rubber one. • Refurbished play units and installation of a new toddler unit. 	£40k
Kimberley - Millfield Road Open Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play area extended. • Rubber accessible surface installed. • Toddler unit with low level activities installed. 	£40k

Site	Improvement	Cost
Nuthall - Redbridge Drive Open Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Play area extended Toddler unit, trampoline and group swing installed. 50% of the bark surface replaced with rubber. 	£48k
Stapleford - Central Avenue Recreation Ground	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintenance and cleansing of equipment and surfacing. 	£1k
Stapleford - Judson Avenue Open Space	<p>External funding was obtained to refurbish this area, working alongside a local community group.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 25% of the bark surface replaced with rubber. Accessible dish roundabout and low level trampoline installed. 	£30k
Trowell - Salcey Drive Open Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintenance and cleansing of equipment and surfacing. 	£1k

Table 3: 2018/19 - Pride in Parks improvements

2019/20

Site	Improvement	Cost
Bramcote - King Georges Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rubber surfacing. Low level activities and trampoline in a fenced play area. Timber units for older children. 	£130k
Chilwell - Sherman Drive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Play area extended and refurbished. New equipment for younger children. Installation of rubber safety surfacing to make the area more accessible. 	£30k
Stapleford - Hickings Lane Recreation Ground	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New play area, featuring a large steel dome, climbing nets and rope ladders. Installation of a trampoline and a rubber surface. 	£160k

Table 4: 2019/20 - Pride in Parks improvements

2021/22

Site	Improvement	Cost
Beeston - Dovecote Lane Recreation Ground,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full refurbishment of the play area. • New climbing units installed. • Bark replaced with an accessible rubber surface. • Play units with low level activities installed. • Accessible basket swing. • Picnic tables. • Zip line. 	£140k
Chilwell - Swiney Way Open Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replacement of outdated equipment. • Rubber surface installed. 	£40k
Play Area Improvements	<p>Works carried out at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beeston Fields Recreation Ground. • Sandy Lane Open Space, Bramcote. • Inham Nook Recreation Ground, Chilwell. • Queen Elizabeth Park, Stapleford. <p>Works included refurbishing individual play items and installing rubber surfacing.</p>	£42k

Table 5: 2021/22 - Pride in Parks improvements

2022/23

Site	Improvement	Cost
Eastwood - Jubilee Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extension of existing play area. • Installation of an accessible rubber surface. • Accessible basket swing and picnic table installed. 	£22k

Site	Improvement	Cost
The Spinney, Nuthall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bark replaced with an accessible rubber surface. New play items installed for younger children. 	£33k
Stapleford - Pasture Road recreation Ground	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full refurbishment of the play area. Bark replaced with an accessible rubber surface. Accessible basket swing and picnic table installed. Installation of a fitness area 	£90k

Table 6: 2022/23 - Pride in Parks improvements

2023/24

Site	Improvement	Cost
Beeston - Cator Lane Recreation Ground	<p>Design works on this play area are currently being finalised and include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low level inclusive activities and additional toddler equipment. <p>Installation of accessible rubber surfacing.</p>	£35k
Bramcote - Bramcote Hills Park	<p>An extensive public consultation has been undertaken over the summer of 2023. The project will see the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Old play units replaced and refurbished. Improved provision for toddlers. Zip line. 	£230k
Bramcote - Sandgate Open Space	<p>Works are still being undertaken on this site and include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New seesaw and roundabout. Rubber flooring. 	£40k

Site	Improvement	Cost
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements to access points. • Accessible basket swing will be installed. 	
Stapleford - Queens Elizabeth II Park	Design works on this site are currently being finalised and include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An accessible basket swing. • Installation of accessible rubber surfacing. 	£25k
Toton - Banks Road Open Space	Design works on this play area are currently being finalised and include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low level inclusive activities and additional toddler equipment. • Installation of accessible rubber surfacing. 	£30k

Table 7: 2023/24 - Pride in Parks improvements

APPENDIX 3

Path maintenance works

After conducting a comprehensive programme of asset management inspections in 2023, high, medium and low priority path maintenance works have been identified across the Borough's parks and open spaces.

The high priority path improvement works identified are in the following locations:

- Alexandrina Plantation, Bramcote
- Eastcote Avenue Open Space, Bramcote
- King George V Park, Bramcote
- Hall Park, Eastwood

Further detail is provided in table 8.

A number of improvements at Colliers Wood Nature Reserve have also been identified including, refurbishment of the performance area, improvements to surfacing and accessibility to foot paths and a new accessible dipping platform. The total cost of all these improvements is £165,000 (subject to final sign off from the Executive Director and the Head of Service) and Cabinet will be asked to resolve the funding of this through the upcoming annual capital program report. A detailed list of the works is provided in table 8 below.

The improvements identified in table 8, will be the last to be completed under the current Play Strategy. The Play Strategy is due to be refreshed in 2025 and a Pride in Parks works programme will be developed to run alongside this.

Following this year's asset inspection programme review, an additional programme of works will also be developed and monitored and will capture other parks infrastructure, including, paths, fences, gates and seating.

Site	Condition	Improvement	Cost
Alexandrina Plantation, Bramcote.	Curved natural path leaving central circular route, connecting to path at boundary between Brookside Avenue & Thoresby Road. Path has suffered weathering and erosion due to construction from soft materials.	Reinstate stone and any edging material where needed to make safe.	£30k
Eastcote Avenue Open Space, Bramcote.	Path around perimeter of site connecting into Chesham Drive and Pimlico Avenue. Tarmacadam surface is in need of repair and	Patch and overlay areas worst affected and reinstate affected edgings.	£25k

Site	Condition	Improvement	Cost
	replacement due to cracking, and surface deterioration.		
King George V Park, Bramcote	Tarmacadam surface in poor condition and damaged though tree route activity.	Patch and overlay areas worst affected and reinstate affected edgings.	£40k
Hall Park, Eastwood	Consolidated stone paths through woodland areas have damaged timber edging or the path has fallen below the level of the edge. Sediment build-up also makes the paths slippery when wet.	Scrape and clear any detritus found and where possible relief channels installed to reduce water pooling.	£20K
Colliers Wood Nature reserve, Moorgreen	Consolidated stone paths are prone to erosion and wash out. Conditions have worsened over recent years and numerous repairs are having revenue implications. Performance area seating and dipping platform in need of repair and refurbishment both items original to site (25 years old).	Reinstate stone and any edging material where needed, to make safe. Resurfacing of the main path with tarmacadam.	£50K

Table 8: Works identified for urgent infrastructure works