

Report of:	To:	Date
Councillor Simon Bridge, Street Scene, Parks and Open Spaces Portfolio Holder	Council	14 September 2023

Executive Report: Street Scene, Parks and Open Spaces Portfolio Holder

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1** To inform council of progress on key objectives and the current position on issues within the Street Scene, Parks and Open Spaces Portfolio as set out below.

2. Parks and Open Spaces

- 2.1** The Green Flag Award scheme recognises and rewards well managed parks and green spaces, setting the benchmark standard for the management of recreational outdoor spaces. The scheme aims to ensure that everybody has access to quality open spaces, that these spaces are appropriately managed and meet the needs of the local community.
- 2.2** This year, Vicarage Park, Poulton; Hawthorne Park and Wyre Estuary Country Park in Thornton along with Memorial Park and The Mount in Fleetwood have all retained the prestigious Green Flag accreditation.
- 2.3** On 18 July I attended a celebration event with the Mayor and other councillors to recognise the achievement and thank the hard work and dedication of all the teams and incredible volunteers working to make Wyre's parks and open spaces such welcoming places for people to spend time enjoying the outdoors, essential to good health and wellbeing.
- 2.4** Wyre Council received £3.9million from the UK Government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund in December 2022. One of our key public realm projects is the redevelopment and renovation of Cottam Hall to realise its full potential as a community asset to support wellbeing, active lifestyles, and deliver environmental improvements. Stage one of this process is to create a comprehensive Masterplan for the Playing Fields. ReLandscapes have been appointed to undertake the necessary consultation and work closely with key stakeholders over the coming months.

- 2.5** We are working in partnership with the Wyre Rivers Trust to introduce natural flood management measures and create thriving habitats for all to enjoy at King George's playing field in Thornton. The project will restore a section of Royles Brook and create water storage areas including wetlands and ponds; 400 trees will also be planted as part of the project, with sign off anticipated by the end of September. The Lancashire Environmental Fund and United Utilities are also contributing to this £80,000 investment to help reduce flood risk in the area.
- 2.6** Educational and creative activities are ongoing at The Mount as part of the Heritage Lottery Fund Project, including a geology talk, leaf printing, gardening demonstrations and heritage bookbinding events. Weekly events were co-ordinated by the Activity Development Officer at The Mount and Memorial Park throughout the school holidays to promote fun through learning.
- 2.7** Site improvement works have taken place at Wyre Estuary Country Park to create a wildflower meadow, restore pathways and treat wooden fencing. The ranger team have worked in partnership with Wyre Rivers Trust to engage with school groups studying the salt marshes and meadows. Large numbers of visitors attended the Green Gathering and Homeless Hounds events.
- 2.8** The Wyre Great Outdoor programme has included a wide variety of seasonal activities across Wyre's parks and open spaces. Wildlife of Larkholme Grasslands, walks along the river and canal in Garstang, Music on the Park at Hawthorne Park along with Xplorer Orienteering and ecology events at Wyre Estuary Country Park.

3. Young Wyre in Bloom

- 3.1** The Cleaner Greener Project Officer has supported ten local schools and nurseries in this year's Young Wyre in Bloom initiative. Representatives of the school groups demonstrated how school grounds and indoor spaces can be maximised to grow fruit and vegetables, provide bee friendly planting, reuse school materials and promote climate friendly activities in an educational environment. The participants were awarded seven gold, two silver and one bronze award in acknowledgement of these environmental achievements. The main Wyre in Bloom awards will be announced at the ceremony to be held later this year.

4. Environmental Enforcement

- 4.1** Public space protection orders (PSPOs) are in place across the borough for the enforcement of dog control under the Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014. These PSPOs require a person in control of a dog to comply with conditions including the exclusion of dogs from certain areas; a requirement to place dogs on leads in certain locations and the immediate removal of dog faeces. Failure to comply with a PSPO is an offence which can be dealt with by a fixed penalty notice of £100 or by prosecution (maximum fine £1000). A public consultation was carried out during July to seek views on extending the PSPOs for a further three years, beyond the expiry date of 22 October 2023. The

outcome of the consultation was reported to the September Cabinet meeting.

5. Public Conveniences

- 5.1** I was pleased to officially open the new Changing Places Toilet facility at Central Car Park in Fleetwood on 19 July to coincide with Changing Places Awareness. This event provided an opportunity to promote this vital new provision and raise awareness of the life changing difference Changing Places toilets make. The facility has been made possible through grant funding from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities in partnership with Muscular Dystrophy UK, with capital funding in support of the provision from Fleetwood Town Council and Wyre Council. Danfo have provided this new facility and generously agreed to clean and maintain the additional unit within existing costs. This new Changing Places facility will enable dignity, independence and safety for residents and visitors with disabilities of a complex nature. Works will now commence on the Changing Places facility at Wyre Estuary Country Park.

6. Comments and questions

- 6.1** In accordance with procedure rule 11.3 any member of council will be able to ask me a question or make a comment on the contents of my report or on any issue, which falls within my area of responsibility. I will respond to any such questions or comments in accordance with procedure rule 11.5.