

Report of the Strategic Director

BROXTOWE PARKS STANDARD1. Purpose of report

To update Members on the outcome of the latest consultation and site assessments relating to the Broxtowe Parks Standard.

2. Background and detail

The Corporate Plan, as one of its priorities, is to protect the environment for the future. One of the targets associated with this priority is that 100% of 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. Appendix 1 details the questions asked as part of this standard.

Since the standard was approved in 2014 all the 45 main parks and open spaces have been assessed on a number of occasions and a report to the Environment and Climate Change Committee in February 2020 identified two sites not achieving the standard. Appendix 2 details these sites together with the outcome of the consultation reassessments in autumn 2020. In addition, the appendix lists the outcomes of consultation and site assessments of a further 20% of sites that previously met the standard to make sure they were still achieving the quality targets. Consultation took place during late summer/early autumn 2020 using an online questionnaire and 214 responses were received. Notices were placed on all the sites being assessed asking for responses. The questionnaire was also promoted on the Council's website and through social media. All sites are also inspected by officers from the Parks team to assess any concerns raised through the consultation process and to check that the scores achieved are a true and accurate reflection for the sites.

3. Financial implications

No costings have been included in this report but it is proposed to use some of the issues identified to prioritise both capital and revenue budgets for improvements to the Borough's parks and open spaces.

Recommendation

The Committee is asked to NOTE the report.

Background papers

Nil

APPENDIX 1

Site Assessment

1. How welcoming is the park?
2. How effective is signage?
3. Standard of cleanliness
4. How clean is the site in terms of dog fouling?
5. Accessibility
6. Standard of grass cutting
7. Standard of shrub beds/flower beds maintenance
8. Standard of the tree maintenance
9. Play facilities provided
10. Sports facilities provided
11. How are the issues with violence and anti-social behaviour dealt with?
12. Nature and wildlife management
13. Overall impression of the park/open space

Options

Very good/very well
Good/Well
Fair
Poor/not very well
Very poor/not at all
Don't know/not applicable

APPENDIX 2

Sites failing to achieve the Broxtowe Parks Standard in 2019

To achieve the Broxtowe Parks Standard sites must score at least 85% of marks in the fair and above category and at least 45% of marks in the good and above category. Detailed below are the 2 sites not achieving the standard in 2019.

Less than 85% Fair and Above

| | |
|---|-----|
| Archers Field Recreation Ground, Stapleford | 75% |
| Knowle Park, Kimberley | 83% |

Less than 45% Good and Above

| | |
|---|-----|
| Archers Field Recreation Ground, Stapleford | 30% |
|---|-----|

Analysis of the 2020 Survey Work

In late summer/early autumn 2020 the 2 sites failing to achieve the Broxtowe Parks Standard were reassessed together with 12 other sites previously assessed as achieving the standard. These additional 12 sites were selected at random across the borough from the sites that had not been assessed in the last 3 years. The scores are shown below.

| Area | Name of site | Fair & Above 2020 | Good & Above 2020 |
|------------|----------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Awsworth | Shilo Recreation Ground | 89% P | 63% P |
| Beeston | Beeston Fields Recreation Ground | 92% P | 56% P |
| Bramcote | King George V Park | 94% P | 77% P |
| Brinsley | Brinsley Headstocks | 91% P | 78% P |
| Chilwell | Cator Lane Recreation Ground | 93% P | 71% P |
| Chilwell | Sherman Drive Open Space | 93% P | 73% P |
| Greasley | Beauvale Park | 82% F | 61% P |
| Kimberley | Knowle Park | 87% P | 52% P |
| Nuthall | Basil Russell Playing Fields | 96% P | 84% P |
| Stapleford | Archers Field Recreation Ground | 85% P | 48% P |
| Stapleford | Ilkeston Road Recreation Ground | 89% P | 54% P |
| Toton | Manor Farm Recreation Ground | 95% P | 70% P |
| Trowel | Pit Lane Recreation Ground | 95% P | 80% P |
| Watnall | Watnall Green Open Space | 97% P | 89% P |

F = Fail

P = Pass

Based on this round of assessments there is only 1 site failing to achieve the Broxtowe Parks Standard.

Less than 85% Fair and Above

Beauvale Park, Greasley

82%

Less than 45% Good and Above

All sites achieved the standard

Site Specific Comments on the 14 Sites Assessed

Awsorth – Shilo Recreation Ground. Very positive feedback on protection of nature and wildlife. Improvements to boardwalk and access paths suggested together with clearing back of vegetation and repairs to fences.

Beeston – Beeston Fields Recreation Ground. The play area was very well received having lots of space for informal play. Site scored highly in terms of cleanliness. Suggestions for a path around the full perimeter of the park. Comments about the possibility of outdoor gym equipment and refurbishment of the small multi use games area. Negative comments about issues with graffiti.

Bramcote – King George V Park. The new play area attracted lots of positive feedback. The new outdoor fitness equipment was also well received as was the balance between regular mown grass and that managed with a more relaxed mowing regime. Tennis courts popular but could do with more maintenance.

Brinsley – Brinsley Headstocks. Another high scoring site with many favourable comments. The new information panel was well received and the work of the Friends Group much appreciated. High scores for protection of nature and wildlife and the path improvement works. Further works needed to thin out the developing trees in the woodland compartments.

Chilwell – Cator Lane Recreation Ground. Positive comments about cleanliness and responsible dog ownership. A good play area with equipment for all ages. Comments on footpath erosion and the need for new tree planting. This last point has in part been addressed with a new woodland copse planted this winter.

Chilwell – Sherman Drive Open Space. This large open space in the middle of a housing development is appreciated by local residents. Seen as a clean site and only occasional problems with litter which is cleared quickly either by the Council or local residents.

Suggestion for additional tree planting to supplement work done in recent years.

Greasley – Beauvale Park. The only park this year failing to achieve Broxtowe Parks Standard. Although a creditable pass in the “good and above” category a score of 82% in the “fair and above” category was just below the required standard. One of the main criticisms related to the lack of surfaced paths in the children’s play area and the need for improved gates and fencing. Both these items are due to be addressed with Section 106 funding received for this site with the Parish Council working with the Borough Council. The works are scheduled to take place this spring. Other suggestions to improve the site included better signs at entrances, more tree planting and creating more natural areas of grassland management.

Kimberley – Knowle Park. An area failing to achieve the standard twice in recent years. This year however the scores have improved and the park is now achieving the standard. A key factor was the new fenced play area which was well received. Suggestions that it would benefit from a path to make access easier for pushchairs. Comments that signage could be improved.

Nuthall – Basil Russell Playing Fields. Very high scores in both categories with positive feedback across a wide range of areas. Facilities to suit lots of people, always clean and tidy with little anti-social behaviour. The new table tennis and fitness equipment introduced as part of Pride in Parks scheme was appreciated.

Stapleford – Archers Field Recreation Ground. An area that failed to achieve the standard in 2019 with low scores in both categories. Comments in previous years have related to issues with cleanliness and dog fouling but there have been noticeable improvements here. This may be a result of additional visits by the neighbourhood wardens and cleansing teams as recommended as a result of the consultation in 2019. The positive comments related to the recent meadow and orchard planting and removal of graffiti. Whilst still lower scores than other sites, there was a genuine feeling that improvements had been made on previous years. Areas that still need further improvement are issues with path surfacing and additional signage relating to dog fouling.

Stapleford – Ilkeston Road Recreation Ground. Generally positive comments relating to cleanliness, the path around the perimeter of the park, improvements to the play area in recent years and the outdoor fitness equipment.

Toton – Manor Farm Recreation Ground. Another high scoring site with people commenting on a good mix of space and facilities for all ages. Praise for the Council's cleansing team and the work done by local residents to maintain standards of cleanliness. Suggestions that some of the informal paths could be cut back more regularly.

Trowell – Pit Lane Recreation Area. Much appreciated during lockdown as a place to get away from it all. High score for nature and wildlife management. Drainage of the football pitch is a concern during the winter months.

Watnall – Watnall Green Open Space. The highest scoring of all sites with new paths and entrances well received. The changes to maintenance regimes that enhance the sites Local Nature Reserve status have proved popular. Clean and tidy throughout reflecting the work of the Council and local residents.