

Service being assessed	Environmental Services – Parks & Open Spaces
Who will be involved in completing this assessment?	Lead/SUM: Simon Mutton - Environmental Services Manager Support: Jules Tinsley – Environmental Services Support Officer Peter Holland/Paul Kelf – GYB Services Grounds Manager/Asst Manager
Date of Review	21 June 2011
Date of Next Review	21 June 2012
What is the purpose of the service?	To provide a network of easily accessible, safe, attractive and welcoming parks and open spaces which meets the needs of everyone and which contribute to the economic, social, environmental and educational well-being of people.
Is this assessment being undertaken because of changes to the service? If so what are they?	Assessment being undertaken as part of Council's annual review of equalities information, not because of change to service/policy. However, the Parks Strategy is due for major review but resource limitations mean this is unlikely until 2012.
The purpose of this assessment is to understand how services can help the Council to meet its duties under Equalities legislation. The duties can be summarised as 1. Eliminate discrimination 2. Advance equality of opportunity	As part of the Parks Strategy, the Council has already achieved Green Flag status for St George's Park and looks to apply the judging assessment criteria to all its parks and open Spaces. The full criteria is attached as an appendix to this assessment but key points we are judged against are:

<p>3. Foster good relations between different parts of the community</p> <p>How does this service help the Council to do this, in particular in relation to the categories specifically mentioned in legislation - Race, Gender/Sex, Disability, Age, Religion/Belief, Gender Reassignment, Sexual Orientation, Pregnancy & Maternity and in respect of Duty 1 only – Marriage and Civil Partnerships?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equal access for all members of the community • It must be a secure place for all members of the community to use or traverse • Evidence of community involvement in management and/or developments and results achieved • Appropriate levels of provision of recreational facilities for all sectors of the community <p>The Green Flag has been held for 3 year but is not being applied for in 2011 due to lack of resource to prepare bid but will reapply in 2012.</p>
<p>How will you know that service is working as it should?</p>	<p>Feedback from annual Citizen's Panel surveys</p>
<p>What data have you used to help you make this assessment?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey responses • Site inspections
<p>Is there any additional data that you need to collect to help in continuous improvement?</p>	<p>Not currently</p>
<p>How have you ensured that this service has been designed from a customer's perspective and how have you involved customers in that process?</p>	<p>St George's Park refurbishment – extensive consultation including customer representation on the project board.</p> <p>Responses from Citizen's Panel survey used to help direct service delivery priorities in consultation with service provider(s)</p>

<p>Has any other consultation been carried out, including to ensure that we have taken into consideration the needs of those not currently using the service?</p>	
<p>What is, or what do you expect to be the impact of the way you work on different parts of the community, including those covered by equality legislation?</p>	<p>Who benefits? All members of the community benefit from provision of free and easy access to public open space for both active and passive recreation.</p> <p>Who should be expected to benefit but don't – Why not? Full access to all open space facilities for some physically disabled not possible to achieve due to physical nature of some sites (eg gradients) and costs involved in remedy.</p>
<p>On the basis of what you have found out, which of these options will you now follow</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No major changes • Adjust the policy • Continue the policy • Stop and remove the policy <p>This is a review – not a new policy or service. As and when it is proposed to change the service or policies, new assessments will be completed.</p>
<p>Say how the service will be reviewed to assess the impact</p>	<p>The Parks and Open Spaces strategy is due to undergo review in 2012 subject to resource availability.</p>

<p>What now needs to be done and by who?</p>	<p>Review of Parks Strategy and Green Flag Award criteria compliance will be undertaken by the Environmental Services team alongside staff from GYB Services during 2012. The review and monitoring compliance with the Green Flag standards will then be undertaken annually in consultation with our customers. The method of consultation will be designed during the review.</p>
<p>Signed off by</p>	<p>Simon Mutten - Environmental Services Manager</p>

Appendix: Green Flag Award® Assessment Criteria

Green Flag Award® applications are judged against eight key criteria. Where certain criteria are not met, applicants can provide justifications that may be taken into account. What's more, if management practice changes are in progress but not yet fully implemented, transitional phases will be acknowledged and viewed positively.

The judging criteria also considers the fact that each park/green space will offer different kinds of facilities, and will be managed and developed to varying opportunities and constraints. Innovation and the way facilities offered are tailored to the needs of the community will also be taken into account.

Eight Key Criteria:

1. A welcoming place

When approaching or entering the park/green space, the overall impression for any member of the community - regardless of the purpose of their visit - should be positive and inviting. There should be:

- Good and safe access

- Good signage to and in the park/green space
- Equal access for all members of the community

2. Healthy, safe and secure

The park/green space must be a healthy, safe and secure place for all members of the community to use. Any issues that have come to light must be addressed in the management plan and implemented on the ground. New issues that arise must be addressed promptly and appropriately.

- Equipment and facilities must be safe to use
- It must be a secure place for all members of the community to use or traverse
- Dog fouling must be adequately addressed
- Health and safety policies should be in place, in practice and regularly reviewed
- Toilets, drinking water, first aid, public telephones and emergency equipment where relevant (e.g. life belts by water) should be available in or near the park/green space, and be clearly signposted.

3. Clean and well maintained

For aesthetic as well as health and safety reasons, issues of cleanliness and maintenance must be adequately addressed, in particular:

- Litter and other waste management
- The maintenance of grounds, buildings, equipment and other features
- A policy on litter, vandalism and maintenance should be in place, in practice and regularly reviewed

4. Sustainability

Methods used in maintaining the park/green space and its facilities should be environmentally sound, relying on best practices available according to current knowledge. Management should be aware of the range of techniques available to them, and demonstrate that informed choices have been made and are regularly reviewed. Parks/green spaces should:

- Have an environmental policy or charter and management strategy in place, which is in practice and regularly reviewed
- Minimise and justify pesticide use
- Eliminate horticultural peat use
- Recycle waste plant material
- Demonstrate high horticultural and arboricultural standards
- Have energy conservation, pollution reduction, waste recycling, and resource conservation measures

5. Conservation and heritage

Particular attention should be paid to the conservation and appropriate management of:

- Natural features, wildlife and fauna
- Landscapes
- Buildings and structural features
- These should serve their function well without placing undue pressure on the surrounding environment

6. Community involvement

The park/green space management should actively pursue the involvement of members of the community who represent as many park/green space user groups as possible. The following should be demonstrated:

- Knowledge of user community and levels and patterns of use
- Evidence of community involvement in management and/or developments and results achieved
- Appropriate levels of provision of recreational facilities for all sectors of the community

7. Marketing

- A marketing strategy should be in place, which is in practice and regularly reviewed
- There should be good provision of information to users, eg about management strategies, activities, features, ways to get involved
- The park/green space should be promoted as a community resource

8. Management

- A management plan or strategy should be in place which reflects the aspirations of Local Agenda 21
- This should clearly and adequately address all of the above criteria and any other relevant aspects of the park/green space's management
- The plan must be actively implemented and regularly reviewed
- A financially sound management of the park/green space must also be demonstrated