

**Committee: Open Spaces**

**Date: 6 December 2022**

**Title: Progressing the Green Flag Award - Herne Hill LNR**

**Purpose of Report**

To advise members on the best way to progress with pursuing the Green Flag award.

**Recommendation:**

Members to delegate authority to officers to engage with local stakeholders and set up a "Herne Hill Users Group". Terms of reference to then be brought back to Open Spaces for their Consideration.

**Background:**

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 across the United Kingdom and around the world.
2. Winning a Green Flag Award brings with it a wealth of benefits, from the status of being affiliated with a prestigious awards programme through to tangible benefits such as recognising and rewarding staff, promoting the site and sharing good practice.
3. Applications are made on an annual basis with each site receiving a detailed feedback report following an assessment by members of the team of industry professionals.
4. Every new site is assessed by experienced judges, who make an appointment to inspect the site and meet staff and volunteers. In subsequent years, judging alternately between a full assessment as described below and an unannounced "Mystery Shop" assessment. The full assessment has two parts and judges score each section of the Green Flag Award Score Sheet.
5. Stage One: Desk Assessment - Judges assess the site-specific management plan and associated documentation, and any responses to the judges' feedback from the previous year (if this isn't a first application). This section is worth 30 out of 100 points. The average score is calculated and multiplied by 3 to give a score out of 30. At least 15 points are required to achieve the accreditation.
6. Stage Two: Site Assessment - Judges assess whether the management plan is in practice on the site, and how well the Green Flag Award criteria have been met. This is determined by observation and by questioning staff, volunteers and visitors. This section is worth 70 out of 100 points. The average score is multiplied by 7 to give a score out of 70. At least 42 points are required to achieve the accreditation.

7. A total pass mark of 66 is needed to gain the accreditation. Therefore, an additional 9 points must be gained across the two assessments to achieve the award. Every application will receive a full desk assessment, a site visit and a full feedback report, irrespective of the outcome. Applicants will not see their individual scoresheet; the scoring is applied as a band.

**Report:**

1. Members have recently agreed an annual budget of £2,000 for Green Flag related fees and projects with the aim to apply for the Green Flag Award in the 2023/24 award period to allow time to create a solid management plan for the next five to ten years. Subject to Full Council's approval in the January Budget Setting process, this funding will be available from April 2023.
2. The grounds team recently put together an action plan for Herne Hill that is broken down into the eight criteria associated with the Green Flag Award. This action plan can be seen in **Appendix 9A** and will form the building blocks of the management plan.
3. A key element of the Green Flag Award is community involvement, which is one of the criteria that the Town Council will be judged on. This is to ensure we as site managers understand the community it seeks to serve; that we actively and appropriately involve members of the community in making decisions about the site's development; and that they provide opportunities for active participation in site projects; and that we ensure that there is the appropriate provision of recreational facilities and activities for all sectors of the community.
4. Officers would therefore like to engage with local stakeholders to get their thoughts and comments on Herne Hill and how it is being managed to ensure we are considering their needs and so that that they can put ideas forward into the management plan.
5. In order to achieve this engagement, it is proposed that a Herne Hill Users Group (HUG) is set up along the lines of the Recreation Ground Users Group. The Terms of Reference (ToR) will be structured in a similar way and will be brought to the Open Spaces Committee in February.
6. The Countryside Manager will then put together a draft management plan that meets the Green Flag criteria and bring it forward to the Open Spaces committee for discussion and further thoughts before we progress with the Green Flag Award.
7. Members to delegate authority to officers to engage with local stakeholders and set up a "Herne Hill Users Group". Terms of reference to then be brought back to Open Spaces for their consideration.

**Jake Taylor**  
**Countryside Manager**  
**November 2022**