

<b>Report To:</b>	<b>CABINET</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>7<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2019</b>
<b>Heading:</b>	<b>PARKS AND GREEN SPACES PROJECT UPDATE</b>		
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	<b>CLLR HELEN-ANN SMITH – PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR STREETS, PARKS AND TOWN CENTRES</b>		
<b>Ward/s:</b>	<b>ALL</b>		
<b>Key Decision:</b>	<b>NO</b>		
<b>Subject to Call-In:</b>	<b>NO</b>		

### **Purpose of Report**

To report on the £2.6m investment and improvements completed on parks and green spaces in 2019 and to provide an update on current and future projects.

### **Recommendation(s)**

To note the contents of the report.

### **Reasons for Recommendation(s)**

To update Cabinet on the investment and improvements completed on parks and green spaces across the District during 2019 and plans for future investment.

### **Alternative Options Considered**

Not applicable.

### **Detailed Information**

#### **1. Introduction**

A wide range of improvements to parks and green spaces have been completed across the District in 2019. Over **£2.6m** will have been invested in improvements from the beginning of 2019 through to March 2020. The Council is investing over £600k, with more than 75% of the £2.6 million secured from grants, partner funding and contributions from housing developers, including:

- **Seven play and activity areas created/ improved**
- **Six Green Flag Awards retained**

## 2. Green Flag Awards

The Council once again retained six Green Flag awards in 2019, joining 125 other parks across the East Midlands to receive the prestigious award in recognition of their high standards. Titchfield Park in Hucknall celebrated the tenth anniversary of the award. A celebration was held at Brierley Forest Park to mark the achievement of all the awards and flag raising ceremonies were carried out at several sites, supported by parks friends groups.

## 3. Investments in 2019

### 3.1 Hucknall Investment

#### Broomhill Estate Play Area (£137K)

In Hucknall the much awaited play area on the Broomhill Estate was completed and opened. The Council's Parks Fund which provides £120k per year to one area of the District was committed to the town which will be invested in Nabbs Lane Park and Titchfield Park.

Improvement works to create a new children's play area and activity trail at Broomhill Park were completed in time for Easter 2019 with over 200 residents coming together to celebrate the opening. The project has been well received by the local community with ongoing consultation to ensure that local children got what they wanted. The new equipment was funded by Section 106 contributions from housing developers and grant funding from FCC Community Foundation (formally WREN Community Fund).

### 3.2 Annesley & Kirkby Investment

#### Public Art Project, Annesley & Kirkby (£171k)

In Annesley & Kirkby a major public art project was completed and much needed improvements to play areas were completed:-

A number of pieces of public art were installed across the Annesley area, linking the established community at Annesley Rows with the new community at the Jasmine Gardens and Willow Fields housing developments and Newstead and Annesley Country Park.

The art works engender a sense of community pride whilst telling the tale of Annesley through the ages from woodland to deer park, to industry, to residential and recreation. This project had substantial community engagement from start to finish.

The art works include a new gate into the country park, linked by an arts trail from Annesley Cutting. Deer and miner sculptures have been installed amongst the groves of trees on the Annesley Rows open space along with new benches. The Annesley 'A' which once adorned the side of the pit head building has been re-imagined adjacent to the original colliery winding wheels located at the junction of Newstead Road and Annesley Cutting.

Additional deer and feature seating have been installed on the open space between Jasmine Gardens and Willow Fields. A rubbing trail including an A-Z of Annesley has been installed in the garden around the Parish Hall.

#### Kirkby Parks and Footpaths (£43k)

Replacement swings have been installed at **West Park (£18k)** and redundant equipment removed. At **Morven Park £25k** Improvement works have been completed with a new inclusive roundabout and toddler unit installed, along with improvements to the play trail.

### Kirkby Footpath Network (£120k)

Over £120k is being invested to improve the footpath network to the north of Kirkby, focusing on the old pit tip sites. The works will include improving existing footpaths and Public Rights of Way.

### **3.3 Rural Areas Investment**

The Rural area benefited from the first tranche of the Parks Fund with additional funding from Selston Parish Council and Section 106 contributions from housing developers.

#### Jacksdale Recreation Ground, Multi-use Games Area (MUGA) (£68.7k)

A brand new multi-use games area with provision for football and basketball has been installed at Jacksdale Recreation Ground. The opening event was held on Tuesday 16th July, with representatives from Ashfield District Council and Selston Parish Council and were joined by hundreds of pupils from Jacksdale Primary School as part of Love Parks Week. Each child had the opportunity to try out the MUGA during their PE lessons throughout the afternoon. The new MUGA was installed adjacent to the existing skate park; new outdoor gym equipment is due to be installed in 2020. The three facilities will combine to create a young people's 'hub' on the site complementing the existing play area and informal use grass football pitch. Access and footpath improvements are also planned together with new bins and signage to give the recreation ground an improved local identity.

#### Friezeland Recreation Ground, Bike Track - Underwood (£50k)

The new scooter park was designed and built by Bike Track who specialise in the design and build of scooter parks. The new facility was opened in time for the 2019 school summer holidays. The facility has been designed for younger scooter users with a range of abilities and has proved very popular with children and young people. It can also be used by skate boarders, inline skaters and BMX riders. An official opening event is planned in the near future with both Ashfield District and Selston Parish Council representatives meeting the young people from the youth group that worked hard to lobby the Parish Council for the new facility. An outdoor gym area was also installed to provide cardio and callisthenic zones to support body weight training and improved flexibility and strength. The area is suitable for all ages.

#### The Hills – Selston (£8k)

The footpaths at The Hills open space in Selston have been resurfaced making the pathways more accessible for visitors. The footpaths had become overgrown, narrowing the paths to an uneven track. The resurfaced footpaths will mean easier access for dog walkers and visitors from the neighbouring residential care home and other path users.

### **3.4 Sutton Investment**

#### Kingsmill Reservoir - Sutton

In Sutton the main focus has been on developing the Heritage Lottery Funded project at Kings Mill Reservoir. The Kings Mill Reservoir project budget is: £1.437m.

The project will support new access routes, signage and heritage interpretation along with an activity programme, improvements will take place across Sutton Lawn, Kings Mill Reservoir and Hermitage Ponds. The project includes:

- Ranger led activity plan
- Kings Mill Viaduct restoration
- Reedbed management and creation

- Dredging works at Kings Mill Reservoir
- Footpath creation and improvements
- Signage and interpretation
- Website and mobile app.
- Education packs
- Heritage centre / café improvements

A new bridleway bridge, providing a safe crossing over the railway track has been completed by Network Rail at Kings Mill Reservoir. The bridge links to the Timberland Trail and features artwork which reflects the local area.

Restoration work to the viaduct is due to commence in October 2019 and the works to transform the existing visitor centre at Kings Mill into the Mill Waters Heritage Centre will be undertaken from December 2019 until February 2020.

The dredging work will commence in October and is due to be completed in December 2019. The work will include the formation of sediment breaks which will assist in the natural formation of islands at the main inlet providing habitat benefits.

Footpath improvements will commence from early 2020 and will be completed by April 2020. The works include the expansion of the car park to accommodate growing visitor numbers.

The Mill Waters Project Ranger has been recruited and started in post in September 2019. Based at the Mill Adventure Base at the reservoir she will be leading volunteering and community activities for the project.

A mobile app. which covers Sutton Lawn and Kings Mill Reservoir has been rebranded this year and will be relaunched in October 2019 half-term. The app provides games and trail activities around the parks and will host the heritage interpretation for the site.

There has also been a focus on continued investment into play areas in Sutton with the following schemes completed:

#### John Whetton Park Play Area - Sutton (£85K)

The Play Area has received investment of £85k creating a new toddler and junior play area. The new play area retains a fenced space for toddlers with a new soft play surface, climbing and active equipment and a new swing which supports child and parent to play together. The new junior area introduces new levels of taller, more challenging equipment and a new cocowave pendulum swing for multiple teens to join in. The entrance to the park is also to be refreshed with new park signage at both entrances and to the toddler play area. Later this year work to level out an area for football and other ball games will provide wider activities for residents of all ages.

#### Sutton Lawn, Play Area (£62k)

Two bespoke climbing frames were installed at Sutton Lawn Play Area earlier this year. The first creating a new large climbing structure to challenge the agility of young teenagers and an inclusive climbing frame with wheelchair access creating a play space where all children can play together. The new play structures complement the installation of a wheelchair accessible roundabout installed last year expanding the opportunities for young people of all abilities to play together. Later this year a new imaginative sand play unit will be added to the sand pit refreshing the tired elements in the sand play area and maintaining the high standards in the destination park.

Other improvements in Sutton have focused on improving local spaces and routes to school:

#### Wharf Road, Open Space Landscape Improvements - Stanton Hill (£50k)

This popular local green space situated at the end of Stanton Hill High Street, Sutton, was improved earlier this year. The project has benefitted from over £50,000 of investment aimed at improving the area's 'gateway' appearance and providing local users with a safe access onto the open space. In doing so, the works cleared many of the existing overgrown trees & shrubs to bring the landscape under management. It also included the replacement of the old timber revetments to safeguard the steep embankments along Wharf Road.

All works were successfully completed between March – June 2019 and have been well received by local residents and users of the open space. A new high quality entrance space was created at the junction of Wharf Road / Fackley Hill; with refurbished steps, bespoke handrails and resin bonded surfacing along with new signage and street furniture. The quality of the finished works has greatly benefitted from an improved specification including over 50m<sup>2</sup> of masonry retaining walls. The area will continue to be routinely maintained and managed by Ashfield District Council.

### **4. Future Improvements**

Looking towards 2020 there are a number of projects planned which will help to ensure that children and young people across the District can access safe, exciting play and activity areas and that all residents can enjoy well maintained parks and green spaces.

#### **4.1 Hucknall Future Improvements**

**In Hucknall there are exciting plans for Titchfield Park which will see over £0.5m investment and Nabbs Lane play area will receive a much needed facelift:**

##### Nabbs Lane Park Play Area – Hucknall (£68k)

Plans are underway to refurbish the existing children's play area on the Park. Younger residents will have the opportunity to comment and give their ideas on the final designs and help choose the new equipment. It is envisaged that the installation works will start later this year.

##### Titchfield Park Brook - Hucknall (up to £350k)

Following on from the success of improvement works completed during winter 2017, further funds have been secured from the Environment Agency and Nottinghamshire County Council to naturalise and de-culvert part of Titchfield Park Brook where it runs through the park. The works will see the construction of new channels and basins to attenuate storm water and reduce peak water flow further downstream before the brook joins the River Leen. The project provides an opportunity to improve this area of the park and maximise biodiversity for wildlife. Works are to be commenced in early 2020.

##### Titchfield Park Play Area – Hucknall (Up to £180k)

The existing children's play area at Titchfield Park contains older style, traditional play equipment which is due for replacement. In tandem with the works to the park's brook the play area will be relocated to an area adjacent to the astro-turf pitch. The new location is more central and accessible and more visible from the main car park and pavilion café. A funding bid of up to £100K is due to be submitted to FCC Community Foundation in December 2019. Some of the existing equipment will be used to create a temporary play area whilst the works are being carried out. Installation of the new play area is due to commence next year.

## 4.2 Kirkby Future Improvements

**Kirkby will benefit from major investment in 2020/21. £120k from the Parks Fund and over a quarter of a million pounds of s106 and external grant funding have successfully been secured to improve the town's parks and green spaces.**

Improvements will include refurbishment of the Skegby Road play area in Annesley/ Kirkby Woodhouse, additional toddler equipment at West Park, replacement equipment at New Annesley Recreation Ground and Titchfield Park and over £100k investment in a new play area off Sorrell Drive (Lindley's Lane development):

### Skegby Road and West Park Play Areas - Kirkby (£120k)

The Council's Park Improvement Fund has been secured to deliver improvements to the existing play area on Skegby Road, Kirkby Woodhouse. The £120k will be spent on new equipment to be installed in the play area with new youth equipment installed in the adjacent grass areas. The funding will also be used to install additional toddler equipment on West Park and improve the play provision at Titchfield Park with a number of the older units being replaced with more modern, challenging units that will appeal to a wider age range.

### Kirkby Footpath Improvements (£129k)

In order to improve the strategic green infrastructure routes that link the Larwood Park housing development to Sutton Parkway station and Kirkby Town Centre, £129k has been secured from s106 developer contributions. Works will be ongoing throughout the winter and completed in early 2020.

### Lindleys Lane, New Play Area - Kirkby (£102k)

£102k has been secured through the s106 agreement for the Lindleys Lane housing development to install a new play area once the developer has completed the works to the open space. Consultation with residents is planned for spring 2020 prior to the implementation of the play area later in the year once the developer has fulfilled their planning obligations.

### Annesley Recreation Ground, Play area (£39.5k)

Following the completion of the Annesley Art Project there will be further improvements to the New Annesley Recreation Ground. £19,500 has been secured from Nottinghamshire County Council's Local Improvement Scheme with an additional £20k of funding allocated from Annesley and Felley Parish Council. The £39.5k of funding will be used for improving the existing play area providing additional youth equipment.

## 4.3 Sutton Future Improvements

**In Sutton, Brierley Forest Park will benefit from additional parking to meet the increased visitor demand and a new orchard will be planted:**

### Brierley Forest Park, Car Park (£45k)

Due to the overwhelming popularity and increased visitor numbers coming to Brierley Forest Park since the opening of the woodland play area and the Brierley Café in summer 2018, £45k has been committed to increase the capacity of the existing car park by approx. 30-40 spaces. The planned works will be in keeping with the existing natural surroundings which make the park so popular with visitors. There will be minimal excavation works required as eco-grid will be used which provides the required stability and is then filled in with a soil mix and then grass seeded to provide the desired natural appearance. As part of the works, the current butterfly planting area adjacent to the main walkway to the visitor centre, will be improved and plants relocated as and where necessary.

### Brierley Forest, Community Orchard (£4k)

As part of the Council's commitment to tackling climate change £4k has been secured for a community orchard to be planted at Brierley Forest Park. The Council has ambitions to plant 1,000 trees over the next four years and Brierley Forest Park will be the first site to welcome large scale tree planting. This project aims to educate young people as the District's first community orchard, 250 fruit and nut trees will be planted to demonstrate the natural food cycle. The long term plan is to create a green zone within the park where children can learn, enjoy and interact. The first phase of planting will take place during October and local schools and community groups are being invited along to participate, each tree planted by a resident, child or community group will be recorded so that in years to come it can be referenced.

## **4.4 Rural Future Investments**

**In the Rural area there are several projects planned for Jacksdale.**

**Footpath works will provide an improved link to the bridge over the Cromford Canal connecting into Derbyshire. The car park at Jacksdale Community Centre will be expanded, providing additional spaces for visitors using local amenities in the village as well as the nearby green spaces and the Cromford Canal trails. The Parish Council is funding new gym equipment on Jacksdale Recreation Ground, similar to that provided at Friezeland Recreation Ground in Underwood which has proved popular with residents.**

### Jacksdale Recreation Ground (£23.2k)

Future improvements to Jacksdale Recreation Ground consist of new outdoor gym equipment; £7,125 has been secured from Nottinghamshire County Council's Local Improvement Scheme and £7,125 has been secured from Selston Parish Council. The new gym equipment combined with the existing skate park and recently installed MUGA will create a young people's 'hub' on the site complementing the existing play area and informal use grass football pitch.

A further £9k of investment is planned to improve the accessibility into the recreation ground and the footpath network linking to the adjacent Erewash Meadows Nature Reserve.

Further investment of £1,750 has been secured from Nottinghamshire County Council's Local Improvement Scheme, £1,750 from the Friends of Cromford Canal and £400 from Selston Parish Council to provide interpretation panels identifying walking routes around the Cromford Canal which links places of interest in Jacksdale, Codnor and Ironville.

### Jacksdale Community Centre Car Park (£25.7k)

In order to increase the capacity of Jacksdale Community Centre car park, £25.7k of S106 money has been secured. This will provide additional spaces for visitors using the local high street amenities and those wishing to use the facilities on the recreation ground or enjoy a healthy walk to the surrounding countryside.

The above improvements are all due to be delivered in Spring 2020.

## **Implications**

### **Corporate Plan:**

#### **Health and Happiness**

- Healthy Places, Promoting health through our built environment.
- Tackling physical inactivity

## Cleaner and Greener

1. Invest into open spaces, including play areas.

**Legal:** There are no legal implications associated with the recommendations in the report.

### Finance:

Budget Area	Implication
General Fund – Revenue Budget	None
General Fund – Capital Programme	None – funding for several projects was agreed at September Cabinet, projects scheduled for next financial year will be incorporated into the Capital Programme review in November.
Housing Revenue Account – Revenue Budget	None
Housing Revenue Account – Capital Programme	None

### Risk:

Risk	Mitigation
Not applicable	

### Human Resources:

No HR implications.

### Equalities:

Accessibility for all residents is considered during the design stage of all projects.

### Other Implications:

Communications: There will opportunities for generating ongoing positive publicity about the projects through press releases and social media.

### Reason(s) for Urgency

Not applicable.

### Reason(s) for Exemption

Not applicable.

### Background Papers

Not applicable.

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