

Updates for Mansel Park for 2011/12

Exciting times for Mansel Park

- The Friends of Mansel Park continued to use the park and the MP3 building for their events during 2011. These events included the annual Easter and Christmas events and the successful annual Gala Day.
- Millbrook Community Library relocated to the MP3 building in September 2011, this is used by the local residents in the Millbrook area.
- Floodlighting for the Multi-use Games Area (MUGA) is being investigated by the city council, The Football Foundation and Youth Options through a grant from the Barclays Spaces for Sports Sustainability Fund. This would enable the MUGA to be used in the evenings by organised groups etc. Saints in the Community (SFC) will also be involved in operating organised sports sessions on the MUGA.
- Bush Hills Football Club who are based at The Saints public house and very much a local team are discussing leasing part of the Park so that they can have their own football pitch, this will enable the already successful club to progress through the leagues to a higher standard of football. The pitch will also be made available by the club for organised training sessions etc. with local youngsters.

Improvements to the Park

- We have installed an interpretation board at the boggy area to show the wildlife that can be found in and around the boggy area and the rest of the park. Another interpretation board is planned to be installed near to the bund that runs along Windermere Avenue.
- We are currently looking at installing a barrier or fence at the top of the park near to Millbrook Tower this is to prevent cars and vans parking on this area of the park. The barrier will be in keeping with the park and surrounding area.
- Following consultation with residents in the block, Millbrook Tower and the area immediately surrounding it has undergone a complete revamp, improving the general area and feel of the building with new planting, grass areas and lighting. The base of Millbrook Tower has also been painted with a mural which shows views of the park as well as other images.
- New paths have been built leading to the AdiZone, enabling easier access for Disabled People, pushchairs and prams.

Community Involvement

- A work day was set up with the friends, an ecologist and the district team to carry out work on the boggy area. This is planned to become an annual event.

Park events for 2012

April

Community Association Easter event

September

Mansel Park Gala Day

December

Community Association Christmas Day

Throughout the Year

Events at the MUGA arranged by Saints in the Community (floodlighting permitting)

1.5 Resources Update

1.5.1 Staff

- The day to day management and maintenance of Mansel Park is undertaken principally by the West District Team within the Parks and Street Cleansing Section (P&SC). The Area Co-ordinator (ACO) Stuart Davies has overall responsibility for the park. Stuart reports to Brian Kneller, West District Parks and Street Cleansing Manager.
- The ACO and some members of the team are involved in the events arranged by the community association in the park. They help with setting up the event, clearing up at the end, litter picking during the event and are also on hand to give information and answer questions.

1.5.2 Finance and Budget

- Mansel Park is located in the Millbrook area of Southampton. The park has undergone extensive improvements in recent years, including the addition of the AdiZone an outside fitness area. Budget allocations have continued broadly in line with those set out for 2009/10 until the present time. However, due to the overall financial position of the city council, the service is now tasked with reducing overall spend within Mansel Park during 2012/13. It is anticipated this reduction will be achieved through changes to mowing regimes etc.

- At the time of writing the budget expenditure forecast for 2011/12 is estimated as forecast in the management plan

1.6 Community Involvement Update

- The Community Association and associated Friends Group continue to show an interest in the park and in its management and maintenance. They continue to provide ideas and feedback from the local residents through our links with the community association.
- We are looking at ways of improving usage of the park hence the installation of the AdiZone, the possible floodlighting of the MUGA and the proposed leasing of an area of the park to Bush Hills the local football team. All of these will hopefully encourage more usage of the park as well as helping give local residents places to exercise and improve health and fitness.

1.7 User Feedback Update

The results of the latest city survey conducted in 2010 shows public satisfaction with the city's parks and green spaces to now stand at 91%.

2.3 Specific Objectives for 2012/13

The following key objectives have been derived from the Green Space Strategy, the relevant team business plans and customer feedback and provide a focus for management in 2012/13. Specific actions to address these objectives are identified in the action plan.

- Continue to monitor and possibly develop new areas where mowing reduction on certain areas of banks has occurred to encourage wildflowers to seed and carry out coppice style mowing to maintain diversity.
- Work with the Natural Environment Team to review the success of biodiversity actions and update the biodiversity management statement as necessary.
- Aim to improve usage of the MUGA by encouraging organised sessions for local residents with Saints in the Community.
- Continue to work with the community association to help continue with the already successful and well supported events.
- Work with Bush Hills FC and The Saints public house to develop a stand alone football pitch that will enable the already successful football team to gain more success. This will also enable local residents to use the pitch for organised matches and training sessions with the support of Bush Hills FC.

2.4 Management Structures Update

Brian Kneller, who at the time of writing the management plan in 2009, was managing the West District Parks and Street Cleansing Team, has recently taken on responsibility for the Cemeteries Team, Central Clean Team and the Reactive Team.

2.5.3 Sustainability

An appreciation of reduced staff and resources available to the team in future years has prompted a review to the way that the work is approached by the team in the park. The team will continue to aim to keep the grass areas to the published service standards but we will also look in conjunction with the Natural Environment team at creating additional grass areas that can be maintained as biodiversity areas. Litter picking and play area inspection within the park will be carried out by the district team rather than have a specific team for these tasks.

3.1 Measuring success and progress towards Green Flag criteria

We recognise our success from the completion of the points from the action plan as listed below.

Welcoming place

- Various groups including The Football Foundation and Saints in the Community are looking at using the park for organised events.
- Public information and interpretation on the wildlife to be found within the Park has been introduced with some more signage proposed.

Healthy, safe and secure

- Works have been completed on Millbrook Tower including new murals and planting, improving the area around the site.
- Work to improve approaches to the Adizone has taken place enabling easier access for Disabled People and users with prams/pushchairs.

Clean and well maintained

- New fencing around the top of the park is being discussed to stop residents parking.
- Maintenance of some grass areas has been altered enabling these to become biodiversity areas.
- New seating and a bin have been installed near to the Adizone.

Community Involvement

- The Community Association held a variety of events including Easter and Christmas events and the annual Gala Day.
- Millbrook Community Library have opened in the MP3 building on the edge of the park.

3.2 Programme of events

Events within the park this year included:

Christmas Day – A Christmas themed event held on 17th December, stalls and interactive events attended by approximately 650 people.

Easter Event – an event based on Easter themes including an Easter egg hunt attended by approximately 300 people.

Gala Day – the 3rd annual gala day which is increasing in size and popularity each year, unfortunately poor weather for the first time since the gala days have been in existence meant a lower turn out than normal approximately 250 – 300.

All events were publicised through the councils 'what's on' web pages. Events were also listed in City View, the council's flagship magazine that is distributed to all households. The Neighbourhood Services Team also produced a park events leaflet which included events.

3.5 Friends of Mansel Park Actions for 2011/12

Working with the district teams on some sites around the boggy area and the bunding around the perimeter of the park. A few members turned up at the arranged times.