



Chestnuts Park Management Plan 2008 – 2012 Executive Summary

Introduction

The 5.13 hectare Chestnuts Park, located opposite St Ann's Hospital, was first opened in 1900 and has undergone a number of changes since then. The site has been managed by the London Borough of Haringey since its formation in 1965.

Chestnuts Park was formally a private manor first built in 1850. The manor building was used as a library and reading rooms until it was taken down and replaced by the community centre in the 1960's. The park itself is well known for its avenues of plane trees, first planted in the early 1900's.

The park originally held a bowling green and pavilion, but the pavilion was converted to a day crèche in the 1970's. The green itself has recently had a multi-use games area installed on it. The park also has a play area, two tennis courts, a basketball area, a café and public toilets.

Park Management

Chestnuts Park is managed by the Parks Service, a division of Recreation Services in the Directorate of Adult, Culture and Community Services in the London Borough of Haringey. A Parks Service Neighbourhood Manager, responsible for all sites in the east of the borough, oversees the maintenance and management of Chestnuts Park; and is assisted by a Neighbourhood Officer.

The site itself does not as yet have a permanent gardener; however, maintenance is carried out by a team based in the nearby Downhills Park. There are plans to install a permanent gardener on site following completion of phase one restoration works to the site in 2008. Events, marketing and other administrative tasks are carried out by the Parks Service in-house administrative team.

Our Vision for Chestnuts Park

Our aim is to provide a welcoming park that local people are proud of. We aim to do this by providing a high standard of maintenance and quality facilities that are appreciated and utilised by all members of the community; including families with young children.

To achieve this vision we aim to follow the eight Green Flag Award criteria in creating a welcoming, well used park, which is clean and well maintained.

A Welcoming Place

The Parks Service are replacing the welcome signs at each entrance to the park, and the new signs will detail the name of the park, contact details for the Parks Service and Friends group, as well as symbols detailing 'good' behaviour in the park.

Chestnuts Park also has a notice board located outside the café. The notice board displays the bye-laws, environment policy, a map of the park, and any relevant information regarding events, activities and restoration works in the park.

We aim to ensure that the park is accessible to all members of society and undertake audits and user surveys on a regular basis to monitor this provision. An accessibility audit was carried out in 2005 and the recommendations arising from this have been addressed. All of the entrances to the park are wheelchair accessible from the surrounding pavement.

Cleanliness, Health and Safety

The Parks Service takes a very serious approach to Health and Safety on its sites. Staff are given relevant training and are provided with appropriate safety clothing and equipment for the task they are undertaking. Any accidents or incidents that occur on site to either staff or members of the public are reported to the management team and are followed up.

The Parks Service maintains two mobile hygiene teams; one based in the west of the borough and the other in the east. Litter is collected from Chestnuts Park on a daily basis. Dog bins are emptied at least once a week by a mobile hygiene operative. Graffiti is removed within 24 hours by the on-site staff member.

Toilets for the public are provided in a specific built building next to the café and are open 24 hours.

Safe and Secure

The Parks Service has a Parks Constabulary which regularly patrols the boroughs parks and open spaces in the borough.

Security in the park is boosted by the regular presence of staff in the café, the day crèche and the community centre; as well as the maintenance team.

Maintenance of Buildings, Equipment and Landscape

In September 2003 the London Borough of Haringey launched the Better Haringey Improvement Programme, the primary objective to make Haringey Cleaner, Greener and Safer. Through this programme £1m in 2005/06 was provided to allow for major improvements in many of the Council run parks and open spaces. The Parks Improvement Programme, run since 2005/06, has received £250,000 from the Haringey Capital Fund as well as monies from numerous other funding agencies.

Since 2005 the NDC has contributed nearly £100,000 to Chestnuts Park for the following works:

- resurfacing and fencing of the tennis courts
- improvements to drainage in the sports field
- urgent renovations to the old bowling green 'Play' Pavilion

In the last two years a master plan was developed for the park and consulted on with assistance by Land Use Consultants. The master plan allowed for staged improvements to the park with first phase being completed in 2008. Funding has been gathered from London Marathon Charitable Trust (£20,000), Haringey's capital resources (£120,000), BIG Lottery Play (£120,000), and the NDC (£300,000); totalling £560,000. The works undertaken in early 2008 were:

- complete re-design and re-build of the play area with safety surface (wet pour) and nearly all new play equipment
- creation of a café terrace to 'join' the café to the play area.
- relaying of pathways to flow around the play area and café terrace
- a new multi-use games area (MUGA) on the old bowling green
- removal of the disused hard ball area and creation of a wildflower meadow in its place
- new signage on all entrances and throughout the park
- refurbishment of the basketball court following use by contractors.

Transport for London is also refurbishing the pathway running along the western boundary in 2008, as part of their Cycle Network programme. The works will also include work at the gateways at either end of the pathway, and installation of cycle racks outside the café.

For the next four years (April 2008 – March 2012) of this management plan further maintenance works will be undertaken, subject to receipt of funding, and will largely comprise of the following:

- rolling program to enhance each entrance to increase welcoming feel
- rolling program of renewing shrub beds around the park
- rolling program of tree planting to replace vandalised / old / diseased trees
- rolling program of resurfacing pathways prioritised by usage levels
- replacement and installation of benches, bins and picnic tables
- rolling program of repair and paint to the boundary railings
- installation of a trim trail
- refurbishment of the gate piers on a rolling basis

It is understood that by 2011 the Play Pavilion will have come to the end of its life and will need complete rebuild in order to remain. There are discussions and consultations being carried out regarding the viability of doing this, or preferably removing the pavilion to make way for another MUGA and better movement through the park for users.

Two properties on the east boundary of the park are being re-developed and there are plans for each property to donate a strip of land in order to create a

new entrance to the park. This is currently undergoing planning permission and development and may not be installed for a year or two.

Environment and Sustainability

The Parks Service aims to reduce its impact on the environment and as such:

- uses bedding plants grown in peat-free soil as supplied by Faith Nursery
- requests plants to be grown in peat-free soil when supplied by other contractors
- not use chemicals unless all cultural (manual) methods have failed
- aims to reduce transport emissions through better scheduling of work
- aims to reduce transport emissions through recycling green waste on site or on nearby sites instead of taking it to North London Waste
- procures materials and furniture made from sustainable or recycled sources
- uses drought resistant plants to cope with climate change and reduce water use
- aims to ensure machinery procured has low emission levels
- continues to assess ways of reducing our impact on the environment

Conservation of Nature and Heritage

Chestnuts Park is designated as Significant Local Open Land in the Unitary Development Plan and is the largest public open space in St. Ann's ward, an area of identified open space deficiency. As such its natural features are an important aspect.

Chestnuts Park has a number of mature trees, Plane, common lime, horse chestnut and weeping willow. These trees will continue to be maintained and replaced where necessary in order to ensure a continuing stock of valuable habitat for local wildlife.

A wildflower meadow will be created in late spring of 2008 near the basketball court. The Friends group in conjunction with BTCV, plan to lay a native hedgerow along the top half of the east boundary of the park.

Although the Manor House was removed in the 1960's the original gate piers still exist. These will undergo a rolling program of re-pointing and general maintenance in order to maintain this key piece of heritage.

Marketing

The Parks Service carries out extensive borough wide marketing of its parks and open spaces. Chestnuts Park is advertised in the following ways:

- a specific leaflet on Chestnuts Park with a map and details on its facilities, which will be produced for the first time in 2008
- through the quarterly Recreation Services stakeholder newsletter
- through articles in the Haringey People monthly magazine
- events are listed on the 'what's on' page of the Haringey website
- Better Haringey Trail Guide

Chestnuts Park is also advertised beyond the borough boundaries through:

- the Haringey website under parks and leisure
- the 'YourLondon.gov.uk' website
- on the 'VisitLondon.com' website with a special article in 2007
- the London Cycle Network

The Parks Service will continue to assess ways in which to further advertise Chestnuts Park to the local and wider community.

Community Involvement

Chestnuts Park has a strong Friends group that have been positively involved in the master plan development of the park over the last six years, including chairing the Chestnuts Park Strategic Forum, which has the remit to coordinate and advise on development for the area for The Bridge New Deal for Communities (NDC) and Haringey Council.

The Parks Service also carries out an annual park user survey through which they can gauge the improvements desired by the local community and whether the direction the park is heading is satisfactory.

Tell us what you think or get involved

Users of Chestnuts Park can tell us what they thought of their visit to the park by:

- going online and completing the 'yourvisit' survey found on the Parks Service pages
- calling the Parks Service Customer Care line on 020 8489 5662
- by emailing the Parks Service at parks@haringey.gov.uk
- or by writing to us at Parks Service, 1st Floor, Contract House, Ashley Road, Tottenham, N17 9AY

Users of Chestnuts Park can also get involved in the maintenance, management and future vision for the park by joining the Friends group. They can be contacted through emailing chestnutsfriends@hotmail.com

Summary

Chestnuts Park continues to provide a number of facilities for the local community and those working in the area. The vision is to keep the Green Flag Award and thus maintain the high standard within the park.

The full management plan can be viewed on the Councils website at www.haringey.gov.uk/greenflag