



Bruce Castle Park Management Plan **2006 – 2010 Executive Summary *(Reviewed January 08)***

Introduction

The 8.1 hectare Bruce Castle Park, was first opened in 1892 when the Tottenham Urban District Council took on the private 13th century estate to protect it from development. The Grade 1 listed Manor House has been a local museum since 1906. The site has been managed by the London Borough of Haringey since its formation in 1965.

Bruce Castle Park provides a wide variety of facilities for users, from sports usage to relaxation. There is a large play area with paddling pool; seven tennis courts, a ball court, a well used bowling green and informal recreational use. The peaceful Garden of Remembrance is an enclosed garden situated to the front of the museum and is dedicated to all victims of the Holocaust and other acts of genocide. The museum also provides café and toilet facilities for users.

Park Management

Bruce Castle 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 Bruce Castle Park. He is assisted by a Neighbourhood Officer and the site itself has a permanent gardener, who uses a dedicated mess-room and staff yard located near the museum. The grounds maintenance team for the area is also based in this staff yard and, along with agency staff where necessary, provide assistance at peak periods. Grass cutting of the main areas is carried out by the borough gang-mowing team who cut the grass on a fortnightly basis as required. Events, marketing and other administrative tasks are carried out by the Parks Service in-house administrative team.

Bruce Castle Park is strongly supported by the local community with an active 'Friends' group who can be contacted via the Museum. The Friends, along with the museum staff have been instrumental in helping to improve the park, organising community events and taking positive actions towards reducing any anti-social behaviour in the park.

Bruce Castle Museum is managed by the Culture, Library and Learning Services, under the Directorate of Adults, Culture and Community Services. The Museum is accredited by Museum, Libraries and Archives (MLA) London

Our Vision for Bruce Castle Park

To provide the local community with opportunities for recreational and educational activities, within a clean, safe green and historic environment.

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 aims to place welcome signs at each entrance to the park detailing the name of the park, contact details for the Parks Service and Friends group, as well as symbols detailing 'good' behaviour in the park. Current signage tends to be more negative and these signs will gradually be replaced over time.

Bruce Castle Park also has three notice boards located at key entrances. These notice boards display the bye-laws, environment policy, a map of the park, and any relevant information regarding events and activities in the park. The notice board at the entrance in front of the museum also contains extensive information about the museum itself.

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 majority of recommendations arising from this have been addressed. Six of the entrances to the park are wheelchair accessible. The Museum has won an award from the Museums and Galleries Disability Association as being a flagship historic building for disability improvements.

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 relevant safety clothing and appropriate 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 Bruce Castle Park on a daily basis and the on-site gardener works alongside them to litter pick the park. 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 the museum building and as such are available during opening hours. There is also a disabled toilet available.

Safe and Secure

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

Security in the park is boosted by the presence of the on-site gardener, who walks the park every morning to carry out safety checks on all facilities, particularly in the playground. The museum staff, bowling green users and Tennis for Free coaches also provide a presence, and they are also aware of whom to call in any situation.

Tennis for Free provides free tennis coaching and equipment to all members of the community on Saturday mornings and has done so since January 2006.

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.

From both internal and external Capital funds £29,000 in 2005/06 was spent in Bruce Castle Park and the following works were undertaken:

- relining of the paddling pool
- resurfacing of the basketball court
- installation of basketball hoops
- installation of safety surfacing in the play area
- resurfacing of pathways in the Garden of Remembrance
- new bins and new benches

In the two years since, a further £69,500 of Capital funds has been spent in Bruce Castle Park and the following works were undertaken:

- installation of security window grills to the Bowling Green Pavilion
- security fencing around the staff yard
- pathway resurfacing around Church Lane entrance and elsewhere
- internal signage
- removal of the old ball area and turfing
- new fencing on south side of the tennis courts
- re-pointing and repairs to a section of the Grade II listed boundary wall
- hoop fencing along the herbaceous bed outside the staff yard
- re-painting boundary railings

For the remaining two years (April 2008 – March 2010) of this management plan further maintenance works will be undertaken, subject to receipt of funding, and will largely comprise of the following:

- rolling program of repair and paint of the boundary railings and wall
- enhancement of each entrance to increase welcoming feel

- replacement of benches and bins as they come to the end of their life
- rolling program of renewing shrub beds around the park
- rolling program of tree planting to replace vandalised / old / diseased trees
- rolling program of repair to play, tennis and basketball fencing as required
- rolling program of pathway resurfacing
- installation of a trim trail
- replanting of the Rose Garden
- subject to receipt of major specific funding:
 - o refurbishment of the play kit and installation of wet pour
 - o resurface of the tennis courts
 - o extensive repairs to Grade II listed boundary wall
 - o refurbishment to the mess room building

The London Borough of Haringey runs an In Bloom competition and Bruce Castle Park has been successful in achieving awards such as Best Park and Best Bedding on several occasions.

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
- reduces transport emissions through recycling green waste on site instead of taking it to North London Waste
- provides a location for residents to bring their Christmas trees for recycling
- 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

Bruce Castle Park has a wildflower meadow area in the north corner of the park. It also has a wonderful array of mature specimen trees and tree lined paths. The key feature in Bruce Castle Park is the 400 year old Oak Tree located in the centre of the park. A program of collecting acorns from this tree has been implemented and the Metropolitan Housing Trust Nursery in Finsbury Park has been charged with growing saplings for future planting in the park.

From a wildlife point of view there are considerable advantages in planting native trees of local provenance. These trees tend to have more associated

wildlife, conserve local genetic stocks and are better adapted to the local environment and climate. Providing replacement veteran trees for the 400 year old oak will ensure continuity of habitat for associated wildlife such as bryophytes, fungi and invertebrates.

There is also a tree maintenance program which will seek to replace other old and dying trees with young native species. Where safe to do so, dead trees are left in situ to create further habitats for wildlife.

There is a Tree Trail aimed at Key Stage 2 pupils (aged 7-9 years) that highlights important trees in the park as well as educating on dendrochronology and tree related items.

Bruce Castle Museum, a Grade 1 listed building, will be putting in a Stage 1 application to the Heritage Lottery Fund for a Heritage Grant in March 2008. Works to the museum, the boundary wall and railings are all included in the bid.

Marketing

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

- a specific leaflet on Bruce Castle Park with a map and details on its facilities
- through the Bruce Castle Park Tree Trail
- 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

Bruce Castle Park is also advertised beyond the borough boundaries through:

- the Haringey website under parks and leisure, which also features a virtual tour of the park
- the Good Parks Guide
- the 'YourLondon.gov.uk' website
- on the 'VisitLondon.com' website with a special article in 2007
- London's Parks and Gardens Guide

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

Community Involvement

Bruce Castle Park has a Friends group which is involved in the parks management and improvement. The Friends group in conjunction with the Museum carry out numerous community events and activities. The Friends also assist the Parks Service and BTCV in bulb planting days and meadow creation days.

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 Bruce Castle 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 Bruce Castle 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 calling the Museum on 020 8808 8772. You can also write to them at Bruce Castle Museum, Lordship Lane, Tottenham, N17 8NU.

Summary

Bruce Castle Park continues to provide a number of facilities for the local community who may wish to exercise, relax or just visit the museum. 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 Council's website at www.haringey.gov.uk/greenflag