
Agenda Item:	Green Flag Award Application
Meeting Date:	Tuesday 11 February 2025
Contact Officer:	Biodiversity and Green Spaces Officer

The purpose of this report is to inform the Committee of the submission of the application for a Green Flag Award for the Lake & Country Park.

Background

Green Flag Award status is an aspiration in the Council's adopted Open Spaces Strategy PO2 of 'Modernising and upgrading our Parks and Open Spaces Service.' - *Consider seeking to attain Green Flag status for relevant Parks and Open Space locations.*

The Green Flag is an international award that recognises well managed parks and green spaces, setting the benchmark standard for the management of recreational outdoor spaces, having good environmental standards, being well maintained and providing clean and safe visitor facilities. The aims are:

- To ensure that everybody has access to quality green and other open spaces, irrespective of where they live.
- To ensure that these spaces are appropriately managed and meet the needs of the communities that they serve.
- To establish standards of good management.
- To promote and share good practice amongst the green space sectors.
- To recognise and reward the hard work of managers, staff and volunteers.

For further information please see their website <https://www.greenflagaward.org/>

Current Situation

Following the completion of the Management Plan, a requirement for Green Flag Status the application was submitted by the Biodiversity & Green Space Officer as all other criteria had been met.

Impact Assessments

The Town Council has a duty to consider the effects of its decisions, functions and activities on equality, biodiversity, and crime & disorder. Consideration should also be given to effects on the environment, given the Council's Climate Emergency declaration in 2019.

- a) Equality – Raising the profile of the Country Park which is open to all. This is enshrined in the aims of the Green Flag Award.
- b) Biodiversity – The preservation and enhancement of biodiversity is included in the Lake & Country Park management plan which shows good management practice.
- c) Crime & Disorder – Green spaces such as Lakes and Parks can contribute to reducing urban crime by making spaces more inviting and safer for residents.
- d) Environment & Climate Emergency – This is deeply intertwined with both the protection of biodiversity and the fight against climate change. Both challenges require urgent and comprehensive action, as they not only affect the country's natural systems but also its economy, society, and future well-being. The Green Flag Status shows the Council is at the forefront of this action.

Risk

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

There is a risk that the required standard will not be achieved, however Officers believe the criteria is well met and the Council stands a good chance of being successful.

Social Value

Social value is the positive change the Council creates in the local community within which it operates.

This value can be understood through various lenses, such as cultural, economic, health, and ethical considerations.

An aim of the Green Flag Award is to ensure the Lake & Country Park meets the needs of the community it serves.

Financial implications

Application submission costs were £516. All costs are included in planned works and budget

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report and

1. Not and support the application submission for a Green Flag award at Witney Lake & Country Park.