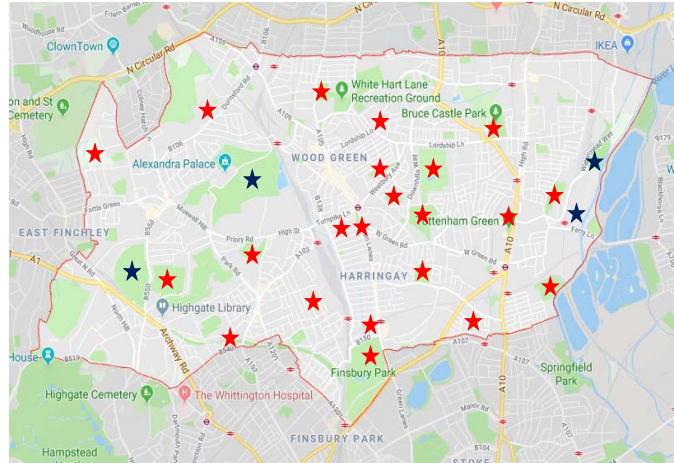




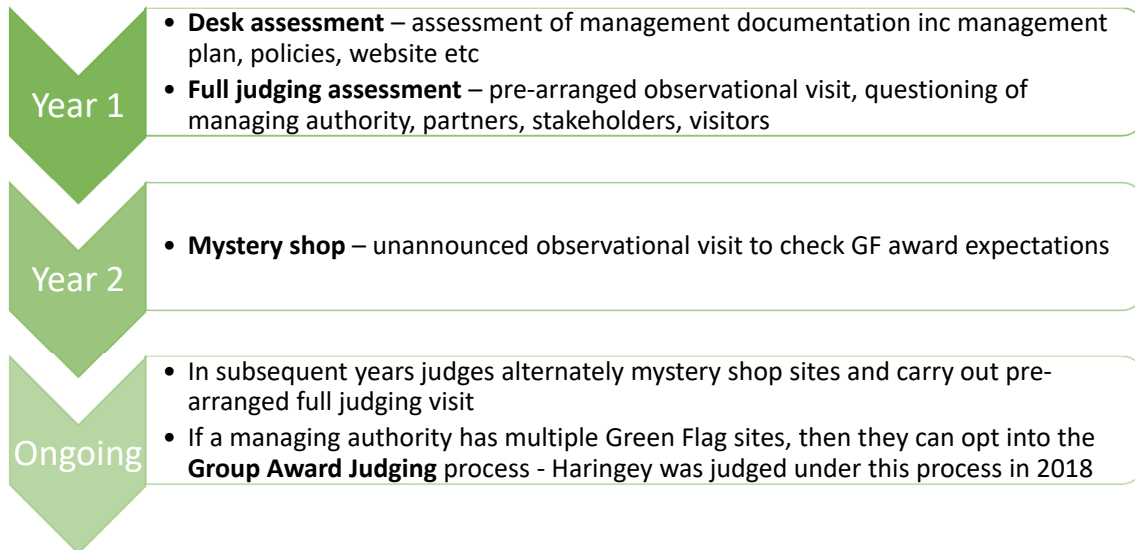
- The purpose of presentation is to:
 - provide an overview on the current status of the Council's response to the unprecedented level of mystery shopping by Keep Britain Tidy (KBT) of the Council's Green Flag parks. What was said, and how we have responded;
 - update you on the new systems that have been implemented, and staff we have appointed, which will ensure in part, that issues are identified and respond to in a suitable timeframe;
 - and we thought it would be appropriate to brief you on some recent thoughts that we have been working on in regards to the future management of parks. This is at a very early stage of development and we are seeking your input....

Background to Green Flag in Haringey

- The Green Flag Award Scheme is run by Keep Britain Tidy and recognises and rewards well managed parks and green spaces; setting the benchmark standard for the management of recreational outdoor spaces across the United Kingdom and around the world
- Haringey has been a voluntary participant and consistent supporter of the Scheme since 2003
- Haringey has been one of the top achievers and leaders of Green Flags both locally in London and nationally
- Priory Park and Bruce Castle Park were the first parks to be entered and awarded a Green Flag in 2003
- Since then, the Council has increased the number of award winning sites to 22
- A further 4 sites in Haringey – Alexandra Park, Tottenham Marshes, Hale Village and Highgate Wood – are Green Flag Award sites not managed by the Council



- ★ Haringey managed GF park
- ★ GF Park managed by other organisations



- To give you an idea of how the Award Scheme works, I wanted to very briefly touch on how the GF judging process is - on the whole – carried out.
- In the first year of application:
 - a desk assessment is done - this entails judges reading the park's management plan and associated policies, looking at information available to the public eg on the website etc
 - once the desk assessment has been carried out a full pre-arranged judging visit is arranged – to assess if the management plan is being put into practice on site, and to meet and question staff, partners, stakeholders, and visitors etc
- The second year will see an unannounced mystery shop, carried out by judges to assess if the GF award expectations are being met – this should be done purely by observation of what is seen onsite at the time of the visit
- In subsequent years judges will alternately mystery shop sites and carry out a pre-arranged full judging visit.
- In 2018 the Council was judged under the Group judging award process...

- In May 2018 Haringey took part in the Group Award
- This recognises managing authorities with multiple winning sites and aims to simplify the judging process
- Two judges from a similar managing authority, visited the borough for a 1½ days and conducted an assessment of the Council's management practices
- Judges then choose a few sample sites to visit. These included Albert Road Rec, Bruce Castle Park, Chapmans Green, Finsbury Park, Lordship Rec, Queens Wood and Railway Fields
- In their final report the judges determined that...

'Haringey was deemed a Low – Medium Risk for losing their Green Flag Awards'

'Clear political support for parks and greenspace issues as set out in Labour manifesto.'

'Enthusiastic and dedicated team with positive of new Nature Conservation Officer and new project officers coming soon.'

'Good engagement with c.40 Friends of groups and over-arching forum.'

'Positive partnerships with TCV and Lordship Rec co-operative and at Albert Road Rec.'

'Strong event management processes.'

'Sites generally litter free considering high usage. Sites free of dog fouling.'

'In order to sustain the existing Green Flag portfolio, LBH should consider investing more resource into frontline grounds maintenance as this is the key item that currently detracts from otherwise good standards on the sites visited.'

This saw judges carry out a visit over 1½ days, to assess the Council's overall park management practices.

This also included some spot site visits to parks including Finsbury, Albert Rec, Bruce Castle, Chapmans Green, Lordship Rec, Queens Wood and Railway Fields

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018		
																group judging	1st round	2nd round
Albert Rec													mystery shop	full judging	mystery shop	group judging	mystery shop	
Belmont Rec											full judging	mystery shop	full judging	mystery shop			mystery shop	
Bruce Castle Park											full judging	mystery shop	full judging	mystery shop	mystery shop	group judging	mystery shop	
Chapmans Green											full judging	mystery shop	full judging	mystery shop	full judging	group judging	mystery shop	
Chestnut Park												full judging	mystery shop		mystery shop		mystery shop	mystery shop
Coldfall Wood											full judging	mystery shop	mystery shop	mystery shop			mystery shop	
Downhills Park											full judging	mystery shop	full judging		mystery shop		mystery shop	
Down Lane Park												full judging	mystery shop	mystery shop			mystery shop	
Ducketts Common												full judging	mystery shop	mystery shop	mystery shop		mystery shop	
Fairland Park											full judging	mystery shop	full judging				mystery shop	
Finsbury Park												full judging			mystery shop	group judging	mystery shop	mystery shop
Lordship Rec											full judging	mystery shop	full judging		group judging	group judging	mystery shop	
Markfield Park												full judging	mystery shop			mystery shop	mystery shop	
Paignton Park											full judging	mystery shop	full judging	mystery shop			mystery shop	
Parkland Walk													full judging		mystery shop		mystery shop	
Priory Park												full judging	mystery shop	mystery shop			mystery shop	
Queens Wood													full judging		mystery shop	group judging	mystery shop	
Railway Fields											full judging	mystery shop	full judging			group judging	mystery shop	
Russell Park												full judging	mystery shop		mystery shop		mystery shop	
Stationers Park											full judging	mystery shop	full judging				mystery shop	
Tottenham Green														full judging	mystery shop		mystery shop	
Woodside Park														full judging	mystery shop		mystery shop	

Years prior to Green Flag application	Green Flag Award - pass	Green Flag Award - concerns to address	Green Flag Award - at risk of losing / lost
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- Following the Group Judging visit and their assessment of the borough being at a low to medium risk of losing its Green Flag awards, in 2018/19 we were expecting a number of sites (approximately half) to be mystery shopped – as is standard practice, and based on the previous judging pattern
- Table shows how parks have been judged over the last few years
- A number of sites have in the past received a red report, but at no time have we been asked to take the flag down. Action plans have been drawn up to address the identified issues, which Keep Britain Tidy has accepted, and the parks have carried on being Green Flag sites – as far as we’re aware none of the sites previously judged red have then been the subject of further mystery shops – KBT have accepted our action plans in good faith
- During September, October and November 2018 mystery shop visits were undertaken for ALL council managed sites. As admitted by Keep Britain Tidy none of the four sites managed by other organisations in the borough, or indeed any other organisation in London or beyond has been subject to this much scrutiny...

- All 22 reports are available on the Haringey website, along with a list of completed actions
- Reports have been shared with Ward Members and Friends of the parks
- Discussed at the Friends of Parks Forum
- Ongoing discussions with KBT focusing on the
 - the level of scrutiny Haringey has been under
 - the methodology used in the assessments
 - disputing some of the comments within the reports

- All 22 reports are available on the Haringey website along with actions we've already completed
- Reports have been shared with ward members and Friends of parks groups
- Discussed at Friends Forum on 2 Feb and with individual Friends groups
- Two meetings have taken place with KBT to discuss a number of ongoing issues....
- Why this level of scrutiny?
 - We honestly don't know – Green Flag Accreditation Manager has been asked this, and although he admitted that no other authority has been under this much scrutiny, he didn't provide a reason as to why Haringey has?
 - The methodology used in the assessments relies more on personal opinion than specific methodology. FP for example has now had two mystery shop visits, carried out by different judges, who have identified different issues....
 - Initially we reacted and carried out many of the issues raised in the reports done for FP and Downhills – even though we disagreed with much of what was said.
 - Once further red reports were received there was neither the staff or the money to immediately fulfil many of the issues raised. These have been pulled into action plans, defining both realistic timeframes and resources to complete the works.
 - We have yet to receive satisfactory responses to some of the problems with

the judging assessment...

- Currently no legislation that sets out how councils should inspect or maintain play areas
- Guidance set out by the Industry is considered to be best practice, and says there should be 3 levels of play inspection each year:
 - Annual written inspection – carried out by qualified independent inspector, only 55 inspectors who are qualified in whole country.
 - Operational monthly or quarterly written inspections – carried out by Registry of Play Inspectors International (RPII) accredited and can be internal staff
 - Routine daily or weekly visual inspections – carried out by RPII accredited and can be internal staff
- All inspection regimes are based on risk, and Haringey, based on its risk profile, has decided to operate a more intense inspection regime:
 - Quarterly inspections carried out by a qualified independent inspector
 - Supplemented with daily and/or weekly visual internal staff inspections - dependent on site

The main area of dispute is what was said about play equipment...

- The safety of children in the borough is of the utmost concern to us, so this is the most serious area of concern...
- I wanted to provide a bit of background as to the guidance around play equipment safety, how and when it should be inspected, as well as what we do here in Haringey...
- Text above
- For reference - Independent inspector should be certified and accredited to undertake annual inspections by the Registry of Play Inspectors International (RPII) – there are only 55 of these in the country

Green Flag Report Comments	Independent Play Inspection Company
<p>Woodside Park – 29/10/18</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Toddler play are in terrible condition and despite a sign children were still using the equipment' 'Weeds are present around the wet pour which is lifting the surface' 	<p>Overall risk rating 12 – moderate risk – 26/10/18</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inspector noted play area had been closed, gates locked and warning sign displayed. Swing chains and seats also removed
<p>Albert Road Recreation Ground – 7/11/18</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Condition of play was very poor' 'Dangerous screw head exposed on slide platform' 'Holes in play surface' 'Dog faeces on hard surface' 	<p>Overall risk rating 12 – moderate risk – 26/10/18</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Missing plant on side of play platform – moderate risk and should be attended to within 1-2 weeks All other items low risk Dog faeces would have been addressed either later that day or following day by Hygiene Team
<p>Markfield Park – 7/11/18</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Broken and loose elements of play unit' 'Children's cradle seat in very poor / dangerous condition' 	<p>Overall risk rating 8 – low risk – 29/10/18</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both items were identified as being low risk. We agree that the seat was in a poor condition, but not dangerous
<p>Bruce Castle Park – 7/11/18</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Concrete is exposed in play area, bark needs topping up' 'Broken play equipment left exposed' 'Gate to play area missing' 'Weeks lifting the wet pour safety surfacing' 	<p>Overall risk rating 10 – low risk – 31/10/18</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> First three issues were rated between 6 – 8 in terms of risk Safety surface rated as a 10 – moderate – and therefore the play area was rated as being well maintained

- To give you a flavour of the issues identified by the GF judges, this table details what was said in the reports about specific sites, and what was concluded by our external Independent Inspector on their most recent visit to the sites.... Please note that the GF judges visits and those of the Independent Play Inspector were undertaken within a few days of each other...
- A couple of examples.... And disparities of the terminology used....
 - Woodside Park: GF judge – 'despite a sign children were still using the equipment' / Independent Inspector – noted the play area had been closed, gates locked and warning sign displayed saying equipment should not be used. Swing chains and seats had also been removed... If children were still using the equipment as the judge states, then the Council considers it had taken reasonable action to secure the site and warn the public of the danger. But even in this current state the site is gauged as 12 – a moderate risk, by the Independent Play Inspector.
 - Albert Rec: GF judge – 'very poor', 'dangerous' / Independent Inspector – 'moderate risk', 'low risk'
 - Markfield Park: GF judge – 'very poor', 'dangerous condition' / Independent Inspector – 'low risk'
- LBH so concerned about the nature of observations made by GF judges on play areas

that we have taken further advice from Keith Dalton, Managing Director of the Play Inspection Company who undertake the inspections.

- Keith is also the Vice Chair of the Register of Play Inspectors International. **His overall view is that Haringey does not have dangerous play areas and it is wrong for GF judges to make the statements that they are making in their reports.**
- **For information - Our external Play Inspector states that low risk items would expect to see action in 3 months e.g. prior to next inspection and medium risk items within two weeks as it may require a contractor to be appointed. High or very high risk items are phoned through on the day with an expectation to make safe or prevent usage.**

A number of themes emerge from the mystery shopping reports which if the council wants to retain green flags in 2019 it must address. These themes can be summarised as:

1. Litter and Graffiti
2. Marketing and Communication
3. Asset Inspection and upgrades
4. Horticultural Maintenance
5. Low Risk Play Area Maintenance
6. Finsbury Park Resourcing

Many of these areas were already raised by the Friends of Parks Forum and form part of the work streams for the new Parks and Opens Spaces Strategy, to be developed over the next eighteen months.

- The current three litter crews will be expanded to four litter crews
- Expansion of the litter team in Finsbury Park from 2 people to 5.5 people
- Introduction of new high capacity litter bins in Finsbury Park
- Selection of new lidded larger capacity litter bins for parks
- Removal of dog waste bins
- Signage and engagement with park users to encourage more people to bin their litter
- Simpler reporting mechanisms for staff to report graffiti

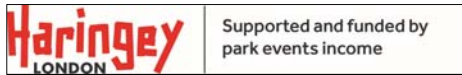


Messaging about dog waste and also about take your rubbish home if the bin is full

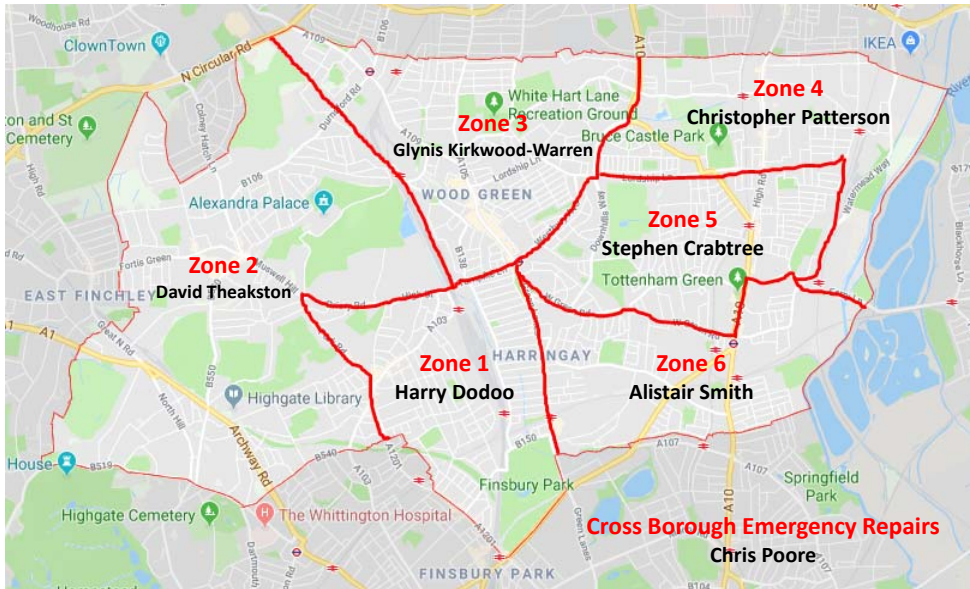


Remove the majority of these





- Coming Soon – new onsite signage and web based information detail areas that pending refurbishment
- Digital Marketing – use of digital screens in park cafes and pavilions to advertise events, activities and provide information relevant to that park
- Improvement Banners – Linking improvements in parks back to Haringey and also back to their funding source
- Park Spotlight – regular information giving and feedback sessions for park users, hosted by parks staff, frequency dependent of size of park and usage levels.



Responsibilities include:

- regular park inspections
- asset related enquiries
- non-emergency repairs
- management plan input
- project identification
- liaison with Friends groups
- support Friends led project development work
- Member liaison
- sponsored items
- identification of volunteering opportunities

Cross-borough inspections

- Ongoing enquiries with neighbouring borough about reciprocal mystery shop inspections

- So... a number of initiatives have been instigated in response to the recent high level scrutiny of the parks.....
- In an effort to realign our current approach with an expanding team, and to ensure that we are able to be more responsive and informed, a zonal approach to asset management has been initiated.
- Operations Teams already work across six geographic areas and Confirm is already configured to work across these six zones. We have recently recruited, and now have six park development / project officers.
- The approach we have adopted is that each of the six officers will take a lead on Asset Management Issues, in their allocated zone.
- Their responsibilities will cover
 - Regular park inspections
 - Asset related enquiries
 - Non-emergency repairs
 - Management plan input
 - Project identification
 - Liaison with Friends groups
 - Support Friends led project development work
 - Member liaison
 - Sponsored items

- Identification of volunteering opportunities
- Emergency repairs will be the responsibility of the Monitoring and Compliance Officer for Parks.
- Another level to add to these internal inspections may include partnering up with a neighbouring borough (currently speaking to Waltham Forest) to provide reciprocal mystery shop judging based on GF standards... Officers are progressing this and will update at a later time...

- A real pressure point for parks since 2011 budget reductions
- Currently only able to undertake two visits a year when best practice would suggest six to eight per annum
- Adding three new seasonal gardeners in Finsbury Park
- Adding a two person seasonal horticultural crew to increase frequencies in Green Flag parks
- Releasing resource from Lordship Rec to help maintain Downhills Park (released resource backfield by new Litter Crew)
- New gardening resource in Finsbury Park will release Zone 1 resources to increase standards within Priory Park, Fairland's Park, Stationers Park and Ducketts Common
- Pilot rationalisation projects in Woodside Park, Chestnuts Park and Paighton Park

- All the borough's play areas are deemed safe by our external inspectors. But there is scope to lift the overall standard of the play areas, which will enhance their visual appearance and overall play value.
- During 2019/20 and 2020/21 a programme of play area enhancements will be conducted addressing a range of low risk issues that require upgrading. This will be funded with the council's current Capital allocation.
- Play area renewals will also take place in Albert Road Recreation Ground, Bruce Castle Park, Finsbury Park and Woodside Park.
- Further funding will also be identified to expand the internal play maintenance team from 2 people to 3 people from April 2020 at the latest.



Finsbury Park Manager
Finsbury Park only,
operational
management including
litter, hygiene,
horticultural work,
grass cutting, graffiti

**Finsbury Park Project
Officer**
improvement projects,
planned maintenance,
reactive repairs,
monthly inspections of
parks within Zone 1

**Finsbury Park Hygiene
Team x 5.5**

- 7 day a week presence in the park
- litter bin emptying and litter picking
- problem reporting

**Horticultural & Nursery
Team**

- 1 Nursery Operative
- 3 seasonal gardeners
- Support from Zone 1 team and borough wide resources

Finsbury Park Rangers x 2

- 5 day a week presence in the park
- organise and deliver activities to create a busier park
- co-ordinate action with Enforcement teams and Met Police
- engagement and education of park users

Finsbury Park is our biggest park and is seen as Haringey’s flagship park. It has received a lot of negative comment over the last few years, from those opposed to the major events that take place. It was also one of the first parks for Keep Britain Tidy to mystery shop twice.....

We’re committed to improving all our parks as you have just heard.... But through having the major events in the park, and the income that brings, we are able to do a lot more there. **(ALL income raised through events, leases etc must be spent in the park)**

So to focus on FP for a moment...

To summarise the latest discussions with Keep Britain Tidy and next steps:

- We are never going to agree with what they've said in their reports, and what we think of the borough's parks
- We are committed to working with them to continually improve Haringey's parks
- They have accepted there has been an unprecedented level of intervention in Haringey
- We have stressed the need to work together because genuine improvement will only come when we work in partnership
- We have been clear that we need to be as open and transparent as possible and work with a wide range of stakeholders



- We have agreed that the Council will revert back to the previous judging regime by withdrawing from the Group Judging Process, and all current 22 Green Flag parks will be fully inspected by judges at dates to be agreed in 2019
- This judging process will significantly increase resources needed to
 - organise, coordinate and facilitate the Judges visits to all 22 sites
 - update paperwork such as management plans to recognise current management practices
 - This will have an impact on the standards that can be delivered in other parks during 2019 and beyond, and will significantly stretch current resources
- We will explore how we work with other boroughs to benchmark our parks against quality standards, incl the Green Flag Award
- The commitment remains to make our parks as vibrant, welcoming, safe and inviting as possible within the resources available

