

# Public Document Pack



ASHTON-UNDER-LYNE · AUDENSHAW · DENTON · DROYLSDEN · DUKINFIELD · HYDE · LONGDENDALE · MOSSLEY · STALYBRIDGE

## WERNETH LOW COUNTRY PARK JOINT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

**Day:** Monday  
**Date:** 19 February 2018  
**Time:** 10.30 am  
**Place:** Lower Higham Visitor Centre - Werneth Low Country Park

Item No.	AGENDA	Page No
1.	<b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b> To receive any apologies for the meeting from Members of the Joint Committee.	
2.	<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b> To receive any declarations of interest from Members of the Joint Committee.	
3.	<b>MINUTES</b> The Minutes of the proceedings of the previous meeting of the Werneth Low Country Park Joint Management Committee held on 20 November 2017 to be approved as a correct record.	1 - 4
4.	<b>GREENSPACE DEVELOPMENT OFFICER'S REPORT</b> To consider the report of the Greenspace Development Officer.	5 - 10
5.	<b>DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS</b> To approve the dates of future meetings of the Joint Management Committee as follows, commencing at 10:30am:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 23 July 2018</li><li>• 19 November 2018</li><li>• 18 February 2019</li></ul>	
6.	<b>URGENT ITEMS</b> To consider any additional items the Chair is of the opinion shall be dealt with as a matter of urgency.	

---

From: Democratic Services Unit – any further information may be obtained from the reporting officer or from Charlotte Forrest, Senior Democratic Services Officer on 0161 342 2346 or [charlotte.forrest@tameside.gov.uk](mailto:charlotte.forrest@tameside.gov.uk), to whom any apologies for absence should be notified.

This page is intentionally left blank

# Agenda Item 3.

## WERNETH LOW COUNTRY PARK JOINT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Monday, 20 November 2017

**Commenced:** 10.30 am

**Terminated:** 11.15 am

**Present:** Councillors Bell, Cooper and J Fitzpatrick  
Mr Ainger, Mr Galvin and Mr Hodgkinson

**In Attendance:** Nicola Marshall Greenspace Development Manager  
David Cannon Greenspace Development Officer

**Apologies for Absence:** Councillors Robinson and Buglass

### ELECTION OF CHAIR

#### RESOLVED:

**That in the absence of the Chair and Deputy Chair, Councillor J Fitzpatrick be appointed Chair for the duration of the meeting.**

*Councillor J Fitzpatrick in the Chair.*

### MR PAUL COOPER

In opening the meeting the Chair was saddened to report on the recent death of Paul Cooper. Members of the Committee paid tribute to his dedication to the Hyde War Memorial Trust and more recently to Werneth Low Country Park Joint Management Committee. Thoughts were with his family at this sad time.

A minutes silence was held in his memory.

### 9. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

### 10. MINUTES

The Minutes of the previous meeting of the Werneth Low Country Park Joint Management Committee held on 24 July 2017 were approved as a correct record.

### 11. GREENSPACE DEVELOPMENT OFFICER'S REPORT

The Greenspace Development Officer submitted a report informing members of the activities undertaken within the Country Park since the last meeting of the Joint Management Committee held on 24 July 2017.

The report outlined the following:-

- Maintenance of Sites;

- Environmental Stewardship – Higher Level Agreement 2010-2020 Update;
- Public Events;
- Werneth Low Country Park Greenspace Volunteer Service;
- Visitors 2017; and,
- Wildlife Nature Conservation.

With regards to Maintenance of Sites, the summer grass cutting programme had been completed by the end of September, including the area surrounding Lower Higham Visitor Centre, car parks, access points, picnic areas and strips along footpaths. The cost of the programme was funded by Tameside Council. It was reported that Council engineers had repaired two sections of tarmac on the main drive at Lower Higham Visitor Centre.

The report included attendance at public events for the Country Park’s summer 2017 programme and details of the 2017/2018 winter/spring programme. Visitor monitoring data for 2017 was also provided.

It was reported that since the last meeting of the Joint Management Committee volunteers had held four meetings and at their October meeting had agreed the programme of works to be undertaken during winter and spring 2017/18. It was confirmed that there were 18 members in the volunteer service at present, two of whom were skilled in the art of hedge-laying. One volunteer had re-laid 200 metres of hedgerow during the autumn near Higham Lane in Shepley’ Meadow. The project had been funded by Heritage Lottery and jointly managed with Manchester City of Trees. It was anticipated that the project would achieve £5.00 a metre and would be completed by Christmas. Hedgerows were an important part of nature conservation and provided boundary habitats for wildlife in addition to complimenting the surrounding landscape.

Members enquired how volunteers were recruited. It was confirmed that the most effective method was word of mouth, however, advertising on the Council’s website and social media was also utilised. Members suggested displaying information on how to volunteer in the Visitor Centre.

The Committee was advised that the exhibition in the Visitor Centre had been updated for Remembrance Day and the data had been used to suggest the naming of a new street in Tameside (as per the Leader’s Pledges) after one of the men who had fallen during the Somme.

The Greenspace Development Officer sadly informed the Committee about the death of Dr John Smith who was one of the original signatories of Werneth Low Country Park. Members of the Committee expressed their condolences.

Members of the Committee commented that they would like to be kept informed of the progress of the renewal of the 1979 agreement, which was due to expire in 2020. The Greenspace Development Manager advised that updates would be brought to future meetings of the Joint Management Committee.

**RESOLVED:**  
**That the report be noted.**

## **12. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

**RESOLVED:**  
**That the Joint Committee meets as follows:-**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>VENUE</b>	<b>TIME</b>
Monday 19 February 2018	Lower Higham Visitor Centre	10:30 am

**13. URGENT ITEMS**

There were no urgent items.

This page is intentionally left blank

# Agenda Item 4.

<b>Report To:</b>	<b>WERNETH LOW COUNTRY PARK JOINT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE</b>
<b>Date:</b>	19 February 2018
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Assistant Executive Director, Place David Cannon, Greenspace Development Officer
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>GREENSPACE DEVELOPMENT OFFICER'S REPORT</b>
<b>Report Summary:</b>	To inform Members of activities undertaken within the Country Park since the last meeting of the Joint Management Committee (20 November 2017).
<b>Recommendations:</b>	That the report be noted.
<b>Links to Community Strategy:</b>	To ensure that the Country Park is an attractive and environmentally friendly place to visit.
<b>Policy Implications:</b>	The activities in the Country Park are in accordance with Council policy priorities.
<b>Financial Implications: (Authorised by the Section 151 Officer)</b>	The funding for the projects is met by the Operations and Greenspace revenue budget.
<b>Legal Implications: (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)</b>	It is important that the Joint Management Committee is kept informed of activities undertaken in the Country Park.
<b>Risk Management:</b>	Activities in the Country Park are kept under review in order to ensure any potential risks are dealt with adequately.
<b>Access to Information:</b>	Background papers and information can be obtained by contacting David Cannon, Greenspace Development Officer,  phone: 0161 368 6667  e-mail: <a href="mailto:david.cannon@tameside.gov.uk">david.cannon@tameside.gov.uk</a>

## 1. MAINTENANCE OF SITES

- 1.1 The summer grass cutting programme for 2018 is due to start the beginning of April. The programme includes: the grass cutting of the Lower Higham Visitor Centre area, car parks, access points, picnic areas and strips along footpaths. The cost of this programme of maintenance is paid by Tameside Council.

## 2. ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP – HIGHER LEVEL AGREEMENT 2010 – 2020 UPDATE

- 2.1 Environmental Stewardship agreements have five primary objectives:-

- Wildlife conservation
- Maintenance and enhancement of landscape quality and character
- Natural resource protection
- Protection of the historic environment; and
- Promotion of public access and understanding of the countryside

Environmental Stewardship – Higher Level agreements are only suitable for land that is of “significant environmental interest”.

- 2.2 Since the agreement started in January 2010 the Country Park has received in total £39,158 of grant income from Natural England.
- 2.3 At the time of this report the Country Park is compliant with all aspects of this agreement.

## 3. PUBLIC EVENTS

- 3.1. The winter/spring 2017 to 2018 programme of events at Werneth Low Country Park is as follows:-

Date	Event	Attendance
<b>17 December 2017</b>	Christmas Ramble Around Werneth Low	<b>34</b>
<b>28 January 2018</b>	New Year's Ramble Around Werneth Low	<b>27</b>
<b>25 March 2018</b>	Roman History of Werneth Low Walk	--
<b>1 April 2018</b>	Easter Egg Hunt	--
<b>30 April 2018</b>	Ramble to Chadkirk Chapel	--
<b>Total</b>		<b>61</b>

- 3.2 The summer 2018 programme of public events is currently being planned, which will include Flora Walks, a History Walk, a Poetry Walk and an all-day ramble to Cown Edge. All the events will be included in Tameside's Greenspace publications and social media platforms.

## 4. WERNETH LOW COUNTRY PARK GREENSPACE VOLUNTEER SERVICE

- 4.1 Since the last meeting of the Country Park Joint Management Committee the volunteers have held 3 meetings. The volunteers assist the Greenspace Development Officer with public events, the maintenance and general upkeep of sites, and staffing the visitor centre. There are at present 15 members in the volunteer service.



- 4.2 At the October 2017 meeting of the Country Park Greenspace Volunteer Service the Volunteers agreed the major projects to be undertaken during winter and spring 2017/2018. The project list of works with update of progress can be found in **Appendix 1**.
- 4.3 Volunteer Mike Kelly has completed re-laying 200 metres of hedgerow near Higham Lane in Shepley's Meadow. This project is Heritage Lottery funded and jointly managed with Woodland Officer, Andy Long from Manchester City of Trees. We expect to receive £5.00 per metre for the completed project.
- 4.4 In addition to the hedhelaying in Shepley's Meadow, Volunteer Mike Kelly is now laying a further 38 metres of hedgerow at Ash Cottage on Higham Lane. This project has also been included in the submission to the Heritage Lottery Fund.
- 4.5 On Monday 5 February the Country Park Volunteer Service celebrated their 30<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting. Since 1988 the volunteers have played a major and significant role in the stewardship and care of the Country Park. Their work, focusing right across the whole management spectrum of the conservation of Werneth Low, has saved the Management Committee tens of thousands of pounds, provided a viable means of engaging the local and wider community and ensured the Country Park is fit for purpose.

## **5. REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY 2017**

- 5.1 On Sunday 12 November 2017 the annual Service of Remembrance was held at the Cenotaph on Werneth Low. The commemoration was supported and attended by over 500 people and is the most important occasion in the Country Park's calendar of events.

## **6. THE LOWER HIGHAM VISITOR CENTRE**

- 6.1 Lauren Gradwell, The Hyde War Memorial Trust's archivist, has installed a new exhibition covering all the years of The Great War 1914 – 1919 in the visitor centre. The exhibition has raised much interest especially the poignant feature of young men, from the Ashton Brothers Training Corps, using Werneth Low as a training ground prior to joining the armed services.
- 6.2 On 23 January we welcomed 30 Year 4 children from Holy Trinity School Gee Cross to the Visitor Centre. The children learnt about the Country Park, in particular the history of the purchase of the land and farm in memory of the 710 servicemen from Hyde, Gee Cross and Newton killed in The Great War.
- 6.3 Arrangements are well underway for the 11<sup>th</sup> Alder School Cross Country Run around Werneth Low Country Park. This annual event raises thousands of pounds for The Christie Hospital in Manchester and is a great link between our local schools and the Country Park.

## 7. VISITORS – 2017

### 7.1 Active monitoring data for The Lower Higham Visitor Centre 2017:-

<b>Month</b>	<b>Lower Higham Visitor Centre</b>
<b>January</b>	<b>207</b>
<b>February</b>	<b>202</b>
<b>March</b>	<b>357</b>
<b>April</b>	<b>590</b>
<b>May</b>	<b>339</b>
<b>June</b>	<b>213</b>
<b>July</b>	<b>165</b>
<b>August</b>	<b>390</b>
<b>September</b>	<b>179</b>
<b>October</b>	<b>173</b>
<b>November</b>	<b>759</b>
<b>December</b>	<b>106</b>
<b>2017 Totals</b>	<b>3,680</b>
<b>Previous Years Total:</b>	<b>3,719</b>

## 8. WILDLIFE NATURE CONSERVATION

- 8.1 Over the winter there has been a small flock of Bullfinches in residence around the gardens at Lower Higham. Feeding off Sunflower seeds on the bird table these handsome finches are normally seen at lower locations than Werneth Low. The collective noun for a group of Bullfinches is: a bellowing, which may be linked to their piping call that can be heard at no small distance.

# APPENDIX 1

## Werneth Low Country Park Greenspace Volunteers 2017 2018 Winter Maintenance of Sites Projects

Project Ref	Location	Task	Completion Date
1	Hackingknife Woodland	Plant 2,000 Pseudo narcissi	October 2017
2	Lower Higham Drive	Cut back 30 metres of hedgerow	October 2017
3	Hackingknife	Tractor cut Rosebay Willowherb	October 2017
4	Lower Higham - Cow Lane	Cut back, prune hedgerow and sweep lane, clean-out grids	November 2017
5	Genotaph Area	Cut grass/edge off. Clean area ready for Remembrance Day	November 2017
6	Lower Higham Gardens	Clean borders and prune shrubs ready for Remembrance Day	November 2017
7	Orchard Hedgerow	Reduce height along all length to aid summer cutting	November 2017
8	Lower Higham Cow Lane	Tractor flail hedgerow	November 2017
9	Lower Higham Visitor Centre	Clean all banking and hedgerow around Garage Building	December 2017
10	Baron Fields Hazel Coppice	Coppice Hazel in Memorial Coppice and process timber	January 2018
11	Rear of Hillcrest	Thin-out Coppice	January 2018
12	Lower Higham Orchard	Cut back 40 metres of hedgerow	March 2018
13	Flaggy Path Hedgerow	Cut back 124 metres of hedgerow	March 2018
14	QCP Picnic Area	Cut back 54 metres of hedgerow	March 2018
15	Lower Higham Car Park	Cut back 20 metres of Holly hedgerow	March 2018
16	Werneth Low Road	Cut back 356 metres of hedgerow	March 2018
17	Rig Field Meadow	Cut back 300 metres of hedgerow	March 2018
18	Holy Trinity Paddock	Cut back 60 metres of hedgerow	March 2018
	Riding Track Highm Cottages	Cut back 140 metres of hedgerow	March 2018
		<b>Total Hedge Cutting metres 1,094</b>	
19	Shepley's Meadow	200 Metres of Hedgelaying	March 2018
20	Ash Cottage	38 metres of Hedgelaying	March 2018
21	Milkwort Bank	Coppice/Cut Back Ulex europaeus (Common Gorse)	March 2018
22	New Piece Meadow	Remove/cut back encoaching blackthorn	March 2018
23	All Sites	Outstanding from access audit	March 2018
24	Higham Cottage Steps	Prune/Crown Lift Oak trees	March 2018
25	Baron Fields Woodland	Remove Blackthorn suckers from corner with Hillcrest	March 2018

Completed Projects									
--------------------	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

This page is intentionally left blank