

## WERNETH LOW COUNTRY PARK JOINT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

**Day:** Monday  
**Date:** 15 July 2019  
**Time:** 10.30 am  
**Place:** Lower Higham Visitor Centre - Werneth Low Country Park

Item No.	AGENDA	Page No
6.	<b>ANNUAL REPORT 2019</b>  To consider a report of the Greenspace Development Officer.	1 - 28

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**Annual Report 2018 - 2019**  
**WERNETH LOW COUNTRY PARK**

Jointly Managed by Tameside Council and the Hyde War Memorial Trust

# . Werneth Low History

- Ancient British Bronze Age Outdoor Cathedral.
- Romano – British Hill Fort Established 550 AD.
- Mentioned in the Domesday Book 1086.
- Higham Family Established 1330.
- Higham Family mentioned as Freeholders 1445.
- Medieval settlement established 1550.

# Werneth Low History - 1921

- 3<sup>rd</sup> March 1920 Mayor of Hyde launches the subscription appeal to buy Werneth Low.
- 31<sup>st</sup> May 1920 £14,013 14s. 8d collected.
- 25<sup>th</sup> June 1921 Cenotaph unveiled by Mrs Evelyn Welch.
- Lower Higham Farm bought for £4,000.
- Cenotaph costs: £2,000.

# Cenotaph Unveiling Ceremony 25<sup>th</sup> June 1921



## . Location and Size

- Werneth Low Country Park is located 15km (9½ miles) east of the city centre of Manchester on the edge of the Pennines. All the land in the Country Park is in the Borough of Tameside. The town of Hyde, along with the villages of Gee Cross and Newton, are just 2.5km (1½ miles) away to the west.
- The Country Park consists of approximately 81 hectares (200 acres) of hilltop and hillside.

# Ownership

- 60 hectares (150 acres) belong to the Hyde War Memorial Trust, including the Visitor Centre building. Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council owns the remaining 21 hectares (50 acres) of land in the Park.





# Creation of the Country Park

- The Country Park was officially established in 1980 when the Hyde War Memorial Trust and Tameside MBC and the Greater Manchester Council entered into a formal agreement relating to the management of the park. Responsibilities relating to the Greater Manchester County Council were passed on to Tameside MBC in 1986 when the County Council was abolished.

# Werneth Low Landscape

## June 2018

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# Vision for Werneth Low Country Park

- The Vision for Werneth Low Country Park is of a place where landscape and nature conservation and informal countryside recreation are in balance. It is a place where natural beauty is enhanced, where wildlife will thrive, and where visitors, regardless of their ability or background, can spend an enjoyable and fulfilling time. It is a place that is cared for and looked after, not just for now but for future generations.

# Overall Aims

## Country Park Overall Aims:

- To manage the Country Park in a way that sustains and improves the quality and variety of its wildlife and landscape, and where recreation activity is in harmony with this.
- To facilitate access for all, irrespective of ability or background.
- To manage the Country Park for its cultural and historic importance.
- To engender an understanding of the various aspects of the Country Park through programmes of lifelong learning.
- To provide a high quality service to visitors, involving them in decision making about how the Country Park is run.
- To maintain a safe and health environment, befitting the Country Park.

# Greenspace Service Priorities

**The general management aims are supported by the Tameside Greenspace Service Priorities:**

- Improving the quality of Greenspace for residents.
- Building capacity amongst Friends Groups and Volunteers.
- Conserving the natural environment and increasing biodiversity.
- Maximising opportunities to improve the health of all residents.
- Developing opportunities to bring in external funding.



# All Day Ramble Werneth Low to Chadkirk Chapel Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> April 2018



# Managing the Country Park

## 2018/2019 Highlights

- Annual programme of grass cutting footpaths, picnic sites, cenotaph area, car parks and areas around the visitor centre completed during April to October.
- Minor works programme completed by the Operations Maintenance Team and Contractors:
  - At Riding Track near Golf Course reform ditches.
  - At Ash Cottage installed new steps.
  - At Quarry Car Park rebuild 30 metres of drystone wall.
  - At Baron Fields install new drainage.
  - At Higham Lane repair 30 metres of drystone wall.
  - At Cow Lane install new access gate.
  - At Lower Higham Visitor Centre install new Oak bench.
  - At Lower Higham Visitor Centre emergency tree works.
  - At Lower Higham Visitor Centre install new water heater.

The cost of this work was paid for by Tameside Council - **£13,033.**



# Managing the Country Park



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Quarry Car Park Wall  
November 2017 – June 2018



# Managing the Country Park



Dry Stone Walling Weekend  
September 2018

# Managing the Country Park



Grass Cutting around the Cenotaph – June 2018  
and Hedge Cutting - November 2018

# Involving the Community

## 2018/2019 Highlights

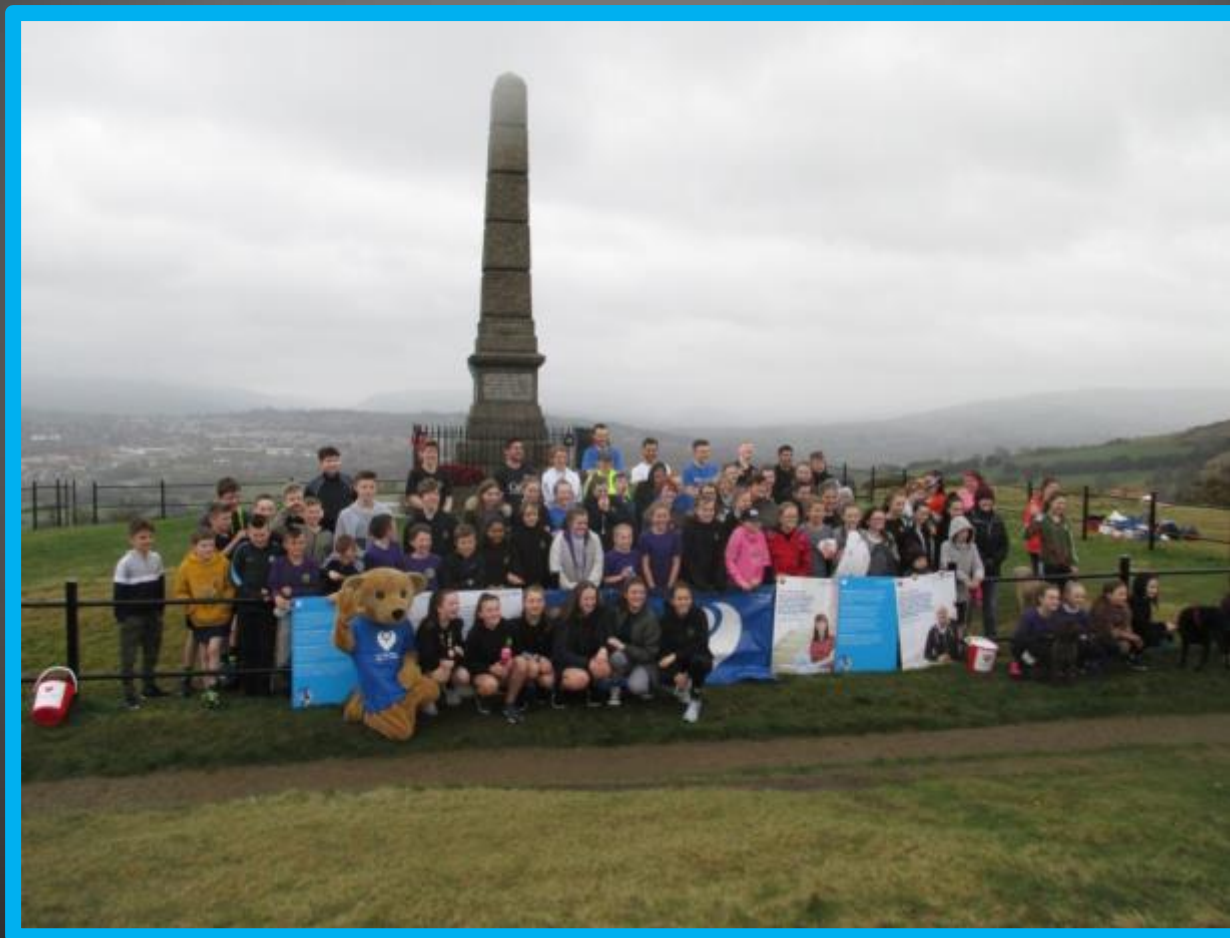
- We welcomed **3,827** people to the Lower Higham Visitor Centre  
(Previous year's total: **3,433**).
- The Country Park Greenspace Volunteers completed in total **4,020** work hours (Previous year's total: **4,182** work hours). See Appendix 1. and Appendix 2.
- During the year the Greenspace Development Officer organized **11** events at which **645** people attended (Previous year's total: **11** events at which **558** people attended).
- Alder Community High School cross country run around Werneth Low Country Park raised **£4,100** for The Christie Hospital.

# Involving the Community

## Alder Community High School

### Run Around Werneth Low Country Park

17<sup>th</sup> April 2018





# Involving the Community



# Involving the Community



Greenspace Volunteer Sam Simpson  
Tree Planting at the Lower Higham Orchard - December 2018

# Conserving Habitats and Wildlife

## 2018/2019 Highlights

- Environmental Stewardship agreement 9<sup>th</sup> year compliant securing **£1,087** of grant income.
- Environmental Stewardship grant income to date since commencement of agreement in January 2010 **£43,507**.
- Maintained field boundary habitats, both hedgerows and dry stone walls.
- Maintained all Sites of Biological importance and undertook removal of non-native invasive weeds from adjoining areas.



# Conserving Habitats and Wildlife



Volunteer Mike Kelly Hedgelaying  
November 2018 to March 2019 at Higher Higham Meadows



# Conserving Habitats and Wildlife





# Conserving Habitats and Wildlife

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Lower Higham Orchard – May 2018

# Providing a Quality Service

## **Planned Developments 2019/2020**

- Complete Year 10 of the Environmental Stewardship Agreement.
- Complete the 2019/2020 Maintenance of Sites Programme.
- Complete the 2019/2020 Wildlife Nature Conservation Programme.
- Complete programme of repairs to footpaths and riding track network.
- Redraft the Country Park Management Plan.

# Werneth Low Country Park By Numbers

- 710 Hyde servicemen killed in action in the First World War and remembered at the Cenotaph on Werneth Low.
- 15 the age of the youngest serviceman from Hyde killed in The Great War: Pte. Harry Whittaker.
- 62 the age of the oldest serviceman from Hyde killed in the Great War: Corporal William Sawyer.
- 250,000 visitors a year.
- 17 Voluntary Rangers complete 4,020 work hours in 2018 to 2019.
- 3,827 visitors to the Lower Higham Visitor Centre in 2018 to 2019.
- £46,100 to run the Country Park in 2018 to 2019.
- 21 pence cost to each person in Tameside over the age of 18 to run Werneth Low Country Park in 2018 to 2019.

**END**

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