

# GREEN FLAG AWARDS CELEBRATING EXCELLENCE IN OUR PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

CHELTENHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL



# CHEL TENHAM B O R O U G H

- Approx 4,700 ha
- Approx 600 ha of green space
- Over 50 parks, from Grade 2 listed formal parks, sports recreation fields, to Local Nature Reserves, and a National Nature Reserve

# GREEN FLAG PARKS

- Cheltenham has 7 Green Flag Parks and 1 Green Heritage Award
- Applying for an 8<sup>th</sup> this year
- A deliberate choice to spread our Green Flag parks across all communities within the town
- As a result, we have seen improvements across all parks within the town, and consistently high levels of satisfaction with Parks and Greens Spaces in resident surveys





# CELEBRATING SUCCESS

- Team work
- Springfields Park
- Sandford Park
- Burrow's Field
- Volunteer's 'Thank You' Event





# BENEFITS FOR RESIDENTS

- Health
- Wellbeing
- Biodiversity
- Inclusion





# SUSTAINING HIGH STANDARDS

- Maintaining quality
- Improving parks across the borough
- Using the Green Flag template has been very successful





A photograph of a forest floor. In the foreground, a cluster of white snowdrops with green leaves grows from the ground, which is covered with brown, dried leaves. Behind the flowers is a large, dark, weathered log. The background shows a dense forest of trees with bare branches, and sunlight filters through the canopy, creating a bokeh effect. The text "THANK YOU" is overlaid in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters on the right side of the image.

THANK YOU





# Itchen Valley Country Park

Masterplan project







**EASTLEIGH**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL



The Play Trail



The Remembrance Avenue



The Den



The Dray





# Diverse Income Mix

- *Increase footfall:* Larger carpark to maximise peak earning periods
- *Increase dwell time:* Improved and expanded footpath, wayfinding and play provision
- *Tenancy income:* Improve tenancy spaces to increase commercial value
- *Café and catering:* Relocation of parking to maximise footfall and increase dwell time
- *Event programme:* New performance spaces to introduce new visitors
- *Space hire:* Public hire of the Hide, community space, BBQ areas, Dog Run
- *Health and Wellbeing programme:* Funding through targeted community engagement



# Integrated Income





# Engagement Styles

**Passive engagement** encompasses self-guided use of the parks; primarily delivered through built environment, signage and social media. Visitors can identify their own desired outcomes for their visit and easily find resources and guidance that enhances their time.

**Active engagement** is focused on building new audiences or stretching current visitors to use the park in new ways. Delivery of this activity will be through guided or authored experiences created with a specific user group in mind, this may often be targeted through wider council community engagement priorities.

**Partnership engagement** will deliver larger scale events and programming with either a commercial or funded component. Activity here will focus on enabling other organisations to make use of the sites and may involve partnership or commissioning models.



# Core Themes

## ***Nurturing Resilience and Wellbeing***

- Visitors will come together, get active or find space to breathe and reflect

## ***Sharing Skills and Knowledge***

- Visitors will discover how our habitats can thrive and learn how to value and protect them through positive action

## ***Encouraging Exploration and Play***

- Visitors will try something new; whether it's a muddy expedition in the woods or a summer evening performance





# Themes and Engagement Matrix

	<b>Nurturing Resilience and Wellbeing</b>	<b>Sharing Skills and Knowledge</b>	<b>Encouraging Exploration and Play</b>
<b>Passive</b>	Path renewal and seating	Trails, guides and interpretation	New play areas
<b>Active</b>	Mental wellbeing walks	Volunteering	Explorer packs and family activities
<b>Partnership</b>	Parkrun, Boot Camp, Alpacas	Workshops and Youth Options	Theatre and GoApe



# A Sense of Welcome and Arrival

- Natural flow from carpark to welcome space
- Centralised amenities and meeting place
- Clear starting point for trails and activities
- Covered area to broaden seasonality of Cafe
- Event space with access to catering, toilets and carparks
- Changing places and additional accessible toilets





# Welcome Space



**EASTLEIGH**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

# Creating an Integrated Experience





# New Opportunities for Adventure

- Encourage imagination and exploration
- Increase in accessibility
- New opportunities for collaborative play
- Increased dwell time for families
- Design and materials in keeping with environment
- Disbursed around site to encourage movement









# Everyone Exploring Further

- Renewed path surfaces enabling access for all
- Reworked junctions for easier wayfinding
- New network of navigation points to enable exploration
- Trails extending further into the Park



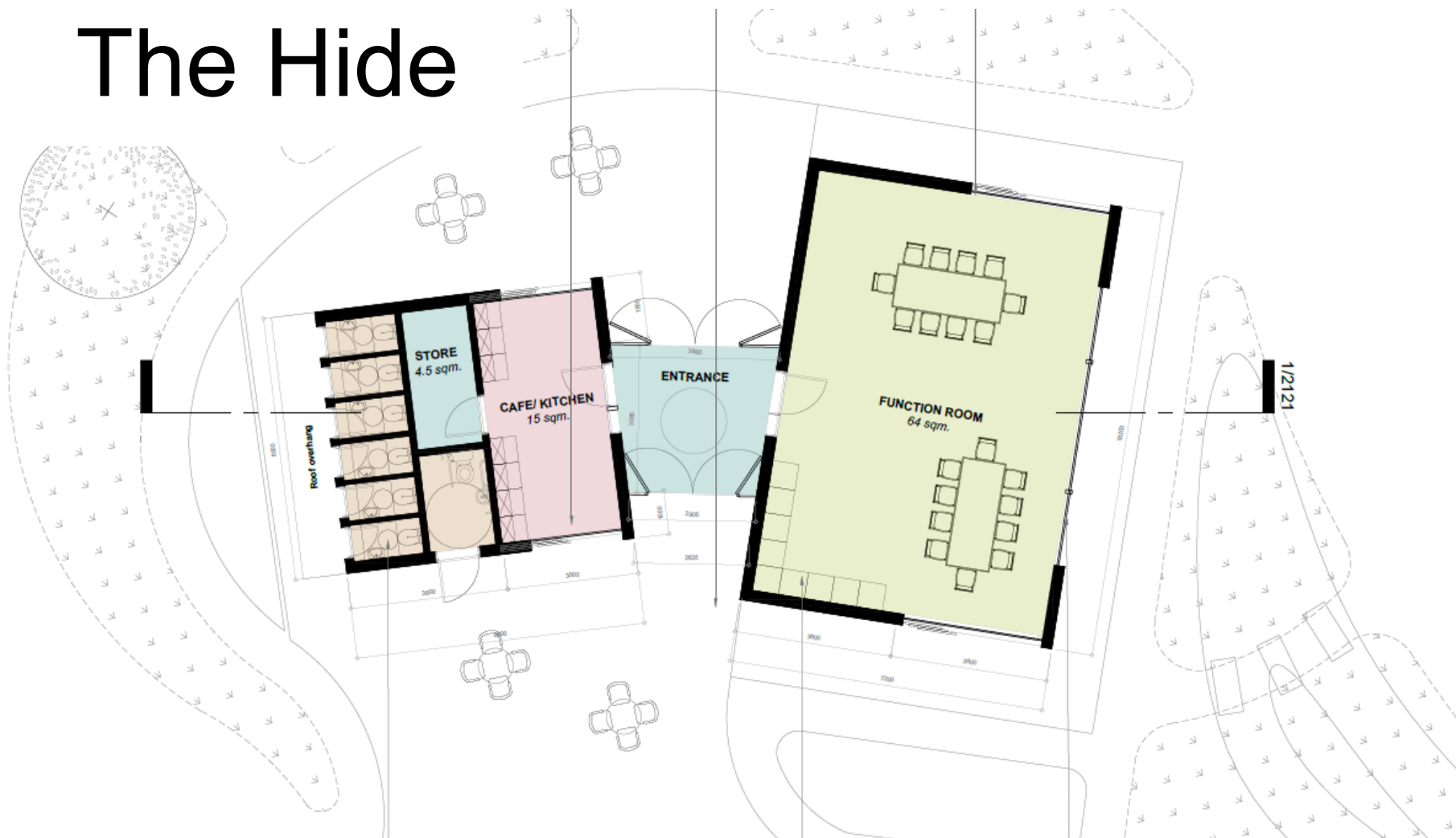
# New Reasons to Come Together

- New community building on High Hill Field
- Improved access to GoApe, trails and play
- Low impact prefab Eco-build
- Supporting family, wellbeing and volunteer groups
- Enables larger events on High Hill Field
- Medium sized event space created at Woodland Café
- Small sized meeting/BBQ areas around Woodland Cafe



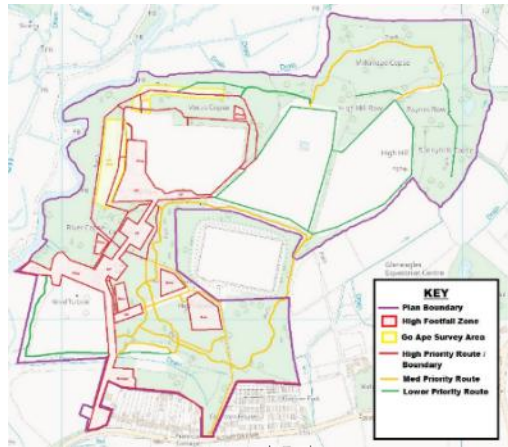


# The Hide



# Nurturing our Habitats

- Moving to woodland habitat management approach
- Improving woodland margin, rides and understory
- New species lists for replanting
- Community involvement through volunteering and interpretation
- Healthy woodlands lead to safe trees





# Itchen Valley Country Park transformation

**EASTLEIGH**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Investing in  
**our** community

This is a temporary gravel storage area while we install new and improved paths around our woodlands and meadows, as well as construct our new community building.

Once the works are finished this area will be returned to grass.

We apologise for any disruption while work takes place – but we think the final results will be worth it.

Get the latest updates  
- [www.itchenvalley.co.uk](http://www.itchenvalley.co.uk)



# Itchen Valley Country Park transformation

**EASTLEIGH**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Investing in  
**our** community

Eastleigh Borough Council's project to transform Itchen Valley Country Park and make the visitor experience even better is now under way.

These works are delivering a range of exciting new features, including:

- creative play facilities
- a visitor hub
- a new community building
- an outdoor events and eating area for the Woodland Café
- better trails, barbecue and picnic areas
- greater accessibility, including a Changing Places room

We apologise for any disruption while work takes place – but we think the final results will be worth it.

Get the latest updates - [www.itchenvalley.co.uk](http://www.itchenvalley.co.uk)



# Itchen Valley Country Park transformation

**EASTLEIGH**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Investing in  
**our** community

Eastleigh Borough Council's project to transform Itchen Valley Country Park and make the visitor experience even better is now under way.

These works are delivering a range of exciting new features, including:

- creative play facilities
- a visitor hub
- a new community building
- an outdoor events and eating area for the Woodland Café
- better trails, barbecue and picnic areas
- greater accessibility, including a Changing Places room



We apologise for any disruption while work takes place – but we think the final results will be worth it.

Get the latest updates - [www.itchenvalley.co.uk](http://www.itchenvalley.co.uk)



**EASTLEIGH**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

# Play Areas and Trails



The Warren

The Nest

The Dray

Remembrance Avenue

The Hide

Play Trail

Woodlarks

The Holt

The Den

High Hill Field

Wildflower Meadow

Covered reservoir  
(no access)

Woodland  
Nature Reserve

Entrance and exit

**Key**

	Picnic area		Dog waste bin
	Parking		Old brick kiln
	Cafe		Dog wash
	Play area		Forest School
	BBQ area (hire)		Go Ape
	Toilets		Path
	Visitor information		

**Trails**

	Family Trail (0.5km)		Nature Trail (2.5km)
	Running Trail (2.5km)		Caster Trail (0.5km)



# Lessons learnt

- Combine all contracts under one central contractor
- Make sure you have a good QS
- Create clear lines of communication between project, contractors and operations
- Leave room for snagging and follow up
- Pilot and test the concepts



# Impact of Work

- 140,000 additional visitors
- 32% rise in café income
- 40% rise in parking income
- Significant rise in access across the park
- Stepping stone to future projects across Borough





# Green Flag feedback

*“The whole site is an example of how a country park should be run mixing the needs of nature with the needs of people.*

*This is a very very fine park with a good interaction between nature and people.”*

Green Flag Mystery Shopper report



# Green Flag Award: Present and Future for Lambeth





# Introduction to London Borough of Lambeth

- London Borough of Lambeth: relatively compact Inner London borough
- Population of almost 350,000 residents – one of the highest population densities of any London borough
- Heavily urbanised with large areas of social and private housing, roads, business units, railways, etc.



# Introduction to London Borough of Lambeth

- However, still a remarkably 'green' borough, with significant areas of green space (over 30% of borough)
- Residents place great importance on protecting, as well as looking after and improving both public and private open spaces





# Lambeth and Green Flag Award

- 26 of Lambeth's parks and open spaces have a Green Flag in 2025, up from 1 in 2007!
- 3 Green Flag Heritage Awards – Brockwell Park and Kennington Park
- 4 sites with Green Flag Community Awards



# Green Flag Award - The Future

- Lambeth has further potential for additional Green Flag Awards in 2026 and beyond
- Borough contains 81 parks, commons, cemeteries, churchyards, and other public open spaces
- So only 32% of the total have a Green Flag in 2025





# Why do we participate in Green Flag Award?

- Externally validated means to 'test' our commitment to maintain and improve our standards in our greenspace management (and improvement)
- Continuous yet open and fair scrutiny, including through mystery shopping, and from experienced assessors





# Why do we participate in Green Flag Award?

- Lambeth Parks Key Performance Indicator (KPIs) – proportion of public open spaces (above minimum size threshold) that have and retain a Green Flag Award
- Evidences to public and politicians (and to funders) that we are serious about maintaining standards, both in how we provide services and how we look after our assets





# Green Flag Award - The Future

- Accepted that not all of our open spaces might be eligible or large enough to justify a Green Flag
- Estimated that at least 12 other sites already meet the criteria to apply for and secure a Green Flag
- Resulting in 44% of our total sites with an award





# Green Flag Award - The Future

- Two major challenges will be capacity and resources
- More sites being applied and prepared for, and being maintained to Award standard, has implications for current and future budgets, staff capacity and time
- Not insurmountable, but needs careful planning and decision making to maximise best use of resources





# Green Heritage Award – The Future

- Only three public parks currently have a Green Flag Heritage Award: Brockwell Park, Kennington Park, Vauxhall Park
- At least five other sites are eligible for a Heritage Award
- E.g. Myatt's Fields Park, Ruskin Park, Streatham Rookery, Vauxhall Park, West Norwood Cemetery



# Green Heritage Award – The Future

- All five candidates have appropriate management plans and stakeholder support is strong to maximise success
- Not expensive to apply, and Lambeth's success rate in securing and holding Heritage Awards is excellent
- Aim to add at least two more by 2030





# Green Flag Community Award – The Future

- Only 4 sites/groups with a Community Award in 2026
- Immense potential for more groups and sites to win a Community Award





# Green Flag Community Award – The Future

- Free to apply for a Community Award
- Application process is simple, as is judging process
- Lambeth is committed to encouraging and supporting new community groups to apply in 2026 and beyond
- Sites/groups outside of parks are eligible – those on housing estates and in schools can and should apply





# Conclusions

- Significant potential to increase number of Green Flag, Green Heritage and Community Awards in Lambeth in each year going forward
- We have an enviable track record in applying for, winning and holding on to our awards
- Strong political, community and stakeholder support to retain and increase awards across all categories





# Conclusions

- Need to encourage more small sites and groups to apply for Community Awards: we can advise and support
- Encourage more projects/groups on public realm, housing estates and in schools to apply for awards
- Ward and portfolio members play a key role in advocating and encouraging interest and applications

