

## Sandwell MBC

Sandwell is a metropolitan borough located within the Birmingham Conurbation. It forms part of 4 Black Country Metropolitan Boroughs and borders Birmingham City.

It is the size and profile of most metropolitan boroughs. Originally consisting of 6 towns with each town having a substantial town park.

Our revised green space audit 2014 shows there are 548 green space sites covering an area of 2044 hectares, equivalent to 24% of the total area of the borough.



# Parks Regeneration

- The park is the 5<sup>th</sup> heritage Lottery Award to a public park in Sandwell.
- The total value of all the lottery projects awarded over the years is in the region of 22 million
- A number of other funding grants have also been accessed such as Play England, Sport England, Football Foundation and Big Lottery.



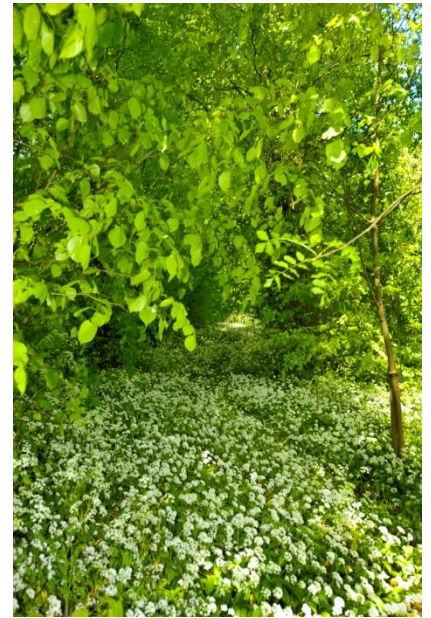
# Council Match Funding/Contribution

The council's match or contributory funding for each of the lottery awards has come from a number of sources namely:-

- Council Capital programme
- Prudential Borrowing
- Section 106 Planning Gain
- Sale of Land
- Volunteer Work

In respect to West Smethwick Park the funding will come from:-

- Section 106 Planning Gain
- Sale of Land
- Volunteer Work



# Council Match Funding/Contribution

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The Parks for People Lottery programme round one development approved costs are:-

• Match funding (section 106)	£46,000
• Volunteer time	£2,000
• HLF Grant 88%	£337,300
<b>Total</b>	<b>£385,300</b>

## Round Two Delivery Costs

• Match funding (land Sale)	£550,025
Maintenance uplift for 5 years	
• £20k per year (section 106)	£100,000
• Volunteer time	£28,500
• HLF Grant 88%	£4,493,400
<b>Total</b>	<b>£5,171,925</b>



# Strategic context

I mentioned earlier that Sandwell is made up of 6 towns and ideally its good to try and have a degree of equity across the towns. However in reality this is not always possible when chasing money and often we need to focus on opportunistic funding.

In 2010 we produced a Green Space Strategy that was approved and published in 2011. The strategy is a 10 year vision based around 4 key strands of activity:-

1. Audience Development
2. People and Partnerships
3. Spaces and Places
4. Resources and Services



With an action plan against each of those headings. Our revised Green Space Audit 2014 provides the hierarchy of parks and green spaces. A green space improvement plan was produced from the Audit that sets out the priorities for funding and potential disposal of low value green space.

# Strategic context

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We also have a Playing Pitch Strategy revised 2015 with financial support from Sport England.

When submitting a lottery application we use the Green Space Strategy as the strategic basis for that application.



# Begin with the end in mind

- As a Development Manager the beginning and the end for me is finance.
- The construction and regeneration of the park infrastructure is not a big issue if the procurement process is robust.
- I find that the most important element of any project is money and cash flow.



# The Starting Point

As mentioned earlier the most important starting point is to either have some money or know where the finance will come from. The next step is to consult usually starting with the Friends Group, this enables a degree of support for any project.

With Friends support the next step is to consult more widely. In the case of Sandwell I always procure external consultants to do this with a strong track record in community consultant and working on Parks for People projects. I must emphasis its essential to give the consultants a brief to work within.

Allied to this there is a need to have a design team preferably Landscape Architects team to carry out historical research and production of outline concept plans with indicative costs from a QS.

This work does not need to be in great detail as that's part of the development round 1. However its essential to 'make the case' for the restoration within the HLF application.



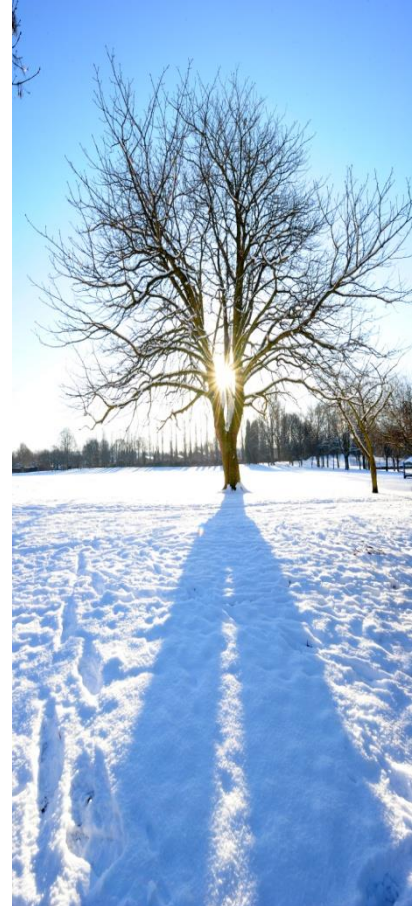
# The Starting Point

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I always make use of both the consultants and Landscape Architects to complete sections of the HLF application. I usually create a word doc version of the application that can be amended and added to during the early stages.

The total cost of submitting an HLF application for major funding is in the order of £50,000. Consultation consultants are around £12,000 – £15, 000. Landscape Architects/Architects is around £35,000.

It is essential to have industry costs fairly well nailed down before the application is submitted. In the past we have learnt that industry inflation is much higher than anticipated .



# The Cost

When you know with a degree of certainty from QS figures what the costs of round 1 and round 2 will be then you know if the project is deliverable.

In the case of West Smethwick Park we have a redundant depot yard next to the park that used to be the plant nursery. Within the body of the Green Space Audit I made sure the depot was surplus to requirements. Within the Green Space Strategy its Council policy to recycle the capital sale receipt of green space back into parks.

Planning, Property Services and Highways all inspected the site and agreed it can be disposed for housing. Its at this point I obtained political support for the project showing a clear audit trail of community support and where the finance will come from prior to submitting the application to Heritage Lottery.

The land development value of the depot is around £800,000 so its more than sufficient for the project.

# Developing a successful HLF bid

## The check list

- Get local Friends, political and residents immediately around the park support.
- Ensure there is a small team of people available to work on the application.
- Submit an expression of interest to HLF emphasising community support and heritage value of the site.
- Be prepared for a site visit from HLF officers and ensure there is a clear formulated idea of the scope of works.
- Develop the application making sure that HLF guidance notes and the on line booklets are fully understood.

**Action Plans** can take a number of formats depending on the size and scope of the project; make sure the plan is simple and easy to follow. Make use of HLF guidance notes and if necessary make reference to that guidance within the document.

# Developing a successful HLF bid cont'd

**Sustain the project** by galvanising community support and establishing a volunteer plan that can be included within the Action Plans. Make sure the project enables the site to support large scale events that include funfairs, cinema in the park etc all of which provide income. If necessary re-profile budgets to support additional infrastructure. On-going community support is the best way to sustain the project, good news stories, green flag, web pages, blog etc all raise the profile and provide that essential political support.



# The current position

Heritage Lottery have awarded round 1 Parks for People with round 2 approved subject to the submission of round 1 plans and application. We have received permission to start and I am currently preparing OJEU notice ITT invitation to tender the PQQ – pre qualification questionnaire and the tender brief for Landscape Architectural Design Development and contract supervision. It is anticipated to retain the successful team into round 2 delivery.

Separate to this there is an advert going out for a Project Officer on a fixed term contract but again retained between end of round 1 and round 2. SMBC will pick up the salary costs between round 1 and 2 out of the section 106 planning gain monies.

