



APSE Northern Forum 2019

Haigh Woodland Park.  
Great Fun. Great Value.  
Great Outdoors.

Developing and delivering a sustainable  
solution for Wigan's Premier Visitor Attraction:

Keith L Bergman.  
Development Manager.  
Destination Parks.

  
*Inspiring  
healthy  
lifestyles*

**Wigan**  
Council 



## 'Destination Parks' V 'Community Parks'

- Titles not intended to signify public value.
- However, identify those Parks that have the ability to generate larger visitor numbers, commercial revenues and commercial partnerships.
- And therefore, identify Parks that have ability to be financially self sufficient.



‘As far as austerity is concerned,  
the medicine is killing the patient’.

Nigel Farage.

- Austerity placed significant pressures on LAs.
- Reduced spending on Leisure and Culture.
- The need for LAs to think and deliver services differently.
- Wigan’s approach: ‘Invest to Save’.
- Encourage financial ‘self sufficiency’.



# Introducing Haigh Country Park

- A popular country park.
- 250K (local) visitors per year.
- A proud and loyal audience.
- 350 acres.
- Grade II\* listed Georgian Hall
- Underinvestment in buildings, infrastructure, woodland and amenities.
- Costing circa £350K per year.
- Municipal management.





# Introducing Haigh Woodland Park

## The Vision:

- To develop an attraction of 'regional significance'
- A high quality destination with a mix of attractions.
- Celebrating and maximising the natural and historic assets of the Park.
- Valued by the local community and visitors from outside of Wigan Borough.
- A destination that encourages 'wellbeing'.



# Introducing Haigh Woodland Park

## The Principles of development and delivery:

- 'Invest to Save'. £3.7M.
- Phase I: Focus on commercial development and infrastructure.
- Find an appropriate solution for Haigh Hall.
- Change municipal management to commercial management.
- Recognising the Park's value to the local community.
- Delivering financial sustainability. Reducing cost burden to LA.





# Introducing Haigh Woodland Park

## New Attractions:

- A mix of FREE and Paid for:
  - The Woodland Adventure Play Park.
  - High Ropes Adventure.
  - Woodland Adventure Golf.





# Introducing Haigh Woodland Park

## The Kitchen Courtyard:

- Artisan food and drink destination.
- 9 private tenants.
- Commercial rents and service charges.
- Events.







# Introducing Haigh Woodland Park

## New Visitor Infrastructure:

- Car Parks.
- The Visitor Centre
- Pathway Improvements.
- Park 'Furniture'.
- Signage.
- Security.





# Introducing Haigh Woodland Park

## Events:

- Purpose built event space.
- New Event Programme.
- FREE events.
- Commercial Events.
- Investment in events equipment (RDP Funded).
- Tactical event planning





# Introducing Haigh Woodland Park

- Additional Staffing.
- New Branding.
- Improved Marketing.
- Investment into Grounds Maintenance.
- Existing Attractions.





# Haigh Woodland Park: The Outputs

- 509,000 visitors (2018/19).
- Top 10 Paid For Visitor Attractions in NW.
- 67% Visitors from Outside Borough
- £1.3M net turnover PA
- Visit England VAQAS
- 4.5 Star Rating Trip Advisor.
- Gilt Silver Award NW In Bloom





## Haigh Woodland Park: 'Every Day is a School Day!'

- Invest to Save.
- Invest in Community Consultation.
- Win (internal) stakeholder support.
- Choose your partners wisely.







## Haigh Woodland Park: 'Every Day is a School Day!'

- Be unashamedly commercial.
- Know your Audience.
- Invest in Marketing.
- Put your infrastructure in first!
- Understand the Product Life Cycle.



# Introducing Haigh Woodland Park Phase II

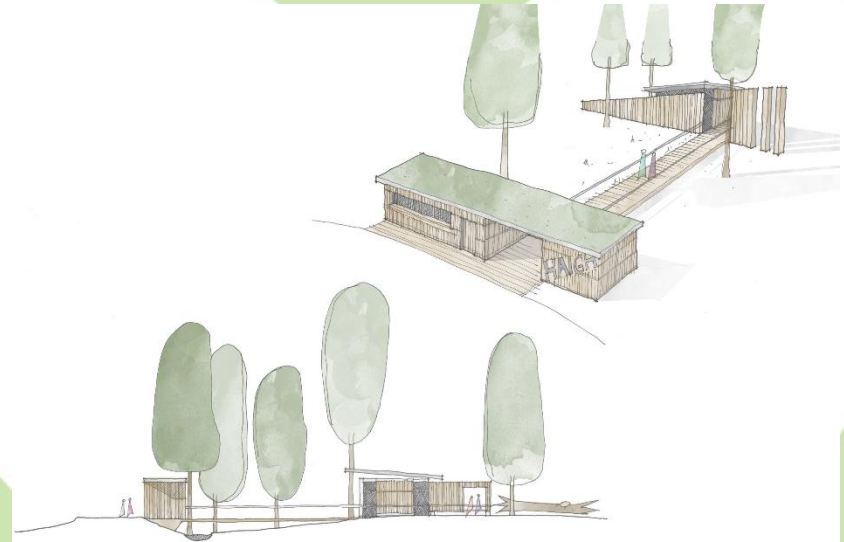
- ‘Heritage, Nature and People’.
- Restore the Park’s Heritage Assets.
- Develop and encourage greater access to the Woodlands.
- Develop community opportunities.





# Introducing Haigh Woodland Park Phase II

- £6M Project. 2022 – 2024.
- £4M NLHF Application.
- Attract new audiences.
- Reinvigorate existing attractions and infrastructure.





APSE Northern Region Forum 2019

Haigh Woodland Park  
Great Fun. Great Value.  
Great Outdoors.

Thank you for your time and attention

  
*Inspiring  
healthy  
lifestyles*

**Wigan**   
**Council**