

## **Wirral Council**

Department of Regeneration

Parks & Countryside Service

## **Arrowe Country Park**

### **Management Plan & Security Audit**

Produced 2006/2007



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## 1) Introduction

Wirral Council produced this management plan in conjunction with the Friends of Arrowe Country Park. The plan is intended to provide a framework for the development and improvement of the Park over the next five-year period up to 2011. The plan is a working document, which is open to new ideas at any time. We welcome your suggestions and comments for incorporation into this plan, whether you are a local resident, user or organisation. This will help us develop a park that meets everyone's needs and aspirations.

If you wish to find out further information about this document or to submit any suggestions please contact the Parks and Countryside Service at Wirral Council on 0151 666 4712 or the Area Ranger on 0151 677 7594, alternatively contact in writing to:

Wirral Council, Department of Regeneration, **Parks & Countryside Service**, Westminster House, Hamilton Street, Birkenhead, Wirral, CH41 5FN.

### **Departmental Mission Statement;**

*'Promoting a healthy, safer lifestyle and improving the quality of life for all.'*

*Aims:*

- *To enable sustainable, economic, social, neighbourhood and environmental regeneration.*
- *To improve the health and well being of Wirral residents.*
- *To promote opportunities for personal, community and business development.*

## **2) The wider policy context and its relevance to the park/open space**

**Wirral Council has produced 9 corporate objectives:**

- PROTECTING AND IMPROVING OUR ENVIRONMENT
- PROMOTING AND SUPPORTING THE ECONOMIC REGENERATION OF WIRRAL
- PROVIDING EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL
- IMPROVING THE HEALTH OF WIRRAL PEOPLE
- MAKING WIRRAL SAFER
- MEETING THE HOUSING NEEDS OF WIRRAL
- SUPPORTING AND PROTECTING VULNERABLE PEOPLE
- IMPROVING TRANSPORT
- CONTINUOUSLY IMPROVING SERVICES

### 3) Site information

**Name:** Arrowe Country Park

**Grid Reference:** 326970, 386260

**Primary classification:** Country Park

**Ward:** Pensby & Thingwall

**Address:** Arrowe Park Road, Birkenhead, Wirral

#### **Current facilities and features:**

- Football Pavilion
- 2 x Children's play areas
- 16 x football pitches (13 x Senior / 3 x Junior)
- Mature deciduous woodland
- Numerous Ponds
- Arrowe Brook with lake, dam and waterfalls
- Site of biological importance (S.B.I.)
- Meadow grassland
- 18 hole Golf course with staff mess room and machinery compound
- 9 hole Chip and Putt course
- Red Rooms Club House, Ticket Office and Café
- Arrowe Hall (grade 2 listed building privately owned)
- 2 x Victorian Entrance Lodges (privately owned)
- Ivy Farm (originally the farmhouse now used by youth service for adventure courses)
- Works compound (including Area Manager's Office, storerooms, staff mess rooms, machinery sheds and outside composting areas)
- Tennis Courts (3 x Grass, 2 x Hard porous, 1 x Tarmac)
- 4 x Bowling Greens
- 2 x 5 a side pitches (1 x Grass, 1 x Hard porous)

**Total site size:** 162 Hectares

#### **Tenure:**

The site is owned and managed by the Parks and Countryside Service of Wirral Council's Department of Regeneration.

#### **Summary of main uses:**

- Dog walking
- Football
- Children's play
- Family recreation
- Fishing (with licence)

- Golf
- Pitch and Putt
- Bowls
- Tennis
- Flying model aircraft
- Horse riding
- Cycling
- Nature watching

### **Partner organisations:**

Merseyside Police  
 Wirral Community Safety Team  
 Association of Wirral Angling Clubs (AWAC) Water Bailiffs  
 Cheshire Wildlife Trust  
 Wirral Schools  
 Wirral Youth Service

### **Access:**

The Park is located near to main bus routes on Arrowe Park Road, Arrowe Brook Road and Thingwall Road.

The main entrance is situated on Arrowe Park Road opposite Landican Cemetery and is suitable for vehicles, pedestrians and wheelchair users. Pedestrian access can be gained from a number of points around the site, particularly on Thingwall Road opposite Thingwall Drive, on Arrowe Park Road opposite the Arrowe Park Hotel and on Arrowe Brook Road near it's junction with Arrowe Brook Lane where there is a car park.

There are two Statutory Public Rights Of Way within the Park; one running between the Arrowe Brook Road entrance and Thingwall Road entrance on the western edge of the site (FP 27). This is combined with a permissive horse and cycle route. The other crosses the Park from the side of Arrowe Park Hospital over Arrowe Brook and onto adjacent farmland (FP 11).

### **History:**

The shape of Arrowe Country Park as we know it today really began in 1800 when the then Mayor of Liverpool, John Shaw bought the land. He had made his fortune from supplying his ships for the slave trade. He passed it to his Great Nephew John Ralph Shaw who was responsible for landscaping the park and building Arrowe Hall in 1835. Future owners were Captain William Shaw J.P., Major Dermont McAlmont and the estate of Lord Leverhulme until it was purchased in 1927 by Birkenhead Corporation and made into a public park in 1928. In 1929 the International Boy Scout Jamboree was held in the park and attended by Lord Baden Powell their founder. In 1974 Local Government re-organisation gave ownership to the Metropolitan Borough of Wirral, which retains responsibility to this day.

## **Resources:**

- Area Manager and Assistant Manager (based at Arrowe Country Park Depot)
- A range of horticultural machinery and tools
- Annual revenue budget
- 4 x site based Grounds maintenance staff
- Head Green keeper and 3 additional golf course maintenance staff
- Visiting Arboriculture team
- Seasonal Football Attendant
- Visiting Ranger (based in Royden Park)

## **Summary of the known problems**

- Problems associated with youth disorder and vandalism
- Golfers playing on the course without paying
- Reducing revenue budgets for maintenance
- Lack of capital investment

## **Staff and their functions**

A team of 4 permanent gardeners and 3 seasonal staff maintain the park, assisted by a gardener using tractor-mounted equipment to mow the larger grass areas.

A play area safety inspection team visits the park on a weekly basis (Monday to Friday).

A forestry team visits the park in order to undertake seasonal specialist tree pruning and felling work.

The Area Parks Manager and the Assistant Area Parks Manager are responsible for the management of the park. The area grounds maintenance depot is located in the park; telephone number; 0151 678 3555. The park is located in the 'Central' operational grounds maintenance area.

A Ranger working with school groups arranges educational visits to the park. In addition the Rangers organise a variety of public events in the park including guided walks, fun events for children and larger events such as Viking encampments and Folk concerts.

## **Skill gaps**

The Parks and Countryside Service Plan recognises that a skill gap currently exists within the division's operational staffing, in consequence 3 main aims have been identified in order to address the issue: -

- 1) Review Parks Modern Apprentice scheme
- 2) Produce a staff training action plan
- 3) Improve training for parks staff in biodiversity awareness

## **Stakeholders**

- The parks management and maintenance staff
- Park user groups and individuals (i.e. footballers, bowlers)
- Model Aircraft Club
- British Horse Society
- Arrowse Park Golf Club
- Arrowse Park Advisory Group
- Wirral Footpath and Open Spaces Preservation Society
- Deeside Orienteering Club
- Friends of Arrowse Country Park

## **What standards are management trying to achieve**

The intention is for the park to achieve the standards as defined by the Green Flag Award Scheme.

## **What are the current aims and objectives, what level of success has been achieved?**

This plan will seek to establish clear aims and objectives to be achieved over the next 5 years identified within the action plan.

Arrowse Park officially attained Country Park status in 1994 as outlined in the Countryside Act 1968. Within the Park the Golf Course and an area of approximately 23 Hectares including Nicholson's Plantation, Arrowse Brook / Lake and Gorse Covert have been designated a Site of Biological Importance (S.B.I.). Cheshire Wildlife Trust has completed a plant survey within the park and a woodland management plan has been outlined. Both Children's play areas have been enclosed.

The creation of additional shelter- belt planting and small native woodland copses with associated long grass buffer zones is ongoing.

## **4) Analysis and assessment**

A decline in investment in green space over previous decades has seen maintenance standards and the condition of facilities and infrastructure within municipal parks decline.

The current condition of the Park has been assessed using the following criteria as defined by the Civic Trust's Green Flag Award scheme:

- i. A welcoming park
- ii. Healthy, safe and secure
- iii. Clean and maintained
- iv. Sustainability
- v. Conservation and heritage
- vi. Community involvement
- vii. Marketing

viii. Management

**i) A welcoming park**



Main Entrance



Entrance opposite Arrowe Park Hotel



Thingwall Road Entrance



Arrowe Brook Road Entrance

The main entrance to Arrowe Country Park is signposted from nearby main roads and junction 3 of the mid Wirral motorway (M53).

There are “Arrowe Country Park” name signs at all entrances. There is an attractive feature with seating and planting at the main entrance and there is an information cabinet but its content is limited and out of date (i.e. directing users to Ivy Farm Visitor Centre that is no longer in use). Signage requesting dog owners to clear up after their pets was not clearly visible at any entrance.

The main entrance is suitable for disabled access.

There is substantial car parking at this point although it requires the white lined bays over marking. This car parking is shared with the Cherry Orchard Public House, Arrowe Park Golf Course and the Red Rooms Café and Golf Shop.

Arrowe Hall private residences are accessed from the main entrance along a tarmaced drive into the park. It is therefore difficult to control unauthorised vehicular access into the park at this point.

The entrance opposite the Arrowe Park Hotel has an attractive Victorian Gothic style lodge (in private ownership) and recently repainted double and single iron gates on feature sandstone pillars. This entrance is also suitable for disabled access. Improved signage / information should be a priority at this point.

The Thingwall Road entrance is informal but somewhat run down and requiring re-gating and improved signage / information as it is currently easily overlooked. Selective thinning and pruning of over mature and oppressive vegetation should also be carried out. The field gate approximately 20m into the site is open and unlocked, potentially allowing unauthorised vehicles over the site.

Consideration could be given to creating an improved small car park at this location.

The Arrowe Brook Road entrance has a privately owned and refurbished lodge and forms part of the Statutory Right of Way (FP27) along the western edge of the park. Improved signage and information should again be installed at this point. An adjacent loose surface car park is provided which requires replacement of broken and missing barriers and trip rail fencing to prevent unauthorised vehicles driving onto the football fields and into the park.

## **ii) Healthy, Safe and Secure**

The park is covered under the Fouling of Land Act 1996; this act makes it an offence not to clean up in a public area if a dog under your control does foul. Signage requesting dog owners to clean up after their pets was not evident at any of the entrances. Dog ban signage was also not erected to the Children's Play Areas and self-closing gates were not fitted.

Wirral Council has a written and up to date Health and Safety policy.

It is proposed to introduce an Annual Parks Safety Inspection Checklist. The inspection is intended to identify defects within the park that present a safety problem for staff, users and adjacent residents. The checklist requires appraisal of the following items:

1. Paths, steps, ramps
2. Walls, fences, gates
3. Buildings
4. Furniture – signs, seats, litterbins etc
5. Soft landscape – grass, planted areas, water features etc
6. Trees

Wirral Council operates a 24 hour Community Patrol force, established to provide a response to any concern notified to them regarding anti-social behaviour occurring

within Council owned land. The Patrol can be contacted on telephone number 666 5265.

Public toilet facilities are available in the Red Rooms Café. The toilet block to the north of Arrowe Hall remains closed and locked due to vandalism and is heavily defaced by graffiti. Exceptionally it is opened on special events.

The Parks and Countryside Service are represented on the Junior Joint Agency Group (Junior JAG), a forum consisting of Merseyside Police, Community Safety, and youth workers. Issues regarding security in parks are raised at the meeting with the intention of providing a multi agency approach to addressing problems.

The park is covered by Byelaws, made under Section 164 of the Public Health Act, 1875,

A Senior Parks Development Officer carried out a Security Audit under the following 9 criteria: -

1. Sight-line visibility
2. What evidence is apparent of anti-social behaviour or undesirable activity in the park?
3. Motor vehicles
4. The park at night
5. Pathways, pedestrian routes
6. Boundaries
7. Buildings
8. Children's play areas
9. Is the park well cared for?

**Sight-line visibility** – The main entrance on Arrowe Park Road could be improved by ensuring the vegetation growing over and under the welcome sign is regularly cut. Sight lines into the park at this point were clear although the footpath to the Children's Play Area was poorly surfaced where it runs through the wooded area of Card Plantation, feeling quite oppressive. A handrail over an open ditch was missing and there was excessive graffiti adjacent to the footpath within this wood.



The entrance opposite the Arrowe Park Hotel is tree lined and quite dark but the wide tarmac footpath was clear and invites the visitor into the park. This footpath

eventually arrives at the children's play area. Consideration should be given to clearing gaps in the vegetation alongside these footpaths so that park users feel more secure.



The Thingwall Road entrance was uninviting and overgrown. Although informal, first impressions were more of neglect than informality. Pruning / maintenance to open up' sight lines and the route into the park should be a priority at this location coupled with gating and signage.

The Arrowe Brook Lane entrance was attractive with waterfall and lodge and the route from the adjacent car park was acceptable. However, consideration should be given to pruning and thinning the over mature shrubs that bound the southern side of this footpath to improve sight lines and views through to the wooded plantation of Gorse Covert.

**Evidence of anti-social behaviour** – Graffiti was evident throughout the park to sports facilities, buildings, children's play areas, park furniture and even trees. Vandals had subjected the trees around the lake to fire damage and a damaged mature Cedar had collapsed into the lake and required removal. At the time of the assessment of the park litter was not found to be a serious problem although during the summer there were problems with littering around the lake and fires lit on the fishing platforms and pegs.

**Motor vehicles** – Vehicles can access the park from the main Thingwall Road and Arrowe Brook Road entrances. In addition cars can now access the park from the recently completed car park extension to Arrowe Park Hospital. Barriers at these points are either locked in the open position or broken and not repaired.



**The park at night** - The park does not have dedicated lighting.

The park is not well overlooked by surrounding property, with approximately 90% being bounded by mature woodland.

Physical and anecdotal evidence indicated that the park is subject to varying levels of anti social behaviour at night and is used as a place in which to congregate and drink alcohol, however further investigation as to the extent of this problem is required. Footballers and golfers heavily use the two lower bowling greens. This vandalism adversely affects the playing surface.

The park, by nature of its boundaries, could not be effectively secured at night but existing barriers should be locked to prevent vehicular access.

**Pathways, pedestrian routes** – Tarmac footpaths across the site were generally in good condition, although heavily contaminated with leaf litter throughout the assessment visits.

Fishing around the lake had caused severe erosion to the banks in places resulting in steep muddy edges and exposed roots. Some fishing pegs were provided with timber steps but all should be renovated and bare areas reinstated as a priority.

Tarmac drives across the site were generally in good order although a short section to the east of Arrowe Hall requires potholes to be reinstated.



Main footpaths routed through the wooded plantations of the park were generally stone surfaced and mainly clear, striking a reasonable balance between the feeling of walking through a wood and maintaining effective sight lines.

An opportunity exists to improve and connect these footpaths into a complete circular walk around the park including consideration of providing similarly for cyclists and horse riders.

**Boundaries** – The Park is almost entirely bounded by mature woodland belts approximately 40m wide augmented by either feature sandstone walling or hawthorn hedging with railings (to the football field). The Thingwall Road woodland

boundary is augmented by chestnut pale fencing that is becoming dilapidated. Consideration should be given to its removal.

Fencing around the children's play areas was in good condition. The gates to the two children's play areas were not of the self-closing type and these should be erected as a priority.

Dumping of garden waste in Neilson's Plantation was evident and action should be taken to stop this practice. Dumping of hardcore has taken place in the woodland belt behind the Warrens Nursery and this should also be stopped and if possible cleared.

It appears that Arrowe Park Hospital staff is using the woodland area adjacent to the overflow car park for their break times. They have placed two picnic tables in this area and also left bin bags full of litter.

## **Buildings**

There is an old (1929) purpose built football changing pavilion on the site, constructed mainly of timber. As a result, despite recent improvements to the plumbing, it is still in poor external and internal condition and does not meet modern requirements for such a building.



The Rangers office was situated within Ivy Farm (once the tenanted farmstead dating back to 1790) but is no longer used as they are now based at Royden Park. Although organised groups use the building as self-catering accommodation at times throughout the year, organised by the Children and Young People's Department, there is still a lack of constant use resulting in abuse to the building with broken and boarded up windows giving a very poor first impression.



The pair of cottages known as Ivy Farm Cottages are tenanted and in good order. Both entrance lodges to the park are privately owned and in good condition.

Grounds maintenance staff office, mess room and storage barn appear to be in acceptable condition and are alarmed.

Machinery storage sheds are of steel construction. The shed nearest to the main road is in poor external condition. Both are alarmed.



The Red Rooms Café / Golf Shop paintwork to timber and rainwater hardware is in a poor state and requires urgent attention to improve first impressions and longevity.

The Golf Course mess room and compound appear adequate.

The disused ticket office to the golf course, which now sits within the infant play area, has deteriorated through lack of use and requires refurbishment and development.



Arrowe Hall is privately owned (Regard Partnerships) and used as a centre for autism. Its Elizabethan style façade appears to be in good condition, although there was litter dumping to the rear, probably from the Hall itself that should be removed.



The old bowls pavilion is leased in part by the Wirral Table Tennis League and also used for storage. Dormer style roof windows were boarded up and unattractive.

The only remaining detached toilet block in the park is mainly closed and was heavily defaced by graffiti.



## **Children's play areas**

The two play areas are designated dog free but do not have relevant signage. 1.2m bow-top railings enclose both children's play area. The pedestrian access gates are not of the self-closing type.

Graffiti was evident to some of the items of play equipment, benches and buildings within them.

Litter within these areas was apparent and included substantial amounts of broken glass and alcohol containers.

Play bark under the aerial runway and space net had clearly not been maintained and was compacted and contaminated with weed affecting the critical fall height.

Siting of the larger play area is not ideal being along way from car parking and hidden behind a mature tree belt. This may cause security issues for users.

## **Is the park well cared for?**

Although the park is well used, both for formal and informal recreation, the overwhelming issue is the lack of a good standard of maintenance and staff presence, particularly the further one walks away from the formal bowling-green area.

The golf course is generally well-maintained and will be the subject of a separate management plan.

It is acknowledged that a well-maintained environment has a positive effect on the behaviour of users, lessening the likelihood of vandalism and other forms of abuse.

### **iii) Well maintained and clean**

The Park is designated a 'canine faeces removal area'; signs at entrance points and other locations should indicate the park is a 'clean it up' area. The children's play area should indicate it is a 'dog-free' zone.

The children's play area is inspected on a weekly basis, Monday to Friday. During the visit the condition of the equipment is assessed and any repair considered necessary is undertaken or the equipment isolated until a permanent repair can be made.

It is understood that a limited survey of the mature tree stock has been undertaken and a simple management plan for this substantial woodland prepared.

There are four site-based members of staff, augmented by 3 seasonal staff from April to September. In addition there is a mobile play area safety inspection team and a gardener performs tractor mounted mowing of the larger grass areas.

Horticultural maintenance is carried out in accordance with a frequency-based work programme allied to a specification; the work programme is issued to staff on a quarterly basis. These are used for identifying all maintenance operations on the site and the required standards. Currently these documents are not being fully utilised and are under review.

The Senior Parks Development Officer using the following 13 headings carried out an assessment of the current maintenance condition of the site. The facilities and features are simply ticked as good, fair or poor and can only represent findings during the writing of this plan. The facilities and features without a rating are not available at the site.

### Grounds maintenance site checklist

<b>Grass</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Poor</b>
Fine Sport		√	
Playing Fields		√	
Ornamental	<i>N/a</i>	<i>N/a</i>	<i>N/a</i>
General		√	
Rough		√	
Wild Flower Area	<i>N/a</i>	<i>N/a</i>	<i>N/a</i>

<b>Planting</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Poor</b>
Annual	<i>N/a</i>	<i>N/a</i>	<i>N/a</i>
Herbaceous	<i>N/a</i>	<i>N/a</i>	<i>N/a</i>
Roses	<i>N/a</i>	<i>N/a</i>	<i>N/a</i>
Shrubs		√	
Hedges		√	
Young staked trees	<i>N/a</i>	<i>N/a</i>	<i>N/a</i>
Mature Trees		√	
Woodland		√	

<b>Hard Surfaces</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Poor</b>
Tarmac Sport	√		
Hard Porous			√
Footpaths		√	
Drives	√		
Car Parks		√	
Steps	<i>N/a</i>	<i>N/a</i>	<i>N/a</i>
ACW / ATP	<i>N/a</i>	<i>N/a</i>	<i>N/a</i>

<b>Play Areas</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Poor</b>
Maintenance			√

<b>Litter</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Poor</b>
Collection		√	
Bins		√	

<b>Buildings</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Poor</b>
Maintenance			√
Graffiti			√

<b>Walling</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Poor</b>
Maintenance	√		
Graffiti	N/a	N/a	N/a

<b>Fencing</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Poor</b>
Maintenance			√

<b>Drainage</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Poor</b>
Ditches			√
Inspection Chambers / Covers	N/a	N/a	N/a
Gully pots		√	

<b>Furniture / Memorials</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Poor</b>
Maintenance		√	
Graffiti			√

<b>Signage</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Poor</b>
Maintenance		√	
Graffiti	N/a	N/a	N/a

<b>Lighting</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Poor</b>
Maintenance	N/a	N/a	N/a

<b>Water</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Poor</b>
Maintenance			√
Safety		√	

There was a large Cedar that had collapsed into the lake and required urgent removal. The overshoot waterfall from the lake was heavily overgrown and required selective removal of vegetation to reveal this feature.



Footballers and golfers abuse two of the four bowling greens in the park and they are maintained to a reduced frequency and standard. Consideration could be given

to their removal. This problem may be compounded by the poor maintenance of the adjacent hard porous 5-a-side pitch.

The hard porous tennis courts were equally poorly maintained with little or no surface management having taken place.



The pitch and putt course was an asset that appeared to be suffering from poor maintenance with poor signage, tees, greens and missing course furniture.

Some goalposts on the football fields were loose in their sockets and in need of attention.

It is apparent that operational factors beyond the influence of this management plan require consideration in order to improve grounds maintenance. The main issues for consideration could include staff management (i.e. motivation, supervision, and training) coupled with the issue of resourcing (i.e. revenue funding, machinery and materials).

#### **iv) Sustainability**

Water and energy consumption at the park is monitored and where necessary modification is made to minimise wastage, thereby achieving economies in usage in line with the Council's Environmental Policy.

Green waste generated at the park is not currently separately composted and reused on the site.

Tree brash is chipped and stored separately at Arrowe Country Park depot but is piled against the rear wall of the mess room building.

An environmental audit of the park is to be undertaken, the scope of which is to identify the aspects and impacts arising from the management and operational activities of Arrowe Country Park.

Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) assessment records of all chemical based products used within the park form part of the Departments Quality Assurance procedures. Pesticide records are retained at the park depot. Chemical

storage and usage within the park complies with the requirements defined within the current pesticide handling legislation.

Tractor and mowing equipment are checked for emission levels.

The park is well served by public transport infrastructure.

Peat use in bedding and soil amelioration should cease.

#### **v) Conservation and Heritage**

Arrowe Country Park is the largest area of parkland in Wirral comprising 401 acres of formal and informal parkland areas, mature deciduous woodland, ponds, lake and brook, playing fields containing 16 senior football pitches and amenity and meadow grassland. This provides both passive and active recreational facilities for the local and wider community.

A bio-diversity action plan to maximise the parks ecological interest and variety should be produced. An opportunity exists to possibly introduce areas of wildflowers, better manage the numerous ponds, lake and associated open ditches, better manage the mature broad leaved woodland and to further increase the site's habitat potential in order to achieve a balance between the recreational use of Arrowe Country Park and its valuable contribution to bio-diversity.

Arrowe Hall has grade 2 listed building status.

A Site of Biological Importance (SBI) lies within the park and covers Nicholson's Plantation, Arrowe Brook and lake and Gorse Covert. More recently the SBI has been extended to include the Golf course, Hay Meadow and trees around Arrowe Hall (bat roosts).

There are feature sandstone gate pillars and iron gates to the entrance opposite the Arrowe Park Hotel.

There is no signage or interpretation informing the visitor of local flora and fauna and the sites history. General improvements and funding for these and further developments should be actively sought.

#### **vi) Community Involvement**

The park has an Advisory Group representing park user groups, which meets regularly with council officers. A Friends of Arrowe Country Park group has also recently been formed.

Only 6 senior football pitches were rented during the 2006/07 season. This may be largely due to the condition of the changing facilities and the surface levels of some of the pitches.

Association of Wirral Angling Clubs (AWAC) water bailiffs monitor licensed fishing at the lake.

The youth service organise adventure breaks during the school holidays and weekends, utilising the parks facilities for the outdoor activities and staying in the first floor bunk rooms in the Ivy Farm building.

### vii) Marketing

Wirral Council has an Internet web site that has links to the Parks and Countryside Division's information. The link to this site is currently hard to find and no reference is made on the site to the park.

Erection of information boards would be useful to involve users in the running of the park and possibly stimulate formation of a Friends group.

### viii) Management

Following re-organisation of The Parks & Countryside Service in 2004 the following management structure was put in place.



The production of this management plan should provide staff and public with the expectations Wirral Council has for the future development and maintenance of the park.

## 5) Aims and Objectives

### **Aim:**

- Our aim is to make the park more welcoming and encourage more people to use the facility.

### **Objectives:**

1. Over mark white lined parking bays to main entrance car park.
2. Improve / update content of information cabinet at the main entrance.
3. Provide good quality finger post signage through the park from the main entrance.
4. Erect / stencil dog 'clean it up' signage to all entrances.
5. Provide welcoming entrance signage and information cabinets to remaining entrances.
6. At the Thingwall Road entrance carry out selective pruning and thinning of over mature vegetation.
7. Supply and fit replacement field gate to Thingwall Road entrance and lock existing gate 20m into park to prevent unauthorised vehicles entering site.
8. Replace broken and missing barriers / trip rail at Arrowse Brook Road car park entrance.
9. Improve first impressions at all 3 entrances with improved grass cutting, weed control etc.

**Aim:** To improve the health, safety and security of the public when visiting the park.

### **Objectives:**

1. Improve cleansing of both children's play areas.
2. Erect / stencil dog ban signage to both children's play areas.
3. A procedure for the rapid removal of any incidents of graffiti should be introduced including, buildings, walling, park furniture, play equipment etc any incidents of vandalism should likewise be attended to quickly. Specifically in Arrowse Country Park these include the 5 a side court, toilet block, children's play areas and trees.

4. Improve footpath to children's play area through Card Plantation (pruning oppressive and overhanging vegetation, replacing handrail over ditch and possibly tarmacing loose surface).
5. All incidents of vandalism and anti-social behaviour occurring in the park should be reported to the neighbourhood police, this should include incidents associated with under-age drinking and drug taking. Monitor levels and extent of problems in order to better determine an appropriate response.
6. Undertake annual park safety inspection.
7. Consider selective thinning of vegetation alongside main routes to open up views and negate the oppressive feel (i.e. routes from Arrowe Park Hotel and Arrowe Brook Lane).
8. Remove collapsed vandalised mature Cedar from lake (burnt out base).
9. Consider supply and fit of a bollard to the access from the new overflow car park for Arrowe Hospital and ensure the barrier near this point is kept locked (onto Arbour field).
10. Carry out a comprehensive tree survey of the mature woodlands.
11. Consider removal of the two lower bowling greens.
12. Regularly clear main footpath routes of leaf litter.
13. Renovate lake banks and fishing pegs.
14. Reinstate potholes to tarmac drives as required.
15. Consider improving and connecting perimeter footpaths / cycle routes / bridle way into a circular route.
16. Consider removal of chestnut pale boundary fence on Thingwall Road.
17. Supply and fit self-closing gates to children's play areas.
18. Consider ways to stop dumping occurring in woodland boundaries and clear existing rubbish.
19. Renovate / rebuild football changing pavilion.
20. Re-use / refurbish ex ticket office in small children's play area.
21. Liaise with Arrowe Hall owner to stop rubbish dumping to rear.
22. Improve maintenance of detached toilet block.

23. Improve maintenance of play chip safety surfaces and levels in children's play area.

24. Secure loose goalposts in sockets and check regularly.

25. Liaise with Arrowe Park Hospital representative to stop staff littering park boundary.

**Aim:** To improve maintenance and develop the built environment with hard and soft landscaping, creating a feeling of quality throughout the park.

**Objectives:**

1. Selectively prune / remove vegetation obscuring the lake waterfall.
2. Improve surface management of hard porous 5-a-side and tennis courts.
3. Improve maintenance of pitch and putt course.
4. Repaint exterior of Red Rooms building.
5. Consider ways to improve aesthetics of the bowling pavilion.

**Aim:** To improve sustainable work practices relevant to the park.

**Objectives:**

1. Undertake an Environmental audit and report.
2. Improve waste handling / re-cycling procedures at the site (i.e. separate purpose built bays).
3. Continue to reduce and minimise pesticide and peat usage in the park.

**Aim:** To conserve and improve the best features of the site and retain those of historic importance.

**Objectives:**

1. Undertake a bio-diversity assessment and report.
2. Provide quality signage and interpretative information strategically throughout the site.
3. Retain / maintain feature stonework, railings, gates and buildings.

**Aims:** To support and increase community involvement in the park.

**Objectives:**

1. Work in partnership with park users, the Park Advisory Group and the Friends Group to achieve Green Flag status.
2. Support user groups with fund raising and events.
3. Assist with the development of the Friends Group.

**Aim:** To raise the public profile of the park and promote the site as a community resource.

**Objectives:**

1. Improve the Wirral Council internet web site to increase available information regarding the park
2. Supply / erect information cabinets to main entrances.

**Aim:** To manage the implementation and review of this plan.

**Objectives:**

1. To secure funding to make as many quality improvements to the park as possible.
2. To create mechanisms to actively review maintenance, improvements and development.

**6) Action Plan**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Target date</b>	<b>Funding source</b>
Over mark white lined parking bays to main entrance car park	Area Parks Manager		Funding to be sourced
Improve / update content of information cabinet at main entrance	Area Parks Manager		From existing resources
Provide fingerpost signage through park from main entrance	Area Parks Manager		Funding to be sourced
Replace / stencil dog 'clean it up' signage to all entrances	Area Parks Manager		From existing resources
Provide entrance signage and info.cabinets to remaining entrances	Area Parks Manager		Funding to be sourced
Selective thin / prune	Area Parks		From existing

vegetation at Thingwall Road entrance	Manager		resources
Supply / erect new field gate (lock existing) Thingwall Road entrance	Area Parks Manager		From existing resources
<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Target date</b>	<b>Funding source</b>
Replace broken / missing barriers at Arrowe Brook Road car park	Area Parks Manager		From existing resources
Improve grounds maintenance at all 3 main entrances	Area Parks Manager		From existing resources
Improve cleansing to both children's play areas	Area Parks Manager		From existing resources
Erect / stencil dog ban signage to both	Area Parks Manager		From existing resources
Supply / fit self closing gates to children's play areas	Area Parks Manager		Funding to be sourced
Top up and maintain play bark	Area Parks Manager		From existing resources
Establish a procedure for the rapid response to incidents of graffiti and other acts of vandalism	Area Parks Manager		From existing resources
Monitor levels of anti-social behaviour occurring in the park and establish a procedure for reporting all incidents to Merseyside Police	Area Parks Manager		From existing resources
Introduce annual park safety inspection procedure	Area Parks Manager		From existing resources
Improve footpath through card plantation to children's play areas	Area Parks Manager		From existing resources
Consider selective thinning / pruning alongside main routes	Area Parks Manager		From existing resources
Remove collapsed / vandalised mature Cedar from lake	Area Parks Manager		From existing resources
Consider supply / fit of bollard to access from Arrowe Park Hospital overflow car park	Area Parks Manager		From existing resources
Consider removal of the two lower bowling greens	Area Parks Manager		From existing resources
Regularly clear main	Area Parks		From existing

footpaths of leaf litter	Manager		resources
Carry out a comprehensive tree survey	Area Parks Manager		From existing resources
Renovate lake banks and fishing pegs	Area Parks Manager		From existing resources
<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Target date</b>	<b>Funding source</b>
Reinstate potholes to tarmac drives as required	Area Parks Manager		From existing resources
Consider improving / connecting perimeter paths into a circular route for walkers, cyclists and horse riders	Area Parks Manager		Funding to be sourced
Consider removal of chestnut pale fence to Thingwall Road	Area Parks Manager		From existing resources
Remove and stop dumping in perimeter woodland belts	Area Parks Manager		From existing resources
Renovate / rebuild football changing pavilion	Area Parks Manager		Funding to be sourced
Re-use / refurbish ex ticket office in children's play areas	Senior Parks Development Officer		Funding to be sourced
Liaise with Arrowe Hall to stop dumping to rear	Area Parks Manager		From existing resources
Improve maintenance of detached toilet block and consider its future	Area Parks Manager		From existing resources
Secure and regularly check goalposts in their sockets	Area Parks Manager		From existing resources
Liaise with Arrowe Hospital to stop staff littering	Area Parks Manager		From existing resources
Selective thin / prune vegetation obscuring lake waterfall feature	Area Parks Manager		From existing resources
Improve surface management of hard porous sports	Area Parks Manager		From existing resources
Improve maintenance of pitch and putt course	Area Parks Manager		From existing resources
Repaint Red Rooms building	Area Parks Manager		Funding to be sourced
Consider improvement to bowling green pavilion exterior	Area Parks Manager		From existing resources
Undertake environmental audit of the park	Parks Development Officer		From existing resources
Improve waste handling/re-	Area Parks		From existing

cycling procedures (separate bays) remove chippings from mess room wall	Manager		resources
Continue to reduce pesticide usage within the park	Area Parks Manager		From existing resources
<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Target date</b>	<b>Funding source</b>
Continue to reduce peat use in park	Area Parks Manager		From existing resources
Undertake bio-diversity assessment of the park in order to maximise the parks potential	Parks Development Officer		From existing resources
Provide quality signage and interpretative information throughout the park	Area Parks Manager		Funding to be sourced
Retain and maintain feature stonework, ironwork and historic buildings	Area Parks Manager		Funding to be sourced
Support user groups with fund raising and events	Area Parks Manager / Senior Parks Development Officer		From existing resources
Work in partnership with park users, the Park Advisory Group and the Friends Group to achieve Green Flag status	Area Parks Manager / Senior Parks Development Officer		From existing resources
Assist with development of the Arroe Country Park Friends Group	Area Parks Manager / Senior Parks Development Officer		From existing resources
Improve the Council internet web site	Senior Parks Development Officer		From existing resources
Supply / erect information cabinets to all entrances	Area Parks Manager		Funding to be sourced
Pursue funding sources as available to develop and improve the parks range and quality of facilities	Senior Parks Development Officer		Funding to be sourced
Introduce mechanism to monitor and review progress of both development and the maintenance of the park	Area Parks Manager		From existing resources

## **7) Monitoring and Review**

There needs to be a precise frequency and a clear process for monitoring both maintenance and development.

The Principal Officer (Parks Management) will incorporate progress on management plan actions into monthly management team meetings.

Chargehands will report back on progress or shortfalls to the Area Parks Manager after each visit.

The Area Parks Manager will carry out random inspections of the site between programmed visits.

The Area Parks Manager should carry out a monthly inspection of the site with the relevant operatives to assess maintenance standards and check against the issued work programme and specification.

The Senior Parks Development Officer should carry out a bi-annual site visit with the Area Parks Manager and Friends to oversee the delivery of the development plan. The target date in the five- year action plan will enable people to see how the partnership is making progress and when that action has been achieved.