



Wirral Council
Department of Regeneration
Parks and Countryside Service

Citrine Park
Management Plan
&
Security Audit

2007 - 2012

DRAFT



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1) Introduction and vision

Wirral Council produced this management plan. The plan is intended to provide a framework for the development and improvement of the park over the next five year period up to 2012. The plan is intended to be 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. Your input will help us to develop a park that meets everyone's needs and aspirations.

If you wish to find out further information about this document or submit any suggestions please contact **Peter Whittle** in the Parks and Countryside Service at Wirral Council on 0151 666 4713 or by email at peterwhittle@wirral.gov.uk alternatively, you can contact Peter Whittle by writing to:

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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

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

The **Parks and Countryside Service Plan 2007/08** sets out the targets for the Service within the context of the above corporate objectives and the **Regeneration Departmental Service Plan for 2007/08**.

3) Site Information

Name: Citrine Park

Grid Reference: 331807, 390539

Primary classification: Local Park

Address: Oakdale Road, Wallasey

Ward: Seacombe

Size: 1.221 Hectares

Existing facilities and features:

- Children's play area
- Open grass area

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
- Ball games
- Children's play

Partner organisations

Merseyside Police
Wirral Council Community Safety team

Access:

The main access to the park is from Oakdale Road, an opening in the perimeter fence leads to the refurbished children's play area; this entrance is suitable for wheelchair users.

An unsurfaced footpath from Wheatland Lane leads to a second entrance into the park

The park is situated 91m from a major bus route on the B5145 Wheatland Lane, other buses travel along the A5139 Dock Road.

Resources:

- Visiting mobile maintenance team
- Management team of the Parks & Countryside Service
- Area Parks Manager and Assistant Area Parks Manager
- Parks Development Officer
- Wirral Council's Community Safety Team
- Play Area Safety Inspection Team

Summary of the known problems

- Lack of local community involvement
- Dumping/fly tipping
- Dog fouling

Staff and their functions

Tractor driver visits the park to undertake large scale grass mowing

A mobile team undertakes pedestrian grass cutting and litter removal

A playground safety inspection team visits the play area on a weekly basis (Mon. – Fri.) to inspect the safety of the play equipment and the condition of the site. Repair is carried out as required or the equipment isolated until repair can be made.

The Area Parks Manager and the Assistant Parks Manager are responsible for the management of the park. The area grounds maintenance depot is located at Central Park, Liscard Road, Wallasey tel. 638 5608.

Skill gaps

The **Parks and Countryside Service Plan 2007/08** recognises that a skill gap currently exists within the division's operational staffing, in consequence three 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

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; level of success has been achieved?

This plan will seek to establish clear aims and objectives over the next five years.

A past Council capital funding programme aimed at improving children's play areas enabled refurbishment of the facility during 2003, at the time new equipment together with associated safety surfacing was provided. The play area was enclosed in order to be dog free.



4) Analysis and assessment

As with many parks across the country, 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

The footpath leading to the park from Wheatland Lane, presents an uninviting corridor between steel security fencing, the route is rough surfaced and extends for a distance of approximately 90m.



The Entrance leading from Oakdale Road is small and somewhat inconspicuous, no signs are provided at either entrance. The information sign in the children's play area has been removed with only the upright support posts remaining. The self-closing gate into the play area remains in a galvanised finish and has not been painted to match the fencing.

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. Powers to enforce £50 fixed penalty notices on offenders were extended to include Wirral's Community Patrol Officers in August 2007, a media campaign 'Don't give a dog a bad name' will be launched to highlight the new powers.

Wirral Council's policy regarding dog fouling is to encourage responsibility in dog ownership and owners are expected to clean up after their pets, dedicated dog waste bins are not provided; dog waste can be deposited into the Borough's litterbins consequently becoming incorporated with general waste this does not then entail the problems associated with disposal of faeces only bins.

The Park is designated a 'canine faeces removal area'; however dog fouling was apparent throughout the park, signs are in place at entrance points indicating the park is a 'clean it up' area. Many dog walkers use the park's litterbins for the disposal of removed faeces.

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

Parks and Countryside are represented on the Junior Joint Agency Group (JAG), a forum consisting of the following agencies Merseyside Police, Community Safety, Youth and Community. Serious issues regarding security in parks are raised at the meeting with the intention of providing a multi agency approach to addressing any problems.

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

It is proposed to introduce an annual site Safety Inspection Checklist this is intended to identify defects within sites that present a safety problem for staff, users and adjacent residents. The checklist requires the 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

Dog fouling was apparent within the site.

A Security Audit was undertaken and assessed the park under the following criteria:

- A. Sight-line visibility
- B. What evidence is apparent of anti-social behaviour or undesirable activity in the park?
- C. Motor vehicles
- D. The park at night
- E. Pathways, pedestrian routes
- F. Boundaries
- G. Buildings
- H. Children's play areas
- I. Is the park well cared for?

A. Sight-line visibility

The view along the footpath; approaching the park from Wheatland Lane is restricted along it's full length due to a curve mid-way. The route is also somewhat restricted in width creating a feeling of unease when approached by others using the route.

The park consists generally of a large grass area and therefore affords good open views across the entire site.

B. What evidence is apparent of anti-social behaviour or undesirable activity in the park?

Graffiti was evident to the children's play equipment and also to a steel panel at the entrance from Wheatland Lane. Graffiti was on the industrial units backing onto the park.

The sign in the play area was missing.

C. Motor vehicles

No bollards are in place to prevent vehicle access from Oakdale Road into the site. Vehicles on occasion have been driven onto the site and burnt-out.

D. The park at night

The park does not have any artificial light; the only illumination is from the on-street lamp columns situated on Oakdale Road, which shed an overspill of light along this boundary. The prospect of entry from Wheatland Lane is extremely uninviting given the long unlit pathway restricted in width.

Wirral Council neither encourages nor discourages the nighttime use of the park.

Incident reports compiled by Wirral Council's Community Patrol are made available to the Parks and Countryside Service and are provided to the Area Parks Manager; no assessment is currently made of this available data in order to establish the types and frequencies of incidents occurring.

Anecdotally it is assumed that the majority of incidents associated with youths causing annoyance and anti social behaviour take place between 18:00 hrs and 21:00 hrs during Fridays and Saturdays predominately in the spring and summer months

E. Pathways, pedestrian routes

The footpath leading from Wheatland Lane has a loose unbound surface, the route continues from this entrance paved with pre-cast concrete flags, which are in poor condition.

A concrete path, laid in sections, extends along the length of the industrial buildings

F. Boundaries

Various types of timber fencing associated with the residential housing define the park's northern boundary.

The gabled ends of the brick built Industrial units, situated in Citrine Road, form the park's southern boundary.

Boundary fencing consisting of 900mm high steel vertical round bar painted black was erected to the sites Oakdale Road frontage at the time of the play area refurbished in 2001/02.

Galvanised steel fencing 2m in height extends along the eastern boundary to the Wheatland Lane Business Park and whilst securing these premises a largely utilitarian and industrial appearance is presented.



The tubular barrier rail enclosing a small area of sloping ground, on the left emerging from the Wheatland Lane footpath, is in particularly poor condition with broken tubular rail and rusted appearance.

G. Buildings

The only buildings associated with the site are the neighbouring residential properties in Oakdale Avenue and the industrial and business premises situated in Citrine Road and Wheatland Lane.

H. Children's play areas

The children's play area affords good all-round visibility; the area is enclosed and entered through self-closing gates in order to prevent access by stray dogs. An information sign, which had contact information, was located in the area but this has been ripped out by vandals and not replaced.

I. Is the park well cared for?

The park has very little in the way of landscape features. The site suffers some abuse, litter and fly tipping presents a challenge and graffiti is a constant problem.

iii) Clean and well maintained

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

The maintenance regime is carried out to meet general standards set out in a Borough-wide grounds maintenance 'frequency based' specification. The specification sets out corporate standards of maintenance.

There are no site-based members of staff, however, a mobile team carry out operations within the park, supported by a swing fitter operative.

The Senior Park Development Officer has carried out an assessment of the current maintenance condition of the park under the following 13 headings. The facilities and features are simply categorised as good, fair or poor and can only represent findings at the time of writing.

Grounds maintenance site checklist

Park	Citrine Park
Date	2006

Grass	Good	Fair	Poor
Fine Sport	N/A	N/A	N/A
Playing Fields	N/A	N/A	N/A
Ornamental	N/A	N/A	N/A
General			√
Rough	N/A	N/A	N/A
Wild Flower Area	N/A	N/A	N/A

Planting	Good	Fair	Poor
Annual	N/A	N/A	N/A
Herbaceous	N/A	N/A	N/A
Roses	N/A	N/A	N/A
Shrubs	N/A	N/A	N/A
Hedges	N/A	N/A	N/A
Young staked trees / semi-mature trees	N/A	N/A	N/A
Mature Trees	N/A	N/A	N/A
Woodland	N/A	N/A	N/A
Hard Surfaces	Good	Fair	Poor
Tarmac Sport	N/A	N/A	N/A
Hard Porous	N/A	N/A	N/A
Footpaths			√
Drives	N/A	N/A	N/A
Car Parks	N/A	N/A	N/A
ACW / ATP	N/A	N/A	N/A
Steps	N/A	N/A	N/A

Play Areas	Good	Fair	Poor
Maintenance		√	

Litter	Good	Fair	Poor
Collection		√	
Bins			√

Buildings	Good	Fair	Poor
Repair / Maintenance	N/A	N/A	N/A
Graffiti	N/A	N/A	N/A

Fencing	Good	Fair	Poor
Repair / Maintenance			√

Walling	Good	Fair	Poor
Maintenance	N/A	N/A	N/A
Graffiti			√

Drainage	Good	Fair	Poor
Ditches	N/A	N/A	N/A
Inspection Chambers / Covers	N/A	N/A	N/A
Gully pots	N/A	N/A	N/A

Signage	Good	Fair	Poor
Repair / Maintenance			√
Graffiti			√

Furniture / Memorials	Good	Fair	Poor
Repair / Maintenance	N/A	N/A	N/A
Graffiti	N/A	N/A	N/A

Lighting	Good	Fair	Poor
Maintenance	N/A	N/A	N/A

Water	Good	Fair	Poor
Maintenance	N/A	N/A	N/A
Safety	N/A	N/A	N/A

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

Generally Citrine Park receives a fair standard of maintenance however the frequency of grass cutting and graffiti removal requires attention during the period of the plan.

iv) Sustainability

Pesticide usage at the park is confined to non-residual Herbicide for the control of weed growth on pathways.

C.O.S.H.H. (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health) assessment records of the chemical based products used within the park form part of the Departments ISO 9002 Quality Assurance procedures. Pesticide records are retained at the district grounds maintenance depot (Central Park). Chemical storage and usage within the park complies with the requirements defined within the current pesticide handling legislation.

Motorised mowing equipment used at the park is checked for emission levels.

v) Conservation and heritage

The relevant Parks Development Officer to report.

vi) Community involvement

Currently the park does not have the benefit of a recognised local park user group.

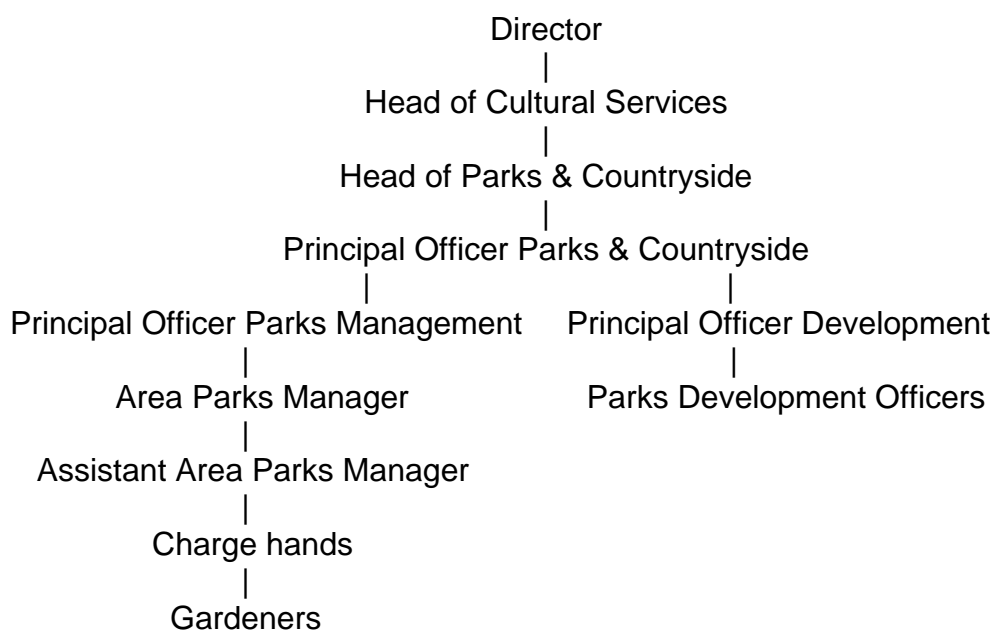
The park does not host any community-organised events.

vii) Marketing

Wirral Council has an internet web site that has links to the Parks and Countryside Service's information. No information regarding Citrine Park is currently available on the site. The site is not currently marketed.

viii) Management

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



5) Aims and objectives

Aim: To make the park more welcoming

Objective:

- Surface the footpath leading to the park from Wheatland Lane
- Paint the security railings either side of the above route
- Provide signage with contact information and prohibitive notices at both entrance points and replace sign in children's play area
- Paint the self-closing gate into the play area
- Remove graffiti from play equipment
- Provide seating and litter bins
- Resurface broken flagged footpath
- Clean-off unsightly area adjacent to the entrance from Wheatland Lane

Aim: To make the park healthy, safe and secure

Objective:

- Undertake the annual 'Site Safety Inspection'
- Arrange with the neighbouring factory units to have graffiti removed from the buildings
- Resurface the paved footpath which extends into the park from the Wheatland Lane
- Ensure the site is regularly litter picked and broken glass is removed
- Install removable bollard to restrict vehicle access to the site
- 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
- Remove tubular barrier rail enclosing sloping area by the Wheatland Lane entrance and replace with new

Aim: To improve the overall maintenance standard of the park

Objective:

- Achieve the standard as defined by the Green Flag Award scheme
- Bring all grounds maintenance operations to good during the period of the plan

Aim: To improve environmental sustainability in the park

Objective:

- Continue to reduce and minimise pesticide usage

- Review waste handling associated
- Ensure all green waste is recycled

Aim: To improve the parks conservation value

Objective:

- *To be reported by the relevant Parks Development Officer*

Aim: To increase community involvement in the park

Objective:

- Encourage and support the establishment of a park Friend's Group
- Promote the park as a venue for community initiated events

Aim: To improve the marketing of the park

Objective:

- Improve the available information concerning the site

Aim: To manage the implementation and review of this plan

Objectives:

- To create a mechanism to actively review both maintenance and developmental improvements

6) Action Plan

	Action	Target date	Lead Officer	Funding source
1. To make the park more welcoming				
1.1	Re-surface path from Wheatland Lane			Additional funds required (AFR) £10K
1.2	Paint security railings along footpath			AFR £2K
1.3	Install signs at two entrance points and replace the sign in the play area			AFR £5K
1.4	Paint the self-closing gate to the play area		Area Parks Manager (APM)	WER
1.5	Remove graffiti from play equipment		APM	WER
1.6	Provide seating and litter bins within the park			AFR £5K
1.7	Resurface the broken flagged path linking to the Wheatland Lane path			AFR £2K
1.8	Clean-off the unsightly area adjacent to the Wheatland Lane entrance			
2. To make the park healthy, safe and secure				
	Undertake the annual 'Site Safety Inspection'		APM	WER
	Co-ordinate the removal of graffiti from the neighbouring business premises		APM	WER
	Improve litter removal frequency		APM	AFR
	Install removable vehicle bollard to restrict access		APM	£0.5K
	Monitor levels of anti-social behaviour occurring in the park and establish a procedure for reporting all incidents to Merseyside Police		APM & Partners	WER
	Remove tubular barrier rail and replace with new			AFR £2K
To improve the overall maintenance standard in the park				
	Achieve the standard as defined by the Green Flag award			AFR £5K pa
	Improve grass care and grass cutting frequency introduce some			AFR £10K

	tree planting			
To improve environmental sustainability in the park				
	Continue to reduce and minimise pesticide usage in the park		APM	WER
	Review waste handling		APM	WER
	Ensure all green waste material is recycled		APM	WER
To improve the park's conservation value				
	The relevant Parks Development Officer to report			
To increase community involvement in the park				
	Support and work in partnership with user groups		APM/Parks Development Officer (PDO)	WER
	Promote the park as a venue for local community orientated events		Community groups	
	Improve parks internet website		Parks Officer	WER
To manage the implementation and review of this plan				
	Create system to monitor and review progress of this plan		APM	WER

7) Monitoring and Review

There will be a precise a clear process for monitoring both maintenance and development.

The Principal Officer for Parks Management will incorporate progress on Management Plan actions into the monthly management team meetings.

Charge hands 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 monitoring visits.

The Area Parks Manager will carryout a quarterly inspection of the site with the relevant gardeners to assess maintenance standards and check against the issued work programme and specification.

The Parks Development Officer will carryout a bi-annual site visit with the Area Parks Manager and Friends representatives to oversee the delivery of the Management Plan. The target dates in the five-year action plan will enable

people to see how the partnership is making progress and when that action has been achieved.

8) Appendix

Appendix.1.



Aerial photograph Citrine Park 1997