

**Draft**

**The Puddydale**  
**Management Plan and Security Audit**  
**2006-2010**



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# 1 Introduction and Vision

This document has been produced by Wirral Council to provide a comprehensive framework for the future development of The Puddydale. The Management Plan is structured using the CABE space (Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment) model and the site assessed using the 8 Green Flag criteria.

We encourage suggestions from park users and the wider community to this plan.

If you would like to help in any way please contact Neil Irons (Senior Parks Development Officer) on 0151 666 4712.

**Vision:** *To be agreed with park stakeholders*

**Parks & Countryside Service**, Wirral Council, 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

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

## 3 Site Information

**Name:** The Puddydale

**Address:** Telegraph Road, Heswall, Wirral

**Primary classification:** Local Park

**Ward:** Heswall

**Size:** 1.61 Hectares

### **Tenure:**

The site is owned and managed by Wirral Council, Regeneration Department, Parks and Countryside Service.

### **Stakeholders:**

- Grounds maintenance staff
- Senior Church League and Junior League Football Clubs

### **Summary of Features:**

- Grass Senior Football Pitch
- Children's Play Area
- Tarmac Footpaths
- Seating

### **Access:**

The main entrances to the park are located on Telegraph Road with 2 pedestrian accesses and one tractor access via a metal field gate. There are pedestrian access points with one on Dale Avenue, one adjoining the pay and display public car park and a further pedestrian passageway from Heswall shopping centre on Pensby Road. With the exception of Pensby Road, all entrances can be accessed by wheel chair.

### **History:**

The Puddydale was originally a lake and very popular with locals for sailing boats and ice-skating. The Enclosure Commissioners gave the land to the local parish in 1859. In 1922 it was drained at a cost of £79 15s 0d. In 1923 it was decided by council to utilise the site as a tip. By 1932 it was full and was landscaped for use as a playing field. The Primary School built adjacent to the site also known as The Puddydale was closed in 1982.

## Resources:

There is currently no dedicated capital budget for improvements to the park. Grounds maintenance is funded from the annual maintenance revenue budget. The Area Parks Manager has overall responsibility for management of the park.

A mobile team who are responsible for over- marking the football pitch, litter picking and amenity grass and hedge cutting carries out Park maintenance.

A gardener using a tractor mounted gang mower carries out mowing of the playing field.

A play area safety inspection team undertake weekly (Mon.-Fri.) inspection of the playground.

## 4 Analysis and Assessment

The decline in investment in parks over previous decades has resulted in some deterioration to the fabric of the site.

The built environment and soft landscape is in need of improvement and requires more investment.

Horticultural maintenance is variable.

The use of the Green Flag Award criteria can provide an excellent framework for a site assessment as it focuses on 8 key management themes as follows:

### i) A welcoming place



Feature low sandstone walling and natural hedging bound the park on three sides with the fourth being of brick. The hawthorn boundary to Telegraph Road requires gapping up to secure the site. Steel gates, barriers and railings at entrances all require painting to improve first impressions.

There is currently no signage indicating site name or related information to any entrance and this should be sourced as a priority.

There is no direction signage to the park from the main roads surrounding the park or Heswall centre. The narrow footpath to the park from Heswall shopping centre has some pot holing to the tarmac surface. There is a handrail to the steep section that would benefit from being painted in a contrasting colour. This entrance is particularly uninviting.

The entrance from Dale Avenue is heavily littered with leaf fall that is killing the grass sward.

## ii) Healthy, safe and secure



Wirral Council operates a 24hr Community Patrol force providing a measured response to any act of vandalism or anti-social behaviour.

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

Signage requesting dog owners to clean up after their pets is not erected or marked at entrances to the site and during my visits I found dog fouling to be excessive. The type of waste bins requires improving as these are also used for dog waste.

It is proposed to introduce an Annual Site Safety Inspection Checklist. It should identify defects within the park that present a risk to staff and/or users and includes footpath, walls, fences, buildings, furniture and planted areas.

A **Security Audit** was carried out at the site that assessed the gardens under the following 12 criteria:

**Sight lines** – The park is well overlooked by adjacent housing, the main road, car park and shops. There are no obstructions to sight lines across the site. The narrow footpath from the town centre on Pensby Road is oppressive and the high walling obscures sight lines.

**Anti-social behaviour** – Dog fouling was excessive and there was no signage to advise the public. Graffiti was evident to the children's play area equipment and brick boundary wall to the footpath from Pensby Road.

**Motor vehicles** – No evidence of vehicles over the site.

**The park at night** – Officers from the Parks and Open Spaces section attend the Police youth tasking and coordinating group meetings. The Puddydale is not currently identified as a 'hot spot', however, there is some evidence of anti-social behaviour particularly to the children's play area where there is seating.

**Footpaths** – Generally tarmac surfaced throughout the site with some eruption that may cause trip hazards along the northern boundary. Pot holes are evident to the footpath from Pensby Road.

**Boundaries** – The gardens are bounded in the main by a low sandstone wall and natural hedging. The hedge to Telegraph Road needs gapping up to secure the site.

**Buildings** – There are no buildings.

**Play areas** – The children's play area was renovated approximately 10 years ago and provides safety surfacing. It is fenced to keep dogs out but the entrance gate is not self closing and is left open.

**Who was on site** – Dog walkers, families with children using the children's play area and many people using the park to cut through to the shopping centre in Heswall and Tesco's..

**Is the park well cared for** – The park is urban and mainly laid out as a playing field. There is a limited need for grounds maintenance and it is generally in good condition.

### iii) Clean and well maintained



There are no site- based members of maintenance staff. Grounds maintenance is carried out via a mobile team supported by a gardener who undertakes tractor mounted mowing of the playing field.

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. It is understood that currently these documents are not being fully utilised and are under review.

The Senior Development Officer using the following 13 headings has 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	N/a	N/a	N/a
Playing Fields		√	
Ornamental	N/a	N/a	N/a
General		√	
Rough	N/a	N/a	N/a
Wild Flower Area	N/a	N/a	N/a

<b>Planting</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Poor</b>
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		√	
Young staked trees		√	
Mature Trees		√	
Woodland	N/a	N/a	N/a

<b>Hard Surfaces</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Poor</b>
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
Steps	N/a	N/a	N/a
ACW / ATP	N/a	N/a	N/a

<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	N/a	N/a	N/a
Graffiti	N/a	N/a	N/a

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

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

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

<b>Signage</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Poor</b>
Maintenance	N/a	N/a	N/a
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	N/a	N/a	N/a
Safety	N/a	N/a	N/a

Although by no means exhaustive, the following concerns were noted during the assessment:

**Grass** – Amenity grass areas appeared to be cut to frequency. Excessive leaf litter had built up along the base of wall lines and will kill the grass unless removed.

**Planting** – Hedges appeared to be cut to standard but require gapping up to the Telegraph Road boundary. Mature trees appear healthy. Young staked trees require stake reduction / removal.

**Hard surfacing** - The condition of the footpath surfacing is generally good although there is some uneven and pot holed tarmac that could cause a trip hazard (see security audit). The narrow footpath between Dale Ave and Telegraph Rd requires spade edging to return to its true width.

**Play Areas** – Play equipment requires painting. Perimeter railings require painting. The entrance / exit gate should be self- closing.

**Litter** – Bin types require modernising to the hooded type. No plastic bag inserts were fitted to any of the bins on site. Dog fouling was evident particularly to the footpaths.

**Buildings / Walls** – Maintenance of the buildings within the park is carried out via the Departments day- to- day repair system. Graffiti to the brick wall boundary of the park by the play area and to play equipment should be removed as and when it occurs.

**Fencing** – All steel gates, railings and barriers require painting.

**Drainage** – No problems.

**Furniture / Memorials** – Steel benches to the children’s play area require the paint touching up. No others on site.

**Lighting** – There is no security lighting to the park but it is well overlooked and illuminated by surrounding housing and street lighting.

**Water features** – None on site.

#### **iv) Sustainability**



Wirral Council has an Environmental Policy that the Parks and Countryside section work towards.

Water and energy consumption in the park is monitored and where necessary modification is made to minimise wastage, in line with the authorities Environmental Policy.

The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) regulations have been incorporated into the services Quality Assurance procedures.

The park is well served by public transport infrastructure.

An environmental audit should be carried out for the site.

Consideration should be given to providing suitable cycle racks.

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

***Biodiversity report to follow***

The low perimeter sandstone wall should be monitored and maintained. The Puddydale falls within the Heswall conservation area.

#### **vi) Community involvement.**

The Puddydale currently has no active Friends group.

Wirral Council staff should continue to encourage positive use of the park by stakeholders and the general public.

Provision and use of information boards should be considered to better links with the site users.

**vii) Marketing.**

Wirral Council has a web site that has links to the Parks and Countryside information.

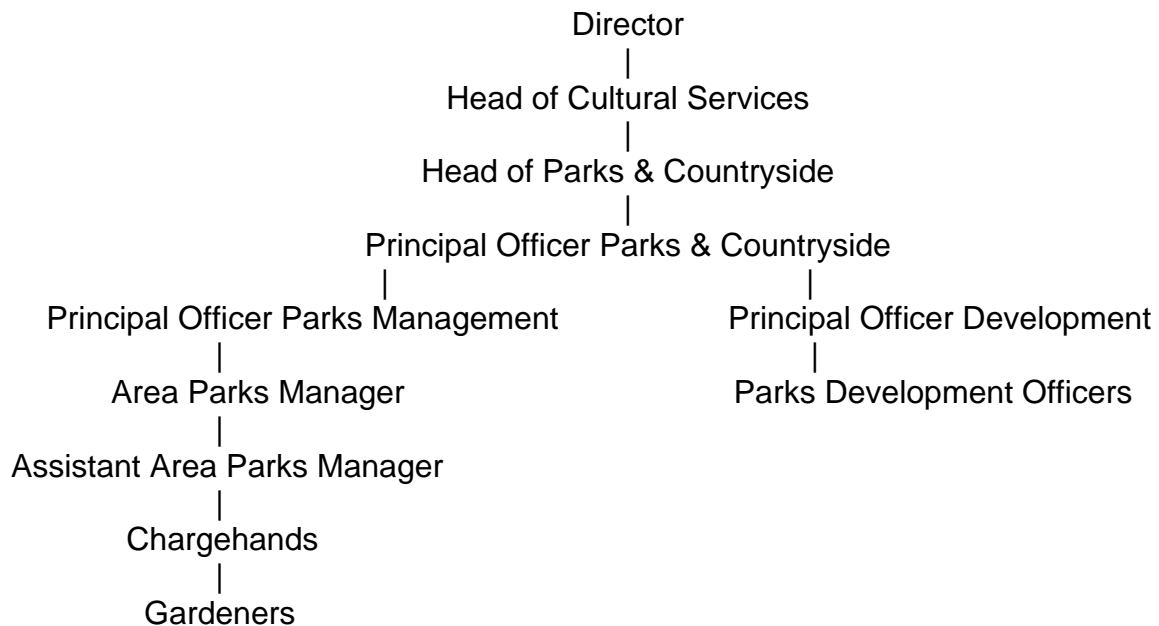
A site name and information board at the main entrance to the park providing current information on local events with contact numbers should be considered.

Market research could be undertaken to give a better understanding of the site users and their views and the findings incorporated into this plan.

**viii) Management.**

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 gardens.

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:** To encourage people into the park and to make it more welcoming.

**Objectives:**

1. Consider providing direction signage from the main roads.
2. Provide a good quality site name board to the park indicating site name, managing organisation and contact numbers.
3. Improve remaining pedestrian / vehicular entrances into park with improved aesthetics (re-painting metalwork / repair of footpaths) and signage.
4. Gap up hawthorn hedge to frontage of site.
5. Clear leaf fall to grass areas regularly.

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

**Objectives;**

1. Erect / paint dog 'clean it up' signage to entrances.
2. Standardise type of waste bins to entrances.
3. Ensure any graffiti is removed immediately.
1. Consider provision of self-closing gate to the children's play area.
5. Begin Annual Site Safety Inspection.

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

**Objectives;**

1. Begin a rolling programme of footpath inspection / re-surfacing.
2. Produce winter work programmes to reflect this document / action plan.
3. Spade edge footpath between Dale Ave and Telegraph Road as a priority.
2. Adhere to the frequency for re-painting the children's play area equipment and railings.

**Aim:** To improve sustainable work practices within the park.

**Objectives;**

1. Produce an Environmental Audit for the park.

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

**Objectives;**

3. Encourage public transport and cycle access to park.
4. Maintain feature perimeter walling.

**Aim:** To support and increase community involvement in the site.

**Objectives;**

1. Continue to capacity build with stakeholders.
2. Consider provision of an information board to improve links with park users.

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

**Objectives;**

1. Improve the Wirral Council website.
2. Provide site signage.
3. Undertake a market research study of park users.

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

**Objectives;**

1. To gain funding to make as many quality improvements to the park as possible.
2. To create mechanisms to actively review both maintenance and improvements.
3. Maintain and review a management plan.

## 6 Action Plan

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Target date</b>	<b>Funding source</b>
Provide direction signage from main roads	Area Parks Manager	2006-2011	From existing resources
Provide new site name and information board to main entrance	Area Parks Manager	2006-2011	From existing resources
Provide signage and improve aesthetics to remaining entrances	Area Parks Manager	2006-2011	From existing resources
Begin Annual Site Safety Inspection	Area Parks Manager	2006	From existing resources
Gap up hawthorn hedge to frontage	Area Parks Manager	2006	From existing resources
Clear leaf fall more regularly	Area Parks Manager	2006	From existing resources
Standardise waste bins (hooded type)	Area Parks Manager	2006	From existing resources
Re-erect / repaint dog signage to entrances	Area Parks Manager	2006	From existing resources
Remove all graffiti as it occurs	Area Parks Manager	Ongoing	From existing resources
Provide self-closing gate to CPA	Area Parks Manager	2006-2011	From existing resources
Produce annual winter work programme for site	Area Parks Manager	2006	From existing resources
Begin rolling programme of footpath inspection / re-instatement	Area Parks Manager	2006	From existing resources
Spade edge footpath Dale Ave to Telegraph Road	Area Parks Manager	2006	From existing resources
Re-paint railings / CPA equipment / barriers / gates	Area Parks Manager	2006	From existing resources
Produce an Environmental Audit	Environmental Auditor	2006	From existing resources
Maintain feature perimeter walling	Area Parks Manager	Ongoing	From existing resources

Encourage public transport / cycle access to park	Senior Parks Development Officer	2006-2011	From existing resources
Support and work in partnership with users / stakeholders	Area Parks Manager / Senior Parks Development Officer	Ongoing	From existing resources
Improve Parks website		2006	From existing resources
Undertake market research study		2006-2011	From existing resources
To gain external funding		2006- 2011	Funding to be sourced
Create system to monitor grounds maintenance / development	Area Parks Manager	2006-2011	From existing resources
Maintain / review management plan	Area Parks Manger	2006-2011	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 for 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 carryout 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 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.



# 8 Appendix

## 1. Site Plans