

Lurgan Park
Green Flag
(Was it worth it)



Lurgan Park

- 2nd largest Urban Park in Ireland (259 acres);
- Largest hand dug lake in Ireland (59 acres)
- Dates from 1683. Gifted to the people of Lurgan in 1909;
- Longest Lime Avenue in Ireland;
- 1 of only 4 remaining Illuminated Coalbrookdale fountains.



Research Undertaken in 1998

Issues identified:

- Need for a management plan;
- Wish to restore fountain;
- Need for replacement pavilion;
- Need to conserve historic features;
- Desire to improve boundaries;
- Need for funding.



Heritage Lottery Fund Grant

- 2002 £1.8 Million restoration grant (£1.4 HLF & £400K CBC)
- Grant to include:
- Restoration of the fountain;
 - New Pavilion;
 - New Playpark;
 - Renovation of all boundaries;
 - Extensive landscape works;
 - Extensive tree Management Program;
 - Funded future management Plan.



Future Management Plan

- Provided for:
- Setting up of the Steering Group;
 - Marketing materials;
 - Open up the lake for activities;
 - Equipment to make the park more accessible;
 - Events;
 - Park Development Officer;
 - Upgrade lake jetties;



What is Green Flag?

The Green Flag Award Scheme is the benchmark national standard for parks and green spaces in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Green Flag

- Set up in 1996
- Administered by Keep Britain Tidy, British Trust for Conservation Volunteers & Greenspace;
- 2008 first year in Northern Ireland;
- Green Pennant, Green Heritage Site (England and Wales only).



Why Green Flag

- Prestige;
- Confidence that it could be achieved;
- Benchmarking;
- Logical proven process;
- Provide a planning framework.

Green Flag Criteria

- Park judged on 8 separate criteria
 - A welcoming place;
 - A healthy, safe and secure place;
 - A Well maintained and clean place;
 - Sustainability;
 - Conservation and Heritage;
 - Community involvement;
 - Marketing;
 - Management.

1. A welcoming place

- Good and safe access;
- Effective signage to and in the park;
- 'Something for everyone'.

2. Healthy, Safe and Secure

- Equipment and facilities must be safe to use;
- The park must be a secure place for all members of the community to use or traverse;
- Dog fouling must be adequately dealt with;
- Health and safety policies should be in place, in practice and reviewed;
- Toilets, drinking water, first aid, public telephones and emergency equipment in place.

3. Well Maintained and Clean

- Litter and other waste management issues must be adequately dealt with;
- Grounds, buildings, equipment and other features must be well maintained;
- A policy on litter, vandalism and maintenance should be in place, in practice and regularly reviewed.

4. Sustainability

- An environmental policy or charter and management strategy should be in place, in practice, and regularly reviewed;
- Pesticide use should be minimised and justified;
- Horticultural peat use should be eliminated;
- Waste plant material generated in the park should be recycled;
- High horticultural and arboricultural standards should be demonstrated;
- Energy conservation, pollution reduction, waste recycling and resource conservation measures should be used.

5. Conservation and Heritage

A plan in place to manage:

- Natural features, wildlife and flora;
- Landscape features;
- Buildings and structural features.

6. Community Involvement

- Knowledge of the user community and levels and pattern of use;
- Evidence of community involvement in park management and/or development and results achieved;
- Appropriate levels of provision of recreational facilities for all sectors of the community.

7. Marketing

- A marketing strategy in place, in practice and regularly reviewed;
- Good provision of information to users about strategies, activities, features, ways to get involved;
- Effective promotion of the park as a community resource.

8. Management

- Management Plan;
- Financial management;
- Performance management and control;
- Policies;
- Partnerships;

Assessment

- Documentation forwarded in advance of the visit;
- 2 Judges visit the site;
- Discussion and walkabout;
- Demonstration of implementation of management plan, policies, strategies.

Was it worth it?

What did we want:

- Prestige;
- Benchmark;
- Logical proven process;
- Provide a planning framework.

Was it worth it?

What did it take:

- Production of a Management plan, Community Involvement plan, Strategies, policies etc;
- Time, commitment and resources to fill in the gaps;
- £700.

Was it worth it?

What was gained:

- Prestige;
- Extensive press and TV coverage;
- Renewed interest in Lurgan Park amongst Townsfolk;
- Increased visitor numbers;
- Successful Benchmark;
- Comprehensive set of plans, policies etc.

