

GRANT APPLICATION 2017/18 – ASSESSMENT AND RECOMMENDATION

Priority Corporate Outcomes	To empower local residents and the community at large to play a more active role in improving their lives, local communities and public services To develop more innovative ways of maintaining parks and green spaces, including through greater partnerships with community groups To focus on using parks to achieve wider public health priorities for the borough To support children and young people to make a positive transition to adulthood	
Organisation	FRIENDS OF WINDSOR OPEN SPACE	ref 164/G/ENV
Address	c/o 51 Broughton Avenue, N3	

Relevant policy, aims and objectives

The council is committed to maintaining Barnet as a place where people want to live and in which an active community can thrive. This includes protecting and enhancing the natural environment, recognising that parks and green spaces are amongst the borough's biggest assets. Strategic objectives include empowering residents to take on more personal and community responsibility for keeping Barnet a successful borough, including improving the local environment, and to look after their health and well-being through improvement in lifestyle. Making parks and green spaces more attractive places for physical activity, entertainment and play is one of the ways in which this may be achieved.

The Corporate Plan, 2015-20, and the Children and Young People's Plan, 2016-20, reflect a commitment to ensure a great start in life for every child and to improve outcomes for Barnet's younger population, including the development of skills and the acquisition of knowledge.

Activities / proposal

The Friends of Windsor Open Space (FWOS) is a charitable unincorporated association with 60 members formed in 1997 by a group of local residents to protect, enhance and support the conservation of Windsor Open Space, a one-mile section of the ten-mile Dollis Valley Green Walk that runs from Hendon Lane, N3, to Thornfield Avenue, NW7. Operating under the auspices of the 'Adopt-a-Place Scheme', it alerts the council's Green Spaces Team of issues such as fallen trees and the Environment Agency of problems with Dollis Brook such as pollution, weed invasion or the dumping of rubbish.

The group conducts litter picks with volunteers and walks for members and schoolchildren to broaden interest in trees and wild flowers and promote the rich diversity of wildlife. It has planted elm and oak tree saplings, a hawthorn hedge for wildlife and daffodils and snowdrops; raised money to plant other bulbs and wildflowers; and produced a tree survey of the area. It is currently in the process of creating a conservation area.

The Green Spaces Team endorses the work of friends groups like FWOS as an effective way of harnessing the talents and energy of local people in maintaining and improving parks and green spaces and obtaining external funding for those purposes.

This application seeks help to install two noticeboards in the open space, one to publicise the group's activities and the distinction that exists between the space and urban parks, highlighting its importance as a wildlife habitat, and the other a specially commissioned panelled watercolour composition identifying bird species to be found there. The open space at present has no noticeboards. The proposal is to add further boards, such as to identify other wildlife, as and when other funding allows.

The project is supported by the Green Spaces Team, especially in the context of how the noticeboards will provide a focal point for the open space; raise the profile of FWOS; and encourage more users to volunteer, such as on tidy-up or planting days.

Cost and financial need

A wholly volunteer-led group, FWOS incurs modest annual expenditure, amounting in 2016/17 to £346, largely made up of public liability insurance cover, administration and membership activities. Income is from a small annual membership subscription and members' donations. A surplus of £235 in 2015/16 increased net current assets at 30/9/2017 to £3,144.

A grant of £5,000 is sought to commission the two noticeboards in question from a contractor recommended by the Green Spaces Team, having regard to the need to adhere to an approved corporate design and in the interests of quality assurance. The cost of the panelled watercolour noticeboard depicting bird species is shown as £3,392 and the general noticeboard £1,458, both figures inclusive of VAT, in the quotation supplied. A delivery charge makes up the balance.

Grant recommendation, type and conditions

£5,000 (from Edward Harvist Charity)

Start-up grant

One-off grant

Special conditions:

Payment of the award should be made subject to (a) agreement of the information to be displayed on the noticeboards with the Green Spaces Team and (b) an undertaking to notify their installation and to facilitate an inspection by the council.

Target grant outcomes

To enhance and develop Windsor Open Space for the benefit of the local community and augment opportunities for children to engage in educational activities linked to the environment.

Date: December 2017