

## Revenue Budget Summary - Parks and Play Areas

Budget Description	Budget Holder	2021/22 Gross Budget	2021/22 Net Budget
Parks and Play Areas	Steve Cooper (Works and Environment Manager)	£204,250	£204,250

### **Purpose of the Budget:**

The purpose of the Parks and Play Areas Budget is to fund the operational resources including staffing, vehicles, machinery, and equipment required to operate and maintain the Council's various parks, play areas and park pavilion buildings.

### **Scope of Activity and Nature of the Service:**

The Council currently operates the following parks and play areas:-

- Moore Lane Park
- Simpasture Park
- St. Oswald's Park
- West Park
- Town Park
- Aycliffe Village Play Area
- Byerley Park Play Area
- School Aycliffe Play Area
- Scott Place Play Area
- Sports Complex Play Area
- Woodham Park
- Horndale Park
- Cobblers Hall Park

The parks offer a combination of open space, flower beds, public seating, picnic areas and play equipment for a variety of ages, while the play areas offer a wide range of enclosed areas of infant and junior play equipment.

The Council also provides multi-use games areas at Woodham, Moore Lane, Simpasture, Horndale and Cobblers Hall Parks, as well as tennis courts at Simpasture Park, a skate park at the Town Park, a scoot track at Horndale Park, a toddlers' play area and sand pit at the Town Park, and a BMX track at Woodham Park.

The Parks and Play Areas Budget provides for the costs of the works department staff who undertake grounds maintenance work within each park, the building maintenance and other running costs of the park pavilion buildings, external parks maintenance including the maintenance of the lakes at West Park, and the inspection, insurance, maintenance and repair of play equipment.

The budget also provides for a significant proportion of the cost of the Council's Park Patrol Service.

Parks and play area provision is a discretionary service area.

### **Contribution to Council Aims:**

Parks and play areas contribute to the following Council Strategic Aims:-

*Aim 2: "To manage the Council's finances and assets in a responsible manner"*

*Aim 3: "To provide accessible, affordable leisure facilities and opportunities"*

*Aim 5: "To contribute to the environmental improvement of Aycliffe by managing and developing parks, play areas and green spaces"*

### **Performance Measures and Indicators**

The Parks and Play Areas Budget contribute towards the delivery of a number of targets linked to Strategic Aims 2, 3 and 5 within the Service Delivery Plan, as follows:-

- Improve advertising of the parks and play areas using the Council's newsletter publication.
- Ensure that social media is used to advertise the parks and play areas.
- Continue to implement recommendations regarding Coronavirus to ensure the safety of staff and the public.
- Deliver the parks and play area related work set out in the Asset Management Plan via the Capital Programme Budget.
- Continue to work with Northumbrian Water to establish flow rates to the lakes at West Park.
- Investigate the options for the improvement of Woodham Park and play area and undertake a suitable consultation.
- The Works and Environment Manager and Park Patrol Officers to work with DCC Officers and the Police in regard to anti-social behaviour issues.
- Work in partnership with residents and friends' groups to improve our parks and play areas.

### **Key Budget Changes for 2021/22**

The Parks and Play Areas Budget has fallen by £1,600 to £204,250 per year.

This reduction is as a result largely as a result of a reduction to the play equipment maintenance budget in line with actual spending in recent years.

### **Importance of Service to the Community**

The parks and play areas are very important and well used community facilities.

The 2019 'Your Town, Your Choice, Your Voice' Satisfaction Survey provided some very positive feedback on public satisfaction with parks and play areas provision, with the service being highlighted as the second most valued service area by taxpayers and a top priority for further investment.

Satisfaction with the value for money and standard of maintenance, safety and cleanliness of the parks and play areas, and the range and quality of play equipment varied by park but was generally very high across the board (between 70% and 100% rated as good or very good).

Feedback in relation to those parks and play areas that scored at the lower end of the scale will be reviewed and used to prioritise future maintenance and investment where appropriate.

### **External Funding and Fees and Charges:**

There is no income currently receivable in respect of the parks and play areas service.