



Report To:	Boston Town Area Committee
Date:	22 nd January 2026
Subject:	Central Park Green Flag Application
Purpose:	To seek approval for an application to be submitted for Green Flag status for Central Park in Boston
Key Decision:	No
Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Claire Rylott, Portfolio Holder for Green Spaces and Travel
Report Of:	Phil Perry, Assistant Director Leisure & Local Services
Report Author:	Scott Higgins, Leisure Services & Contracts Manager
Ward(s) Affected:	All BTAC Wards
Exempt Report:	No

Summary

This report seeks BTAC's approval to submit a Green Flag Award application for Central Park. The award provides national recognition for well-managed parks and supports civic pride, health, wellbeing, and sustainability. BTAC has previously invested in significant improvements and have recently developed a Management Plan to maintain and enhance standards. Endorsement will ensure continued progress and position the park strongly for accreditation.

Recommendations

That councillors support the submission of a Green Flag Award application for Central Park and endorse the continued implementation of the Management Plan to maintain and improve standards.

Reasons for Recommendations

Achieving the award will provide national recognition of quality, promote civic pride, encourage community engagement, and support health, wellbeing, and sustainability. The Management Plan ensures ongoing improvements, accountability, and high standards for a valued public space.

Other Options Considered

Do Nothing - Continue managing Central Park without applying for the Green Flag Award or formally endorsing the Management Plan.

1. Background

- 1.1 The proposal to seek Green Flag Award status for Central Park was first raised at the Boston Town Area Committee (BTAC) meeting on 27 July 2023, where members requested a report on the scheme. This led to a detailed report being presented to the Committee on 8 February 2024, outlining the benefits, requirements, and implications of pursuing the award.
- 1.2 The Committee resolved to proceed with the ambition to achieve Green Flag status for Central Park. Following this decision, an officer and BTAC members working group was established to plan and oversee the steps required. The group met every 6–8 weeks to review progress and discuss key elements of the Management Plan, including the park's vision, history, SWOT analysis, and actions that councillors wished to see implemented.
- 1.3 The Green Flag Award is managed by Keep Britain Tidy and provides external accreditation for well-managed public parks. It sets a national benchmark for quality and requires evidence of a clear management strategy, community engagement, and continuous improvement. Applications are assessed against 27 criteria under eight themes, including welcoming place, safety, maintenance, environmental management, biodiversity, community involvement, marketing, and overall management.

2. Report

- 2.1 BTAC has already invested significantly in Central Park, delivering projects that have transformed it into a safe, inclusive, and vibrant green space. Major improvements include the skate park and multi-use games area, which opened in 2022 following community consultation. The children's play area has been refurbished with inclusive equipment such as wheelchair swings, nest swings, and a zip wire. Outdoor gym equipment has been installed and expanded, offering free fitness opportunities for all ages.
- 2.2 Further enhancements include the creation of community and nature gardens, complemented by art installations and wildlife-friendly features. Accessibility has been improved through the addition of a Changing Places facility, ensuring the park

meets the needs of individuals with complex requirements. Safety and security have been strengthened with increased CCTV coverage, regular patrols by Community Safety Officers, and enforcement of Public Space Protection Orders. Environmental measures such as reduced herbicide use, green waste recycling, and biodiversity initiatives like wildflower planting have also been introduced. These improvements, alongside a comprehensive Management Plan, position Central Park strongly to meet Green Flag standards.

- 2.3 It is recognised that further investment will be required. Areas such as pathways have already been noted for improvement to enhance accessibility and safety. These needs are being identified, costed, and prioritised within the Management Plan to ensure the park continues to meet and exceed quality standards.
- 2.4 The development of the Management Plan has involved several officer and member working group meetings with key stakeholders to help shape the vision for the park. Public consultation has also played a vital role, ensuring that community feedback informs priorities and future improvements.
- 2.5 Applying for Green Flag status offers clear benefits. It provides national recognition for Central Park as a high-quality green space, reinforcing local pride and encouraging community involvement. The award highlights the park's role in promoting health and wellbeing through safe, clean, and accessible facilities. It demonstrates a strong commitment to sustainability and biodiversity, aligning with climate resilience goals.
- 2.6 Green Flag status will also enhance Boston's reputation as a visitor destination, supporting tourism and economic growth. Finally, it ensures continuous improvement through structured monitoring and review, helping secure future funding opportunities and partnerships.

3. Conclusion

- 3.1. Central Park is a safe, inclusive, and vibrant space for the community. Applying for Green Flag status endorses the hard work already undertaken and ensures continuous improvement.
- 3.2. If the Council is unsuccessful in its application, detailed feedback will be provided outlining the reasons why and identifying areas for improvement. This feedback will guide future enhancements and ensure that Central Park meets all necessary criteria before reapplying. Ultimately, pursuing Green Flag status demonstrates our commitment to excellence and continuous progress for the benefit of Boston's residents and visitors.

Implications

South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership

Corporate Priorities

Health and Wellbeing - The plan promotes physical activity and mental wellbeing through outdoor gym equipment, inclusive play areas, and safe green spaces.

Environment and Climate Resilience - Actions include biodiversity initiatives (wildflower planting), reduced herbicide use, and green waste recycling, supporting sustainability and environmental stewardship.

Community Engagement and Civic Pride - Public consultation shaped the plan, and the award encourages community involvement, volunteering, and local pride.

Economic Growth and Tourism - Achieving Green Flag status enhances Boston's reputation as a visitor destination, supporting tourism and local economy.

Continuous Improvement and Partnership Working -The structured management plan ensures accountability, monitoring, and collaboration across councils and stakeholders.

Staffing

None – No new staffing requirements identified.

Workforce Capacity Implications

None – Existing resources and working group arrangements are sufficient.

Constitutional and Legal Implications

None – No legal changes or constitutional issues arise from submitting an application.

Data Protection

None – No personal data processing beyond standard consultation already completed.

Financial

Circa £389 - £440 + VAT to submit application

Further Costs would relate to ongoing park improvements already budgeted; no additional funding requested at this stage.

Risk Management

Low – Main risk is unsuccessful application, mitigated by feedback process for future improvements

Stakeholder / Consultation / Timescales

BTAC Green Flag Working Group have helped to shape the Management Plan.

Application to be submitted no later than 2nd February 2026 with winners announced around July 2026.

Reputation

Positive – Achieving Green Flag status enhances civic pride and Boston's profile.

Contracts

None.

Crime and Disorder

None – Existing measures remain unchanged.

Equality and Diversity / Human Rights / Safeguarding

Positive – Inclusive play equipment and Changing Places facility already implemented.

Health and Wellbeing

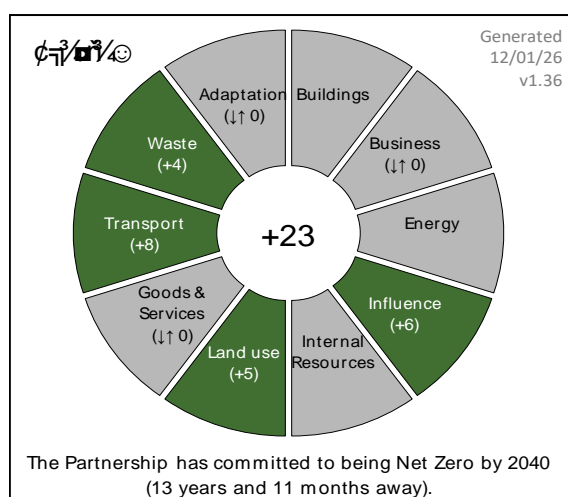
Positive – Park improvements and outdoor facilities promote physical activity and mental wellbeing.

Climate Change and Environment Impact Assessment

A Climate Change and Environment Impact Assessment has been undertaken for the Green Flag application and associated Management Plan. The assessment demonstrates that the proposal delivers significant positive outcomes for climate resilience and sustainability:

- **Transport:** The plan strongly promotes active travel through improved pathways and cycling infrastructure (+8).
- **Influence:** Enhances community engagement and partnership working on climate issues (+6).
- **Land Use:** Increases biodiversity and carbon storage through wildflower planting and habitat creation (+5).
- **Waste & Resources:** Incorporates recycling and reduced herbicide use (+4).

No negative impacts were identified apart from minor drought vulnerability, which will be addressed through adaptive planting and water management strategies. Overall, the initiative aligns with the South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership's commitment to achieve Net Zero by 2040.



Acronyms

BTAC – Boston Town Area Committee

Appendices

None.

Background Papers

Background papers used in the production of this report are listed below: -

Document title	Where the document can be viewed
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Green Flag Management Plan.	Attached to the Report.
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Chronological History of this Report

None.

Report Approval

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Signed off by:	Phil Perry, Assistant Director Leisure & Local Services Phil.perry@boston.gov.uk
Approved for publication:	Councillor Claire Rylott