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Green Flags awarded to local open spaces

LAST week, three parks in and around this neck of the woods received a Green Flag award for their open spaces; a Green Flag being the official sign for visitors that the site is well managed and well maintained.

The award winners just outside our front doors are Bramcote Hills Park, University Park – and a first award for the Old Church Tower (aka the Sunken Church) at Bramcote.

The Mayor of Broxtowe, Cllr Jacky Williams, presented the awards at the two local borough of Broxtowe sites on July 27 – then set off to present the third award at Colliers Wood in northern Broxtowe. University Park falls under the City of Nottingham, so our local civic dignitaries weren't involved there.

Bramcote Old Church Tower

The Friends of Bramcote Old Church Tower were delighted to receive such a prestigious award for the first time. They achieved a special Green Flag 'Community Award' where the local community has played a significant part in the upkeep of the green space – generally, the upkeep of large open spaces is a task for local authorities or some such similar.

Tim Crawford, Parks and Environment Manager for Broxtowe Borough Council, said: "In addition to congratulating the team of Friends of The Old Church Tower for achieving their first Green Flag, I would like to stress to everybody that this is a Community Award, signalling that the project has received tremendous support from the local community in managing and maintaining such a high-quality green space."

Peter Hillier, Chairman of Bramcote Old Church Tower Trust, said: "We are delighted to have received this most prestigious award."

"Our thanks must go to all those people who have worked tirelessly in managing and maintaining this historic site, which is now being discovered and enjoyed by so many in the community."

Bramcote Hills Park

Along the road, where Bramcote Hills Park was presented with a further Green Flag in what is becoming a series at this popular park, the largest in Broxtowe, Cllr Stan Heptinstall, portfolio holder for Environment, said: "I would like to congratulate everyone involved with all the sites, and who have worked hard throughout the year to keep the parks at such a high standard, ensuring they are pleasant spaces for the whole community."

"Access to quality green space is something we all desire. The Green Flag scheme plays a key role in providing it."

University Park

University Park has received its ninth consecutive Green Flag this year.

Nottingham was the first university to win a Green Flag for its parks and gardens; even nine years later it remains the only one to achieve this. In 2010 it received a prestigious Green Gown award for its sustainable grounds management work.

University Park is Nottingham's largest campus at 300 acres. Part of the University since 1929, the campus is widely regarded as one of the largest and most attractive in the country.

The University's Grounds Manager, Desmond O'Grady, said: "Our grounds focus is based on sustainability in our operations and engagement with our communities. Success has been delivered through an excellent grounds team, an enthusiastic Friends Group and ongoing University support. The Grounds and Gardens Team are delighted to continue to achieve a standard seldom achieved in the education sector."

"Our community initiatives during the year have included a Picnic in the Park, the Community Open Day and organised gardens and wildlife tours for local people."

Volunteers from the Friends Group, staff and students have helped deliver high quality restoration projects and events. All these have contributed to the University's continued success in this important national award. We're grateful to everyone who contributed to achieving this continued national recognition."

High standards

In 2011, 1,288 parks and green spaces will fly either the Green Flag or Community Award, a sign that the value of green space is widely acknowledged as vital to our communities.

Phil Barton, Green Flag Plus Partnership chairman, said: "In these challenging financial times, it is heartening that the number of Green Flag Awards continues to grow. As the value of green space and the role it plays in our communities strengthens, we must ensure these high standards remain."



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