

PERTH & KINROSS COUNCIL



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Media Release

PR 4127

For Immediate Release

23 July 2009

Perth and Kinross parks success at Green Flag Awards

Perth & Kinross Council has today (Thursday 23rd July 2009) welcomed the announcement that two local parks have won national awards in the Green Flag scheme.

Kinnoull Hill Woodland Park in Perth and Larghan Park in Coupar Angus were both nominated for Green Flag status in 2009, this being the first full year of the award scheme in Scotland. The awards are similar to the Blue Flag scheme run on Britain's beaches and recognise high quality, well maintained, and well used public open spaces, which have a high level of community involvement in their management.

Both the parks were assessed on eight criteria as well as visits from the awards judges who have substantial experience in managing parks and open spaces. The Council's Community Greenspace Manager will accept the Green Flag awards for both parks at a special ceremony in Bournemouth today, organised by Keep Britain Tidy who run the awards scheme.

Kinnoull Hill Woodland Park was designated in 1991 and is a 307 hectare area of mixed woodland, managed for public recreation and conservation. It is also a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) for its botanical and geological interest. The park is managed in partnership with the Forestry Commission Scotland who own and manage the larger part of the site, dominated by coniferous woodland. The Council manages a smaller area of mixed deciduous and conifer woodland, gifted to the people of Perth in 1924 by Lord Dewar.

In recent years, the park has increased in size, with the addition of small wooded areas owned by the Gannochy Trust and St Mary's Monastery. Management of the overall park is undertaken by a committee comprising representatives of the woodland owners and the local Kinnoull Hill Woodland Park Users Group, which feeds in the community's views. The Green Flag judges commented on the excellent

community engagement in the management of the park, the good woodland management and the way in which conservation of the habitats of the Woodland Park are central to the management of the area.

A significant amount of work has been undertaken in the last three years with access improved around the Park and new signs and paths installed. New interpretative panels have been introduced as well, through the Perthshire Big Tree Country project managed by the Council and the Perth and Kinross Countryside Trust, which inform visitors about the park's rich natural and cultural heritage. Around 120,000 visitors a year enjoy the beautiful woodlands, diverse wildlife and expansive views of Perth and the surrounding countryside.

Larghan Victory Park, located on the north-eastern edge of Coupar Angus, has recently been regenerated to improve the valuable community resource it provides in the East Perthshire town. The land for the park was donated to the people of Coupar Angus in 1945 by Mrs Charlotte Ferguson for 'public enjoyment and recreation.'

In a prominent site by the A94 to Forfar, the park's facilities have been upgraded to include a new play area with additional equipment and features, improvements to pedestrian access with the establishment of a new path network for the park, and tree and shrub planting and other measures to benefit local biodiversity including a wildflower meadow planted by pupils from Coupar Angus Primary School.

The regeneration plans were developed in partnership with the local community with the aim of ensuring the park is widely used and enjoyed by future generations. The works were funded by a partnership including Perth & Kinross Council, The Coupar Angus Regeneration Trust, The Gannochy Trust, Awards for All, Tayside Biodiversity Fund, and the Quality of Life Trust.

Perth & Kinross Council's Environment Convener, Councillor Alan Grant said: "The Green Flag Awards recognise a great deal of hard work by many people at the Council, the Forestry Commission and Perth and Kinross Countryside Trust, together with the strong support and involvement of local communities in both parks. It is very satisfying to have this success in the first full year of the awards in Scotland, and the Council will be continuing to seek Green Flag status for the other parks and open spaces it cares for throughout Perth and Kinross."

Charlie Taylor, for Forestry Commission Scotland's Tay District team said: "The Green Flag Award is excellent news. A lot of planning and hard work has gone into the management and care of both sites and Green Flag status is well-deserved. I hope this will encourage more people to come to the area and visit these sites."

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Notes for editors

For more details about the awards, please go to www.greenflagaward.org.uk

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