



Press Release

For immediate release

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Offenders help with park improvements

Parks and open spaces across Wyre Forest will be undergoing improvements thanks to a scheme set up by Wyre Forest District Council and the Probation Service.

Offenders on the Community Payback scheme carry out unpaid work to pay back for the crimes they have committed. A team of around six offenders have been working alongside a supervisor from the Probation Service and a member of the Council's Parks Patrol Service.

St George's Park in Kidderminster is the first to benefit from the initiative. Work has been on-going at the park since the summer and offenders have just completed the painting of the park's perimeter railings. The next stage of improvements will involve offenders creating pathways, clearing areas and potentially creating an urban meadow.

Councillor Marcus Hart, Wyre Forest District Council's Cabinet Member for Community and Partnership Services said:

"This is an excellent start to what is hoped will be a successful working relationship between the Probation Service and the Council's Parks Section. It will help keep our district cleaner and improve the appearance of our green space and the environment for residents across Wyre Forest. We hope that

the use of Community Payback to make improvements to our parks and open spaces will be welcomed by the public.”

Jan Breen, Probation Community Payback Manager in Kidderminster said:

“St George’s Park is an excellent project and the work being done there by offenders is very visible. Members of the public will be able to see an improvement in the area and also see offenders giving back to the community. We have already received excellent feedback from local residents”.

Through the Friends of St George’s Park group, the park has already benefited from various sources of funding which has enabled a BMX track and a floodlit multi use games area to be built. The group are planning community events for the park to encourage local residents to make use of the facilities.

Spike, Chairman of the Friends of St George’s Park, said:

“It has been a pleasure to have work parties from probation working in the park. The view of St. George's Park from Kidderminster Ring Road has been transformed by the painting of the railings. The old battered and faded lime green railings are now an impressive black which is much more pleasing to the eye. We look forward to working with probation again on future projects”.

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