

2026

Green Flag Community Award **PASS** Confirmed

Bandscore	30-44	45-54	55-59	60-65	66-69	70-74	75-79	80+
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Green Flag Community Award Feedback Report 2026/27

Name of Site	Simmons Park
Managing Organisation	Okehampton Town Council
Date of Assessment	7 th May

Overall Result	Pass X Fail ☐
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Notes about this report
Strengths and recommendations are provided for each criteria. Photographs are included, where appropriate, to support the feedback from the judge in relation to both strengths and recommendations. Please refer to the Raising the Standard guidance manual here for further information on the criteria.

Criteria	Strengths	Recommendations
A Welcoming Place		
Welcoming	The Park is very welcoming. Entrances are clear and easy to use, and path widths and surfaces are very good. The Park is well connected to the Town and train station.	Please see below re. Signage.
Good and safe access	Sight lines into and through the Park are very good. Site based staff provide a reassuring and visible presence.	The visible profile provided by the parks team alongside the positive work that they are doing contribute greatly to the welcoming character. This is

	CCTV is in place as an additional measure to discourage anti-social behaviour.	further enhanced by support from volunteers and informal engagement with park users. This should continue to be encouraged and supported, including working with the school(s) as an immediate, high profile neighbour.
Signage	Directional, orientational and information signage is well located, easy to read, and informative.	There is a risk of clutter with some signage being attached to other signage, added to which there is temporary information notices placed nearby (e.g., as shown in the photos inserted below). Consideration could be given to carrying a signage audit and producing a hierarchy with related design guidance (key messages, style, materials etc.). Notice boards may be a potentially helpful addition at key points.
Equal access for all	As noted above, the main paths have good widths and surfaces, encouraging and supporting use by people with restricted mobility. The play area layout and some of the equipment demonstrate consideration of inclusivity.	The hierarchy of paths significantly contributes to site character. The central, level route either side and across the river provides an excellent route for people with limited and restricted mobility, and for this looking for a level circular walk. Additional subtle improvements could be considered for the less formal, steeper connecting paths to further improve the opportunities to explore and experience the more natural parts of the Park.
Healthy, Safe & Secure		
Appropriate level of facilities and activities	The Park has a really good mix of formal and informal spaces with the river acting as a natural border between the two zones.	Current directional and information signage is good although there may be opportunities to further improve connectivity of the different spaces and facilities through sensitive additional directional waymarking.
Safe equipment and facilities	Equipment and facilities are in good condition and well managed and maintained. This includes the public spaces and also the staff areas (compound and office).	Consideration could be given to review of alternative types of safety surfacing within the play area. The rubber grass matting does provide a cost effective, appropriate option but can add to compaction and ground erosion, and requires regular

	Play area inspection includes in-house weekly checks and annual by RoSPA. Inspections include use of a tablet to record findings.	maintenance (ref. picture inserted below). With high footfall grass does not always grow underneath and matts can lift up.
Personal security	The park keeper, grounds persons and apprentice seem to work very well together as a team, with additional support from volunteers. Risk appears to be carefully managed with appropriate systems in place for maintaining, using and storing equipment.	Continue to monitor and review safe ways of working including Risk Assessments and Method Statements.
Control of Dogs/Dog fouling	Dogs seemed to be under close control during the duration of the visit, with no issues (including fouling) noted. The byelaws include a clause regarding dogs being under proper control. The parks team provide a good site presence with a high profile amongst users.	Continue to provide a site presence with regular informal interaction with dog walkers.
Og walkers Well maintained and Clean		
Litter and waste management	Litter and waste is managed well, with the site very clean and tidy	Continue with regular litter picking and servicing of the onsite bins.
Overall standard of maintenance	Maintenance is to a high standard	The mix of an in-house team and volunteers, with occasional support from more specialist contractors is working really well and so provides a very good model to continue.
Graffiti and vandalism	There have been previous instances of anti-social behaviour which contributed to the installation of CCTV. This seems to be proving effective. At the time of the visit, the park was looking lovely, and no significant issues were noted (except for a damaged finger post).	Finalise the planned work to replace missing finger to the post by the bridge directing people towards the train station
Environmental Management		
Sustainable materials use	Careful consideration is given to use of sustainable materials, including re-use of timber from	Continue with the positive measures including on-site composting, re-use of timber from site, and use of electric

	felled / fallen trees for onsite signage. Battery powered / electric trimmers are used.	(rather than petrol) tools were available. Consideration could be given to investigating grants towards additional measures such as solar panels for the workshop and office areas.
Waste recycling and minimisation	Green waste is collected and composted on site and used in beds / borders.	As per above, green waste management seems to be working well and should be continued.
Chemical use	Very limited and careful use of chemicals, with none used within meadow areas. Emphasis is placed on manual and natural techniques for weed control, although chemical spot treatment is still carried out.	Weed management arrangements should be kept under review, with an ambition to further reduce (and ideally eliminate) use of chemicals.
Peat use	Peat use is avoided.	If not already happening, plant swap arrangements could include education and awareness to park users to encourage them to also avoid peat use.
Biodiversity Landscape & Heritage		
Conservation of landscape & historic features	Landscape and heritage features are managed sensitively and to a high standard.	Current management and maintenance regimes appear to be working very well and should continue to be considered and delivered as a high priority for the Park.
Conservation of biodiversity	Opportunities are actively pursued to conserve and enhance biodiversity. Examples include meadow areas, slope and bank management (as wilder areas), bird and bat boxes. The hedgehog release activity is a great example.	Current management and maintenance regimes appear to be working very well and should continue to be considered and delivered as a high priority for the Park.
Community Involvement		
Promotion of green space/project	The Park is a focal point for events ranging from fairs and shows through to Park Runs and wildlife walks. Contact information is included on the main visitor welcome sign for people interested in hiring spaces within the Park. Social media e.g. Trip Advisor and Facebook are used and	If not already in place, consideration could be given to carrying out visitor and resident surveys to gauge awareness of and participation with park facilities, activities, and events.

	monitored re. park user and visitor activity.	
Links to the wider community	Spaces within the Park are managed through partnership and other arrangements with local groups. This includes Okehampton College (cricket field), West Devon Borough Council (car park), Parklands Leisure Centre (with café, toilets, putting and toddler play area), Okehampton Simmons Bowling Club.	If not already in place, consideration could be given to cyclical stakeholder meetings to bring together the respective organisations and groups – details of which would be reported back to the parks committee to inform priorities
Involvement in decision making	The Parks Committee is part of the parish council arrangements, with meetings open to the public.	Linked to the recommendation above, if not already in place, opportunities should be sought for stakeholder consultation to be fed back to the parks committee.
Involvement in operations	Volunteering is actively encouraged and supported. This includes regular, routine tasks such as weeding and dead heading. Plant swapping with the public / park users is an interesting and less common initiative.	Involvement of volunteers and associated groups could be enhanced as part of a stakeholder consultation process.
Appropriate provision for the community	The Park includes a variety of formal and informal spaces and facilities providing for an excellent mix. The community are able to access and enjoy the Park for multiple purposes ranging from tranquillity to play and sports.	As referenced above, visitor and resident surveys could be a helpful measure to evaluate engagement.
Management / achievements		
Innovation and creativity	In managing the Park, the town council has been very proactive and successful in securing financial resources and engagement from multiple partners and stakeholders. Okehampton Town Council funding is allocated to ensure consistently high standards, with externally sourced grants, donations, and income all helping to support and enhance this.	As referenced above, there may be opportunities to add to
	In addition to optimising funding opportunities, very positive use	As referenced above, there may be opportunities to investigate

Resources secured/used	is being made of volunteers from within the local community and of expertise from partners and stakeholders.	grants to extend positive sustainability measures – for example solar panels for the workshop.
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Summary and additional comments:

(Highlighting the result, and the main areas of strength and recommendation)

Simmons Park is managed to a very high standard and is highly deserving of the Award. There are multiple strengths, especially including the mix of landscapes, habitats and facilities - all within easy reach of the town centre and also the train station. The Park is a very important destination and significant asset for the Town.

I was really impressed with Park and how it is being managed, and so only a few recommendations have been made, some (if not all) of which may already be being considered.

Thank you and well done to everyone involved.

Good connectivity to the town



Welcome and directional signage is clear and to a very good standard

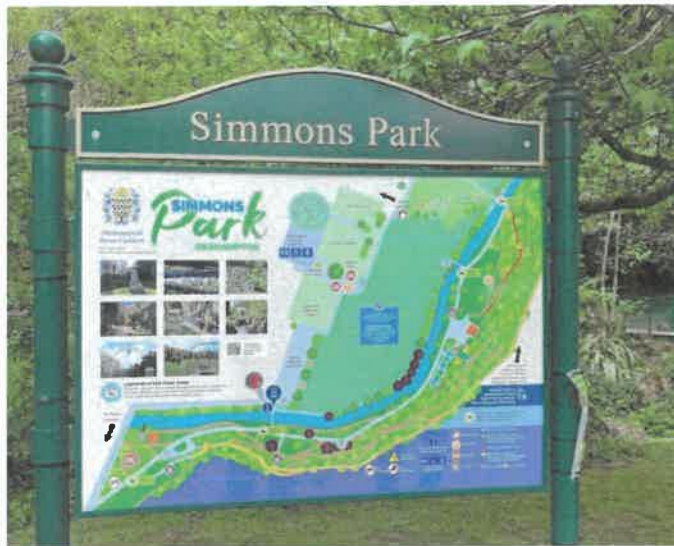


Level paths with very good surface and width – connecting formal and informal spaces



A very welcoming place, with very good signage – but with risk of some clutter. Notice boards may be worth considering alongside or as part of information signs





Use of timber from site is very much in keeping with wildlife areas and sustainability priorities



The play area is in good condition and well managed, although consideration could be given to potential use of alternative safety surfacing. Ground conditions were dry at the time of visit but worn patches may be an issue in wet conditions



Example of very attractive and well managed landscape, heritage and biodiversity

