

Hello

The Friends of Page Park was formed in 1999 after concerns regarding the deterioration and removal of some play equipment.

Our aim is to protect the park for the community today and for the generations to come

The first event was to find out what our park visitors and local community wanted to have in the park so we set up a gazebo with a map of the park and invited everyone to write their requests on small flags and place on the map.

To this day we are still working on this list.

We have held many events which bring our community together, the Centenary in 2010 was unbelievable it was perfect in every way with generations of families all coming together enjoying a day in the park.

We have also raised a great deal of money which has helped us to put on lots of different events and improve the parks facilities.

It became obvious to both the Friends and South Glos Council that the park required major restoration and major funding. We knew that neither the Friends or the council would be able to find the amount required, The Heritage Lottery Fund was really our only way forward.

About 8 years ago myself and a neighbour who was also a member of the group started meeting with one of the Community Spaces Officers to work on an application for Heritage Lottery Funding.

We met every Thursday discussing the questions, not an easy task.

The first attempt failed, it was thought we were asking for too much money for the 19 acre park, so the Friends decided to take the bandstand restoration out of the application.

We commissioned an Architect to draw up some plans, held several consultation meetings and raised £90,000 in four months this was helped by a donation from Henry John Page the grandson of Alderman Page who gave the park to the people of Staple Hill and Mangotsfield.

The Bandstand was opened in December 2012 and is now a venue for musical performances throughout the year.

Richard and Chris then joined the community spaces team and the second application was submitted, the project attained Development Status with Heritage and Friends funding help.

This stage involved a great deal of consultation and communications with our park visitors and our community then submission for the final consideration, On December 15th 2015 we heard that South Glos Council had been awarded over £1.6 Million to restore our beautiful park,

What a Christmas present!!!

I think the most difficult part of this whole project so far was being told by the HLF that we were not to tell anyone about the award until 14th January 2016 a whole month.

Well I can't really say that happened as we were all beaming so it was obvious to most people of the success of the bid.

The Friends have come along way as well.

In 2016 we were awarded Group of the year- Outstanding Achievement at the Love Parks Conference and this year we were awarded The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service.

We are now 2\3 the way through the restoration work and our cafe/community room is up and running.

The project is not only ensuring our park will continue to give enjoyment to our park visitors for many years to come but is having a major impact on our community and environment giving way to a sense of change with several other initiatives starting up to improve Staple Hill for all.

I think there are three major factors that need to be in place when being part of a project like this.

1 The project is focused on what the visitor, the community the people want from it.

2 Ensuring good communication and involving the users and community in consultations

And 3 Having a good working relationship with partner groups and organisations.

The Friends have and are very much involved in this whole process but we totally appreciate and value our relationship with South Glos council and the Community spaces team who with out their support and hard word work we would not be standing here today..

