

Green Flag Criteria Summary:

Criteria:

- The Green Flag Award is assessed across 27 criteria, split into 8 sections.
- **Section 1 – A welcoming Place**
 1. **Welcome** – assesses the welcoming aspect of the site's entrances and on-site facilities. These should include suitable design features and incorporate elements such as interesting planting, varied textures and natural and built play and relaxation features
 2. **Good and safe access** – assesses the safety and practicality of physical routes into, out of, and around the site.
 3. **Signage** – friendly, warm and informative signage around the site. Signs should be placed where needed. Basic information that should be included on signs are: name of site, name of managing organisation and contact details, opening/closing times (where appropriate)
 4. **Equal Access For All** – assess how well managers welcome the range of visitors. This covers the placement of facilities, accessibility, making staff and contractors identifiable, helpful and courteous.
- **Section 2 – Healthy Safe and Secure**
 5. **Appropriate Level of Quality Facilities and Activities** – high level of play/exercise facilities, first aid facilities, appropriate toilet facilities, seating, healthy eating options in cafes
 6. **Safe Equipment and Facilities** – is equipment safe to use? Management Plan should list all the policies, procedures and inspection regimes.
 7. **Personal Security** – examines the measures taken to ensure that people on the site are kept personally safe. On-staff presence should be considered where appropriate, contact details clearly on display, site risk assessments, carry out disclosure checks on staff where necessary
 8. **Control of Dogs/Dog Fouling** – make sure that relevant strategies are in place
- **Section 3 – Well Maintained and Clean**
 9. **Litter and Waste Management** – assess is litter, fouling and waste disposal is under control. It is suggested that a specific policy on chewing gum and smoking litter is considered due to the cost and difficulty of removing gum and the affect it has on the environment. Campaigns could be run to highlight specific issues
 10. **Horticultural Maintenance** – good standards of horticultural practice being maintained should be evidenced. Appropriate management of other features, such as water bodies, should be demonstrated.
 11. **Arboricultural and Woodland Maintenance** – regular monitoring of trees should be evident. Judges may ask to see the tree survey results and discuss the response to it.
 12. **Building and Infrastructure Maintenance** – this includes buildings, fences, gates, paths and roadways on site. These should be well maintained and clear of graffiti, flyposting, weeds and potholes where relevant. The Management Plan should refer to schedules for maintenance, repainting

and renewal, and policies for dealing with vandalism, fly-tipping, graffiti and fly-posting.

13. Equipment Maintenance – this looks at the policies and procedures in place to carry out checks and maintenance on equipment used by staff and the public. This includes seeing evidence in the Management Plan of daily visual inspections, weekly technical inspections and annual inspections (carried out by an independent specialist)

- **Section 4 – Environmental Management**

14 Managing Environmental Impact – this should be evidenced in the Management Plan. Issues addressed should include: water efficiency, energy saving/efficiency, renewable energy use, air quality measures, measures taken to stop pollution into water, noise pollution measures, purchasing choices to give equal consideration to sustainable and socially and environmentally sound sources.

15 Waste Minimisation – policies should be in place to follow established waste management procedures – procurement strategies should seek to reduce the amount of material being used by the site.

16 Chemical Use – pesticides and chemical fertilisers should not be used. Limited use is accepted as part of an Integrated Pest Management Plan but a full explanation and details should be given.

17 Peat Use – Management Plan should detail the approach, now and in the future, to reducing peat use to zero where possible. Judges will be interested in reasonings behind continued peat use.

18 Climate Change Adaption Strategies – all decisions should consider the likely impact of climate change.

- **Section 5 – Biodiversity, Landscape and Heritage**

19. Management of Natural Features, Wild Fauna and Flora – this looks at the natural features of the site and how these are maintained and managed.

20. Conservation of Landscape Features – this should state what landscape features are present, where they came from (social and cultural importance), and how they are protected

21. Conservation of Buildings and Structures – seeks to evidence that managers appreciate every building and structure on site, understand what each adds to the character and manage and preserve them appropriately

- **Section 6 – Community Involvement**

22. Community Involvement in Management and Development – must answer questions such as: who is and who could be involved in the space? How could they be involved in the space? Involvement can include forums, surveys, and further outreach. There is a particular requirement to consult with the 13-19 age group. 'Friends of' groups are often a good indicator of community engagement

23. Appropriate Provision for the Community – this is to verify that the provision of facilities, services and events are suitable for the whole range of users.

- **Section 7 – Marketing and Communication**

24. Marketing and Promotion – sites should have an appropriate marketing plan which should consider: what are you trying to achieve? How is the

place currently used? How would you like it to be used? Who would you want/need to work with? Who are your main target audience(s)?

25. Appropriate Information Channels – with the above answers, this is about how best to communicate with the different audiences. Include opening up conversations with users so they know how to communicate feedback and report issues.

26. Appropriate Educational and Interpretational Information – this criteria looks at the potential for a site to be a place for learning and experiencing ways to enjoy and understand heritage and nature. This can include signage and interpretation boards, nature walks, forest schools, and links with local groups

- **Section 8 – Management**

27. Implementation of Management Plan – broadly, the management plan should take this approach:

- a. Where are we now?** Introduction to site; Historical and social context; Site description
- b. Where do we want to get to?** The vision; Assessment and analysis – strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats; Aims and objectives
- c. How are we going to get there?** Reference to relevant policies; Work and action plans and timetable; Finance and resource allocations
- d. How do we know we have arrived?** Monitoring and review process

Judging:

- The judging process has two parts:
 - **Stage One – Desk Assessment**
 - The judges access the application, the site specific management plan and associated documentation.
 - This section is worth 30 out of 100 points. The average score across the criteria is calculated and multiplied by 3 to give a score out of 30. The site needs at least 15 points to gain the accreditation.
 - **Stage Two – Site Assessment**
 - A pair of judges visit the site (on the first visit) to meet staff and volunteers and to judge whether the management plan is in practice. In subsequent years, the judges ‘mystery shop’ each site alongside carrying out pre-arranged visits with staff.
 - This section is worth 70 out of 100 points. The average score is multiplied by 7 to give a score out of 70. The site must score at least 42 points to gain accreditation
- A total mark of 66 is needed to gain accreditation. A feedback report will be received but the individual score sheets will not be seen.

Cost:

- Cost to apply for the award varies on size:
 - Up to 19.99ha - £339+VAT per site
 - 20ha and over - £389+VAT per site