

Plans for Covid-19 Memorial Wood move ahead

More details have been announced about a large woodland project in memorial to those who have died during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Almost 50 hectares of new public parkland including a Covid Memorial Woodland could be developed on the former South Leeds Golf course off the Ring Road next to Middleton Park.

Created in partnership with Leeds Hospitals Charity, the charity for Leeds Teaching Hospitals, the green space would also be dedicated to frontline workers providing a place for reflection and recreation.

Members of the public will be asked to give their views about the project in a soon to be launched consultation.

*****Media

Invite*****

All media are invited to a photo opportunity on Wednesday 23 June from 10.30am.

Leader of Leeds City Council Cllr James Lewis; Cllr Salma Arif, Executive Member for Public Health and Active Lifestyles; Cllr Asghar Khan, Lord Mayor and Esther Wakeman CEO of Leeds Hospitals Charity will be present and available for interview.

Please park on Gypsy Lane LS1 15TR and walk up the Ring Road to the site. A member of staff will be waiting on Gypsy Lane and at the entrance to meet attendees.

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Development of the site adds around 5 km of new walking trails adjacent

to the already popular park plus scope for new cycle trails. A variety of new habitats are planned including 9,000 trees, a wildflower meadow and wetland habitat, plus rewilding practices such as reduced mowing will form part of the management plan.

The project requires £700k to enable work to commence and aside from presenting a lasting legacy to those who lost their lives and frontline workers, plus the positive impact on the local environment it also supports the council's pledge to plant 5.8 million trees over the next 25 years.

South Leeds Golf Club ceased trading in November 2019 as the land was leased from Leeds City Council it was surrendered by administrators last March.

Councillor James Lewis, leader of Leeds City Council, said:

"This memorial wood, which will be a beautiful asset to future generations, not only creates a fitting tribute to those who have sadly lost their lives to Covid-19, but it also supports a healthy environment.

"We hope it provides a destination for quiet reflection for the residents of Leeds to visit and remember their loved ones or appreciate the work of front line and key workers.

"We also want residents to enjoy the new recreation opportunities and for the park to provide a resource to the local community, such as the nearby school."

Esther Wakeman, Chief Executive at Leeds Hospitals Charity, said:

"Since the pandemic began, we have wanted to create a lasting memorial for those who sadly died through COVID 19.

"We expect an official launch in early autumn when we will be able to let people know how they can give in memory."

Notes to editor:

For more information about Leeds Hospitals Charity and to sign up for regular updates about the woodland

<https://www.leedshospitalscharity.org.uk/woodland>