

CASE STUDY

Project:	Bulwell Bogs, Nottinghamshire
Client:	Nottingham City Council
Project Type:	Splash park with re-circulating system
Project Value:	£376,000
Splash Park Size:	450m ²



The Background

Bulwell Bogs, found in the heart of Bulwell Town Centre in Nottinghamshire, provides an important focal point for the local community. The 'Bogs' in the past was an area of wet wasteland beside the River Leen, unusable except for recreation and it has been used for this purpose for over 130 years.



There had been a paddling pool on the site for over 70 years with the most recent feature dating back about 25 years. There were increasing concerns over the safety, efficiency and running costs of the old concrete facility and regulatory changes to dosing and supervision requirements meant the old pool had to change.

Nottingham City Council Resources Department were commissioned by NCC Community and Culture to manage the redevelopment scheme from design through to completion. The project team worked closely with the 'Friends of Bulwell Bogs', the Sports Leisure and Parks Development team and SSP Water Play to develop a unique and exciting theme led water play area.

The Challenge

There were considerable planning hurdles to address, as is usually the case when redevelopment of public spaces is involved, but these were overcome successfully. Detailed consultation with the Bulwell LIFT project team and NET ensured that various ongoing projects were fully coordinated and tied in with existing and proposed train, tram and parking facilities.

As the majority of the site lies within the flood plain of the River Leen detailed negotiations with the Environment Agency were needed in order to gain the required approvals from them. In addition an existing 900mm diameter combined sewer runs under the site at an approximate depth of 4m below finished ground level. This required early consultation with Severn Trent and Nottingham City Council Drainage Engineers to ensure required easements were observed.

The Solution

Several options were reviewed taking running costs, resistance to vandalism and safety aspects into account. Certain project members had also visited previous splash-

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parks installed by SSP WaterPlay and were very impressed with the quality and popularity of the schemes so this became the preferred option when all aspects were considered.

The £376,000 scheme includes a splash pool, an exciting range of water jets, curved curtains of water, sprays and 'Sound Sticks' that have been incorporated into the play equipment together with a number of bespoke paving, gate and fencing elements that use 'bull' and 'well' motifs to signify the connection with the animal that is believed to have discovered the natural spring in the village that was eventually incorporated into a well.

The water play area is located within a secure, fenced and gated compound which provides a safe and secure environment for children and children's play. The fenced area also includes a variety of informal seating spaces for parents / guardians / supervisors and 'resting' children.

All existing vegetation was protected, retained and incorporated into the scheme and will provide the site with a variety of sunny and partially shaded areas. Unlike the old paddling pool with its concrete edging the new scheme is easily accessible to all with no upstands or significant changes of level between the water play areas and the adjacent areas. All paving surrounding the pool allows level access onto the adjacent grass areas beneath the trees. The smooth, flowing curves of the edging dividing the paving from the grass, shrub and hedge areas has been carefully designed to reflect the water theme.



The general public and locally elected members gave the scheme their unanimous backing and support. The 'Friends of Bulwell Bogs' were, in fact, one of the principle driving forces behind the scheme having campaigned to upgrade the facilities for the benefit of local children. The Friends of Bulwell Bogs worked closely with the Neighbourhood Management Team, Bulwell Lift Centre, Design Services and the Parks and Open Spaces Team to progress this project from initial concepts through to completion.

Peter Broad, Project Leader and Senior Landscape Architect at Nottingham City Council was delighted with the way the project was handled by SSP. He commented: "We were very pleased with the way the whole project was handled by SSP WaterPlay.

It was clear that their focus was on delivering a successful project and with goodwill on both sides we avoided any irritating 'extra' costs that other contractors often add to the agreed project costs. We are very happy with the quality of the project and with SSP's commitment throughout."

"This is a great example of partnership working and shows our commitment towards improving services for children and young people."

Graham Chapman, City Council Deputy Leader.

"It's the accumulation of nearly four years work to replace the old tired paddling pool and get a state of the art water-park for the people of Bulwell."

Jackie Morris, Chairperson of the 'Friends of Bulwell Bogs'

The Result

This project has been a great success and is loved by the local community. The splash park, which is the first of its kind in Nottingham, was completed at the beginning of August 2008 and received some excellent publicity in the local press, regional television and NCC intranet. It was busy from the day it opened until the site was shut down for the winter season - that's another benefit of the SSP design; all above-ground elements can be removed for safe winter storage.

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