



South
Derbyshire
District Council

Heritage



Maurice Lea Memorial Park

As with any park that has been open to the public for over 80 years, there has been a significant amount of change over time. Within this leaflet we cover a potted history of the site both before and following the completion of works to develop the formal park that can be seen and enjoyed today.



1883

Pit shafts, access roads, temporary sheds and a market hall on Gresley Common. Housing present along western (Market Street) and south-western (Common Road) boundaries.

1901

The Common is levelled.

1923

The Common has boundary tree planting along Market Street and York Road, the northern boundary.

1930

Maurice Lea Memorial Park completed and opened. Features include two bowling greens, three tennis courts, a paddling pool, two pavilions, a bandstand, an eighteen-hole miniature golf course and a croquet lawn.

1935

Herbert Lea Memorial installed as central feature in main avenue, and fountain garden installed between bowling greens.

1937

Gravel footpaths replaced with tar spray and grit.

1939-41

Removal of perimeter wrought iron railings.



1959

Features present as in 1930, including three tennis courts, the paddling pool, informal pond, two pavilions and public conveniences in their original locations. The croquet lawn has been removed, and the two bowling greens are separated by an ornamental pond and fountain. The memorial is in the centre of the main path.

1971-4

The paddling pool and pond are not present, and instead there are two children's playgrounds. The putting green is still in existence.

1980

New pavilion erected in original position, but larger than the original one.

1995

New pavilion erected for bowling on the north side of greens.

1996

Basketball court installed to replace the third tennis court.

1998

The central feature on the main avenue for the memorial has become square rather than round, and the memorial is not shown.

2003

Heritage Lottery Funding of £643,500 was granted towards a project to restore some of the features of Maurice Lea Memorial Park. Total cost of the project came to £977,033.

2005

April, works on the restoration commenced and in September the multi-use games area was launched following a successful bid for funding to Barclays for Sport

2006

April, works on the restoration of Maurice Lea Memorial Park were completed. In June, members of the family of Herbert Lea were invited to attend the Festival of Leisure to see the launch of the refurbished park.

2008

Floodlights were added to the multi-use games area to enable extended use. Present Maurice Lea Memorial Park achieved its first Green Flag award in 2008 and then again in 2009 and 2010.

Footnote: Historical information upto 2003 was researched and collated as part of the earlier phases in the restoration of the Park, the feasibility Study (Gillespies 1998) and the HLF application Supplementary Study (FPCR 2003).

