

Celebrating 10 years at the top!

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Celebrating 10 years at the top

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The Forest of Marston Vale's Millennium Country Park in Marston Moretaine is celebrating achieving their 10th Green Flag Award for being one of the very best parks in the UK. The award recognizes and rewards the best parks and green spaces across country and the Millennium Country Park will be proudly flying their flag which is sign of its high standards, beautifully maintained green space and excellent facilities.

Opened in 2000, the Millennium Country Park is at the heart of the Forest of Marston Vale and boasts woodlands, wetlands and grasslands nestled around picturesque lakes. With surfaced paths for gentle strolls or off-road tracks for the more adventurous, the Park has something to offer young and old alike. Walk, run, cycle, explore or just sit, relax and listen to the sounds of nature thriving in the carefully nurtured habitats created for them. The Park received its first Green Flag Award in 2007/08 and the dedication and passion of the small Ranger team and volunteers has maintained the Millennium Country Park as an outstanding green space with continuous improvements to the facilities and comfort for the public and wildlife alike. Notable achievements in recent years include the development of the Wetlands Nature Reserve, the introduction of an artificial sand martin nesting bank, the opening of the Tower Hide for tree top views over the Park and the introduction of adapted bikes for hire for individuals with a range of disabilities. Management of the Park is always done with the goal of maintaining a harmonious balance between access for the public and creating and maintaining safe, natural habitats for many species, including those in decline.

It will be a surprise to many that the Millennium Country Park is owned and run by a charity – the Forest of Marston Vale, who receive no core funding to help them in their work, making the Green Flag Award an even greater achievement. **Anna Charles, Head Ranger says, 'We're delighted to be celebrating our 10th consecutive Green Flag Award, which is a testament to the hard work and commitment of the Ranger team supported by thousands of hours of donated time from our amazing volunteers.'**

The Forest of Marston Vale is a charity which since the early 1990s has been planting trees to transform the landscape and make the Marston Vale a thriving place to live, work and play. Over 1 million trees have been planted to date, and the charity has the aim of planting 5 million more. Every visitor who spends money at the Millennium Country Park is helping to fund this vision to create a flourishing forest for a better Bedfordshire. To find out more about helping the charity in its work, including visiting the Millennium Country Park, fundraising and volunteering opportunities, please contact Robina, Fundraising Officer on 01234 762605 or email robina.b-d@marstonvale.org.

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