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Legal and Democratic Services



COMMUNITY AND WELLBEING COMMITTEE

Tuesday 22 January 2019 at 7.30 pm

Council Chamber - Epsom Town Hall

The members listed below are summoned to attend the Community and Wellbeing Committee meeting, on the day and at the time and place stated, to consider the business set out in this agenda.

Councillor Barry Nash (Chairman)
Councillor Tony Axelrod (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Kate Chinn
Councillor Lucie Dallen
Councillor Hannah Dalton

Councillor Liz Frost
Councillor Jane Race
Councillor Jean Steer MBE
Councillor Alan Sursham
Councillor Clive Woodbridge

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'J.C. Belden'.

Chief Executive

For further information, please contact Tim Richardson, 01372 732122 or trichardson@epsom-ewell.gov.uk

AGENDA

1. QUESTION TIME

To take any questions from members of the Public.

Please note: Members of the Public are requested to inform the Democratic Services Officer before the meeting begins if they wish to ask a verbal question to the Committee.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members are asked to declare the existence and nature of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in respect of any item of business to be considered at the meeting.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (Pages 5 - 8)

The Committee is asked to confirm as a true record the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 9 October 2018 (attached) and to authorise the Chairman to sign them.

4. PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING GRANTS ASSISTANCE POLICY REVIEW
(Pages 9 - 12)

This report proposes amendments to the Private Sector Housing Grants Assistance Policy, to provide more flexible use of the Better Care Fund allocation. The Private Sector Housing Grants Assistance Policy was originally agreed by the Committee in June 2017 and launched in December 2017.

5. PROGRESS ON WELLBEING DAYCARE+ (Pages 13 - 18)

This report gives an update of the higher needs model of daycare at the Community and Wellbeing Centre.

6. VOLUNTARY SECTOR GRANTS AND FUNDING 2019/20 (Pages 19 - 24)

This report considers the general future support of voluntary organisations in 2019/20.

7. LOWER MOLE PARTNERSHIP: SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT (Pages 25 - 80)

This report proposes that the Committee approves a five year service level agreement with the Lower Mole Partnership, and recommends to Council the appointment of representatives to the Surrey Countryside Partnerships Board and Liaison Group for the Lower Mole Partnership.

8. PARK MANAGEMENT PLANS (Pages 81 - 216)

This report presents the Committee with five-year park management/action plans for Long Grove Park and Poole Road Recreation Ground, and the results of the recent visitor surveys for both parks.

9. CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2019/20 (Pages 217 - 236)

This report summarises the proposed 2019/20 capital programme and a provisional programme for 2020-22. The Committee's approval is sought for the programme to be submitted to Council in February 2019.

10. FEES AND CHARGES REPORT (Pages 237 - 246)

This report recommends fees and charges for which this Committee is responsible, with the new charges being effective from 1 April 2019.

11. REVENUE BUDGET REPORT (Pages 247 - 254)

This report sets out estimates for income and expenditure on services in 2019/20.

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**Minutes of the Meeting of the COMMUNITY AND WELLBEING COMMITTEE held
on 9 October 2018**

PRESENT -

Councillor Barry Nash (Chairman); Councillor Hannah Dalton (Vice-Chairman); Councillors Rekha Bansil (as nominated substitute for Councillor Tony Axelrod), Kate Chinn, Liz Frost, Jan Mason (as nominated substitute for Councillor Lucie Dallen), Jean Steer MBE, Alan Sursham and Clive Woodbridge

Absent: Councillor Tony Axelrod, Councillor Lucie Dallen and Councillor Jane Race

Officers present: Damian Roberts (Chief Operating Officer), Rod Brown (Head of Housing and Community), Ian Dyer (Head of Operational Services), Russell Blackmur (Business Development Manager) (Items 11 - 14 only), Linda Scott (Community Services Manager), Teresa Wingfield (Senior Accountant) and Tim Richardson (Democratic Services Officer)

11 QUESTION TIME

No questions were received from members of the public.

12 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made by Councillors in items on the agenda for this meeting.

13 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 12 June 2018 were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

14 PLAYHOUSE THEATRE ACTION PLAN

The Committee received a report presenting an update on the action plan for Epsom Playhouse, which had been produced following the Scrutiny Service Review of the venue undertaken in 2017. The plan identified a number of actions for the Playhouse under the headings of "Income generation", "Equipment" and "Building". The Committee considered the following matters:

- a) **Implementation of transaction charge.** The Committee noted that it was proposed to implement a charge of £1.50 per transaction, and that income generated by this above the budget would be utilised for a rolling programme of improvements to the venue. Similar charges had been

successfully introduced at other local theatres, and had not received a negative response from customers. It was noted that the proposed charge would relate to each order, not each individual ticket.

Officers forecast that the charge would generate around £33,000 income per annum. This would cover the £22,500 revenue cost encountered by the Council following the removal of credit card booking fees in January 2018 (in accordance with legislative changes), with any further revenue to be utilised for the rolling programme of improvements.

- b) **Future annual update.** The Committee considered that an annual update report on the Epsom Playhouse should be presented to its October meeting in the future.

Following consideration, the Committee:

- (1) Noted the update on the action plan for Epsom Playhouse and agreed that an update report regarding the Playhouse should be presented annually to the Committee at its October meeting.
- (2) Agreed to the implementation of a charge of £1.50 per transaction, with income generated in excess of budget from this charge being set aside for a rolling programme of improvements to the venue.

15 SOCIAL PRESCRIBING UPDATE

The Committee received a report providing an update on the delivery of Social Prescription services in the Borough.

The Committee was informed that Social Prescription is a framework for local GPs and healthcare professionals to refer patients to non-clinical services such as physical exercise or emotional wellbeing and social isolation assistance. The report detailed the operation of the Social Prescription services provided by the Council, and informed the Committee that funding provided by the Surrey Downs Clinical Commissioning Group had enabled the Council to participate in a 1-year pilot to provide a link worker to support lowly activated patients who might otherwise not fully engage with the services.

The Committee considered the following matters:

- a) **Council's work supporting health and wellbeing in the community.** The Committee noted that many of the Council's activities supported the health and wellbeing of residents and the work of local health service providers. The provision of Social Prescription services would assist in continuing to raise awareness amongst health service providers of the value of the Council's work in this area.

Following consideration, the Committee:

- (1) Noted the update report and endorsed the continuation of the Social Prescribing service.

The Committee expressed its thanks to Officers for their work to deliver the Social Prescription service.

16 BUDGET TARGETS 2019/20

The Committee received a report informing it of the Council's revenue budget targets and seeking support for changes to services.

Following consideration, the Committee:

- (1) Noted the implications of the budget targets presented to the Strategy & Resources Committee.
- (2) Agreed to support the changes to services and savings identified in section 3.3 of the report and that they would be included within the budget presented to the Committee in January 2019.
- (3) Considered how additional savings can be generated to address the Council wide funding gap of £113,000 in 2019/20. No additional savings above those included within the report were identified.

The meeting began at 7.30 pm and ended at 8.35 pm

COUNCILLOR BARRY NASH (CHAIRMAN)

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PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING GRANTS ASSISTANCE POLICY REVIEW

| | |
|---|--|
| Head of Service/Contact: | Rod Brown, Head of Housing & Community |
| Urgent Decision?(yes/no) | No |
| If yes, reason urgent decision required: | N/A |
| Annexes/Appendices (attached): | None |
| Other available papers (not attached): | Current Private Sector Housing Grants Assistance Policy (modified March 2018). |

Report summary

This report proposes amendments to the Private Sector Housing Grants Assistance Policy, to provide more flexible use of the Better Care Fund allocation. The Private Sector Housing Grants Assistance Policy was originally agreed by the Committee in June 2017 and launched in December 2017.

Recommendation (s)

- (1) That the Committee agrees to recommend to amend the Housing Grants Assistance Policy.**

1 Implications for the Council's Key Priorities, Service Plans and Sustainable Community Strategy

- 1.1 The Policy promotes our Key Priority of "Supporting our Community".

2 Background

- 2.1 In 2015, the Government's Comprehensive Spending Review announced a five year funding programme for the Disabled Facilities Grant Programme. The programme allowed for greater flexibility for the delivery of the Disabled Facilities Grant. Some Authorities opted to waive the financial means test for all applications, whilst allowing an automatic top-up to award grants of up to £45,000 regardless of the applicant's financial situation. Epsom and Ewell Borough Council wished to ensure that a wider range of residents, and those who were more vulnerable received assistance and thus adopted a Private Sector Housing Grants Assistance Policy which introduced a wide range of discretionary assistance.

- 2.2 This Committee approved the Private Sector Housing Grants Assistance Policy in June 2017, and it was launched in December 2017. Whilst the programme has been effectively implemented, Officers have considered that there are amendments necessary which would allow the Policy to provide even greater assistance to vulnerable residents.

3 Proposals

- 3.1 That the Policy is amended as follows:

(i) The Handyman Scheme

This has been a very successful scheme benefitting residents since 2006. The scheme was funded via Surrey County Council, and in recent years direct through the Better Care Fund. Whilst there appears to be support to continue the funding, this cannot be guaranteed. It is therefore proposed that the Handyman Scheme is encompassed within the Policy under a new section entitled "Handyperson and Small Works". The scheme would operate in the same way as current, but with greater reassurance that the scheme would be funded through the mandatory BCF Disabled Facilities Grant allocation.

(ii) Hospital to Home Service

That the Policy be adapted to enable support for the Council's Hospital to Home service which was launched in October 2018. It is recommended that where residents have been selected for assistance under the Hospital to Home service, that the means test is waived to allow for a rapid hospital discharge where urgent/remedial works are required to enable a person to return to their own home. Additional non-urgent works including Disabled Facilities Grant works would be subject to standard procedures, the waiver is intended to allow an expedited return to home only.

(iii) Flexibility for waiving means test financial contribution

Whilst the Policy has proved to be very effective, it has at times been hindered by the test of resources/means test which has not been significantly reviewed for several years. The implication of this is that there have been on occasion financial means tests which resulted in a required contribution of over £2,000, which the resident has been unable to meet, meaning that they are therefore ineligible to receive assistance.

It is therefore proposed that in order to provide further assistance to vulnerable residents, the Policy for mandatory or discretionary works will disregard the means test contribution up to £5,000 (or higher where appropriate) if the Licensing, Grants and HIA Manager considers that requiring its payment would result in significant financial hardship for the resident, or if failing to provide assistance would result in significant risk of harm to the individual.

(iv) Flexibility for waiving the need for a financial means test

There have been urgent referrals made for assistance but it has not been possible to assess the resident's financial position in a timely manner. It is proposed that flexibility can be exercised to waive the need for a means test to be undertaken where it is not possible to obtain paperwork from the resident in a timely manner, in exceptional cases only, where there is an immediate risk to that individual.

(v) Top-up funding for mandatory grants

The current Policy allocates £60,000 for additional top-up funding of (up to) £15,000 per application. It is proposed that the reference to the £60,000 of allocated funding is removed so as to allow all cases to be determined on a case by case basis, subject to budget, in liaison with the Adult Social Care Team. The cap for additional top-up funding will remain at up to £15,000 per application.

(vi) Legal and land charges

The Policy makes reference to land and legal charges which may be imposed. It is proposed that the Policy is clarified so that any charges apply only to the cost of works i.e. the surveyors and ancillary costs and not Home Improvement Agency fees which would have already been taken from the original grant.

(vii) Policy re-name

To avoid confusion, and for greater clarity, it is proposed to rename the Policy to "Housing Grants Assistance Policy".

4 Financial and Manpower Implications

4.1 The revised Policy would be implemented and administered using existing resources. Funding for the scheme comes through the Better Care Fund allocation, there are no capital contributions to the scheme.

4.2 **Chief Finance Officer's comments:** None for the purposes of this report

5 Legal Implications (including implications for matters relating to equality)

- 5.1 The Council has a general duty under the Equality Act 2010 to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act.
- 5.2 Having 'due regard' means consciously thinking about all three aims of the general duty as part of the decision making process at all levels. This means that equality issues must influence the decisions the Council takes both as an employer and as a deliverer or commissioner of services.
- 5.3 **Monitoring Officer's comments:** The Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England & Wales) Order 2002 ("RRO") give local authorities powers to provide assistance to any person in order to adapt, improve and repair living accommodation. Assistance can be provided in any form and may be either unconditional or subject to conditions. Before exercising this power, the Council must adopt and publicise a policy. The policy must be followed when exercising the Council's powers under the RRO. If officers use any discretionary powers, these should be clearly documented. Where assistance is provided under the RRO, a legal charge can be registered at the Land Registry to secure repayment of the assistance given if the property is sold within a set period. All owners will need to sign a legal charge document and the charge should be registered at the Land Registry prior to any assistance being provided in order to protect recovery of the grant. A legal charge document will need to be drawn up by Legal Services prior to any assistance being granted in excess of the amount set out in the Housing Grants Assistance Policy.

6 Sustainability Policy and Community Safety Implications

- 6.1 None for the purposes of this report.

7 Partnerships

- 7.1 None for the purposes of this report.

8 Risk Assessment

- 8.1 The budget would continue to be closely monitored to ensure it is not exceeded. Should there be a risk of budget being exceeded then the priority would focus on progressing the mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants only.

9 Conclusion and Recommendations

- 9.1 That the Committee agrees to recommend to Council the adoption of the Policy revisions.

Ward(s) Affected: (All Wards);

PROGRESS ON WELLBEING DAYCARE+

| | |
|---|--|
| Head of Service/Contact: | Ian Dyer, Head of Operational Services |
| Urgent Decision?(yes/no) | No |
| If yes, reason urgent decision required: | N/A |
| Annexes/Appendices (attached): | No |
| Other available papers (not attached): | Report and minutes of Community and Wellbeing Committee, 21 March 2017 |

Report summary

This report gives an update of the higher needs model of daycare at the Community and Wellbeing Centre.

Recommendation (s)

That the Committee:

- (1) Supports the continued enterprise model of the daycare service within the Community and Wellbeing Centre for the next 12 months.**
- (2) That a 15% discount is given off the daily fees to organisations that have the capacity to refer higher needs clients.**
- (3) A progress report is made to the Community and Wellbeing Committee in October 2019.**

1 Implications for the Council's Key Priorities, Service Plans and Sustainable Community Strategy

- 1.1 The update within this report links to our Key Priority of "Supporting our community".

2 Background

- 2.1 In April 2018 we launched the higher needs daycare service based within Community and Wellbeing Centre; this was the launch of an enterprise as a response to the funding reductions from Surrey County Council (SCC) of June 2016. This funding had financially supported a full-time Activity Co-ordinator post at the Community and Wellbeing Centre.

- 2.2 A Service Level Agreement (SLA) attached to the funding had been set-up to support up to eight clients a day with higher needs daycare. The cuts in funding had left a budget shortfall of £23,500 to support the Activity Co-ordinator post.
- 2.3 The Activity Co-ordinator post is key to the Centre, as the role supports, delivers and arranges the activities provided. It is a pivotal role in the day to day operating needs.
- 2.4 This reduction in funding was further compounded by the end of the prevention, personalisation and partnership fund (PPP); this funding was provided by SCC to support services for people 50 years and over.
- 2.5 The PPP funding supported the staffing and activities for people using the Wellbeing drop in centre. The aim of this service was to support our growing elderly population and vulnerable adults with their physical, emotional and mental health wellbeing.
- 2.6 The Wellbeing Centre also specialised in supporting people with memory loss, confusion and in the early stages of dementia whilst also providing support for carer's.
- 2.7 The Wellbeing Centre offering was a free to attend, as the PPP fund covered the running cost of the services provided
- 2.8 It was considered by officers that the revenue needed to cover the losses from these two areas of funding could be made up by an enterprise model.
- 2.9 A business case for an enterprise venture offering a paid for daycare service was put forward to this committee.
- 2.10 The vision of this enterprise was to continue providing the services to our residents, by covering the salary costs of essential workers integral to the day to day functionality of the centre.
- 2.11 At its meeting on 21 March 2017 the Community and Wellbeing Committee agreed:
 - To continue to provide higher needs day care within the Wellbeing Centre
 - To a daily attendance fee of £40 excluding travel and meals.
 - To continue to provide wellbeing support by 'appointment only' within the Wellbeing Centre.

3 Update

- 3.1 Building works were due to be completed by end of August 2017 to re-open as a new facility in September 2017. Due to a need for planning permission the building works were completed in February 2018. This left the programme 6 months behind schedule.
- 3.2 The opening of the Wellbeing Daycare + was on the 5 March 2018.
- 3.3 While the sales have grown for our higher needs daycare service in our first year of trading, the rate of growth has been slower than we hoped, significantly below the income target we set.
- 3.4 Clients started to attend from May 2018. To date we have 8 Clients attending half day sessions at the Wellbeing Daycare+.
- 3.5 Projected income at March 2019 with our current 11 clients is £18,000.
- 3.6 We have reviewed the service and identified a number key factors for this slow growth rate of our client base
- 3.7 Despite Adult Social Care (ASC) being aware of our new enterprise of daycare, we had no clients being referred to the centre through them
- 3.8 The main issue was that the set-up of Activities Co-ordinator post continued to offer the same services as before the loss of funding.
- 3.9 The Activities Co-ordinator post provides for the whole centre as well as the eight clients that were provided for within the SLA.
- 3.10 This meant that the enterprise model could be bypassed and a client with daycare needs could attend for free by paying an annual membership of £10.50.
- 3.11 Therefore, when ASC referred a person to visit the centre they were arriving with the understanding that all they have to pay was membership and all activities were free of charge.
- 3.12 As of the 5 November 2018, the Head of Operational Services became the sole lead for the entire management of the centre.
- 3.13 This ensured the clarity of services on offer and removed any crossovers in the direction of service provision.
- 3.14 This change in the management structure has given the staff within the centre a clear understanding of the need of enterprise and working towards the success of the service.
- 3.15 A new post of a Marketing Officer commenced on the 18 June 2018 to support the enterprise strategies of the council.

- 3.16 The Marketing Officer has been working closely with the Community and Wellbeing Manager to develop a marketing strategy for the Service.
- 3.17 By use of a local social media site we have been verified as a quality service.

4 Next Steps

- 4.1 Developing a web based marketing strategy for Daycare+. This will enable us to capture data related to how people search for daycare within our local radius.
- 4.2 A marketing campaign is expected to take six months before we hit the target set for eight clients daily for the respite, higher needs daycare service.
- 4.3 Adapt a cohesive approach for client screening assessments that will ensure the highest level of care and that the level of need can be managed successfully by our team.
- 4.4 A clear message of the services provided that can be understood by both our self-funding clients and adult Social Care team wishing to use the service.

5 Financial and Manpower Implications

- 5.1 A revised financial business model is being proposed to incorporate the Community and Wellbeing staffing.
- 5.2 This includes salaries, activities and a budget provision for staff absence to ensure that staffing levels are adequate to ensure the level of service is maintain at all times.
- 5.3 **Chief Finance Officer's comments:** Currently the client capacity for this service is 20 half day sessions for five days per week. The expectation is that 16 of these places will be taken by client paying the full rate of £20 per session. The remaining four places could be taken by referral agencies at £17 per session, i.e. discounted by 15%.
- 5.4 Assuming that the service operates at this level the annual income generated would be £93,120. To be fully self-funding the staff and activities costs of the daycare+ service would have to be capped at this level.
- 5.5 If capacity could be increased, operating costs would rise to reflect the higher number of clients requiring care.

6 Legal Implications (including implications for matters relating to equality)

- 6.1 None for the purpose of this report

6.2 **Monitoring Officer's comments:** There are no legal issues arising from this report.

7 Sustainability Policy and Community Safety Implications

7.1 None for the purpose of this report

8 Partnerships

8.1 We will continue to work with Surrey County Council and the Clinical Commissioning Group for the provision of services for people with higher needs.

9 Risk Assessment

9.1 The service requires eight customers per a day to be sustainable.

9.2 If the uptake of the eight customers is not achieved by October 2019 the Head of Operational services will review the options to achieve the Budget and report to the January 2020 Community and Wellbeing Committee

10 Conclusion and Recommendations

10.1 It is recommended that we continue with the enterprise model of the daycare service.

10.2 That a 15% discount is given off the daily fees to organisations that have the capacity to refer higher needs clients, such as ASC to ensure our offer is competitive with competitors operating out of the borough.

10.3 It is recommended that a progress report is made to Community and Wellbeing Committee in October 2019.

Ward(s) Affected: (All Wards);

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VOLUNTARY SECTOR GRANTS AND FUNDING 2019/20

| | |
|---|---|
| Head of Service/Contact: | Rod Brown, Head of Housing & Community |
| Urgent Decision?(yes/no) | No |
| If yes, reason urgent decision required: | N/A |
| Annexes/Appendices (attached): | Annex 1 – Proposed support for Voluntary Organisations 2019/20 |
| Other available papers (not attached): | |

Report summary

This report considers the general future support of voluntary organisations in 2019/20.

Recommendation (s)

- (1) That the Committee approves the proposed support for voluntary organisations in 2019/20, as detailed in Annex 1 to this report.

1 Implications for the Council's Key Priorities, Service Plans and Sustainable Community Strategy

- 1.1 This report links to the Council's Key Priority "Supporting our Community". It also relates to the Core values of "Openness" and "Integrity"

2 Background

- 2.1 The Council provides support to a range of voluntary organisations in Epsom and Ewell in order to maintain and improve the quality of life for residents and in particular, to support some of the more vulnerable sectors of our community.

- 2.2 This report is brought to the Community and Wellbeing Committee recognising the continued pressure on the Council's finances in the medium term and the need to secure good value for money in all of our activities.

- 2.3 The Council currently supports the following bodies:
- 2.3.1 Age Concern Epsom & Ewell
 - 2.3.2 Citizens Advice Bureau Epsom & Ewell (CAB)
 - 2.3.3 Central Surrey Voluntary Action (CSVA) – previously known as Voluntary Action Mid-Surrey
 - 2.3.4 RELATE Mid Surrey
 - 2.3.5 The Sunnybank Trust
- 2.4 Detailed in **Annex 1** is the full breakdown of the current support provided to voluntary organisations. The proposed level of support for 2019/20 is detailed in green text within the Annexe.
- 2.5 The cash grant budgets for 2019/20 are as follows:
- 2.5.1 CAB = £74,115
 - 2.5.2 CSVA = £7,989
- 2.6 The level of support proposed for 2019/20 is the same as that provided in 2018/19. It should be noted that the cash grant element (detailed in 2.5 above) makes up only £82,000 of the overall support package, which totals in the order of £196,000 for 2019/20. Details of the proposed overall support package (such as the usage of Council accommodation) is detailed within **Annex 1**.
- 2.7 New licences were issued with effect from 2017 and expire on 31 March 2020. The Notional Rent and Service Charges have been combined as one overall figure as shown in green in the second column in **Annex 1**.
- 2.8 Licences comprise the agreements between EEBC and the individual licence holders, which in this case, are the occupiers of the serviced offices owned by EEBC. They are reviewed every 3 years by the Council's Property and Regeneration Department, whereby the licence fees and service charges are amended to reflect the current value.
- 2.9 The amount shown for the combined notional charge for the licence fees and service cCharges for 2019/20 reflects the current financial value of this continued commitment from the Council.

3 Proposals

- 3.1 CSVA plays a major role in ensuring that voluntary organisations are consulted on local and national policy and service delivery issues. It can also help to ensure that good practice on equalities issues is applied in local voluntary sector organisations, facilitates access to outside funding as well as organising and hosting the Epsom & Ewell Volunteer Awards and an annual Epsom & Ewell Voluntary Organisations Conference held at Ewell Court House.
- 3.2 Age Concern Epsom & Ewell has a focus on the elderly as their client group. Whereas RELATE and its Counselling Services impacts directly on the wellbeing of children and families where there are relationship problems.
- 3.3 The Epsom and Ewell CAB provides services to clients from a range of minority or vulnerable groups.

4 Financial and Manpower Implications

- 4.1 If CSVA or CAB do not have adequate capacity to support its clients, there would be a considerable knock-on effect to the Council's own staff and operations (e.g. Housing and Council Tax).
- 4.2 **Chief Finance Officer's comments:** Details of cash and notional grants are set out in **Annex 1**.

5 Legal Implications (including implications for matters relating to equality)

- 5.1 **Monitoring Officer's comments:** The Council should notify the voluntary organisations of the approved grant package. This is in line with the Surrey Compact and best practice.

Sustainability Policy and Community Safety Implications

- 5.2 The Voluntary Organisations play an important role within the Borough, assisting the Statutory Services to enable the Family Support Programme to support residents requiring professional interventions, supporting the Community Harm and Risk Management Meetings (CHaRMM) – which has replaced the Community Incident Action Group (CIAG's) and Joint Action Groups (JAG's), plus their role in Safeguarding Vulnerable Children and Adults.

6 Partnerships

- 6.1 Voluntary organisations comprise members of the "third sector" that support the local community through the delivery of services.
- 6.2 It is increasingly recognised that partnership working between statutory bodies and the voluntary sector is essential for the future effective operation of modern local government.

7 Risk Assessment

- 7.1 Should the current and future recommended support to voluntary organisations be reduced, there could be a serious detrimental effect on the organisations, and ultimately the Borough's residents.

8 Conclusion and Recommendations

- 8.1 With the ever increasing pressure on the Council's finances, the Committee must be satisfied that it is achieving value for money and that the financial support is directed to priority areas where it will have the greatest effect. It is considered that the package of support for the voluntary organisations listed continues to provide good value for money for the Council and residents of the Borough.
- 8.2 The Committee is asked to approve the proposed grants as set out in paragraph 2.5.1 and 2.5.2 of this report and to note the overall support package set out in paragraph 2.6 and **Annex 1**.

Ward(s) Affected: (All Wards);

Proposed Support for Voluntary Organisations 2018/19

| | Age Concern Epsom & Ewell | | Citizens Advice Bureau Epsom & Ewell | | Voluntary Action Mid Surrey (VAMS) | |
|--|------------------------------|---------------|---|----------------|---------------------------------------|---------------|
| | 2018/19 £ | 2019/20 £ | 2018/19 £ | 2019/20 £ | 2018/19 £ | 2019/20 £ |
| Cash Grant | 0 | 0 | 74,115 | 74,115 | 7,989 | 7,989 |
| Licence - Notional Grant | 20,205 | 20,205 | 51,669 | 51,669 | 13,227 | 13,227 |
| Rent - Notional Grant | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Service Charge - Notional Grant | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Car Parking for Volunteers -Notional Value | 0 | 0 | 5,810 | 5,810 | 0 | 0 |
| Cash Grant for Volunteer Parking | 100 | 100 | 1,920 | 1,920 | 0 | 0 |
| Subsidy for Staff Parking Permits | 870 | 870 | 1,740 | 1,740 | 0 | 0 |
| Rent paid to EEBC | -2,724 | -2,724 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Net Total Support | 18,451 | 18,451 | 135,254 | 135,254 | 21,216 | 21,216 |

Proposed Support for Voluntary Organisations :

| | RELATE Mid Surrey | | The Sunnybank Trust | | Total | |
|--|-------------------|---------------|---------------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|
| | 2018/19 | 2019/20 | 2018/19 | 2019/20 | 2018/19 | 2019/20 |
| | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Cash Grant | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 82,104 | 82,104 |
| Licence - Notional Grant | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 85,101 | 85,101 |
| Rent - Notional Grant | 14,910 | 14,910 | 0 | 0 | 14,910 | 14,910 |
| Service Charge - Notional Grant | 4,800 | 4,800 | 0 | 0 | 4,800 | 4,800 |
| Car Parking for Volunteers -Notional Value | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5,810 | 5,810 |
| Cash Grant for Volunteer Parking | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2,020 | 2,020 |
| Subsidy for Staff Parking Permits | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2,610 | 2,610 |
| | | | | | 0 | 0 |
| Rent paid to EEBC | -1,200 | -1,200 | -3,170 | -3,170 | -7,094 | -7,094 |
| Net Total Support | 18,510 | 18,510 | -3,170 | -3,170 | 190,261 | 190,261 |

LOWER MOLE PARTNERSHIP: SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT

| | |
|---|--|
| Head of Service/Contact: | Ian Dyer, Head of Operational Services |
| Urgent Decision?(yes/no) | No |
| If yes, reason urgent decision required: | |
| Annexes/Appendices (attached): | Annex 1 – Lower Mole Partnership Service Level Agreement 2019-2024 Annex 2 - Countryside Partnerships Team Business Plan (April 2014 to April 2019) |
| Other available papers (not attached): | Committee Report to meeting of Leisure Committee, 21 October 2014 :Lower Mole Countryside Management Service: Service Level Agreement |

Report summary

This report proposes that the Committee approves a five year service level agreement with the Lower Mole Partnership, and recommends to Council the appointment of representatives to the Surrey Countryside Partnerships Board and Liaison Group for the Lower Mole Partnership.

Recommendation (s)

That the Committee:

- (1) Agrees to approve a further period of funding for the Lower Mole Partnership for five years via a Service Level Agreement.**
- (2) Notes the Service Level Agreement requirement to provide one year's notice in writing to withdraw from the agreement.**
- (3) Recommends to Council the appointment of the Chairman of the Community and Wellbeing Committee to the Surrey Countryside Partnerships Board and the appointment of the Vice-Chairman of the Community and Wellbeing Committee as a substitute member.**
- (4) Recommends to Council that the Vice-Chairman of the Community and Wellbeing Committee and one other Member are appointed to the Liaison group for the Lower Mole Partnership.**

1 Implications for the Council's Key Priorities, Service Plans and Sustainable Community Strategy

- 1.1 The Lower Mole Partnership aims to provide a high quality and cost efficient volunteer based service for local communities and public and private landowners across its area, which includes the Borough of Epsom and Ewell. By doing so it will help Epsom & Ewell Borough Council (EEBC) deliver its four priorities of Keeping the Borough Clean and Green, Supporting our Community, Managing our Resources and Supporting Businesses and our Local Economy.

2 Background

- 2.1 The Lower Mole Countryside Management Project was set up in 1983 as a partnership-funded, volunteer-based countryside management service focused on protecting and enhancing countryside in the urban fringe of North East Surrey. The funding partners are Surrey County Council, Epsom & Ewell Borough Council, Elmbridge Borough Council, Mole Valley District Council, Royal Borough of Kingston Upon Thames and the City of London (Ashted Common).
- 2.2 In 2014/15 following a review, restructure and rebranding of all the former Surrey Countryside Projects the Lower Mole Partnership funding partners agreed to adopt the Countryside Partnerships Team Business Plan (April 2014 to April 2019) and to sign a Service level Agreement (SLA) agreeing to fund the Partnership for a period of up to three years. The Partnership has continued to operate successfully under the new arrangements.
- 2.3 The Countryside Partnerships Board is currently proposing a ten year plan to follow on from the current Countryside Partnerships Team Business Plan (April 2014 to April 2019).
- 2.4 Copies of the 2019-2024 SLA and current business plan are attached at Annex 1 and Annex 2 respectively. It should be noted that the business plan (Annex 2) contains appendices that contain a copy of the 2012 Business Process Review brief (Appendix B) and the output from the BPR (Appendix C). It should be stressed that not all of the iESE conclusions applied equally to all of the former Countryside Management Projects.

3 Proposals

- 3.1 The key proposals for EEBC as a funding partner, are to agree a further period of funding via a new Service Level Agreement (five years is recommended), recommend to Council the appointment of the Chairman of the Community and Wellbeing Committee to the Surrey Countryside Partnerships Board with the Vice Chairman of the Community and Wellbeing Committee acting as a substitute for the Board and for the Vice-Chairman to also be appointed to the Liaison Group along with one other member.

- 3.2 The Service Level Agreement involves Epsom and Ewell Borough Council agreeing to contribute the current level of annual funding (£22,000) for five years from 1st April 2019 to the 31st March 2024, agreeing an annual work programme and continuing to accommodate the Project at Horton Country Park under the terms as described in pgh 4.1 of this report. It should be noted that in the interest of the wider funding partnership the Service Level Agreement requires the provision of one year's notice in writing to withdraw from the agreement.
- 3.3 The Countryside Partnership's Board comprises one member representative from each core funding partner. Partners are entitled to nominate a substitute representative in case their main member representative is unable to attend. It is expected that the substitute will normally be a member of the Liaison Group.

4 Financial and Manpower Implications

- 4.1 The current arrangements for EEBC's annual financial contribution to the Lower Mole Partnership (LMP) are as follows. As of 2018/19 Epsom and Ewell Borough Council provides an annual contribution of £22,000 to the LMP. Responsibility for overseeing and coordinating the work of the LMP within Epsom & Ewell lies with the Epsom and Ewell Borough Council Countryside Manager. The funding supports the core cost of running the partnership (i.e. employee's salaries, vehicle running costs, accommodation and office administration costs). Additional charges agreed prior to a practical task in Epsom & Ewell are made to cover the volunteer charge (£6 per day) and cost of materials, equipment, tools, PPE and machinery hire.
- 4.2 Epsom and Ewell Borough Council continues to provide office and workshop accommodation at Horton Country Park via an arrangement (separate lease) where an agreed annual total of volunteer days valued at £55 per day (Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) value for unskilled volunteer work) is accepted in lieu of the lease valued at £11,000 annually. This equates to 200 volunteer days. Additional volunteer days beyond 200 are paid by EEBC at the standard task based daily volunteer charge of £6 per day. In 2017/18 the total number of volunteer days worked in Epsom & Ewell was 415, equating to a value of £22,825. The figures do not include an estimate for the substantial amount of skilled work carried out by some volunteers who are trained to use excavators, dumpers, chainsaws and brush cutters, which HLF estimate is valued at £150 per day, therefore the true annual value is significantly higher.
- 4.3 As well as the practical conservation work of the volunteers, the LMP supplies other valuable services to the Borough:- Qualified and experienced advice and information on biodiversity, public access and landscape issues. Such advice might otherwise have to be bought in from consultants at a typical rate of £30 to £40 per hour.

- 4.4 The LMP facilitates cross-boundary and cross-ownership co-operation and communication. This has been an important factor on Epsom Common with the City of London and along the Hogsmill/Bonesgate corridor with the Royal Borough of Kingston. The LMP staff have long-standing and detailed local knowledge and direct contacts in the community. Their knowledge and contacts are regularly made available to Epsom and Ewell Borough Council Officers. The LMP contributes further by attending meetings and sitting on committees such as the Epsom and Walton Downs Consultative Committee, the Epsom Common Association and the Epsom/Ashted Common SSSI Forum.
- 4.5 The LMP provides other services such as the loan of hand tools and equipment. Occasional use of workshop facilities, practical support for “Friends of” groups, space in the Tree Nursery, use of timber stocks and an additional professional presence on Horton Country Park are other examples. The latter means that LMP staff field queries from members of the public when EEBC staff are not available. In addition the LMP hosts the Lower Mole Trust which contributes funds raised to conservation projects within Epsom & Ewell and the wider Partnership. For example, Round Pond at Nonsuch Park and Field Pond in Horton Country Park, each receiving substantial grants of several thousand pounds. None of these other services are charged for.
- 4.6 A key question for Epsom and Ewell Borough Council as a funding partner is whether or not we will retain value for money if we maintain our current level of funding? In 2017/18 EEBC contributed £20,002 to core funding exclusive of the office and workshop provision at Horton Country Park (See paragraph 4.1 above). We paid a further £1,204 for task based equipment/materials costs and the daily volunteer charge, giving a total cost in 2017/18 of £21,204. The minimum value for volunteer work in 2017/18 was £22,825 (415 volunteer days at £55 per day and not including skilled volunteer days). Subtracting the value of the lease at £11,000 the volunteer activity contributed a minimum value of £11,825 or 56% towards the total Epsom and Ewell Borough Council costs of £21,204. Taking in to account the other services described in 4.2 which are not charged for, the extra value of skilled volunteer work not accounted for and the unknown financial value of the health and wellbeing benefits both directly to the volunteers and to the public from the volunteers countryside management work, it can be argued that the current arrangements remain beneficial and cost effective to the Council.
- 4.7 The retention of one appointed Epsom and Ewell Borough Council Officer to the Lower Mole Partnership Officers Working Group means there is no change to current or future Epsom and Ewell Borough Council staffing levels.

- 4.8 **Chief Finance Officer's comments:** The base budget for 2019/20 includes £22k to make the proposed contribution. Any additional expenditure is currently charged against the Basic Payment Scheme or the Environmental Stewardship Higher Level Scheme. Both of these are currently funded through EU grants. If political changes result in the closure of these schemes expenditure would need to be funded from the residual balances on these grants already held by the Council, or from existing revenue budgets.

5 Legal Implications (including implications for matters relating to equality)

- 5.1 Continued financial support for the LMP gives residents both young and old the opportunity to contribute directly to the protection and enhancement of their local environment and to gain the social and health benefits that result from conservation volunteering.
- 5.2 Under section 74 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 local authorities owning a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) have a statutory duty to further the conservation and enhancement of SSSIs both in carrying out their operations, and in exercising their decision making functions. The LMP has made a vital contribution to the protection and enhancement of the Borough's two SSSI (Epsom Common Local Nature Reserve and Stones Road Pond)
- 5.3 The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act, Section 40 places a duty on public authorities to conserve biodiversity. Every public authority must, in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity. Conserving biodiversity includes, in relation to a living organism or type of habitat, restoring or enhancing a population or habitat. The work of the LMP contributes directly to the duty, protecting and enhancing biodiversity on our open spaces and assisting us to implement our site management plans and Local Biodiversity Action Plan.
- 5.4 **Monitoring Officer's comments:** The SLA as drafted is not a formal legal document but an understanding between the council and the Lower Mole Partnership. As an informal arrangement between the parties, the provisions are not enforceable by either party. The current arrangements have worked well previously but, if funding from other partners is not made to the partnership, there is a risk that the project will fail and it is unlikely that the council will be able to recover the money it has given to the partnership for the year.

6 Sustainability Policy and Community Safety Implications

- 6.1 The work of the LMP provides clear sustainability and community benefits by using volunteers to protect and enhance the Borough's open spaces and assisting in implementing our site management plans and Local Biodiversity Action Plan.

- 6.2 The work of the LMP which involves active community involvement in environmental improvements helps create more cohesive communities and can help reduce anti-social behaviour.

7 Partnerships

- 7.1 The LMP is an existing partnership of 35 years between Surrey County Council, Epsom & Ewell Borough Council, Elmbridge Borough Council, Mole Valley District Council, Royal Borough of Kingston Upon Thames and the City of London (Ashted Common). There are clear benefits to working in partnership with regard to countryside management where many cross border issues/opportunities can and have been addressed.

8 Risk Assessment

- 8.1 Continued support of the LMP will help ensure that the Borough's countryside and biodiversity continue to be protected and enhanced in a financially efficient way. Our continued financial support of the wider partnership enables the service to operate across North East Surrey providing economies of scale and cross border benefits as described.

9 Conclusion and Recommendations

- 9.1 As described above, the LMP has continued to operate successfully following the review of 2014/15. It is recommended that the Committee approves a new five year Service Level Agreement and appoints the Chairman of the Community and Wellbeing Committee to the Surrey Countryside Partnerships Board with the Vice Chairman of the Community and Wellbeing Committee acting as a substitute for the Board.
- 9.2 It is also recommended that the Committee appoints the Vice Chairman and one other member to the Liaison Group for the Lower Mole Partnership. It is also recommended that the committee notes that in the interest of the wider funding partnership, the Service Level Agreement requires the provision of one year's notice in writing to withdraw from the agreement.

Ward(s) Affected: (All Wards);

Purpose

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council will work in partnership with and provide a financial contribution to the Lower Mole Partnership enabling it to provide a volunteer based service as set out in this Service Level Agreement.

Service to be provided

The Lower Mole Partnership (LMP) is to provide a high quality and efficient volunteer based service for local communities and public and private landowners across its project area (Appendix 1). By doing so it will help Epsom & Ewell Borough Council deliver its four priorities of Keeping our Borough Clean and Green, Supporting our Community, Managing our Resources and Supporting Local Businesses and the Local Economy by applying the following aims:

1. Environmental conservation

Conserve landscapes, the natural environment and character of the Partnership area so that access to green space, nature and the wider countryside is improved by:

- a) Conserving, enhancing and monitoring biodiversity (both habitats and species)
- b) Conserving the local distinctiveness of the countryside e.g. historic landscapes, hedgerows, veteran trees etc.
- c) Working with public and private landowners to promote best practice and ensure sympathetic land management
- d) Work to improve public understanding of countryside management issues e.g. the need to manage woodland, the value of biodiversity (Ecosystem Services), the value of priority habitats, the advantages of conservation grazing, awareness of the Epsom & Ewell Local Biodiversity Action Plan etc.

2. Public access

Ensure that public access to and between green spaces and the wider countryside for walkers, horse riders and cyclists is improved by:

- a) Working with landowners and site managers to improve public access across their green spaces and the wider countryside
- b) Developing and promoting opportunities for access between green spaces and to the wider countryside, via the rights of way network and permissive routes
- c) Developing, promoting and maintaining a broader range of recreational public access routes, including long distance paths and circular routes
- d) Producing signs, displays, literature and other media that will promote access to, encourage greater understanding and enjoyment of green spaces and the wider countryside

3. Community involvement

Engaging with local communities so that they become more actively involved in their green spaces and the wider countryside by:

- a) Encouraging local people to volunteer and become actively involved in sites in need of enhancement or management
- b) Maintain an active dialogue with local people especially with regard to consulting on forthcoming projects

- c) Enabling local community groups to become self-sufficient so that they can carry out improvements in their local green spaces and the wider countryside
- d) Strengthening links with residents associations, parish councils, partner authorities, local community groups and user bodies
- e) Providing opportunities for people to learn about the countryside, develop skills in countryside management and gain appropriate work experience
- f) Providing opportunities for local people to become involved in healthy living with an annual programme of volunteer activities, health walks and recreational events
- g) Increasing understanding and enjoyment of green spaces and the wider countryside through an annual programme of talks, guided walks and publicity events
- h) Encourage schools and colleges to use their local green spaces and the wider countryside as an outdoor classroom
- i) Develop opportunities for those experiencing social exclusion e.g. through physical or mental health conditions, or those with learning difficulties

4. Strategy & planning

Work with partners to deliver this SLA using their strategic documents such as Biodiversity Action Plans, site management plans and local Community Plans by:

- a) Planning and prioritising an annual programme of work
- b) Seeking grant aid, income and other fund raising opportunities to help reduce the cost to the public purse of maintaining the countryside management service
- c) Providing representation on behalf of partners and involvement with planning bodies, working groups, Local Nature Partnerships and Local Strategic Partnerships
- d) Being actively involved with the development and planning of Green Infrastructure, including Green Grid, Green Arc and Nature Improvement Areas
- e) Assisting with the development of Biodiversity, Parish, Neighbourhood or Community Plans
- f) Developing opportunities and plans for strategic initiatives that will encourage landscape scale management and partnership work (Appendix 2)

5. Sustainability

Follow good working practice for countryside management in the urban fringe that seeks to protect the local environment, encourage social inclusion and maintain economic viability by:

- a. Carrying out work activities that enhance biodiversity and minimise pollution or other detrimental impact on the local environment and wider countryside
- b. Promoting the reuse, recycling or sale of products arising from conservation work and where appropriate contribute to local food/fuel production
- c. Helping improve the management of water resources (ponds and watercourses), mitigate for flooding and reducing flood risk as part of countryside projects
- d. Supervising activities for volunteers to become involved in all aspects of work, in particular helping to deliver the annual work programme
- e. Developing connections with local businesses and wherever possible, using local suppliers, contractors and services to deliver the annual work programme

Other terms and conditions

All work to be carried out in a safe, secure and efficient manner, with significant hazards being identified, risks assessed and reasonable measures taken to put in place safe systems of work for employees, volunteers and contractors.

The Countryside Partnerships Operations Manager and LMP Senior Project Officer will develop an annual work programme with the Countryside Manager for Epsom & Ewell BC.

The Manager will review progress on the annual work programme with the Countryside Manager from Epsom & Ewell BC and report annually to the Board about the achievement of the objectives, delivery of targets and outcomes of work.

Financial arrangements

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council will provide an annual contribution of **£22,000** to the Lower Mole Countryside Partnership for a five-year period from 1st April 2019 until 31st March 2024.

The payment will be made in accordance with Epsom & Ewell BC regulations through issuing a purchase order and receiving an invoice from the LMP. This payment is subject to compliance with the terms of this Service Level Agreement.

This funding will support the core cost of running the Service i.e. employee's salaries.

Additional charges will be made for each practical task carried out on site to cover the volunteer charge and cost of vehicles, materials, equipment, tools, PPE and machinery hire at the schedule of rates shown in Appendix 3. Any additional charges will be agreed prior to the commencement of a task and will be commissioned through a purchase order issued.

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council will also continue to provide office and workshop accommodation via an arrangement (separate lease) where an agreed annual total of volunteer days valued at £55 per day (Heritage Lottery) is accepted in lieu of rent. As a guide the annual rent in 2012 was £11,000 which equates to 200 volunteer days. If the total annual volunteer days worked in Epsom & Ewell falls below 200 then the shortfall would be covered by a payment of £55 to EEBC for each day below the agreed figure of 200. Additional volunteers days beyond 200 will be paid by EEBC at the scheduled rate as outlined in Appendix 3.

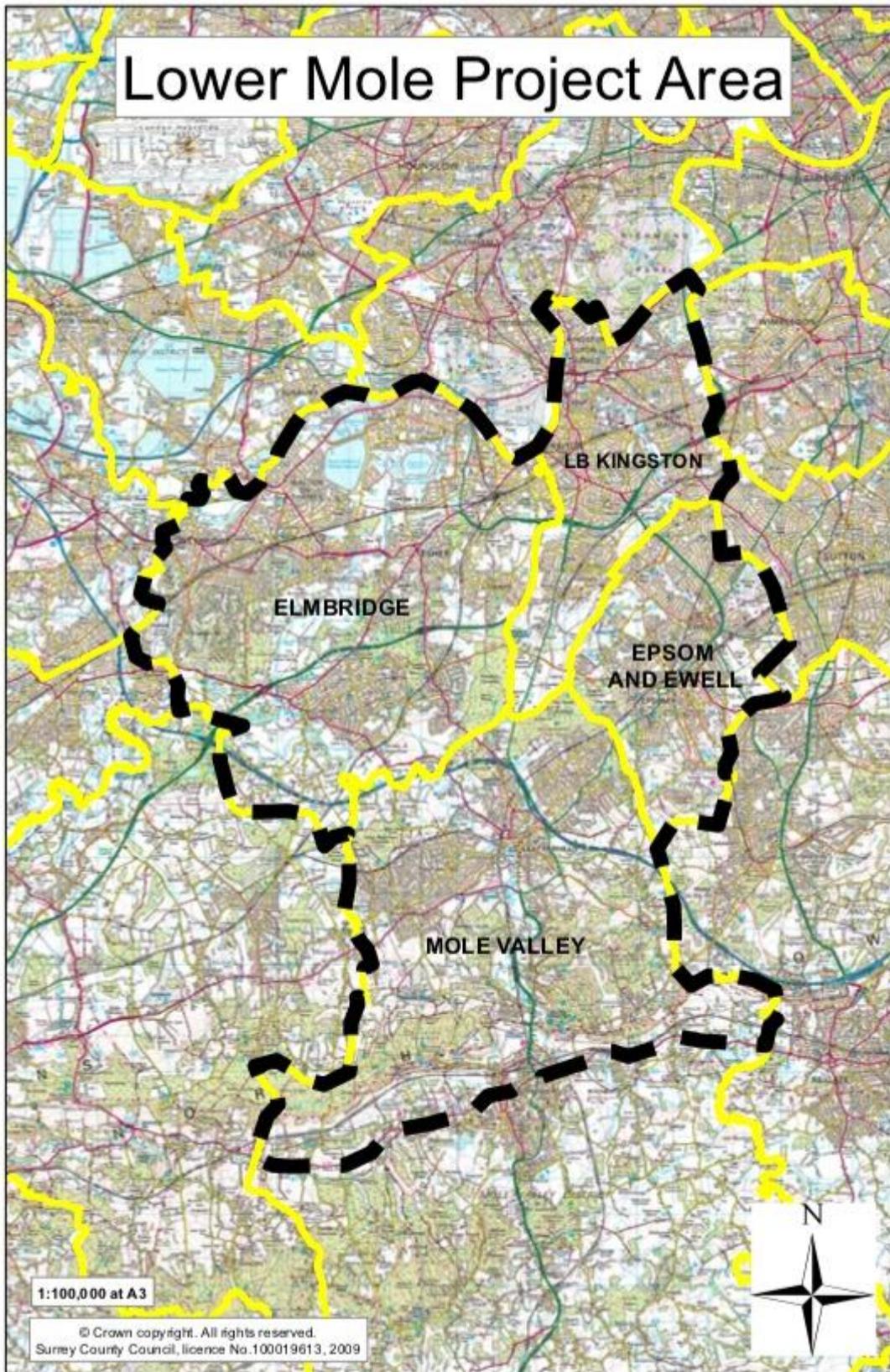
This agreement will be reviewed in June 2023, ten months prior to the end of term in order to allow time to draw up a further five-year agreement and for both the LMP and the Council to consider whether they wish to renew it and on what terms. If either party wish to withdraw from this agreement they must give one year's notice in writing.

Signed on behalf of Epsom & Ewell Borough Council:

Signed on behalf of Lower Mole Partnership:

Dated:

Appendix 1: Map of the Partnership Area



Appendix 2: List of strategic projects & initiatives

Strategic opportunities and projects to be undertaken by the Lower Mole Partnership to be incorporated into this SLA and the work planning process:

1. **Biodiversity Opportunity Areas** – Work with partners to protect and enhance the Biodiversity Opportunity Areas within the Partnership area and Epsom and Ewell
2. **Living Woodlands** – Continue to develop the *Living Woodlands* theme promoting sustainable timber and wood production, with the purpose of restoring a productive landscape within the Partnership area.
3. **Thames Down Link and Round the Borough Hike & Bike** – Continue to support, promote and assist in maintaining access to the countryside throughout the Partnership area and within Epsom & Ewell.
4. **Surrey Nature Partnership & Surrey Biodiversity Working group** – Develop and maintain close links and assist in implementing county wide action plans involving Epsom & Ewell and the linked Epsom & Ewell Local Biodiversity Action Plan.

Appendix 3: Schedule of rates for additional charges

Surrey Countryside Partnerships Team
Charging rates for work 2018-19 From 1 September 2018

| Service | Fee, Core funding partners and charities | Fee, Companies and non-core funding organisations |
|---|--|---|
| Chainsaw/brush cutter/BCS work levy | £75 / day | £75 / day plus staff time |
| Herbicide work contribution | £50 / day | £50 / day plus staff time |
| Waymark post / fingerpost construction and installation | Price range £40 - £110 (supply and install) £35 - £98 (supply only) | Prices vary according to specification |
| Bench construction | Without back £150 With back £250 | Prices vary according to specification |
| Corporate volunteering days | No charge, donations invited (including school groups) | £20 per person (if more than 8 participants, donations invited for groups of less than 8) |
| Talks, walks organised for external groups | No charge, donations invited | £40 plus expenses |
| Machine hire | At cost | Cost plus 25% |
| Machinery operator (Dumper, excavator, roller) | £40 per day | £40 per day |
| Materials | At cost | At cost plus 25% for orders over £500 |
| Task Running Cost | £6 per volunteer per day | £10 per volunteer per day |
| Staff task leader | No charge to core funders, £100 per day to others | £100 per day |
| Consultancy | No charge (unless beyond normal remit of SPO) | £350 per day or 10% of contract price (20% for fencing contracts) |

September 2018

Countryside Partnerships Team

Business Plan

Apr 2014 – Apr 2019

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1. Introduction

An introduction to the history and function of Countryside Management Partnerships (CMP's) is attached at **Appendix A**.

The 3 CMP's hosted by Surrey County Council (SCC) have always been known as Countryside Management *Projects*, reflecting the fact that they were initially established for a fixed period. This is at odds with a vision of the CMP's providing a continuing service and they are therefore referred to individually as Partnerships throughout this document. The three partnerships together are referred to as a service.

The main focus of this plan is on improving the capacity of the CMP's to deliver an efficient and effective service that people value and are willing to pay for. For this reason, the plan refers to core funding partners, local communities, Trusts, volunteers and other stakeholders who benefit from their services as customers.

A central feature of CMP's is their ability to attract, motivate and empower volunteers and this is central to their ability to deliver exceptional value for money. Volunteers are not only able to assist with the practical delivery of the service, but are also powerful advocates for the countryside. The key to unlocking their potential is to recognise that each volunteer is an individual who brings a unique mixture of skills and motivations. The only thing that they all share is a willingness to give up their time in exchange for non-monetary rewards. The success of this plan will largely be judged by the extent to which volunteers can be integrated throughout the service, utilising their existing skills to the full and developing new ones as appropriate. Whilst many of the proposals in this plan are framed in business terms, they are all conceived with volunteers in mind.

Public Value Review of SCC Countryside Service

In 2010 Surrey County Council (SCC) carried out a public value review of its countryside service. On 1 March 2011 the SCC Cabinet accepted a recommendation that the county council should apply the following tests to its involvement in countryside partnerships:

- (1) Surrey County Council to be involved in a strategic enabling role - i.e. normally not to host the partnership or employ partnership staff except possibly where the partnership extends to all or a substantial part of the County area.
- (2) Surrey County Council to provide financial support to partnerships only where they provide Surrey County Council statutory services or deliver Surrey County Council service priorities.

It was further recommended that a consultation be conducted on the proposal to cease hosting the Downlands, Lower Mole and Surrey Heathland Projects. A large number of submissions were received in response to this consultation, including a joint response from the chairmen of the members steering groups. This included the following recommendation:

“The County Council should work with partners to refocus activities, ensure long-term development and sustainability by:

- a) realigning strategic roles and core responsibilities
- b) developing relevance to local communities
- c) improving governance and formal agreement with funding partners
- d) rationalising working arrangements”

Business Process Review

In December 2011, Improvement and Efficiency South East (iESE) was commissioned to carry out a Business Process Review (BPR) of the 3 Countryside Management Partnerships hosted by SCC. A copy of the brief is attached at **Appendix B** and the output from the BPR is attached at **Appendix C**.

Subsequent work on the outcomes of the BPR have been taken forward by a Task Group comprising the chairmen of the Members Steering Groups; Project Managers and key staff from partner Authorities.

This plan is shaped around the conclusions of the BPR and extracts from the iESE document are included throughout this document in quotation marks and italics.

It should be stressed that not all of the iESE conclusions apply equally to all of the CMP's and good progress has already been made on implementing some of its conclusions, in particular the preparation of Service Level Agreements. Because the CMP's have each taken a very individual approach in the past, there are also pockets of good practice, which can be built on and adopted consistently across the service.

Local Government background

As a result of the prolonged economic recession that started in 2009, there has been severe and ongoing financial pressure on many partner Authorities, which has led to a search for savings, contraction and uncertainty. The 2010 Conservative manifesto 'Invitation to Join the Government of Britain' set out a political vision of the 'Big Society' which encompassed localism and volunteerism. Whilst it is still unclear to what extent this vision will be delivered at a national level, it has served to reinforce the potential of countryside management partnerships to deliver exceptional value for money.

It is likely that partners will continue to reduce capacity during the period of this plan and a flexible and efficient shared countryside service could offer an attractive alternative to an in-house service. Whilst in the past much has been made of the 'stand-alone' nature of the CMPs, in practice SCC is responsible for day to day management and carries most of the risk if other funding partners reduce or withdraw funding. This is because budgets have not been managed to ensure a sufficient contingency to cover redundancy costs. The current economic situation

threatens the sustainability of small stand-alone projects carrying out non-statutory countryside work and this plan envisages the partnerships working together more closely in future, delivering an efficient and effective shared countryside service under the direction of a single Board.

2. Executive Summary

This is the first time a single business plan has been prepared for the three countryside management projects hosted by SCC and it covers the 5-year period from April 2014 to April 2019. It is a high-level plan, which sets out a vision for the future and the key objectives to reach this vision. Many of the proposals contained in it have significant practical implications, the details of which will be worked out as the plan is implemented. Monitoring implementation of the plan and working through its practical implications will be a key task for the new Countryside Partnership Board.

Given the ongoing and severe pressure on Local Authority funding, there is a pressing need to reshape the service to increase resilience, control risk and focus on efficiently and effectively delivering partner priorities.

If this plan is successful, in future the CMPs will

- Operate in a more efficient and businesslike way
- Achieve greater financial stability
- Reduce reliance on public sector funding
- Attract and retain a wide cross-section of people as volunteers

The **vision** for the service is:

‘A flexible and responsive county-wide shared countryside management service working across boundaries and delivering exceptional value for money’

To realise the vision, this plan proposes the following:

- ✓ That the 3 separate CMPs be redefined as a shared countryside service, whilst retaining their own individual brands
- ✓ That the management structure and staff roles be revised to facilitate effective one team working and reduce costs
- ✓ That administration be combined to reduce duplication and free up resources to focus on service delivery
- ✓ That the governance model be revised to create a single influential county-wide body focused on strategic issues including performance monitoring; risk management and shaping the future direction of the service
- ✓ That several areas of work be separately reviewed, including the provision of conservation grazing; fees and charges; and volunteer development

- ✓ That future work be focused on the core services set out below
- ✓ That future work be defined in Service Level Agreements and Annual Work Programmes agreed with core funding partners
- ✓ That key outcomes be measured and consistently reported
- ✓ That alternative legal forms and hosting arrangements be investigated once the new ways of working are embedded

The **values** of the service will be to:

- ❖ Work together
- ❖ Cross boundaries
- ❖ Make things happen
- ❖ Inspire and engage
- ❖ Enjoy what we do

3. Themes and Strategy

In order to take forward the conclusions of the business process review, five key themes have been identified, as follows:

- Defining Core Services
- Business efficiency
- Sustainability
- Governance
- Hosting

The overall **strategy** is in two phases:

Phase 1 - reorganize and refocus the service within the existing hosting arrangement

Phase 2 - review options and explore alternative hosting arrangements

Implementation of the strategy will be monitored and overseen by the new Countryside Partnership Board (see page 18).

4. Defining core services

The business process review noted that *“the purpose of CMP’s [is] not defined or articulated nor fully and equally understood by all partners”*.

This conclusion may seem surprising, given that the core objectives of CMP’s were clearly defined at the outset and, despite being reviewed several times, have remained largely unchanged ever since.

A task group comprising the chairmen of the steering groups and officers from the partner Authorities carried out some detailed work to explore this question. The group firstly identified all of the tasks that the CMP’s had performed and then

categorised them according to the core objective that they satisfied. This exercise demonstrated the huge variety of tasks that had been undertaken and went some way to explain a perceived lack of clarity of purpose.

The business process review noted a *'mixed perception on quality and usefulness of the practical services provided'* but that *'in some cases partners would like an increase in CMP services'*. Partners were invited to rank the value of the various services to their Authority. This exercise served to emphasise the value that partners place, in particular, on the following:

- Community involvement
- Strategic cross-boundary working
- Acting as a catalyst for action
- Delivering value for money
- The ability to design and implement solutions
- A centre of excellence and innovation.

Whilst it is clear that the original **objectives** are still understood and supported, they have been further refined and reflected in the Service Level Agreements, as follows:

- Environmental Conservation
- Public Access
- Community Involvement
- Strategy and Planning
- Sustainability

There is a general consensus that the CMP's have evolved into shared countryside services. In the past, there have been debates about where the boundaries of their operations should be drawn. To reinforce the shared service approach, in future the service will cover the whole of the partner authority area, unless they decide otherwise. There are 3 District Councils in Surrey that do not currently core fund the partnerships and it is possible that they might be attracted by the prospect of a shared countryside service. It is also likely that there will be increasing delegation of services to Parish Councils during the period of this plan and they could therefore be attracted to purchase services.

Key actions

- ✓ Rationalise range of services offered
- ✓ Redefine objectives
- ✓ Refocus on core business: community involvement; cross-boundary working; intelligent contractor

- | |
|---|
| ✓ Develop role as centre of excellence and innovation |
|---|

5. Business efficiency

The issues to be addressed under this theme are as follows:

- Increasing integration and sharing resources
- Improving skills and innovation
- Improving use and capability of IT
- Managing workloads

5.1 Increasing integration

The business process review noted that the partnerships were *“too small, fragmented, unfocussed and insular”* and that *“minimal management support [was] provided in a difficult financial environment”*.

Surrey County Council took the first step to address these issues in April 2012, when it created a Countryside Partnerships Team with a full time team leader. In order to fully realise the benefits, however, it will be necessary to take this a step further by sharing resources between the 3 projects and co-locating administration. This, in turn, will help to avoid duplication and increase efficiency. For operational reasons it will be necessary to retain 3 separate operating bases.

To provide a clearer focus on core delivery and greater clarity of individual staff roles, a staff reorganisation will be undertaken. The revised staff structures will reflect the following issues:

- Revised role profiles/ grades within SCC
- Enhanced focus on core delivery role
- Greater flexibility in allocation of staff resources
- Enhanced contract management role
- Sustainable conservation grazing team
- Enhanced fundraising/publicity role
- Single set of financial accounts
- Single point of contact for strategic issues/reporting and operations
- Core staff costs to be covered by core income

There are currently 3 project managers, who each prepare separate budgets and accounts and carry out other administrative tasks that are duplicated. This function will be combined and carried out by the Countryside Partnerships Operations Manager.

There is considerable loyalty to the individual project ‘brands’ and they are valuable in maintaining local connection and engagement. There would also be significant

costs involved in creating new branding. The existing branding will therefore be retained, but the staffing structure will be more flexible to allow for more effective one-team working.

The Lower Mole and Downlands Trusts are stand-alone charitable bodies that raise funds and operate independently to support the work of the partnerships. They each operate in a defined geographical area and there are no plans to merge them.

Modern working practices will be adopted, including effective use of IT; improved financial and resource management; knowledge management and best practice in management of staff and projects.

| |
|--|
| ✓ Reorganise staff structure to focus on core delivery |
|--|

5.2 Sharing resources

The business process review noted that there was *'little or no cross project communication, work and sharing of resources'*.

The three projects developed separately and have always been regarded as stand-alone entities. Consequently they each maintain separate tools and equipment inventories; vehicle fleets; administrative systems; volunteer records; reporting structures and working practices.

Whilst there is some local differentiation, largely reflecting the dominant habitats in their areas of operation, most of the focus and operation of the Downlands and Lower Mole partnerships is the same, namely small-scale local environmental enhancements using volunteers. By combining administration, a significant amount of duplication would be avoided, freeing up frontline staff to deliver core objectives.

The role of the Surrey Heathlands partnership has evolved to focus on contract management and management planning, reflecting the increasingly large-scale mechanized nature of heathland management work. Whilst it must remain principally focused on heathland management in order to deliver service level agreements and justify continued partnership funding, there is potential to utilize, disseminate and embed these contract management skills more widely across the service.

After staff costs, the use and maintenance of vehicles is the most significant element of the core running costs. The Downlands and Lower Mole Trusts have both helped to raise funds and purchased capital equipment such as vehicles, and the Heathlands Partnership has received gifts of vehicles and equipment in lieu of direct financial support. In the past, grant funding has often been available to purchase capital equipment. Because of this, little account has traditionally been taken of the cost of depreciation of tools and equipment and depreciation does not currently appear in the accounts. By adopting standard accounting practices across the

service, including the costs of depreciation and in-kind contributions, transparency will be improved and the Board will find it easier to understand the overall financial position.

Maintaining a single tools and vehicle inventory would also improve transparency and enable standard maintenance procedures to be adopted, although it is likely that most tools and equipment will continue to be kept separately for practical reasons.

- ✓ Combine tools inventories
- ✓ Standardise tools maintenance procedures
- ✓ Combine financial systems
- ✓ Review vehicle fleet
- ✓ Include depreciation costs
- ✓ Integrate administration of Downlands and Lower Mole partnerships
- ✓ Introduce modern working practices

5.3 Improving skills and innovation

The business process review noted that *'there is a recognition from many partners that professional knowledge and advice is generally good'* but that there was *'a lack of commercial practice and skills'*.

As part of the reorganisation, role profiles will be reviewed and a new set of competencies developed to focus the service more clearly on delivering partner priorities and increasing commercial skills. It is essential, if the partnerships are to consistently add value, that training is put in place to ensure that staff and volunteers have the most up to date skills to fulfill their roles. Training also needs to be put in place specifically to enhance innovation.

The key skills that have been identified are as follows:

- Budget management
- Commercial operations
- Contract Management
- Fund raising
- Interpretation
- Negotiation
- Publicity and communications
- Volunteer management
- Community engagement
- Practical skills

Many volunteers bring valuable skills that they have acquired elsewhere, often in the commercial world, and by using these skills more effectively the need for staff

training could be reduced and the overall effectiveness of the service increased. In some parts of the service, volunteers are trained and developed systematically and gradually given more responsibility to the point that they can lead tasks. This best practice will be adopted across the service. Volunteer development is so significant that it justifies a separate in-depth analysis, which will be implemented following adoption of this business plan.

There are currently a number of trainees and apprentices who are placed within the service. The main object of these arrangements is to give the trainee or apprentice the skills that they need, although they can also carry out useful and productive work at the same time. A learning plan will be agreed with every trainee or apprentice working within the service to ensure that sufficient resources are in place to deliver the training and experience they require and to monitor delivery to ensure that they receive it.

- ✓ Review role profiles
- ✓ Develop competencies for individual staff roles
- ✓ Undertake training needs analysis
- ✓ Train staff and volunteers where necessary to deliver new roles
- ✓ Record key skills and ensure volunteers are fully integrated into service
- ✓ Review volunteer development
- ✓ Agree and monitor training plans for all trainees and apprentices

5.4 Improving use and capability of IT

The business process review noted that there was a *'lack of IT capability'*, *'inconsistent use of IT'* and *'lack of knowledge management and sharing'*.

The Downlands and Heathlands partnerships are located in SCC offices and have full access to County Council ICT systems. The Lower Mole partnership is located in a building owned by Epsom & Ewell Borough Council and currently has a stand-alone ICT system with very limited access to the wider SCC intranet. An upgrade is underway, which should allow full access in future. It is essential for effective knowledge management and sharing that all documents and data are held on an open shared drive. This will be possible once all teams have full access to the system. By combining administration, it will be possible to make a more powerful business case for non-standard software, particularly if it is partnership funded, where justified to deliver business priorities. Whilst SCC ICT systems are occasionally inflexible, they nevertheless represent a significant benefit in-kind.

The use of mobile handheld devices is very limited at present, but offers considerable potential to increase effectiveness and flexibility for site-based staff.

The use of social media too is limited, but they could provide a very effective communication tool, in particular amongst younger volunteers and supporters. There is currently no sharing of information with data held on individual team drives. To make most effective use of the intellectual capital that the projects have accumulated, it will be necessary to keep all data on a shared drive.

A review of ICT capability will be conducted once the reorganisation is complete to identify any gaps in provision and areas of opportunity. An ICT strategy will then be developed and implemented.

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Transfer all documents and data to an open shared drive✓ Prepare an ICT strategy |
|---|

5.5 Managing workloads

The business process review noted that *'individuals demonstrate enthusiasm and commitment to the work the projects undertake'* but that *'managers and staff [are] working excessive hours'* there was *'poor planning, coordination and balancing of individuals' workloads'* and *'some communication issues within teams'*.

The issue of excessive working hours is a long-standing and intractable issue which is often excused by the fact that countryside management is not a 9 to 5 business; staff who work in countryside management are highly committed and prepared to 'go the extra mile'; and funding partners demand value for money. Whilst all these points are true and partners appreciate the commitment, in particular, to out of hours and weekend working, there is a pressing need to control working hours. The current situation is exposing Surrey County Council as the employer to an excessive degree of risk. The situation does not apply to all teams, but where it is a problem it will be addressed through more effective 'one team' working –sharing staff and other resources; engaging and empowering front-line staff; and agreeing realistic work programmes annually with partners.

Excessive working hours are particularly prevalent in the management of conservation grazing, which is currently delivered by 2 of the teams. Even with excellent volunteer support, livestock management is a 24 hour a day, 365 day a year business. To provide a safe and sustainable service requires a minimum of 2 staff in the grazing team and the staff structure will be revised to reflect this.

Reviewing the costs and commitments of the existing grazing programme is an urgent task and a separate review will be commenced immediately following the adoption of this plan. As part of this review, an early discussion will be held with Surrey Wildlife Trust and the City of London Corporation to examine whether there may be opportunities to coordinate more effectively with their grazing teams.

Future work programmes will be agreed so that teams are not fully committed and retain the flexibility to respond to urgent issues or unexpected opportunities.

Key actions

- ✓ Adopt formal project management techniques
- ✓ Engage and empower frontline staff to manage working hours and workloads
- ✓ Urgently review the costs and commitments to conservation grazing

6. Sustainability

Sustainability is defined here as the ability to continue to secure funding and provide services. The issues to be addressed under this theme are:

- Delivering customer objectives
- Reducing reliance on Local Authority core funding
- Measuring performance

6.1 Delivering customer objectives

The business process review noted several issues in this area, including *‘a lack of understanding of the role of the funding Authorities as the customer’, ‘customer meetings are inconsistent and irregular’, ‘work programmes not defined or directed by Partners, including financial sign off’, ‘purchaser supplier relationship not recognised’* and *‘work plans and priorities often identified and then carried out by CMPs, with minimal references to customer’*.

It was a founding principle of countryside management partnerships that they should have a degree of autonomy to identify and resolve local issues and it is clear that partners still value this flexibility. However, it is critical to the long-term sustainability of the partnerships that they are responsive and deliver services that partners value and are willing to pay for. Draft service level agreements have been prepared and these, combined with regular customer meetings, will ensure that future work programmes are clearly focused on delivering customer objectives. Responsibility for ongoing maintenance and aftercare of projects will be agreed and recorded in standard works agreements before works commence. Annual work programmes will include a small amount of free time to allow for flexibility.

The business process review noted that *‘customer satisfaction appears to be mixed’, ‘customer relationship management mixed’* and *‘some partners [are] receiving a significantly higher level of service than others’*.

In this context, ‘customer’ refers mainly to core funding partners and others who rely on the partnerships to deliver a service. These issues could be largely addressed by regular customer meetings, but to fully realise the benefits, funding partners need to redefine themselves as customers and start behaving as such.

Local members are also key customers and there is a risk that, unless alternative arrangements are put in place, the new steering arrangements could reduce direct contact with them and erode local support. The existing steering groups will therefore continue, but redefined as Local Partnership Groups as set out below.

The business process review noted that there *was 'poor financial management including poor future planning and financial transparency'* and a *'lack of clear cost or budget information therefore neither customers nor staff are able to assess value for money'*.

Currently there are 3 separate sets of accounts, all prepared in slightly different ways, which come under a single budget head within SCC. A single set of accounts will be prepared in future with separate lines for each CMP so that core funding partners can identify their individual contributions.

Currently several partners make substantial in-kind contributions, for example by providing accommodation, and a consistent method of accounting for these in-kind contributions will be developed. The value of in-kind contributions will then be included in the accounts and reported to the Board to improve transparency and enable more effective forward planning.

The profile of existing volunteers will be reviewed and a Volunteer Development Plan prepared and monitored. This will ensure that there is a clear strategic approach to attracting and retaining a representative cross section of the population to volunteer.

- ✓ Complete service level agreements with all partners
- ✓ Introduce regular customer meetings
- ✓ Prepare works agreements for all projects before works commence
- ✓ Include free time in work plans to allow for reactive work
- ✓ Prepare single set of accounts with separate lines for each partnership
- ✓ Account for in-kind contributions
- ✓ Prepare a Volunteer Development Plan

6.2 Reducing reliance on Local Authority core funding

Countryside management projects have traditionally supplemented their core funding with grants, fees and charges and other income. More recently, separate trusts have been established, which are able to access grant funding which is not available to Local Authorities. Combining administration will enable greater specialisation amongst staff and in particular a more coordinated focus on accessing grant funding. It will also enable improved forward planning of work. One of the key tasks for the new Business Development Officer will be to coordinate fundraising both within the service and with core funding partners.

There is currently no consistency in charging for professional services such as project management or organizing and supervising volunteers. A revised charging scheme will be prepared in consultation with partners, with rates for core and non-core partners, and applied consistently across the service. The commercial discipline of asking customers to pay a daily charge for volunteers would provide a strong incentive for the service to increase the number of volunteers and for customers to prioritise work effectively. By setting a maximum number of volunteers that can be funded, costs to the customer will be defined and will provide an incentive to ensure that volunteers are used in the most effective way. Any charging regime needs to allow some flexibility, so that work can continue with customers -private landowners, for example - who are unable or unwilling to pay for the service. The ability to provide advice and support without charge is one of the reasons that continued core funding will be required. This proposal requires partner agreement and detailed planning before it could be implemented. A separate review of fees and charges will be commenced immediately following the adoption of this plan.

The Trusts were set up to apply for grants that were not available to a Local Authority hosted service, but in practice many of the larger grant schemes, such as the Heritage Lottery Fund, are open to public bodies as well as charities and the trusts are too small to bear the risk of managing substantial grants. They are well placed, however, to capitalize on local support by fundraising and increasing membership and they will continue to manage small grant applications as appropriate. The Business Development Officer will coordinate applications for grant funding, working closely with the Trusts to help maximize their fundraising potential.

- ✓ Create Business Development Officer role
- ✓ Coordinate grant applications across service
- ✓ Agree schedule of fees and charges

6.3 Measuring performance

The business process review noted that there were *'no measures of customer satisfaction'*, *'no quality indicators'*, and *'no KPIs or other outcome based measures'* and *'performance [was] not measured or reported'*. The primary focus was on *'volunteer groups rather than Partners and, in some cases, the wider community'*.

Service level agreements will set out high level objectives to be achieved over the next 3 years and these will be supplemented by annual work programmes, which can be monitored and reported. This will ensure that individual partners can clearly see value for money. Regular customer meetings will help to ensure a consistent level of satisfaction and an annual customer survey will be carried out and reported to the Countryside Partnership Board. The service will continue to report on outputs with reference to the works outlined in the annual work programme.

The Board will define the overall outcomes for the service, and key performance indicators will be developed to effectively measure those outcomes. High-level indicators such as the number of volunteer hours as a ratio of the hours of paid staff; the amount of Local Authority core funding as a proportion of the total budget; and the proportion of public and private land managed will be reported annually. Annual surveys of customer and volunteer satisfaction will also be carried out and reported.

Whilst there may be some resource implications to more effective monitoring this will be offset by the reduced frequency of meetings.

- | |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Report on completion of annual work programme✓ Report value added – volunteer hours and third party funding✓ Report proportion of public and private land managed✓ Conduct and report annual customer survey✓ Conduct and report volunteer satisfaction survey |
|--|

7. Governance

The issues to be addressed under this theme are as follows:

- Governance model
- Countryside Partnership Board
- Officers Working group

7.1 Governance model

The business process review noted that the *'roles, responsibilities and terms of reference of Member and Officer Groups are unclear, therefore meetings lack purpose and usefulness'*. It also noted that there was *'lots of personal goodwill , but ... little evidence of wider Cabinet influence'*.

There are currently 3 Member Steering groups with 2 representatives from each core funding partner, which meet twice per year. Originally, there were also 3 officers groups, but only 1 now remains in operation, due to a perceived duplication of effort and poor attendance. To fully realise the benefits of one team working, the members steering groups will be combined to form a Countryside Partnership Board. This will have the advantages of avoiding duplication, reducing administration costs and creating a more powerful body with county-wide coverage.

Chairmen are currently elected from amongst the membership of the steering group and serve for one year. This has led to issues around continuity and has made it difficult for members to gain sufficient experience to effectively advocate for the partnerships. To reinforce the status of the chairman and ensure continuity, the Board will seek to appoint an independent opinion-former to act in a voluntary capacity as chairman for a minimum period of 3 years.

It is clearly desirable that members and officers on the steering groups should be in a position to report back to their Authorities and influence policy and budget setting. Another potential benefit of creating a single county-wide Board is that it would have the status to attract members who are in a position to directly influence the strategic direction of their Authority.

In order to fully integrate volunteers into the organization and give them a stake in the future, the Lower Mole and Downlands Countryside Trusts will be entitled to a seat on the Board. Their charitable objectives coincide with the aims and objectives of the countryside partnerships and individuals who support the work of the partnerships can pay a modest membership fee to join. This in turn gives them the right to participate in the decision making of the Trust and ultimately influence the direction of the partnerships. The Surrey Heathlands Project does not have an associated Trust, but its business model currently relies less on volunteers. If such a trust were established in future, it too could have a place on the Board.

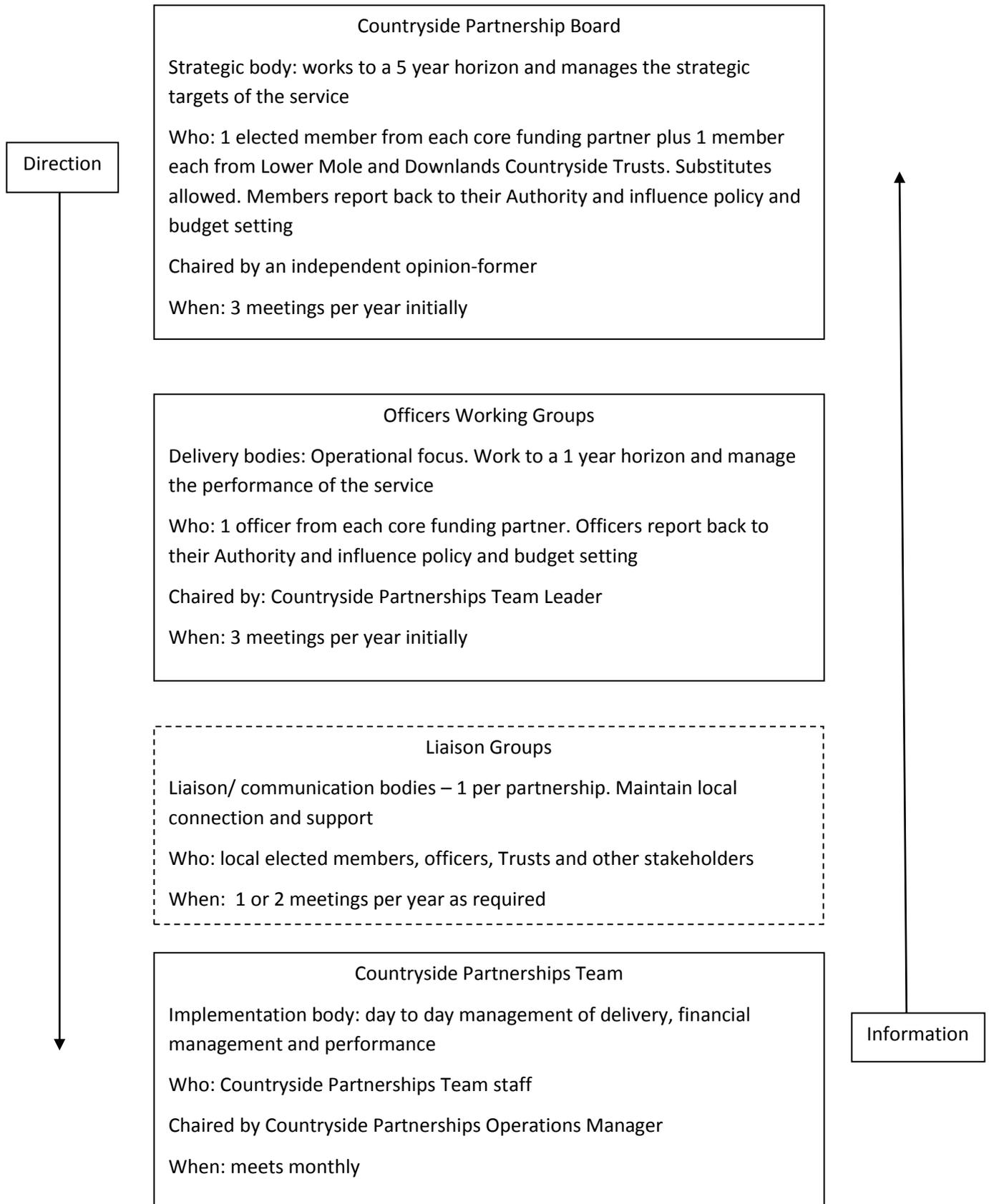
There is a concern that the strong connection with local members supported by the existing steering arrangements, which has proved so valuable in maintaining local support over the years, could be weakened by having a single Board. The existing steering groups will therefore be redefined as Local Liaison Groups. Regular informal meetings and site tours will continue to be held with the Liaison Groups, subject to local demand. The purpose of these meetings will be to update local members on operational issues and to exchange information, but without any unnecessary bureaucracy. Officers, representatives of the Trusts and other stakeholders may also be invited to join these groups, to provide an opportunity for informal liaison.

The Board will comprise one member representative from each core funding partner. Partners will be entitled to nominate a substitute representative in case their main member representative is unable to attend. It is expected that the substitute will normally be a member of the Local Liaison Group.

The Business Development Officer will prioritise the flow of information to elected members and information will be provided using all available methods including social media.

The Officers Working Groups will manage the performance of the individual partnerships - monitoring delivery; resolving issues and identifying opportunities; and acting as a local support network for staff. There will be 3 separate Officers Working Groups - one for each partnership – which will meet three times per year initially with the aim to reduce to two meetings per year once the key changes have been embedded. They will be managed in a light touch way so as to minimize the administrative burden.

The revised governance model is as follows:



7.2 Countryside Partnership Board

The business process review noted that the members steering groups had *'no risk management role'*, *'no issue resolution role'* and *'minimal decision making function'*.

A risk and issue log will be prepared and presented to the Countryside Partnership Board for discussion at every meeting. A standard reporting format will be adopted for items requiring a decision and information reports will be avoided. One of the meetings will take the form of an Annual Partnership Meeting, to be held in September/October, which will provide an opportunity to engage opinion formers more widely; celebrate the achievements of the partnership over the previous year; and reinforce the value of the partnerships in advance of the local authority budget setting process.

The BPR also noted that there was *'little strategic direction provided by members'*, a *'focus on the detail with little clarity on higher level issues'* and *'meetings were retrospective in focus'*.

The improved performance reporting described above will ensure that meetings focus on higher level objectives, enable target setting and provide a forward-looking perspective.

- ✓ Prepare risk and issue log
- ✓ Adopt standard reporting format
- ✓ Avoid information reports
- ✓ Introduce Annual Partnership Meeting
- ✓ Set and monitor performance targets

7.3 Officers Working Group

The business process review made similar criticisms of the officers working group, and noted in addition *'little discussion of operational issues'*, *'no prior discussion and agreement of work programme'* and *'insufficient focus on finances and value for money'*.

Under the revised governance model there will be three officers working groups focusing on operational, financial and value for money issues. Their focus will be on monitoring implementation of the annual work programme; managing risks and issues; and reviewing performance targets. They will also have an advisory and problem-solving role and carry out regular horizon scanning to identify opportunities.

Officers who attend the working group tend to be countryside staff, who deliver countryside services within their Authority. It is clearly desirable that officers who are in a position to influence policy and budget setting within their Authority are fully

engaged, but it would not be appropriate for them to attend the officers working group. They will therefore be invited to attend the Annual Partnership Meeting.

- ✓ Monitor risk and issue log
- ✓ Adopt standard reporting format
- ✓ Monitor annual work programme
- ✓ Review performance targets
- ✓ Develop advisory/ problem solving role
- ✓ Regular horizon scanning
- ✓ Invite senior officers to Annual Partnership Meeting

7.4 Hosting

The business process review recommended longer term actions, as follows:

- *Undertake deeper analysis of implications of other legal forms, including taking legal advice*
- *Undertake detailed negotiation with potential hosts*
- *Assess TUPE and other legal/contractual issues*
- *Develop transition plan*

Setting up the projects on a more streamlined, integrated business footing, but still hosted by SCC, will allow an opportunity to assess whether that is their best future and if they could be transferred to a viable external service in future, if that is the agreed way forward. Some alternative forms may have legal implications for the existing Trusts.

All of the options for alternative hosting arrangements will be identified and evaluated once the reorganisation outlined above is complete. This will be a strategic project and as such will be directed by the Countryside Partnership Board, but it will be a major piece of work and it is likely that a project team will need to be established to take it forward.

8. Action Plan

| Reference | Action | Level | When |
|-----------|--|-------|------|
| 4.1 | Rationalise services | 1 | 3 |
| 4.2 | Define objectives | 1 | 3 |
| 4.3 | Focus on core business | 2 | 1 |
| 4.4 | Develop centre of excellence and innovation | 1 | 2 |
| 4.5 | Realign boundaries | 2 | 1 |
| 5.1 | Reorganise staff structure to focus on core delivery | 3 | 1 |
| 5.2.1 | Combine tools inventories | 3 | 2 |
| 5.2.2 | Standardise tool maintenance procedures | 3 | 2 |
| 5.2.3 | Combine financial systems/ adopt standard accounting practices | 3 | 1 |
| 5.2.4 | Review vehicle fleet | 3 | 2 |
| 5.2.5 | Integrate administration | 3 | 2 |
| 5.2.6 | Introduce modern working practices | 3 | 1 |
| 5.3.1 | Review role and competency profiles | 3 | 1 |
| 5.3.2 | Undertake training needs analysis | 2 | 2 |
| 5.3.3 | Train staff and volunteers to deliver new roles | 3 | 3 |
| 5.3.4 | Record volunteer skills and integrate into service | 3 | 2 |
| 5.3.5 | Prepare training plans for trainees and apprentices | 3 | 1 |
| 5.4.1 | Transfer data to open shared drive | 3 | 1 |
| 5.4.2 | Prepare IT strategy | 3 | 2 |
| 5.5.1 | Adopt formal project management techniques | 3 | 2 |
| 5.5.2 | Manage working hours and workloads | 3 | 3 |
| 5.5.3 | Review costs and commitments to grazing | 1 | 2 |

| | | | |
|-------|--|---|---|
| 6.1.1 | Complete SLA's with all partners | 2 | 1 |
| 6.1.2 | Arrange regular customer meetings | 2 | 1 |
| 6.1.3 | Include free time in work programmes | 3 | 1 |
| 6.1.4 | Prepare works agreements for all projects before works commence | 3 | 1 |
| 6.1.5 | Prepare combined accounts, including in-kind contributions | 3 | 1 |
| 6.1.6 | Prepare volunteer development plan | 2 | 2 |
| 6.2.1 | Create dedicated fundraising role/ coordinate grant applications | 3 | 1 |
| 6.2.2 | Agree schedule of charges | 1 | 2 |
| 6.3.1 | Record and report on completion of annual work programme | 2 | 2 |
| 6.3.2 | Conduct and report annual customer survey | 2 | 2 |
| 6.3.3 | Conduct and report annual volunteer satisfaction survey | 2 | 2 |
| 6.3.4 | Measure and report value added | 2 | 2 |
| 6.3.5 | Record and report proportion of public/ private land managed | 2 | 2 |
| 7.1 | Implement revised steering arrangements | 1 | 2 |
| 7.2.1 | Arrange Annual Partnership Meeting | 2 | 3 |
| 7.2.2 | Prepare and report risk and issue log | 2 | 2 |
| 7.2.3 | Adopt standard reporting format | 3 | 1 |
| 7.2.4 | Set and monitor performance targets | 3 | 1 |
| 7.3.1 | Prepare and monitor annual work programme | 3 | 1 |
| 7.3.2 | Develop advisory/ problem solving/ horizon scanning role | 2 | 1 |
| 7.3.4 | Invite senior officers to APM | 2 | 3 |
| 7.4.1 | Undertake analysis of alternative legal forms | 1 | 3 |

| | | | |
|--------------|--|----------|----------|
| 7.4.2 | Assess TUPE and other legal/contractual issues | 1 | 3 |
| 7.4.3 | Undertake detailed negotiation with potential hosts | 3 | 3 |
| 7.4.4 | Develop transition plan | 1 | 3 |

Key:

- Level 1 – Board**
- Level 2 – Officers Steering Group**
- Level 3 – Countryside Partnerships Team Leader**

When:

- 1 – April 2014**
- 2 – December 2014**
- 3 – April 2015**

Appendix A

An introduction to Countryside Management Partnerships in Surrey

1. Introduction

The concept of countryside management partnerships was developed by the Countryside Commission in the late 1970's as a way to improve access to the countryside and tackle environmental degradation around towns and cities. The concept was widely adopted and there are numerous partnerships throughout the country. Habitat-based partnerships were also established to promote the management of specific habitats.

The Countryside Commission initially contributed pump-prime funding and the partnerships were referred to as projects to reflect this. As the Countryside Commission funding was withdrawn, the funding shortfall was made up by income from third sector partners, private landowners and land-based grants.

2. Countryside partnerships in Surrey

In Surrey, the first countryside partnership was established in the Blackwater Valley. They were subsequently established in the urban fringe areas of Elmbridge; Epsom & Ewell; Mole Valley and London Borough of Kingston (Lower Mole); Reigate & Banstead; Tandridge and London Boroughs of Croydon and Sutton (Downlands); and Gatwick areas. A habitat-based partnership was also established in the south west of the county to preserve and enhance heathland throughout the county.

Details of the partnerships are as follows:

| Name | Established | Type | Based at | Hosted by |
|--|-------------|--------------------------------|----------|--------------------------|
| Blackwater Valley Partnership | 1979 | Urban fringe | Ash Lock | Hampshire County Council |
| Downlands Countryside Management Project | 1988 | Urban fringe/ habitat-based | Redhill | Surrey County Council |
| Gatwick Greenspace Partnership | 1994 | Urban fringe | Crawley | Sussex Wildlife Trust |
| Lower Mole Countryside Management | 1983 | Urban fringe | Epsom | Surrey County Council |

| | | | | |
|---------------------------|------|---------------|--------|-----------------------|
| Project | | | | |
| Surrey Heathlands Project | 1989 | Habitat-based | Merrow | Surrey County Council |

The core funding partners are as follows:

| <u>Blackwater Valley:</u> | Downlands: | Gatwick: | Lower Mole: | Heathlands: |
|--|---|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ash PC • Blackwater & Hawley TC • Farnham TC • Finchampstead PC • Guildford BC • Hampshire CC • Hart DC • Rushmoor BC • Sandhurst TC • Surrey CC • Surrey Heath BC • Wokingham DC • Yateley TC | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of London • LB Croydon • Reigate & Banstead BC • Surrey CC • LB Sutton • Tandridge DC | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BAA Gatwick • Crawley BC • Horley TC • Horsham DC • Mole Valley BC • Reigate & Banstead BC • Surrey CC • West Sussex CC | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of London • Elmbridge BC • Epsom & Ewell BC • LB Kingston • Mole Valley DC • Surrey CC | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guildford BC • Surrey CC • Waverley BC • Woking BC |

The partnerships are governed by steering groups, consisting of 1 or 2 elected members from each of the core partners, and meetings are held once or twice per year. In some cases there are also officers steering groups, which consist of parks and countryside officers from the partner Authorities, meeting at a similar frequency.

3. Aims of countryside management partnerships

The aims and operation of the partnerships have been reviewed many times over the years, but have remained substantially unchanged. The aim of urban fringe projects is to conserve and enhance the environment in partnership with local communities, providing a more accessible countryside experience with improved opportunities for wildlife and people. Their objectives typically include:

- **Access and public enjoyment:** improving access to the countryside for the peaceful enjoyment of all members of the public
- **Landscape:** conserving the character of the landscape in the local area and enhancing its quality

- **Biodiversity:** carrying out and promoting appropriate land management which increases biodiversity
- **Co-ordination:** acting as a focus for the co-ordination of initiatives to conserve and enhance the local countryside
- **Information:** increasing public knowledge and understanding of the countryside
- **Community involvement:** encouraging greater community involvement in the countryside
- **Sustainability:** demonstrating and promoting environmentally sustainable practices
- **Funding:** developing funding and partnership opportunities

Whilst some of these objectives could potentially be delivered in house, the key feature that sets countryside management partnerships apart is that they are able to operate at a landscape scale, working across boundaries on both private and public land.

4. Value for money

It is widely recognised that countryside management partnerships deliver exceptional value for money through their focussed and systematic use of volunteers. The use of volunteers has been widespread in the countryside management sector for many years and typically achieves 1 volunteer hour for every 2 hours of site staff time. Countryside Management Partnerships reverse this ratio, typically delivering about 2 volunteer hours for every hour of paid staff time. Because they have a separate 'brand' from their Local Authority funding partners, they are also able to attract volunteers to carry out administrative tasks, which the partners would struggle to do.

The table below shows the total amount of core funding and the proportion provide by Surrey County Council, together with the total volunteer hours:

| Name | Gross expenditure (£) | LA funding (£) | SCC budget (£) | Volunteer hours | Core staff (fte) | Core staff (hours) |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Blackwater Valley Partnership | 203146 | 111505 (55%) | 13086 (12%) | 9225 | 3.5 | 5871 |
| Downlands Countryside Management Project | 292090 | 123500 (42%) | 31800 (26%) | 14274 | 4 | 6710 |
| Gatwick Greenspace | 96900 | 53800 | 13400 | 4660 | 1.5 | 2516 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|--------|-----------------|----------------|-------|------|------|
| Partnership | | (55%) | (25%) | | | |
| Lower Mole Countryside Management Project | 157547 | 134344 (85%) | 45000 (33%) | 13118 | 3.13 | 5250 |
| Surrey Heathland Project | 102542 | 58565 (57%) | 28537 (44%) | n/a | 2 | 3355 |

Gross expenditure typically exceeds the Local Authority contribution by 30 – 40% as a result of grants and other income generation. The figures shown are the out turn for 2011/12. Income varies considerably and occasionally project funding is carried forward from year to year. Three of the partnerships have established separate charitable trusts, which are able to access grant funding and generate additional income that would not be available to the Local Authority partners direct.

The Surrey Heathland Project is included in this table for the sake of completeness, but as a habitat-based partnership it operates in a very different way. Heathland management involves the use of large-scale machinery and the main focus of the Project is on consultancy and project management work, much of which is unsuitable for volunteers. Volunteers are used where appropriate, for example checking livestock, but the core funding serves mainly to maintain a centre of expertise, which would not otherwise exist.

Appendix B

BPR Project Brief

Introduction

As part of our specification we scoped the BPR to remain focused on:

- Identifying key **strengths** of the existing governance & working arrangements
- Highlighting **weaknesses** of existing arrangements
- Proposing **opportunities** to improve performance, reporting & quality assurance
- Assessing any risks or **threats** associated with the projects ceasing to exist
- Considering how the projects can help deliver local & **strategic planning** objectives
- Exploring the validity of the '**trust status**' option originally proposed
- Recommending an appropriate '**host**' to sustain projects in the short & medium term
- Providing a specific, measureable, achievable, realistic & timely **plan for change**

Strengths

1. What are the strengths of existing governance & working arrangements?
2. Is there clear & effective governance & funding streams?
3. Is there appropriate & efficient working arrangements?
4. Do the existing arrangements deliver effectively for partners & stakeholders?
5. How do the CMPs compare with other similar organisations?
6. How do partners rank these strengths in terms of importance for delivery?

Weaknesses

1. What are the weaknesses of existing governance & working arrangements?
2. If governance & funding streams not clear & effective – why not?
3. If working arrangements are not efficient & effective – why not?
4. If the existing arrangements do not deliver for partners & stakeholders – why not?
5. If the CMPs do not compare well with other organisations – why not?
6. How do partners rank their weaknesses in terms of priority to resolve?

Opportunities

1. What alternative governance models and working arrangements could we consider?
2. What options are available for cost sharing across the three CMPs?
3. What opportunities are there for generating any or more income?
4. Are there any appropriate ways for reducing costs or planning cost savings?
5. How can we make the CMPs more financially secure and sustainable?

Threats

1. What risks or threats face the funding partners if the CMPs cease to exist?
2. What are the best & worst case scenario of doing nothing about these threats?
3. What other issues (staff, capital assets, legal agreements, existing grants etc.) are involved in terminating the existing and future agreement?
4. Who will deliver the existing grant schemes subject to legal agreements?
5. Could the CMPs survive the domino effect of individual partners withdrawing?
6. What are the actual implications of SCC reducing funding & charging for offices?

Quality assurance

1. How is quality assurance conducted & what procedures are already in place?
2. What is the consequence of non-compliance with quality assurance?
3. Are there measurable and realistic targets in place for monitoring performance?
4. If yes - how does current performance compare against existing targets?
5. If no – why not & how are the CMPs currently demonstrating their performance?
6. What are appropriate targets to be set for the CMPs in the future?
7. Are there effective mechanisms in place for reporting progress to stakeholders?
8. Is the information reported to stakeholders clear, concise, accurate, reliable & relevant?

Strategic planning

1. Why is the service needed by partners – statutory or discretionary?
2. Why are the partners involved with the CMPs – what are their strategic aims?
3. How well are the CMPs delivering their partner's strategic aims & objectives?

4. How could the CMPs improve their delivery of partner's strategic aims & objectives?
5. What is the potential for CMPs to deliver green infrastructure planning objectives?
6. Where do the CMPs see their place in the world with regard to strategic initiatives?
7. Is there a suitable alternative model for the future legal/constitutional agreement?

Trust status

1. Are the recommendations about transferring to trust status in SCC's PVR report valid?
2. Where are the examples of a similar trust model being used successfully?
3. What are the actual unique advantages of adopting trust status?
4. What are the disadvantages of trust status?
5. Are there examples of similar trust models failing – and why did they fail?
6. What are the implications of not being able to achieve trust status?

Host body

1. Who are the bodies potentially available to host the CMPs in the future?
2. Where are the examples of a transfer of host being delivered successfully?
3. What are the pros & cons for each potential host?
4. What are critical factors that will influence success or failure of a transfer?
5. Are these bodies actually interested in hosting the CMPs in the future?
6. What are the implications of not being able to find a willing host?

Plan for change

1. What viable alternative structures & arrangements are we going to recommend?
2. What form of legal/constitutional agreement are we going to adopt in future?
3. Are we going to create a protected contingency fund to cover future liabilities?
4. What is the outline of the plan for implementing the recommendations for change?
5. What are our SMART objectives for this programme of change?

6. What are the timelines, milestones, deliverable targets & risks associated with plan?
7. What, if any, additional resources will be needed to deliver change?
8. Who is going to manage the process of change?

NB: These 'big questions' have been collated by the Supervising Officer from various meetings conducted over the last few months since the PVR Report was issued by Surrey County Council. They have been circulated to the Review Team and Sponsors and their feedback incorporated into this document. This represents a collection of questions about what partners want to know before agreeing recommendations for the final report, albeit that some may need to be included into a second phase of review because of the restriction of time.

Appendix C

Output from Business Process Review

Review Overview

Purpose

- To carry out a Business Process Review (BPR) of the three CMPs to identify what improvements could be made to their governance, working arrangements and financial sustainability.

Aim

- To ensure the sustainability of the CMPs so that funding partners continue to achieve their strategic aims, while developing the relevance of the CMPs and improving the value of their services to those partners, and local people and communities.

Scope

- Identifying key strengths of the existing governance & working arrangements
- Highlighting weaknesses of existing arrangements
- Proposing opportunities to improve performance, reporting & quality assurance
- Assessing any risks/threats from doing nothing or following the existing proposal
- Considering how the projects can help deliver local and strategic planning objectives i.e. green infrastructure
- Exploring the validity of the 'trust status' option originally proposed
- Recommending an appropriate 'host' to sustain the projects in the short & medium term
- Providing a specific, measureable, achievable, realistic and timely programme of change

Methodology

Combination of:

- Interviews with staff
- Interviews with Officers
- Meetings with Members
- Meetings with Trusts

- Meeting with volunteer workers in the field
- Meetings with other CM organisations
- Desktop analysis research of current practices
- Desktop research of other CM practices
- Interviews with Senior Managers
- Workshops with PM

Purpose and Aims

The Management Project aims to tackle urban fringe problems through a range of practical projects that can be implemented using private and volunteer labour, will be cost effective and promote local goodwill and interest. The aims of the project can be summarised as:

- To increase public knowledge and understanding of the countryside
- To safeguard the interests of agriculture and forestry
- To improve public access to the countryside for informal outdoor recreation
- To protect landscape features and enhance the natural beauty of the area
- To conserve areas of natural history and archaeological features.

Are the CMPs Fit for Purpose?

Findings and Observations

Is there a focus on customer needs and strategic priorities?

- There is a lack of understanding of the role of the funding Authorities as the customer
- The purpose of CMPs not defined or articulated nor fully and equally understood by all Partners
- Work programmes not defined or directed by Partners, including financial sign off
- Primary focus is on volunteer groups rather than Partners and, in some cases, the wider community
- CMP plans do not recognise strategic priorities of Partners

- There is a recognition from many Partners that professional knowledge and advice is generally good
- Mixed perception on quality and usefulness of the practical services provided
- There are no measures of customer satisfaction
- Customer meetings are inconsistent and irregular
- In some cases Partners would like an increase in CMP services

Do the CMPs provide an appropriate level of service and value for money to the Partners?

- Purchaser: supplier relationship not recognised
- Service provision not agreed through any formal structure
- Work plans and priorities often identified and then carried out by CMPs, with minimal references to customer
- Performance not measured or reported
- Customer satisfaction appears to be mixed
- Customer relationship management mixed
- Some partners receiving significantly higher level of service than others
- Lack of performance information and no KPIs
- Lack of clear cost or budget information therefore neither customers nor staff are able to assess VFM
- Lack of commercial approach
- Focus on income gathering
- Focus on inputs and outputs rather than outcomes

Is work managed efficiently, with modern working practices?

People Based Issues

- Individuals demonstrate enthusiasm and commitment to the work the projects undertake
- Managers and staff working excessive hours
- Little/no cross project communication, work and little sharing of resources
- Need to develop set of competencies
- Quality of staff management mixed (e.g. staff meetings)

- Poor planning, coordination and balancing of individuals' workloads
- Some communication issues within teams
- Management of volunteers an on-going issue
- Uncertainty causing stress among staff

Practice Based Issues

- Some entrepreneurial skills
- Poor financial management including poor future planning and financial transparency
- Minimal management support provided in difficult financial environment
- No quality indicators
- No KPIs or other outcome based measures
- Multiple projects without appropriate levels of transparency
- Lack of IT capability
- Inconsistent use of ICT
- Lack of knowledge management and sharing
- Lack of commercial/business skills

Do the governance arrangements ensure that the needs and ambitions of Partners are fully met?

Members

- Infrequent meetings – but time and effort needs to be proportionate
- Little strategic direction provided by Members
- Focus on the detail with little clarity on higher level issues
- Meetings retrospective focus
- In some cases sufficient knowledge of the work of the CMPs
- Lots of personal goodwill, but with little evidence of wider Cabinet influence
- Reliance on individuals rather than sound business principles
- Insufficient clarity on finances and vfm
- No risk management role
- No issue resolution role

- Minimal decision making function

Officers

- Terms of Reference and format of Joint Partner meetings not defined
- Focus on the detail with little clarity on higher level issues
- Little discussion of operational issues
- No prior discussion and agreement of work programme
- No risk management
- Insufficient focus on finances and vfm
- Meetings focus on the past
- Little use made of advisory/problem solving function of the Officer group
- Meetings infrequent, with excessive and irrelevant reporting
- Opportunities for the future neither raised nor discussed
- Need for frequent, structured individual Partner meetings

Volunteers and Trusts

- Highly localised
- Highly motivated and vocal
- Key supporters of CMPs
- Provide significant funding streams
- Have choice to allocate funds to others
- Access to grants
- Plays into Big Society agenda
- No stated ambition to grow beyond current structure and size (e.g. do not wish to take on staff)
- Not only voluntary/charitable organisations operating in localities
- Increase in volunteering in some localities
- Increasing need for management of volunteer labour
- Trust/volunteers primary point of contact with little contact with communities beyond

Key Issues

Working Practices

- Structurally too small, fragmented, unfocussed and insular
- Lack of commercial practice and skills within projects
- Volunteers passionate about the work in their locality but no wish to increase remit

Governance

- Roles, responsibilities and TOR of Member and Officer Groups unclear, therefore meetings lack purpose and usefulness
- There is no clear remit for future work from Authorities

Finances

- Facing a radical reduction in funding from 2012-13, including some Authorities total withdrawal, making projects unviable
- Legacy of funding commitments and liabilities into the future
- CMPs are valued by some funding Partners, but goodwill not supported with long term financial commitment

Future Options

- Do nothing
- Retained by public sector operating under SLAs
- Charity/Trust Status
- Various Legal Forms
- Individual Options
- Abolish

Do Nothing

Pros

- Familiar
- Flexible

- Least short term disruption for staff and volunteers
- Meets local issues and Big Society agenda
- Good reputation within communities
- Success in securing grant funding

Cons

- Financially unsustainable and therefore likely to fold
- 'Hand to mouth' leading to uncertainty among staff and volunteers
- Fails to meet funding partner objectives
- Mixed Member buy in
- Unsatisfactory governance arrangements
- Insularity leads to lack of resilience
- Lack of resilience leads to excessive working hours and little opportunities for development

Partnership Operating under SLA

Pros

- Requirements, including outcomes would be defined by funding partners
- CMPs have clarity over funding and what is required of them
- Medium to long term assurance over funding and delivery
- Clear governance arrangements
- Flexible call off (Dependent on partner needs)
- Transparent arrangement
- Deliver value for money
- Focus of delivery
- Longer term security

Cons

- Current arrangement may not have capability to deliver agreed outcomes and future needs
- Administrative effort
- Set up could be bureaucratic

- Projects will continue to operate at a small scale with a tendency towards insularity.

Trust/Charitable Status

Independent Trusts

Pros

- Familiar and established legal structure
- Charitable status delivers financial benefits
- Separate to LAs

Cons

- Current Trusts have no wish to take on staff and other liabilities
- Will need a subsidiary company to trade without restrictions, adding to complexity and costs
- Attaining charitable status lengthy and significant set up costs (e.g. legal fees)
- Limited size and on going full costs question viability and sustainability

Trust/Charitable Status

Arrangement with Existing Trust(s)

Pros

- Familiar, tried-and-tested legal structure
- Charitable status delivers some financial benefits
- Greater resilience and sustainable business model
- Larger Trust gives economy of scale and access to proven viable business
- Access to career progressions for individuals
- Customers have access to a wider range of skills, knowledge and services
- Join up with other Surrey CC arrangements

Cons

- Trusts would have no wish to take on liabilities
- Potential TUPE transfers
- Need to retain link with localism agenda

- Need for intense negotiation/consultation in order to make transition within limited timescale
- Need to conduct due diligence to ensure CMPs not at future risk

Legal Forms

Pros

- Has mechanisms for holding income and assets in trust on behalf of its members
- Free from LA control and restrictions (including staff salaries etc.)
- Offers optimal legal basis for trading
- Relatively quick and cheap to register, with commensurate costs for accounting and reporting year-on-year.

Cons

- Doesn't have the same tax benefits (can only be achieved via delivery outsourced to charitable partner)
- Profits subject to tax
- Less well-known legal format
- Potentially in competition with other private suppliers
- Question how it would play into Big Society agenda
- Question over future governance structure and ownership
- Potentially high set up costs and time (e.g. legal costs)

Abolish

Pros

- Partners able to reallocate funding to other work or organisations
- Potential cost savings
- Quick and easy

Cons

- Potentially long term costs
- Possible loss of legacy of past work, long term degradation of environment
- Possible resistance from Members and others

- Loss of model of good practice (partnership working, Big Society etc.)
- Possible longer term discontent from communities
- Remaining liabilities need to be met

Key Recommendations

Delivery of Local and Strategic Planning Objectives

- It is recommended that CMPs develop a 5 year business plan which would include agreed purpose, vision, mission and values of the CMPs, with underpinning high level objectives. In addition detailed objectives would describe the outcomes of the work programme.
- As part of the business planning process, it is recommended that CMPs work with Partners to ensure that local and strategic planning and other key objectives are met.
- It is recommended that appropriate 'light touch' KPIs be developed to enable on-going monitoring of how objectives are being met.
- It is recommended that the establishment of a structured annual reporting cycle would check performance and provide an opportunity to adapt plans and priorities as appropriate.

Improving Performance, Reporting and Quality Assurance

It is recommended that an agreement be developed with funding partners to include the following elements:

- Minimum service requirements
- Options for additional services
- Programme of works
- Deliverables
- KPIs
- Quality indicators
- Financial reporting, funding and pricing
- Reporting systems and protocols
- Comms (including Partner meetings)

It is envisaged that all elements would form the backbone of a future SLA or contract.

It is recommended that the roles, functions and activities of Member and Officer Groups be reviewed and revised in order to better support CMP activities. In particular, Member and Officer Groups should review:

- Terms of reference, to include an articulated purpose and description of responsibilities
- Meeting frequency and priority
- Meeting format and protocols (i.e. information, reporting, advice and decisions)
- Communications
- Roles, functions and meetings outside Group framework

It is recommended that Members and Officers consider the benefits of joint meetings or part meetings in order to ensure consistency in understanding and decision making

Hosting

8. While a range of differing hosting arrangements could be considered for the individual projects, it is recommended that all the projects remain with a single host in order to gain the benefits of working within a wider organisation and to provide breadth, flexibility and resilience.

9. It is recommended that the contract should be managed and coordinated from within Surrey County Council but working with Partner organisations

10. It is recommended that further exploratory discussions take place with both Surrey Wildlife Trust and Groundwork to assess the following:

- Whether all the projects would fit into a future arrangement (i.e. define what would be in and out of scope)
- What financial structures would need to be put in place
- What the financial implications of any transfer of work would be to either organisation
- What organisational and/or structural impact is likely to be of any arrangements
- What contractual arrangements would need to be put in place
- What the contract would include and how it would be managed
- What governance arrangements would need to be put in place

11. It is also recommended that the horizon continued to be scanned to identify other potential organisations suitable for hosting.

Programme of Change

Issues

- Timescales are extremely tight
- Pace of change programme to be dictated by reduction/withdrawal of funding for 2013-14.
- Requirement for full project planning and management to meet tight timescales
- Multiple activities required, with initial 'pinch point' April – July 2012
- Need to ensure appropriate resources and skills are in place
- Comms plan to run alongside all technical activities
- Need to maintain 'business as usual' throughout transition – Project Managers will need support

Immediate Actions

- Secure agreement of findings, next steps and timescales with key stakeholders
- Agree single final report for distribution
- Communicate outcomes to all stakeholders, including staff
- Further detailed discussions with all funding Authorities
- Define resource and skills needs for next stages and agree with contributing Partners
- Appoint project board, PM and develop detailed project plan

Medium Term Actions

- Develop, agree and implement communication plan (internal and external perspective)
- Develop, agree and implement revised governance structures and arrangements
- Develop 5 year business plan
- Undertake negotiation of SLA details with Funding Partners, making explicit links to Authorities priorities
- Write first draft of SLA and test with partners
- Review financial protocols, structures and processes to ensure transparency
- Undertake training needs analysis and put provision in place
- Wrap up OSD project

Longer Term Actions

- Review and approve of 5 year business plan to ensure fit for purpose
- Undertake deeper analysis of implications of other Legal forms, including taking legal advice
- Undertake detailed negotiation with potential hosts
- Assess TUPE and other legal/contractual issues
- Develop transition plan(s)
- Go live

PARK MANAGEMENT PLANS

| | |
|---|---|
| Head of Service/Contact: | Ian Dyer, Head of Operational Services |
| Urgent Decision?(yes/no) | No |
| If yes, reason urgent decision required: | N/A |
| Annexes/Appendices (attached): | Annex 1 - Poole Road Visitor Survey Annex 2 - Long Grove Park Visitor Survey Annex 3 - Poole Road Management Plan Annex 4 - Long Grove Management Plan Annex 5 - Poole Road Action Plan Annex 6 - Long Grove Action Plan |
| Other available papers (not attached): | None |

Report summary

This report presents the Committee with five-year park management/action plans for Long Grove Park and Poole Road Recreation Ground, and the results of the recent visitor surveys for both parks.

Recommendation (s)

- (1) To receive and note the results of the visitor surveys for Long Grove Park and Poole Road Recreation Ground.**
- (2) To receive and approve the 2018- 2023 park management plans and the actions set out for both Long Grove Park and Poole Road Recreation Ground.**

1 Implications for the Council's Key Priorities, Service Plans and Sustainable Community Strategy

- 1.1 This report links directly to the Council's key priority of keeping our Borough clean and green by providing quality parks, nature reserves and other public spaces that are safe, pleasant and well maintained.

- 1.2 The Community and Wellbeing Committee has a target to approve park management plans for Poole Road Recreation Ground and Long Grove Park.

2 Background

- 2.1 Although Epsom Common Nature Reserve has held Green Flag status since 2007, it was not until 2012 that we made the decision to apply for Green Flag Awards for Ewell Court Park and Nonsuch, followed by Alexandra Recreation Ground and Rosebery Park in 2013.
- 2.2 In 2016, the Nonsuch Park Joint Management Committee took the decision to switch from the Green Flag Award to the South & South East in Bloom Award.
- 2.3 The objective of the Green Flag Award scheme is to encourage the provision of good quality public parks and green spaces managed in environmentally sustainable ways.
- 2.4 Due to financial and manpower constraints not all parks are entered in to external award schemes. However, it is our intention that all major parks will have a management plan and benefit from the same standard of maintenance as those that hold the award.
- 2.5 At the heart of any application for a Green Flag Award is a management plan. As well as documenting the balance between all the priorities and policies that apply to a particular site, it identifies the contribution the green space is making towards the Council's wider strategic aims.
- 2.6 For the purposes of the Green Flag Award the park management plans run for a period of five years before they are fully updated. However, if changes or challenges occur which influence the way we manage the parks, the plans can be amended throughout the term to ensure they are useful, working documents.
- 2.7 Our methodology for creating the plans starts with conducting a visitor survey so that we can obtain feedback from both users and non-users of the park.
- 2.8 Non-user feedback helps determine what stops people from the using the park and can provide ideas for encouraging certain groups to visit parks in the Borough.

3 The Visitor Survey

- 3.1 The visitor surveys for Poole Road Recreation Ground and Long Grove Park were conducted during October 2018.

- 3.2 When we launch a park visitor survey, the survey is available to complete over a period of two to three weeks. Throughout this duration, the Rangers distribute post-card size fliers that invite people to take part in the survey online. The fliers are hand delivered to strategic locations near each park, such as libraries, schools etc. In addition, paper copies of the survey are hand delivered to 1200 households near each park. The response rate for returned paper surveys for Poole Road was 26% and for Long Grove, 19%. The online returns for Long Grove Park were 11% and for Poole Road 27%. The top age group returning surveys were in the 35-44 age bracket for both parks.
- 3.3 The results of the surveys (attached at **Annex 1 and 2**) indicate some key themes, most notably the desire for more flower/shrub beds, play facilities and increased security. A recurring theme amongst all the park surveys we have conducted to date is the need for toilet facilities.
- 3.4 In general, the respondents to both surveys were satisfied with the overall upkeep of the park and in particular the maintenance of the grassed areas.
- 3.5 The results of both the surveys show that most people visit on foot, which reveals that these spaces are well used by the local community.
- 3.6 The top reason for visiting Long Grove is to use the play facilities and Poole Road, to go for a walk.
- 3.7 The Streetcare Manager would like to thank the Ranger Service, and the Consultation Team for their hard work in preparing, distributing and analysing the results of the visitor surveys.

4 The Park Management Plans

- 4.1 In line with our target under this year's Service Delivery Plan, we have produced park management plans for Poole Road Recreation Ground (see **Annex 3**) and Long Grove Park (see **Annex 4**) along with Action Plans which have been informed by the results of the visitor survey (see **Annex 5 and 6**).
- 4.2 The Park Management Plans set out the history of the park and then go on to explain in more detail how the park is managed on a daily basis covering the criteria set out in the Green Flag Award Scheme.
- 4.3 Action plans are largely driven by the results of the visitor survey. The plans cover a five-year period with annual reviews and updates. The primary purpose of the action plan is to ensure that targets are focussed and objectives stay on track.

- 4.4 Some of the items on the action plans are aspirational and require significant capital or external investment. We feel that it is important to include these ideas so that they can be considered for any internal or external funding opportunities that become available.
- 4.5 The action plans also explain why some actions are not achievable. A good example of this is the provision of toilet facilities in parks. This request always features highly on visitor surveys and feedback from Green Flag judges, but is costly to provide. However, on occasions it may be possible to re-open toilets that already exist in the park if this is linked to the provision of a café facility, which will take on the responsibility for their upkeep.

5 Financial and Manpower Implications

- 5.1 All actions stated in the park management plans include an awareness of current funding constraints.
- 5.2 Where items cannot be completed due to manpower resources or funding, this is explained.
- 5.3 There is a significant amount of officer time dedicated to producing, distributing and analysing the visitor surveys and in the production and updating of the park management plans.
- 5.4 **Chief Finance Officer's comments:** None for the purposes of this report.

6 Legal Implications (including implications for matters relating to equality)

- 6.1 Other than general maintenance liabilities, there are no further implications arising from this report.
- 6.2 **Monitoring Officer's comments:** There are no legal issues arising from this report.

7 Partnerships

- 7.1 At present, neither Poole Road nor Long Grove Park have an established 'Friends of' Group, however, both Parks have very active Park Communities in particular hirers of the Harrier Centre at Poole Road and staff at Southfields School and Cherry Field Nursery based in Long Grove Park.
- 7.2 Throughout the course of the year, Officers have worked with all stakeholders to understand their issues, concerns and aspirations for future management of these important green spaces.
- 7.3 A key objective for the Ranger Service over the course of the coming year is to encourage general park users to become actively involved by forming a recognised 'Friends of' group for both Poole Road Recreation Ground and Long Grove Park.

8 Risk Assessment

- 8.1 There is risk of not being able to complete tasks set out in the action plan section of the parks management plan. However, annual updates are provided to ensure that tasks are monitored and solutions can be found where possible to keep on track.

9 Conclusion and Recommendations

- 9.1 The Committee is asked to receive and note the results of the visitor surveys for Long Grove Park and Pool Road Recreation Ground.
- 9.2 The Committee is requested to receive and approve the 2018- 2023 park management plans and the actions set out for both Long Grove Park and Poole Road Recreation Ground.

Ward(s) Affected: Court Ward; Ewell Court Ward;

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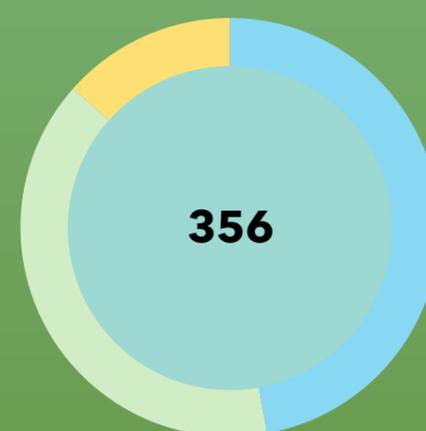
POOLE ROAD RECREATION GROUND VISITOR SURVEY 2018



Date sent to respondents



Deadline



Responses received

Please contact Adama Roberts or Craig Salmon in the Policy, Performance & Governance Team should you require more information on the Poole Road Recreation Ground Visitor Survey Report 2018

Email: contactus@epsom-ewell.gov.uk

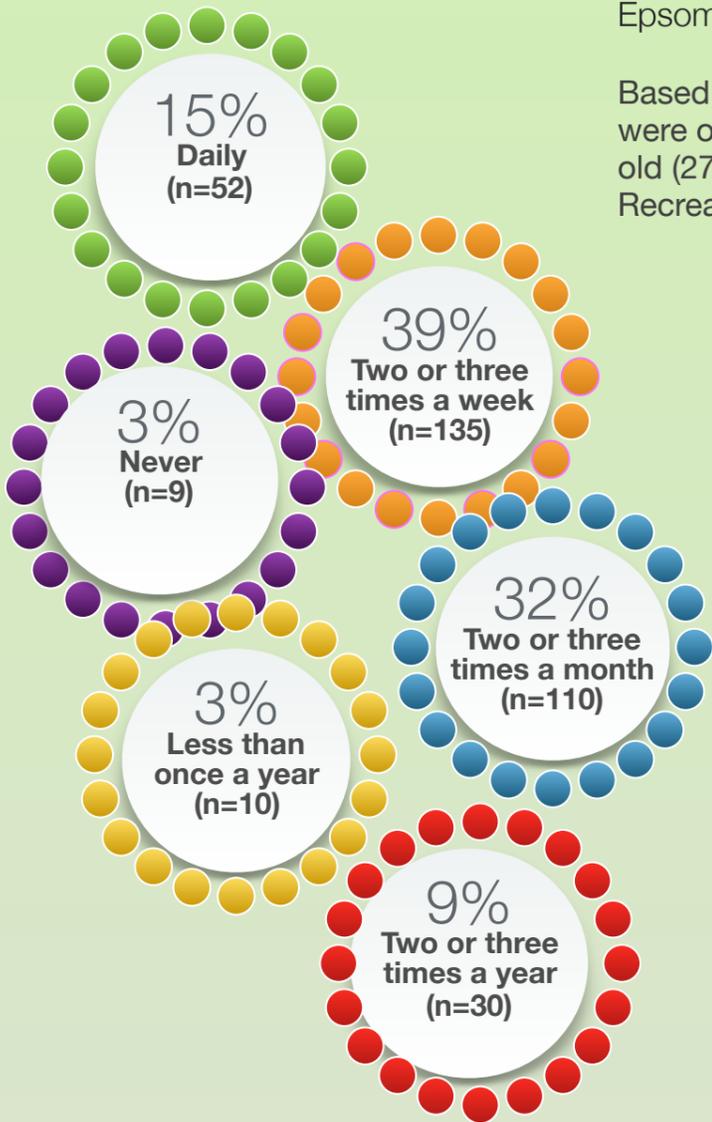


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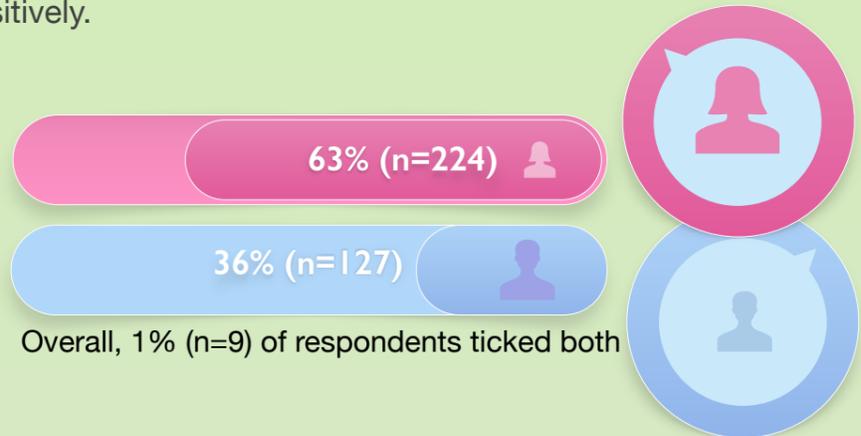
Summary of main findings

How often do you visit Poole Road Recreation Ground?

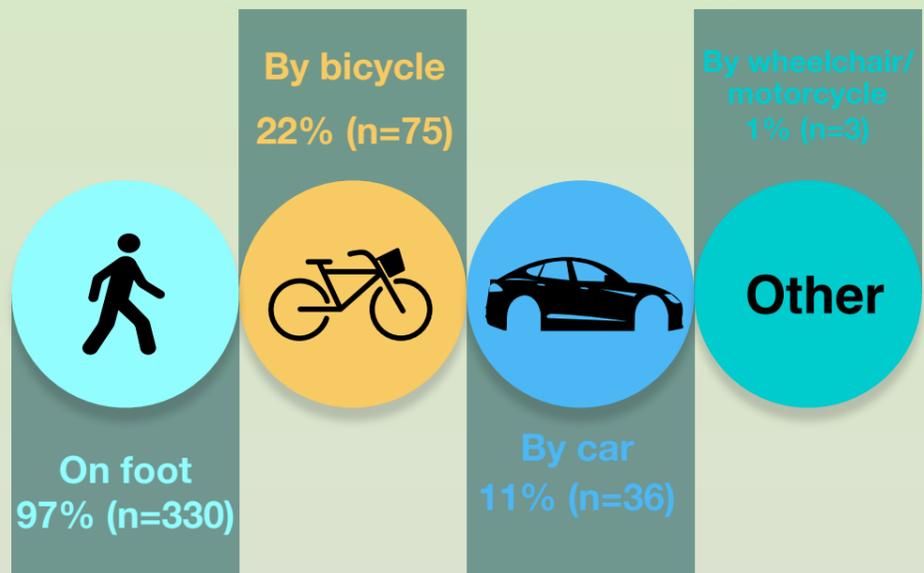


The survey ran from 01 October to 19 October 2018. It was available online and in paper format. In total, 356 responses were received; 89% were paper based (n=316) and 11% were submitted online (n=39). It was sent to properties within the area and postcard-size flyers were distributed to: Bourne Hall; Town Hall; Ebbisham Centre, Danetree School and The Harrier Centre. The survey was also published on our website and via our social media platforms ie Twitter: @EpsomEwellBC and on Facebook: www.facebook.com/EpsomEwellBC and was circulated to councillors.

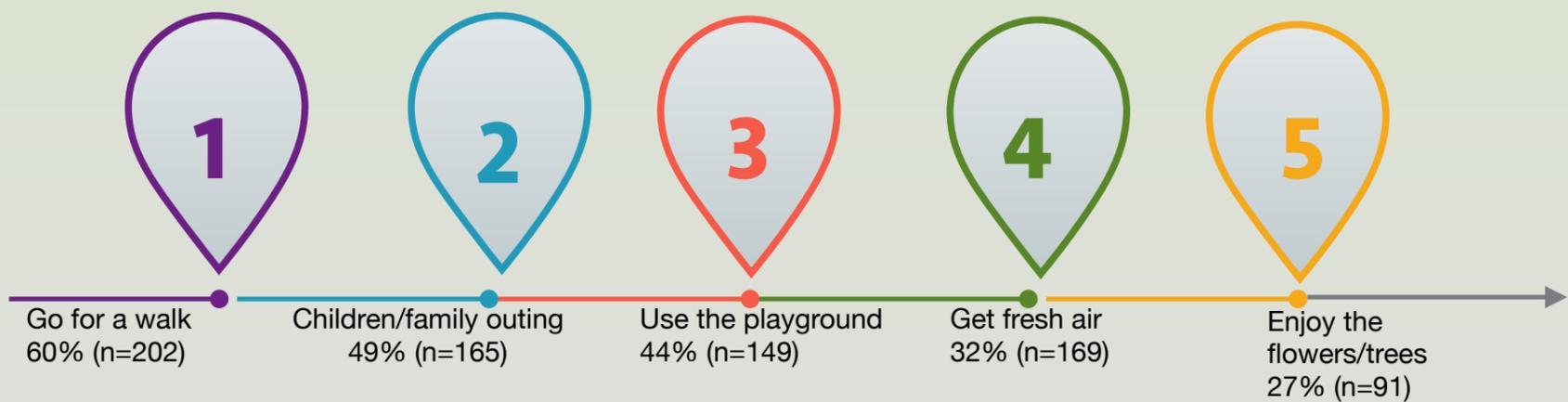
Based on age groupings: 50% (n=170/339) were under 55 years old and 50% (n=169/339) were over 55 years old. The largest portion of respondents were between 35yrs and 44yrs old (27%, n=92/339). Eight in ten respondents (81% n=262) rated the Poole Road Recreation Ground positively.



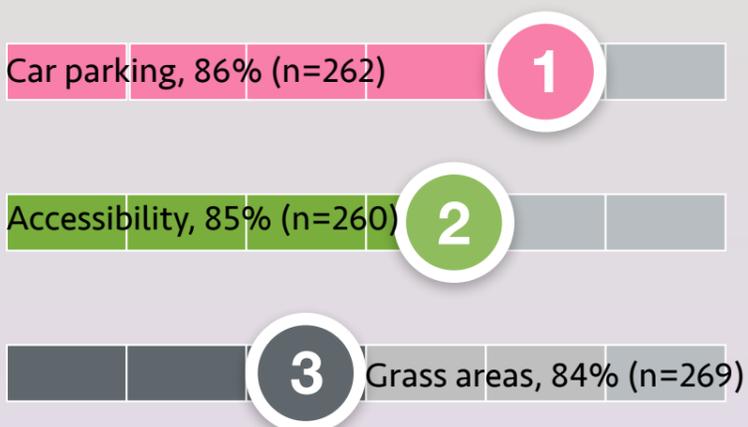
How do you normally travel to the grounds? Respondents ticked all that applied



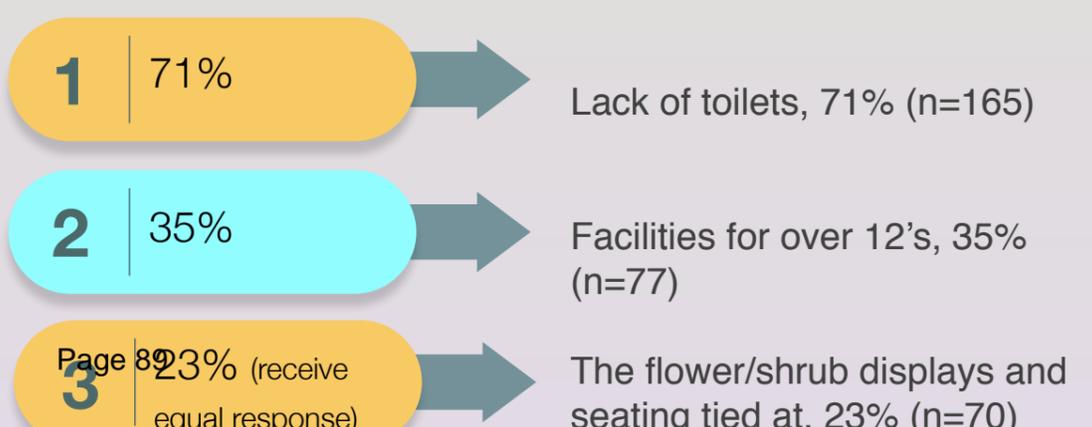
Why do you visit the park? Top five responses provided Respondents ticked all that applied



Top three positively rated aspects of the grounds



Top three negatively rated aspects of the grounds





Poole Road Recreation Ground Survey

Your views wanted! Please take part by...
Friday, 19 October 2018

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council is conducting a survey to ensure Poole Road Recreation Ground meets the needs of local residents, visitors and is developed in a sustainable way.

We want you to tell us how the grounds can be made even better by visiting our website via the link below and take part.

www.epsom-ewell.gov.uk

Poole Road Recreation Ground is situated in West Ewell. The grounds with its athletics track, tennis courts, basketball courts, football fields, boxing club and gymnastics club is a popular park for sporting enthusiasts. The park also has a large playground and a pavilion with hall to hire. Poole Road Recreation Ground is a dog-free park.

The survey was conducted by the Council on behalf of its Operations Management Team. The team is responsible for ensuring the grounds meets the needs of local residents, visitors and develops in a sustainable way.

Questionnaire development:

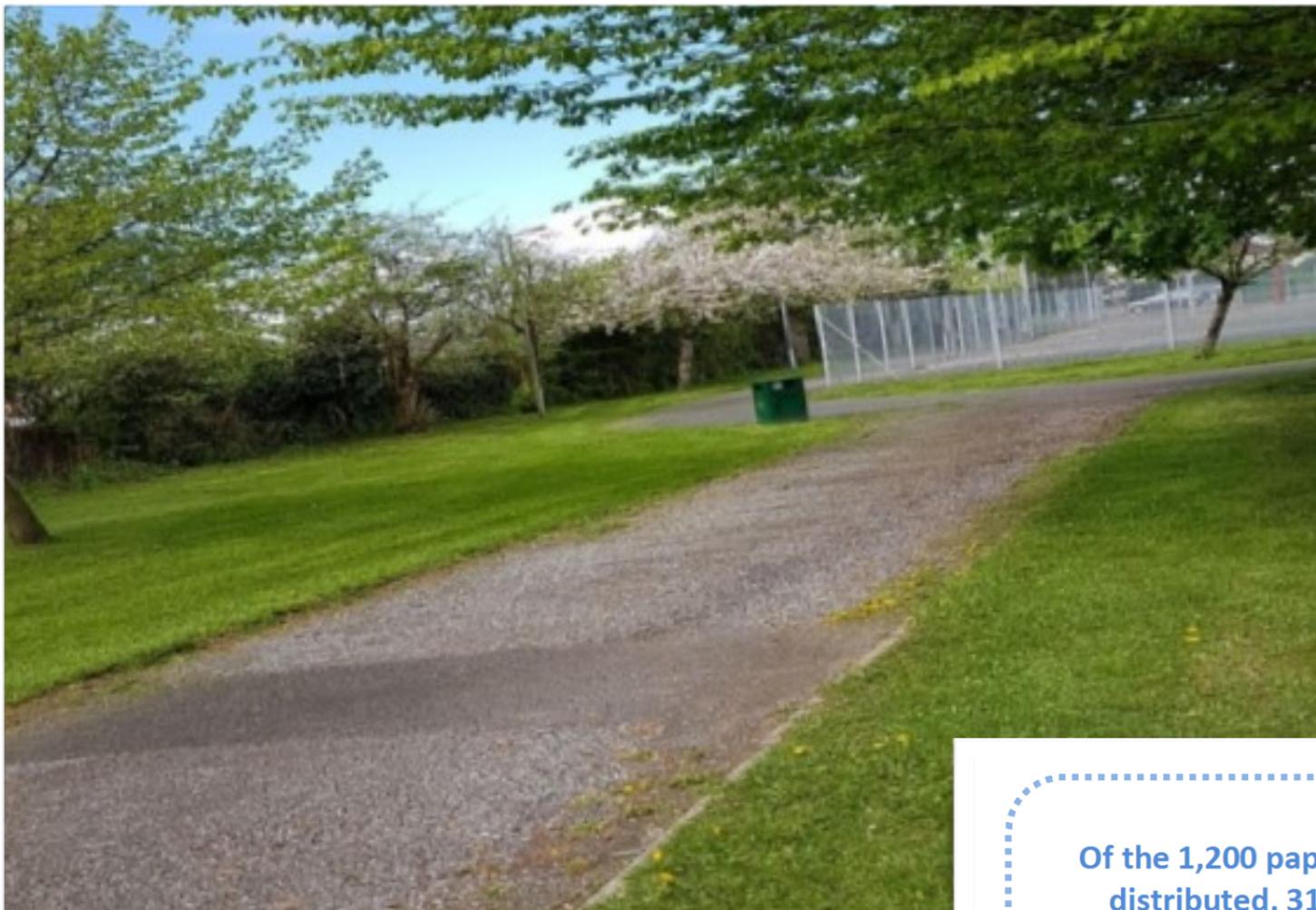
The questions were developed in liaison with the Streetcare Manager and the Patrol Ranger. Areas include:

- Frequency of visiting the grounds
- Method of travel to the grounds
- Reasons for visiting the grounds
- Opinions on various aspects of the grounds
- Improving visitor experience and encouraging more use of the park, or staying for longer.



Methodology:

- The survey ran from 01 October to 19 October 2018 - a period of three weeks. The survey was available in paper and electronic formats:
 - 1,200 paper surveys were distributed to properties in surrounding residential roads. 1,000 postcard-size flyers were distributed to:
 - Town Hall
 - Bourne Hall
 - Ebbisham Centre
 - Danetree School, and
 - The Harrier Centre.
 - The electronic version was featured on:
 - The Council's main webpage: <https://www.epsom-ewell.gov.uk/>
 - Twitter: @EpsomEwellBC, and
 - circulated to councillors.



Of the 1,200 paper copies distributed, 316 were returned - resulting in a paper-copy response rate of 26%

In total, 356 survey responses were received; of which 316 were paper based (89%, n=316/356) and 39 were online submissions (11%, n=39/356). Of the 1,200 paper copies distributed, 316 were returned - resulting in a paper-copy response rate of 26% (n=316/1,200).

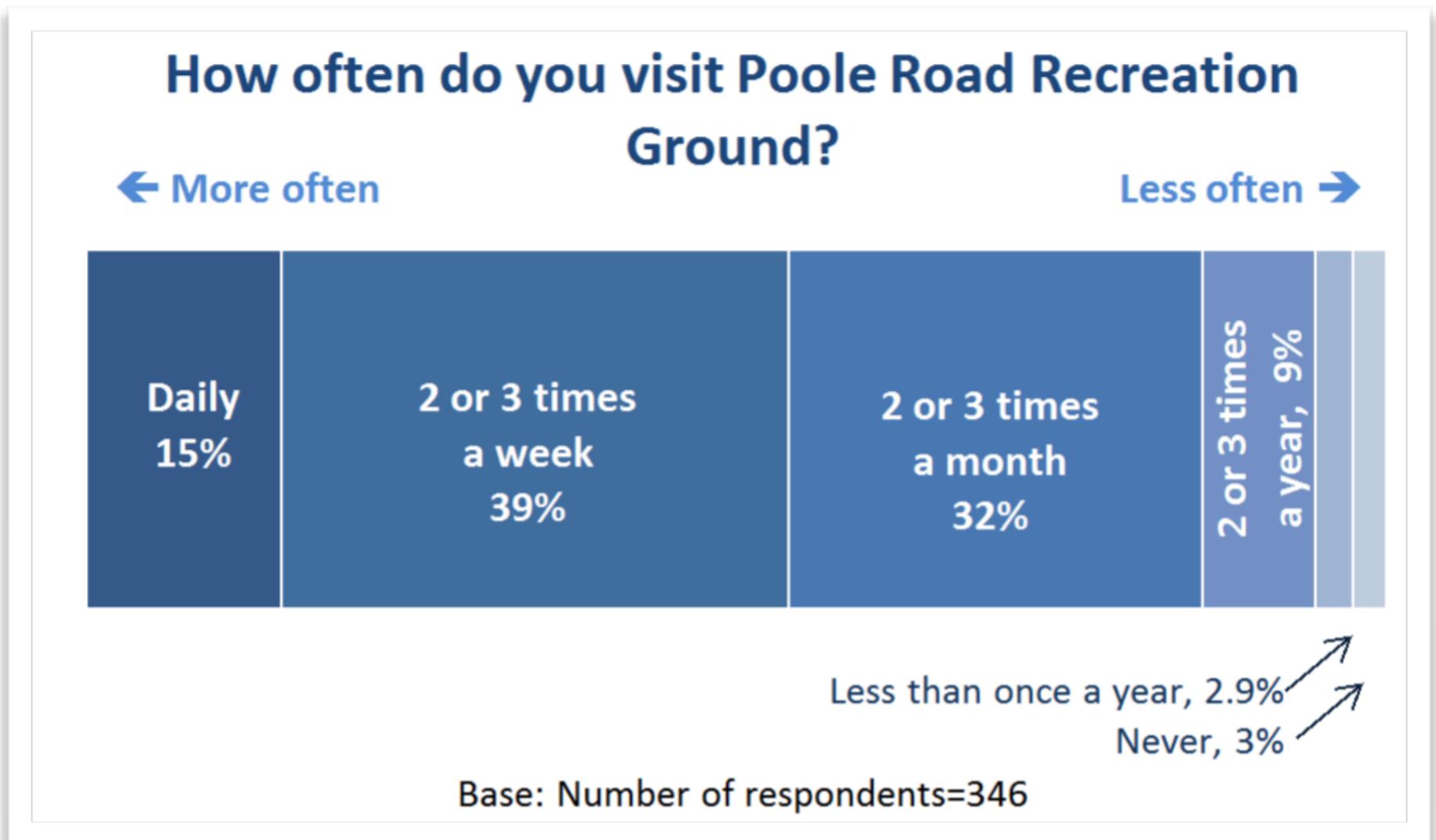
The figures in this report are calculated as a proportion of respondents who answered each question – excluding 'No Reply' or 'No Opinion' responses. Percentages in a particular chart might not always add up to 100% due to rounding, or because a respondent was allowed to give more than one answer to the question.



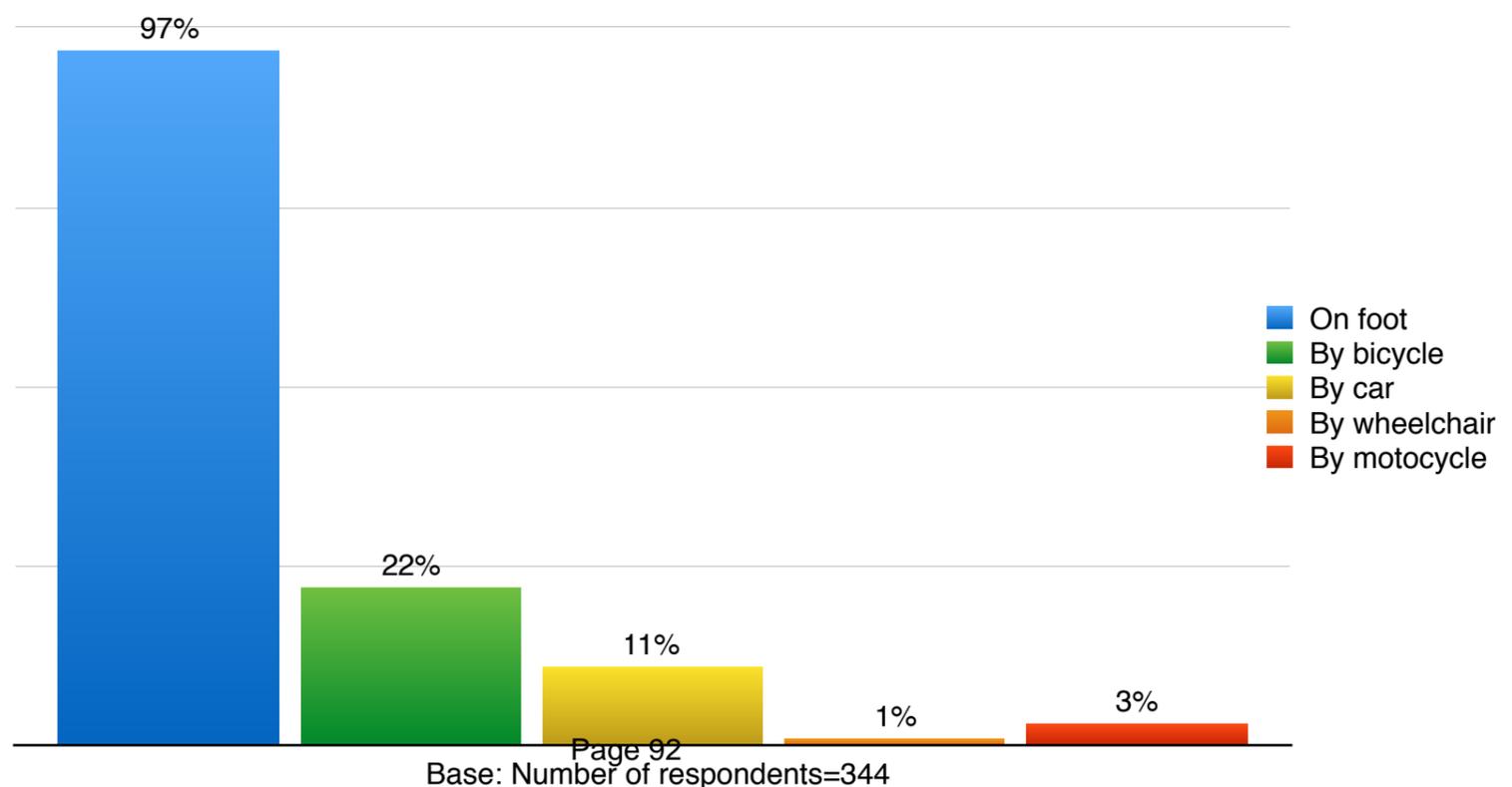
Analysis of results

Frequency of visiting Poole Road Recreation Ground:

Over half the number of respondents (54%, n=187/346) visit the grounds multiple times a week. This comprises: 15% (n=52/346) visiting daily and 39% (n=135/346) visiting two or three times a week. A further 32% (n=110/346) visit the grounds two or three times a month and 9% (n=30/346) visit the grounds two or three times a year. Only 2.9% (n=10/346) visit less than once a year and 3% (n=9/346) said 'never'.



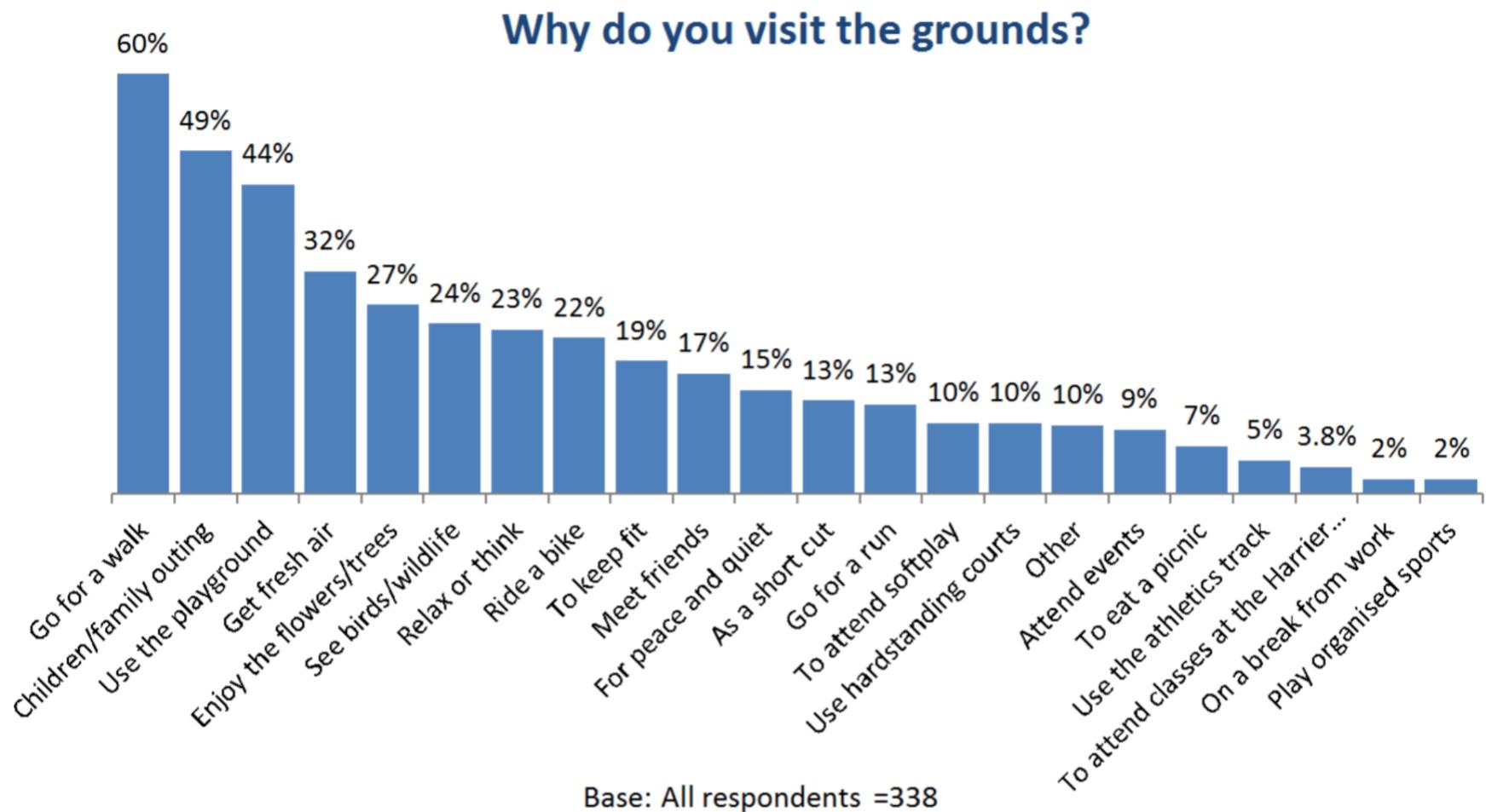
How do you normally travel to the grounds?





Reasons for visiting Poole Road Recreation Ground:

This section looks at the reasons for visiting the grounds (respondents were asked to choose up to three reasons - hence the high number of responses). Overall, the most frequent reason for visiting the grounds was to 'go for a walk' (60%, n=202/338). This was followed by 'children/family outing' (49%, n=165/338) and 'use the playground' (44%, n=149/338)

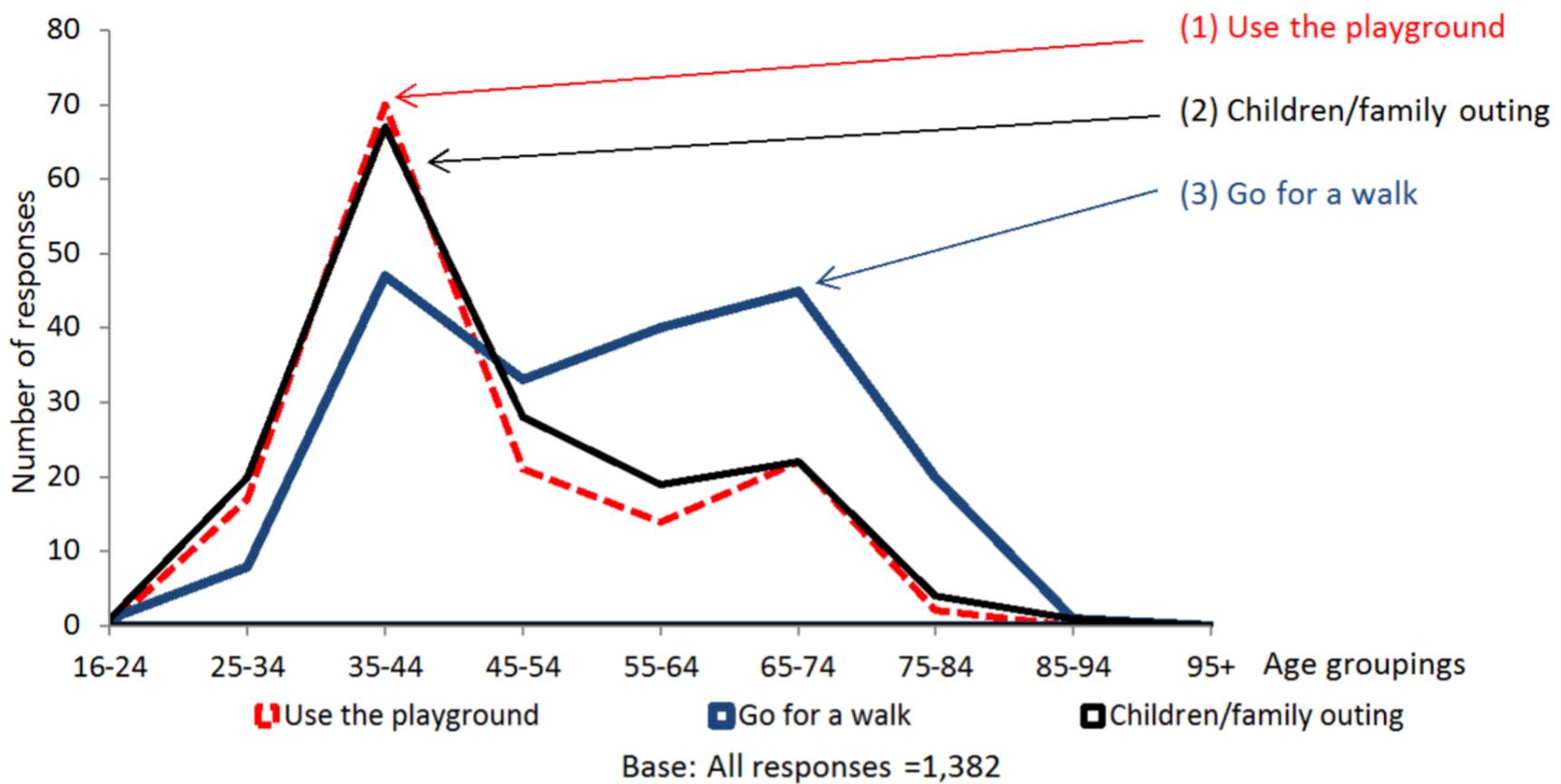


Looking at the age profile, most respondents between:

- 35-44yrs 'use the playground' (48%, n=70/146) and use the grounds for a 'children/family outing' (n=41%, 67/162)
- 45-54yrs use the grounds to 'go for a walk' (17%, n=33/195)
- 55-64yrs use the grounds to 'go for a walk' (21%, n=40/195)
- 65-74yrs use the grounds to 'go for a walk' (23%, n=45/195)
- 75-84yrs use the grounds to 'go for a walk' (10%, n=20/195).

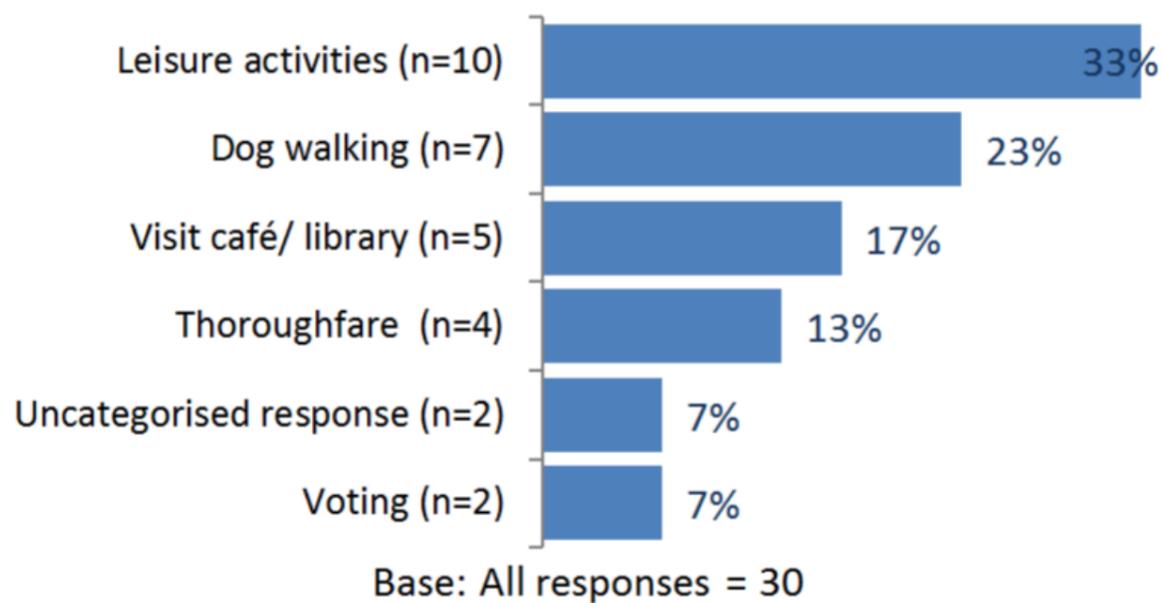


Top 3 reasons for visiting the grounds by age grouping



'Other' reasons for visiting the grounds include:

'Other' reasons for visiting the park





Examples of 'Other' responses for visiting Poole Road Recreation Ground include:

| If Other, please specify: (Base: All responses=30) | |
|--|--|
| Theme: | Examples: |
| 1. Leisure activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play football with family. • To look at the Hogsmill river. • Playground. |
| 2. Dog walking | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk my dog. • To take the dog for a run. • Walk dogs. |
| 3. Visit café/ library | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit the garden centre's cafe. • To go to Ewell Court's library and cafe. • I use the cafe in the park. |
| 4. Thoroughfare | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I live [location cited], a pleasant walk to my allotment. • Cut through to Kingston Road area. Nice walk through away from roads. • It's on our walking route to school. |
| 5. Uncategorised response | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To complain to someone making a noise from a car radio. |
| 6. Voting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voting. |

Opinion of aspects of the park:

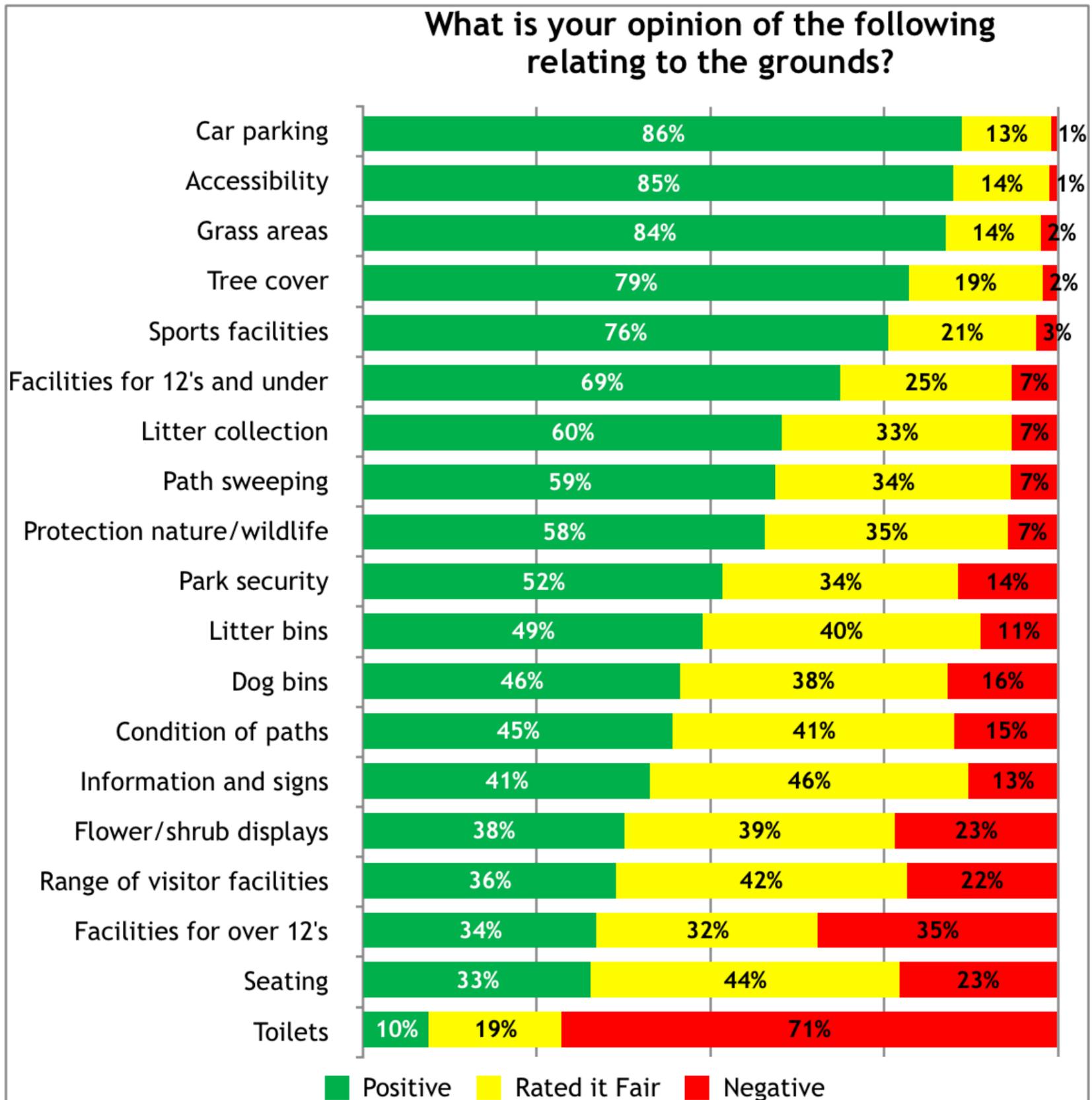
This section looks at peoples' opinions relating to various aspects of the grounds.

The top three positively rated aspects of the grounds were:

1. 'Car parking' (86%, n=262/304)
2. 'Accessibility' (85%, n=260/306)
3. 'Grass areas' (84%, n=269/321).

The top three negatively rated aspects of the grounds were:

1. 'Toilets' [lack of] (71%, n=165/231)
2. 'Facilities for over 12's' (35%, n=77/223)
3. Tie: 'Flower/shrub displays' (23%; n=70/298) and 'Seating' (23%, 71/311).



What is your opinion of the park in general?



Base: All respondents = 325

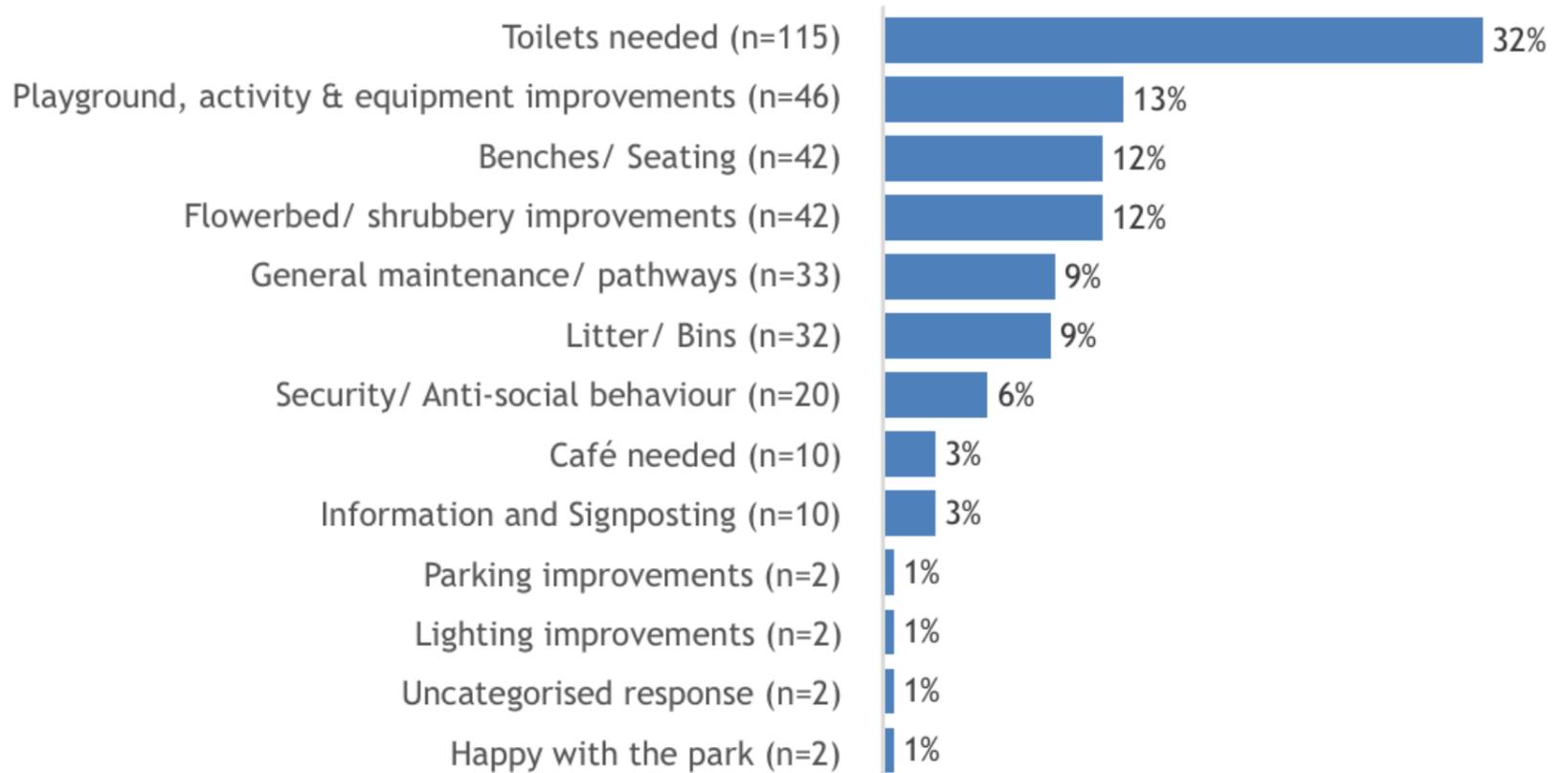


Respondents who gave a negative response to an opinion relating to the grounds were asked to provide reasons for their answer. The three most prevalent reasons were:

1. 'Toilets needed' (32%, n=115/358)
2. 'Playground, activity & equipment improvements' (13%, n=46/358)
3. 'Benches/seating' (12%, n=42/358).

The table below illustrates additional reasons:

If you ticked 'Poor' or 'Very Poor', on any of the options above, please give your reasons:



Base: All responses=358



Examples of literal responses include:

| If you ticked 'Poor' or 'Very Poor' on any of the above options, please give your reasons below: (Base: All responses=358) | |
|--|---|
| Theme: | Examples: |
| 1. Toilets needed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no toilet facilities at all in the park which makes it difficult when visiting with small children. • Where are the toilets? Most people can't find them. We either have to use Ewell Court's cafe or walk over to Harriers, which may not be open. I hear people regularly looking for a toilet. • Toilet facilities are poor or non-existent. People are not sure if they can use the Harrier Centre. |
| 2. Playground, activity & equipment improvements | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playground could benefit from more equipment, a trim trail or outdoor gym equipment perhaps? Or zip line/s? The pole for climbing is v-difficult. • Kids need more variety and better equipment in the playground. • I think the facilities for children over and under 12 could be improved at the playground. Ideas: 1) A climbing wall. 2) A trim trail... 3) Fitness equipment. 4) Trampoline. |
| 3. Benches/ Seating | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It would benefit from a couple of extra benches. Not enough there for the elderly. • More seating is needed. • Seating - very few places to sit. • More seating and ability to sit at bench/table for a picnic. |
| 4. Flowerbed/ shrubbery improvements | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Never noticed any flowerbeds! • Little, to no, flower/shrub displays on recreation side of the park. • Limited flower display, shrubs are just by the path, not very impressive. |
| 5. General maintenance/ pathways | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Path condition, poor and crumbling surface for quite a distance. • A lot of pathways in very poor condition, trip hazards. • Paths in very bad condition. • Paths are often overgrown with nettles/brambles on the sides. |
| 6. Litter/ Bins | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bins are often overflowing. • More litter picking/cleaning bins. • Most disappointing is the sheer amount of litter in the park. • There are insufficient bins in the park/recreation area. There are no dog bins at all. There is often litter left behind by visitors. |
| 7. Security/ Anti-social behaviour | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Never seen any security patrols or measures. • More visible park security. • Security is poor, often mopeds racing around the car park and driving at speed along the path to the children's playground. |
| 8. Café needed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No cafe (except in Ewell Court House) • No place to buy coffee/snacks. • There could be a garden area with seats and a coffee shop for general relaxation. • Need some type of refreshments on sale - drinks & ice creams in summer, hot drinks and hot food in winter etc. |
| 9. Information and Signposting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No information signs around the area, only at the entrance on Poole Road. • Few direction signs within the park. • Information and signs not adequate. |
| 10. Parking improvements | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The entrance for cars is too narrow, should be double gates, so entrance is not blocked by cars waiting to exit. • Maybe a car park at that end of the park would be feasible. |
| 11. Lighting improvements | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of lighting at night, so I would no longer use it to walk through at night. • Lighting does not always work in the surrounding paths. |
| 12. Uncategorised response | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balls frequently end up in my garden. • I think that the money spent on this survey and postage would go a long way to making any improvements needed doing at the recreational ground. |
| 13. Happy with the park | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On the whole the park appears to be well kept. • It is a very good space that if utilised correctly would be widely used by the local community. |



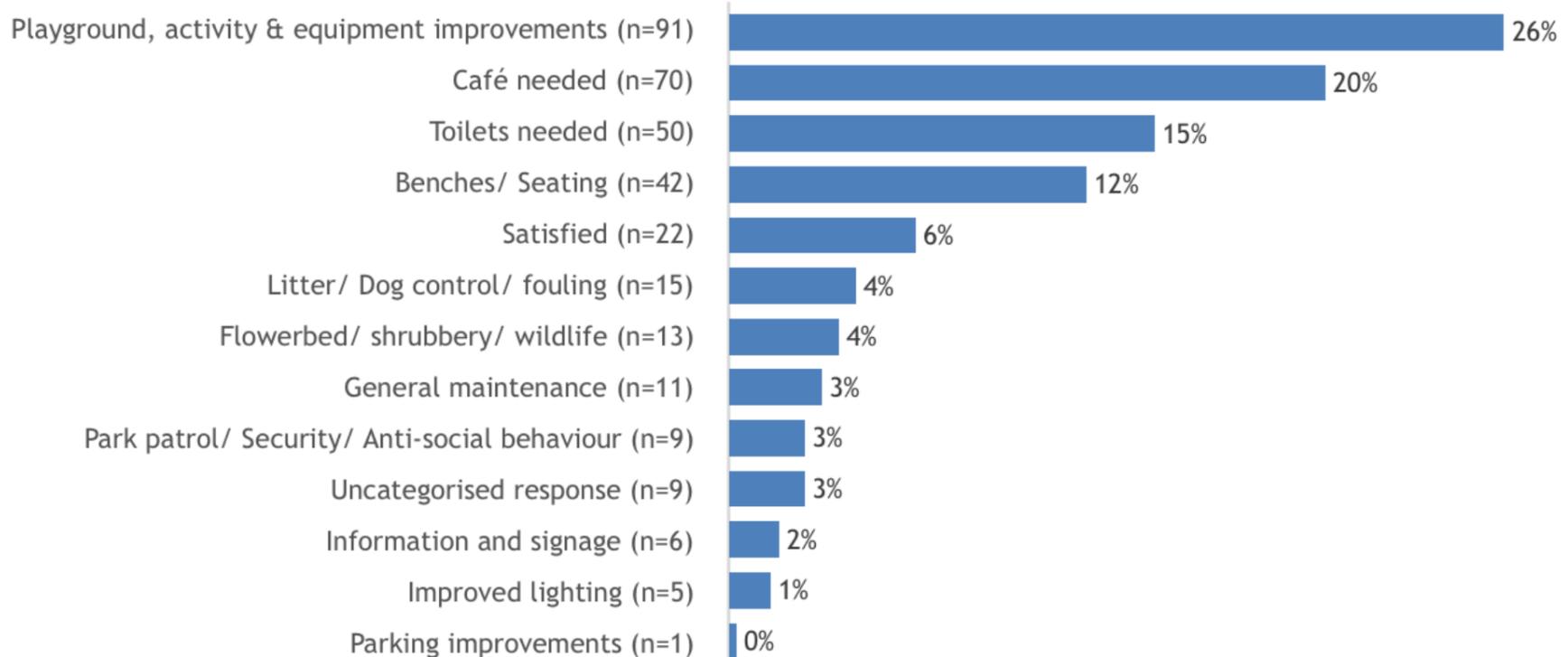
Improving visitor experience and encouraging more use of the grounds or staying for longer:

When considering 'can you think of one thing that would encourage you to use Poole Road Recreation Ground more often or to stay for longer', the three most prevalent suggestions were:

1. 'Playground, activity & equipment improvements' (26%, n=91/344)
2. 'Café needed' (20%, n=70/344)
3. 'Toilets needed' (15%, n=50/344).

The graph below illustrates common suggestions:

Can you think of one thing that would encourage you to use Poole Road Recreation Ground more often or to stay for longer?



Base: All responses=344



Examples of literal responses include:

| Can you think of one thing that would encourage you to use Poole Road Recreation Ground more often or to stay for longer? (Base: All responses=344) | |
|--|--|
| Theme: | Examples: |
| 1. Playground, activity & equipment improvements | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outdoor gym equipment. • Older children's play area needs to be improved. • More equipment to play on - sometimes it gets very busy. • A more adventurous play/climbing area for kids... or even a splash park! • Better range of play equipment in the playground, e.g. trim trail. |
| 2. Café needed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I think the park is great but some kind of coffee/sandwich shop would be welcomed and would encourage more families. • Refreshment hut. • A park cafe would be nice. |
| 3. Toilets needed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We would stay for longer if there were public toilets available to those using the recreation area. • Toilet facilities would be good when taking children to the play area. • It really needs toilets. |
| 4. Benches/ Seating | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seating area for picnics. • More seats to enable the elderly to enjoy the open spaces and rest during their walks and place for all ages not just the young. • More seating on the main playing field. • More seating for parents whilst watching their children play. |
| 5. Satisfied | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I think it is an absolutely fantastic park and I feel very lucky to have it on my doorstep. • We enjoy the park as it is. • A wonderful, well used local facility. |
| 6. Litter/ Dog control/ fouling | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No or less dogs. Tighter rules about how they are walked. • Some people can not control their dogs. • More dog owners not letting their dogs foul. • If the grounds were kept in a better condition and free from litter. |
| 7. Flowerbed/ shrubbery/ wildlife | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To have more flower displays during the summer. • Better planting, using sustainable plants. • More and very evident floral/shrubs displays! • We were sorry that there were not so many wildlife birds on the pond anymore. |
| 8. General maintenance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The paths are uneven in places, nearly as bad as the pavements. • Better maintenance of the tennis courts. • Clearing the overgrown areas of the stream as the stagnant water smells unpleasant. |
| 9. Park patrol/ Security/ Anti-social behaviour | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maybe see a park warden or similar to help reduce the small amount of anti-social behaviour sometimes seen. • Some visible park security. • Stop kids on motorcycles riding through the park. |
| 10. Uncategorised response | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More English summer, better weather. • Sell the site for housing, then there would be no need to build on Epsom & Ewell High School's playing fields. • No doubt you will analyse this data and come up with the result that a housing estate needs building on it. |
| 11. Information and signage | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on history of the park, a guided walk, or a signposted one. • Better information on what is going on in the park, annual events, etc. |
| 12. Improved lighting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put the lights back on at night, very unpleasant to walk through without and a high security risk. • Better lighting, very creepy of an evening around the park. |
| 13. Parking improvements | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The car park is very useful for parents picking up children from local schools so making an "in and out" gate would be beneficial in preventing the congestion of traffic on Poole Road. |



The results of the survey show that people visit the grounds on a regular basis – with over half the number of respondents (54%, n=187/346) visiting the grounds multiple times a week. This comprises 15% (n=52/346) visiting daily and 39% (n=135/346) visiting two or three times a week – suggesting they live nearby or in close proximity to the park. The majority of respondents said they travel to the grounds on foot (97%, n=330/344).

Overall, the most frequent reason for visiting the grounds was to ‘go for a walk’ (60%, n=202/338). This was followed by ‘children/family outing’ (49%, n=165/338) and ‘use the playground’ (44%, n=149/338).

An age breakdown shows the highest number of respondents between 35-44yrs ‘use the playground’ (48%, n=70/146) and use the grounds for a ‘children/family outing’ (41%, n=67/162), whilst the highest number of respondents between 45yrs to 84yrs use the grounds to ‘go for a walk’.

The top three positively rated aspects of the grounds were: ‘Car parking’ (86%, n=262/304), ‘Accessibility’ (85%, n=260/306), and ‘Grass areas’ (84%, n=269/321).

The top three negatively rated aspects of the grounds were: ‘Toilets’ [lack of] (71%, n=165/231), ‘Facilities for over 12’s’ (35%, n=77/223), and a tie between: ‘Flower/shrub displays’ (23%, n=70/298) and ‘Seating’ (23%, 71/311).

When asking respondents to provide reasons for scoring any aspect of the grounds ‘poor’ or ‘very poor’, a number of respondents cited the lack of toilet facilities – with some people saying they have to leave early because of this (32%, n=115/358).

The most popular suggestion to encourage people to use the grounds more often or to stay for longer was the need for playground, activity & equipment improvements (26%, n=91/344).

Overall, 81% (n=262/325) visitor responses rated ‘the park in general’ positive with a few developmental areas identified.

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LONG GROVE RECREATION GROUND VISITOR SURVEY 2018



Date

November

2018

01 OCTOBER

Date sent to respondents

19 OCTOBER

Deadline

310

Responses received

Please contact Adama Roberts or Craig Salmon in the Policy, Performance & Governance Team should you require more information on the Long Ground Recreation Ground Survey Report 2018

Email: contactus@epsom-ewell.gov.uk

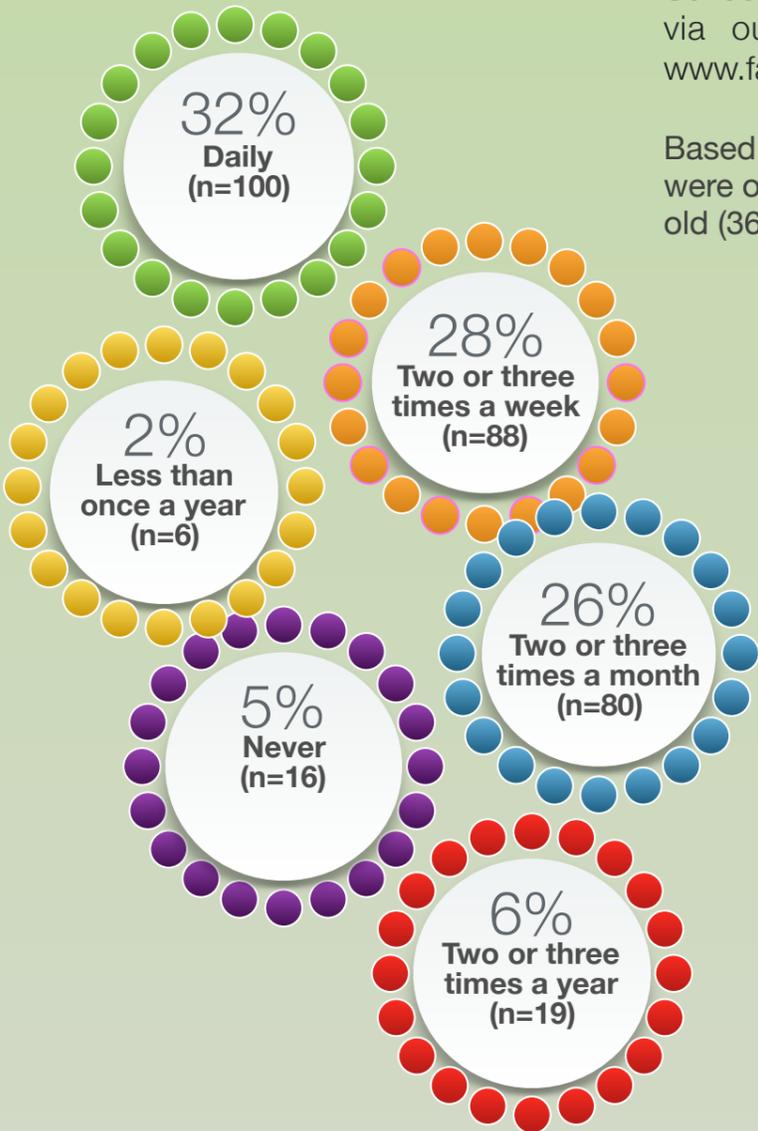


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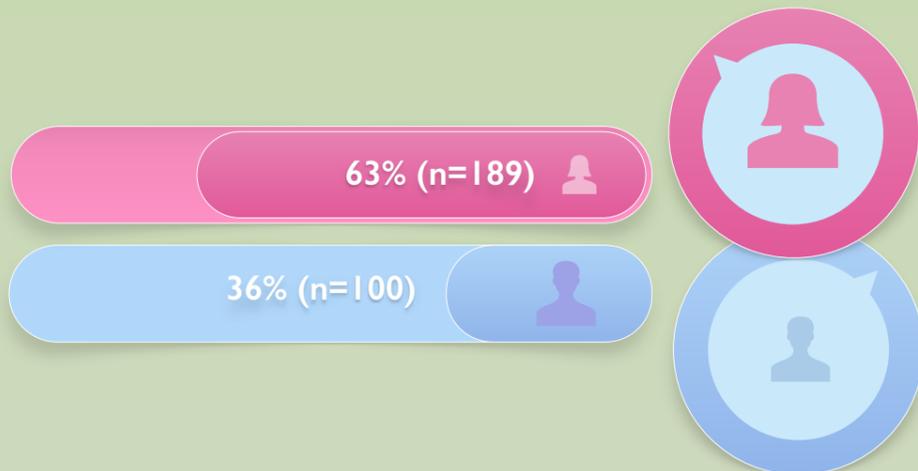
Summary of main findings

How often do you visit Long Grove Recreation Ground?

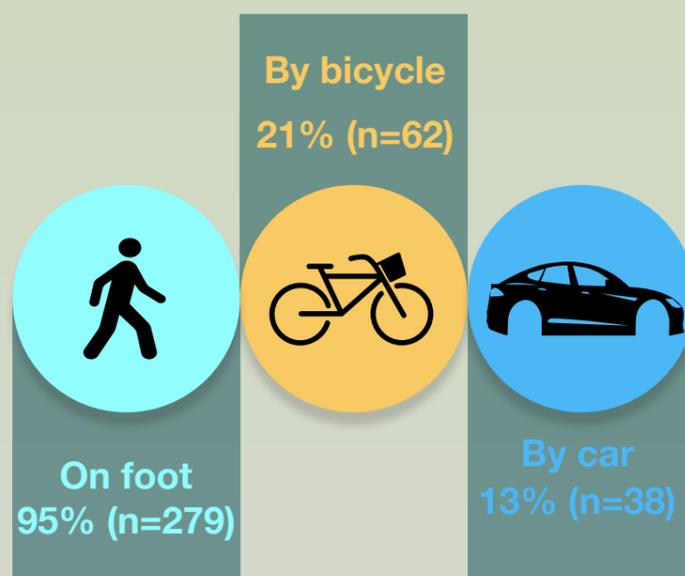


The survey ran from 01 October to 19 October 2018. It was available online and in paper format. In total, 310 responses were received; 73% were paper based (n=225) and 27% were submitted online (n=85). It was sent to properties within the area and postcard-size flyers were distributed to: Bourne Hall; Town Hall; Ebbisham Centre, Southfield Park Primary School and Cherry Field Nursery School. The survey was also published on our website and via our social media platforms ie Twitter: @EpsomEwellBC and on Facebook: www.facebook.com/EpsomEwellBC and circulated to councillors.

Based on age groupings: 73% (n=219/302) were under 55 years old and 27% (n=83/302) were over 55 years old. The largest portion of respondents were between 35yrs and 44yrs old (36%, n=110/302). Seven in ten respondents rated the park positively (70%, n=202)

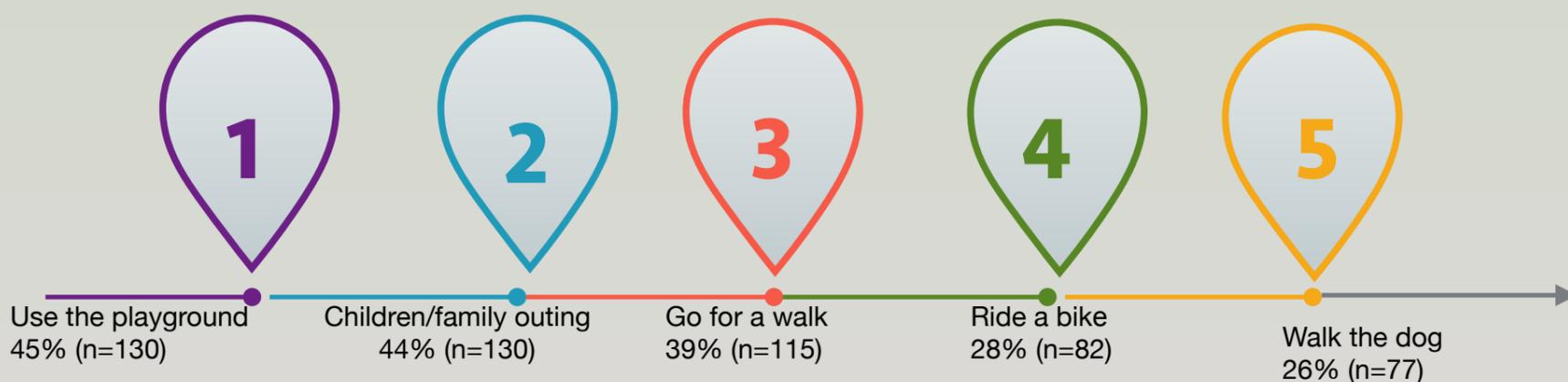


How do you normally travel to the park?

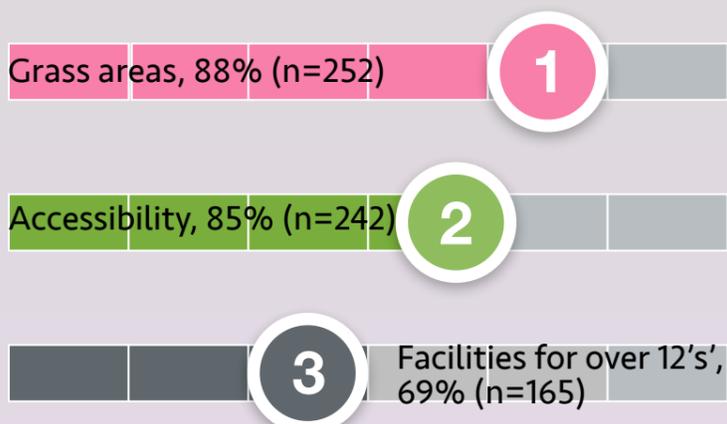


Why do you visit the park? Top five responses provided

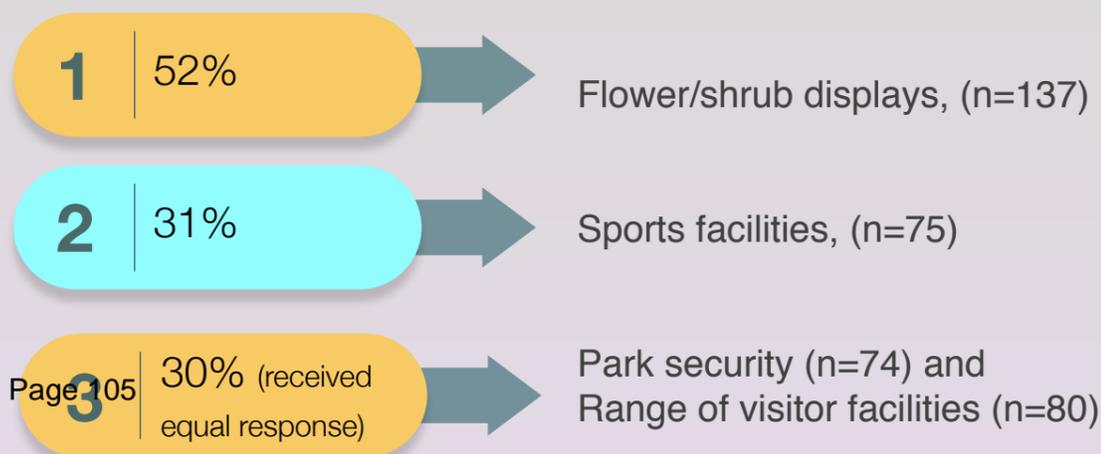
Respondents ticked all that applied



Top three positively rated aspects of the park



Top three negatively rated aspects of the park?





Long Grove Recreation Ground Survey

Your views wanted! Please take part by...
Friday, 19 October 2018

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council is conducting a survey to ensure Long Grove Recreation Ground meets the needs of local residents, visitors and is developed in a sustainable way.

We want you to tell us how the park can be made even better by visiting our website via the link below and take part.

www.epsom-ewell.gov.uk

Objectives and methodology:

Long Grove Recreation Ground is situated in Court ward Epsom. Long Grove Recreation Ground has a skate park designed and built by Wheelscapes in 2013. This has recently been extended to include a beginner's section which has proven quite popular with skaters. The park is dog-friendly and has an established playground area.

The survey was conducted by the Council on behalf of its Operations Management Team. The team is responsible for ensuring the grounds meet the needs of local residents and visitors and that it develops in a sustainable way.

Questionnaire development:

The questions were developed in liaison with the Streetcare Manager and Patrol Ranger. Areas include:

- Frequency of visiting the grounds
- Method of travel to the grounds
- Reasons for visiting the grounds
- Opinions on various aspects of the grounds
- Improving visitor experience and encouraging more use of the park, or staying for longer.

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 - The electronic version was featured on:
 - The Council's main webpage: <https://www.epsom-ewell.gov.uk/>
 - Twitter: @EpsomEwellBC, and
 - circulated to councillors.



Of the 1,200 paper copies distributed, 225 were returned - resulting in a paper-copy response rate of 19%

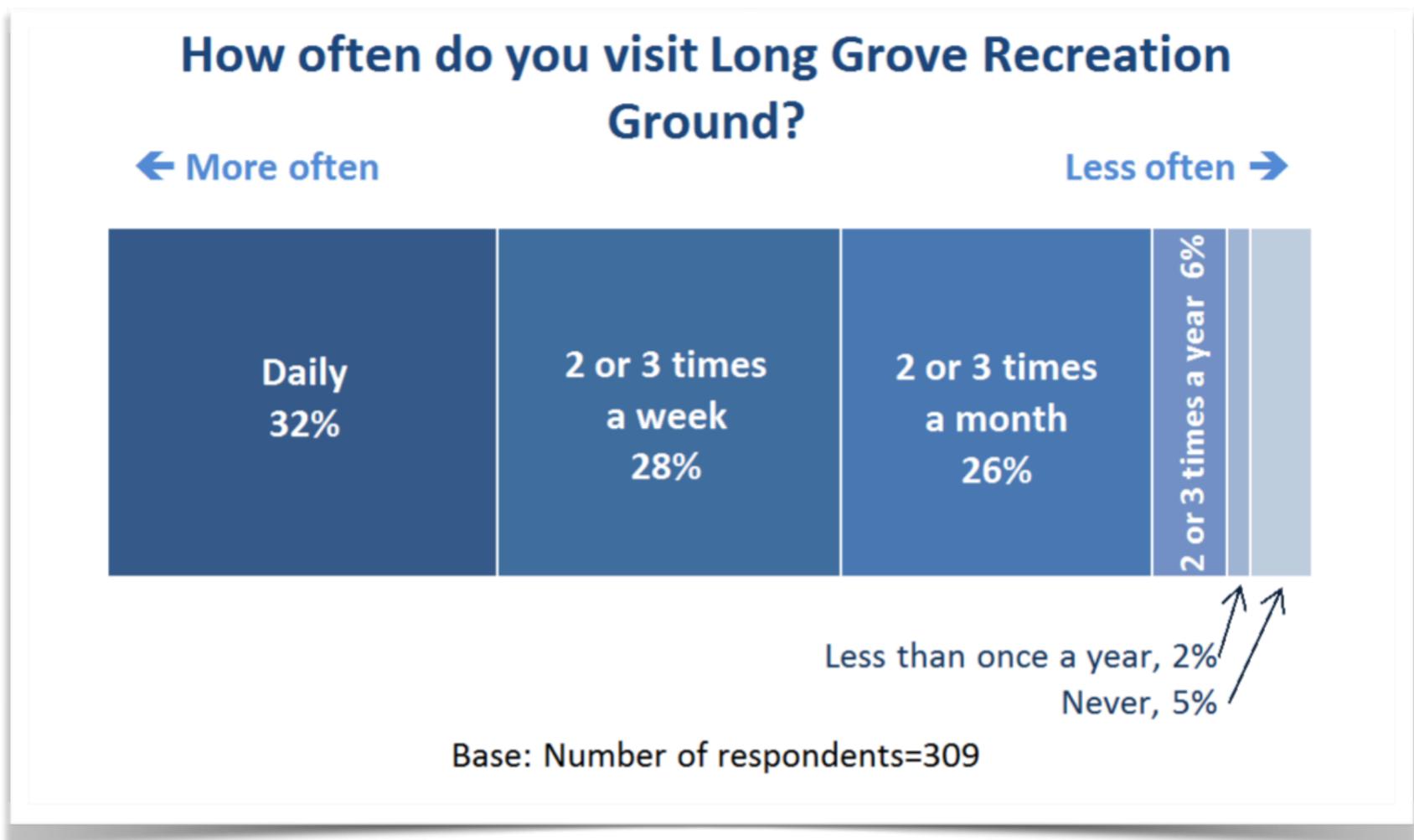
In total, 310 survey responses were received; of which 225 were paper based (73%, n=225/310) and 85 were online submissions (27%, n=85/310). Of the 1,200 paper copies distributed, 225 were returned - resulting in a paper-copy response rate of 19% (n=225/1,200).

The figures in this report are calculated as a proportion of respondents who answered each question – excluding 'No Reply' or 'No Opinion' responses. Percentages in a particular chart might not always add up to 100% due to rounding, or because a respondent was allowed to give more than one answer to the question.



Frequency of visiting Long Grove Recreation Ground:

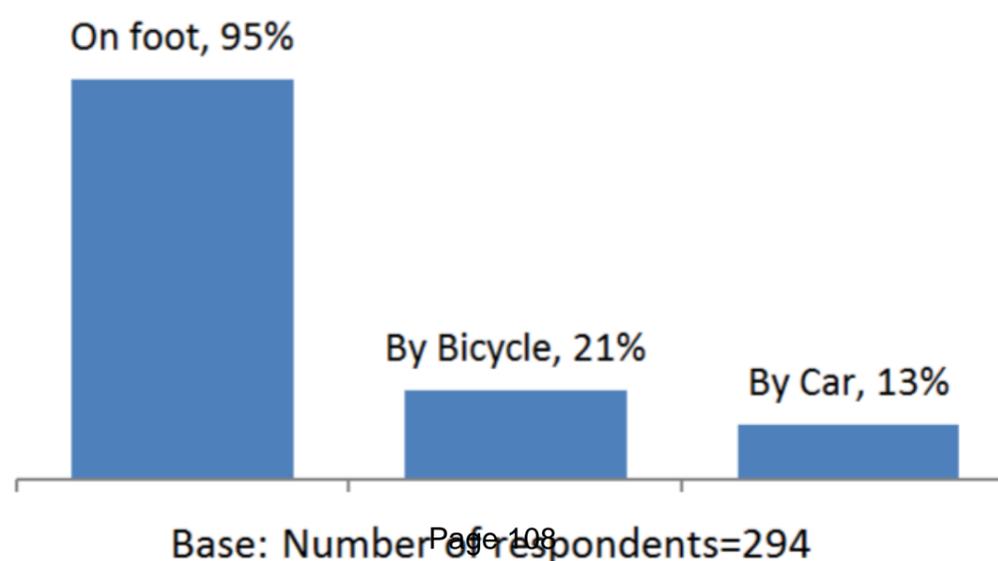
Over six in ten respondents (61%, n=188/309) visit the grounds multiple times a week. This comprises: 32% (n=100/309) visiting daily and 28% (n=88/309) visiting two or three times a week. A further 26% (n=80/309) visit the grounds two or three times a month and 6% (n=19/309) visit the grounds two or three times a year. Only 2% (n=6/309) visit less than once a year and 5% (n=16/309) said 'never'.



Method of travelling to Long Grove Recreation Ground:

Over nine in ten respondents travel to the grounds on foot (95%, n=279/294), whilst 21% (n=62/294) travel by bicycle and 13% (n=38/294) by car. No respondents said bus/coach, train, motorcycle, or wheelchair.

How do you normally travel to the grounds?

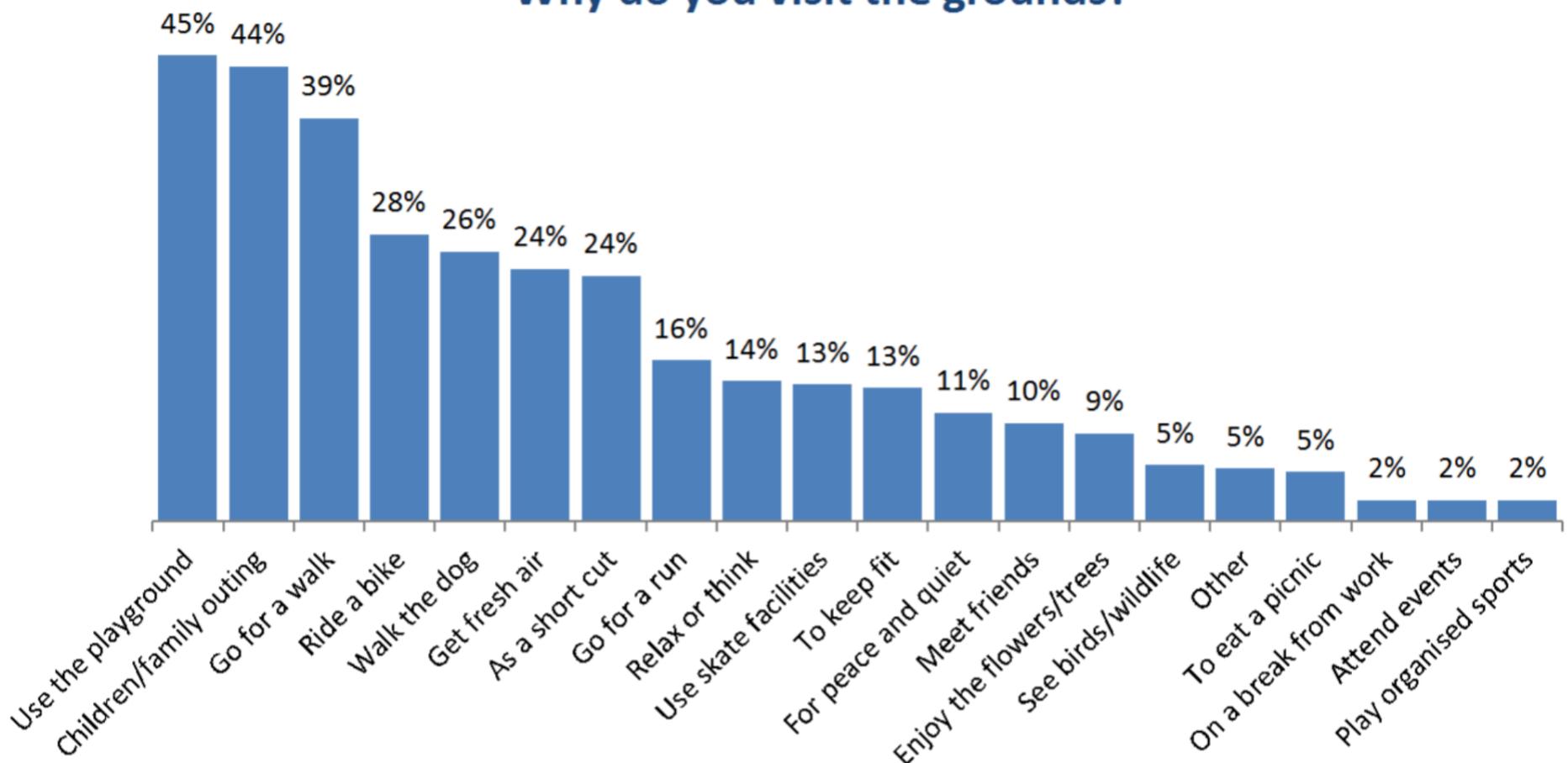




Reasons for visiting Long Grove Recreation Ground:

This section looks at the reasons for visiting the grounds (respondents were asked to choose up to three reasons – hence the high number of responses). Overall, the most frequent reason for visiting the grounds was 'Use the playground' (45%, n=133/294). This was followed by 'Children/family outing' (44%, n=130/294) and 'Go for a walk' (39%, n=115/294).

Why do you visit the grounds?



Base: All respondents =294

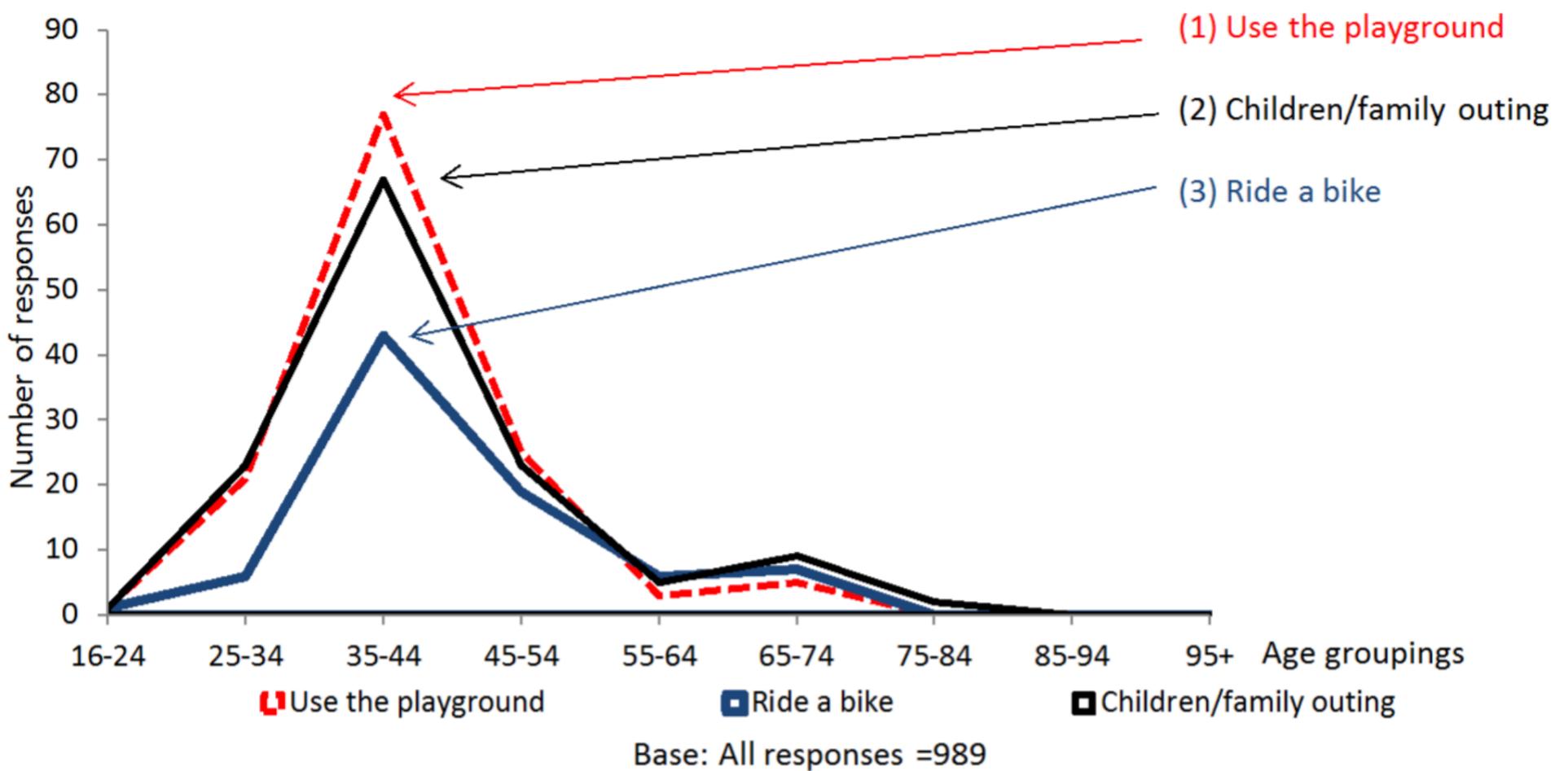
Looking at the age profile, most respondents between:

- 16-24yrs use the grounds to 'use skate facilities' (15%, n=4/26)
- 25-34yrs use the grounds for 'children/family outing' (17%, n=23/130)
- 35-44yrs use the grounds to 'use the playground' (19%, n=77/395)
- 45-54yrs use the grounds to 'go for a walk' (14%, n=30/216)
- 55-64yrs use the grounds to 'walk the dog' (15%, n=12/81)
- 65-74yrs use the grounds to 'go for a walk' (18%, n=21/120)
- 75-84yrs use the grounds 'for peace and quiet' (6%, n=2/31).



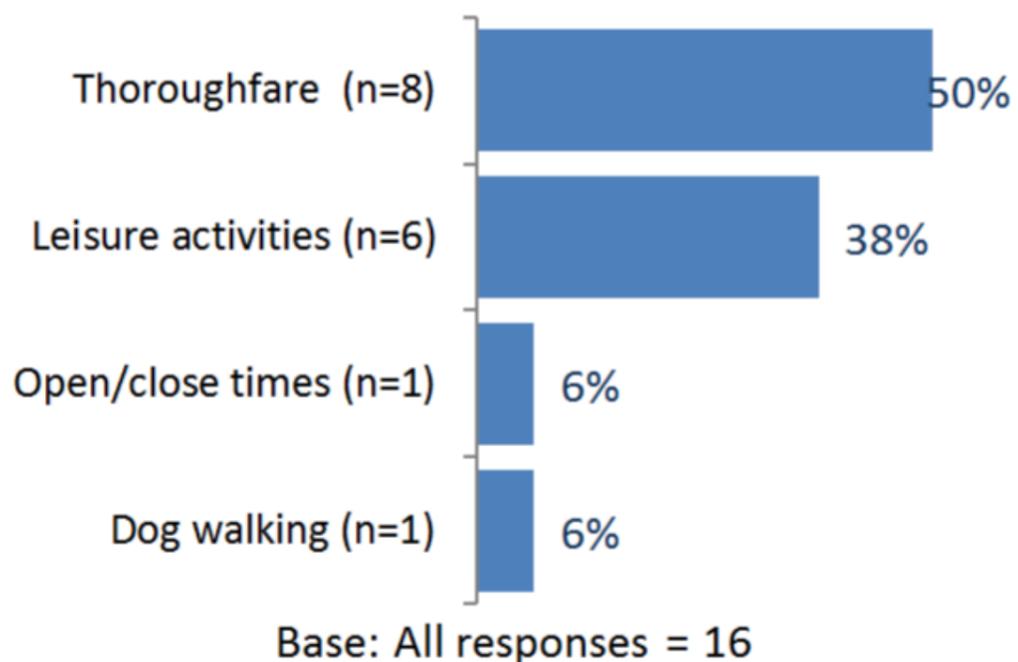
The graph below illustrates the top three reasons for visiting the grounds by age groupings:

Top 3 reasons for visiting the grounds by age grouping



'Other' reasons for visiting the grounds include:

'Other' reasons for visiting the park





Examples of 'Other' responses for visiting Long Grove Recreation Ground include:

| If Other, please specify: (Base: All responses=16) | |
|--|---|
| Theme: | Examples: |
| 1. Thoroughfare | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Commuting to/from work• Walk through for school runs• Passage towards town. |
| 2. Leisure activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Football after school. Occasional park / scooter play• Use the playground equipment. |
| 3. Open/close times | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sometimes not open. |
| 4. Dog walking | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To walk the dog. |

Opinion of aspects of the grounds:

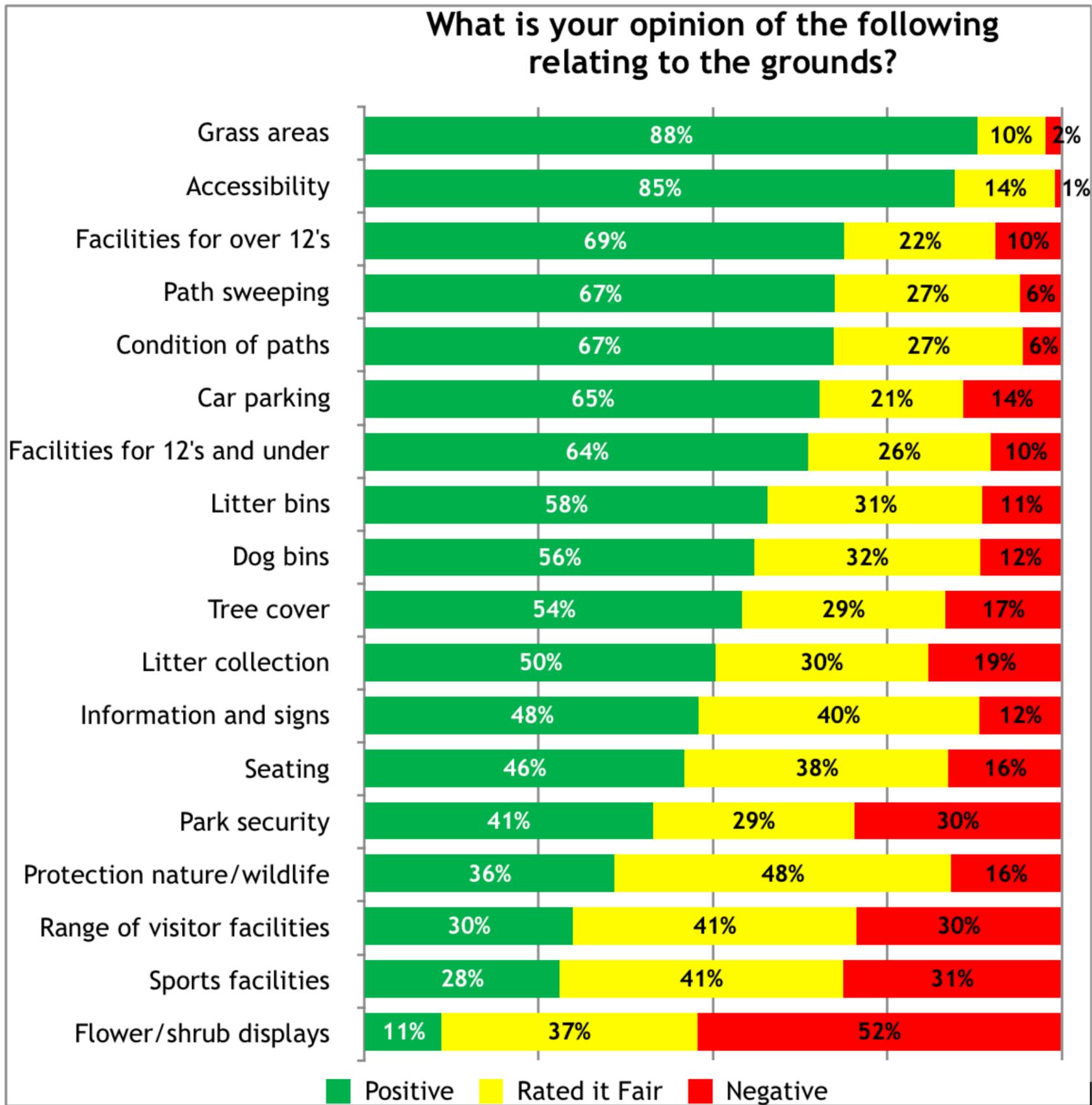
This section looks at peoples' opinions relating to various aspects of the grounds.

The top three positively rated aspects of the grounds were:

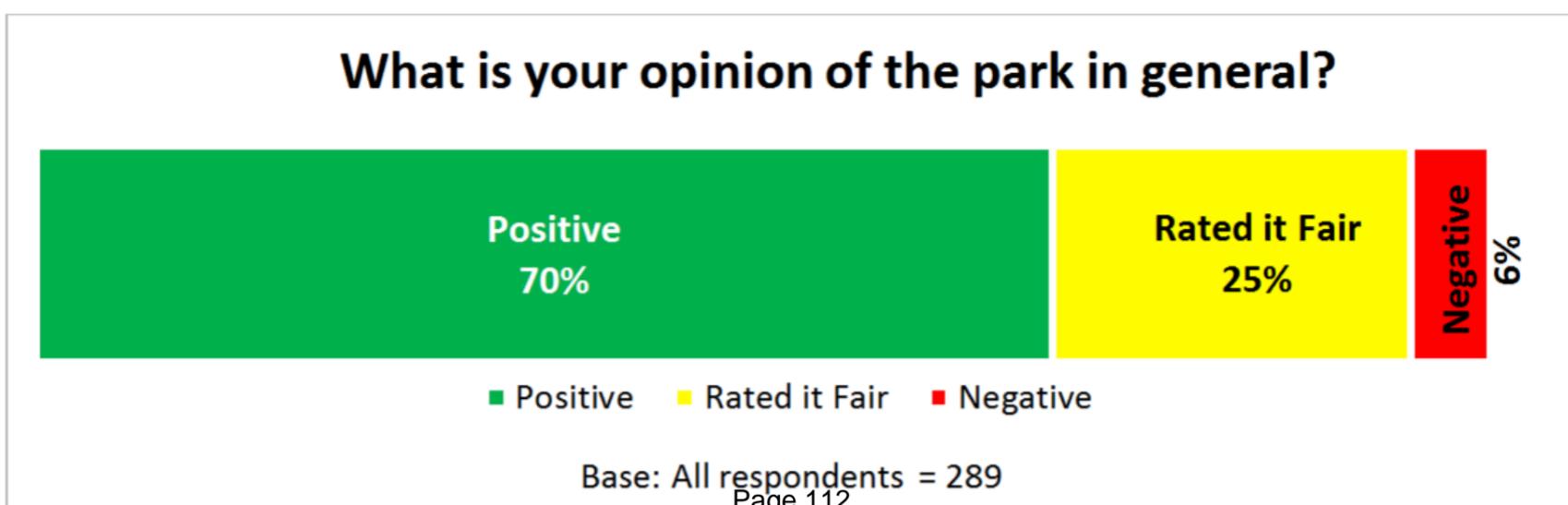
1. 'Grass areas' (88%, n=252/288)
2. 'Accessibility' (85%, n=242/286)
3. 'Facilities for over 12's' (69%, n=165/240).

The top three negatively rated aspects of the grounds were:

1. 'Flower/shrub displays' (52%, n=137/262)
2. 'Sports facilities' (31%, n=75/239)
3. Tie: 'Park security' (30%; n=74/249) and 'Range of visitor facilities' (30%, 80/271).



Overall, 70% (n=202/289) of respondents rated 'the park in general' positively, 25% (n=71/289) rated the grounds fair and 6% (n=16/289) rated the grounds negatively.



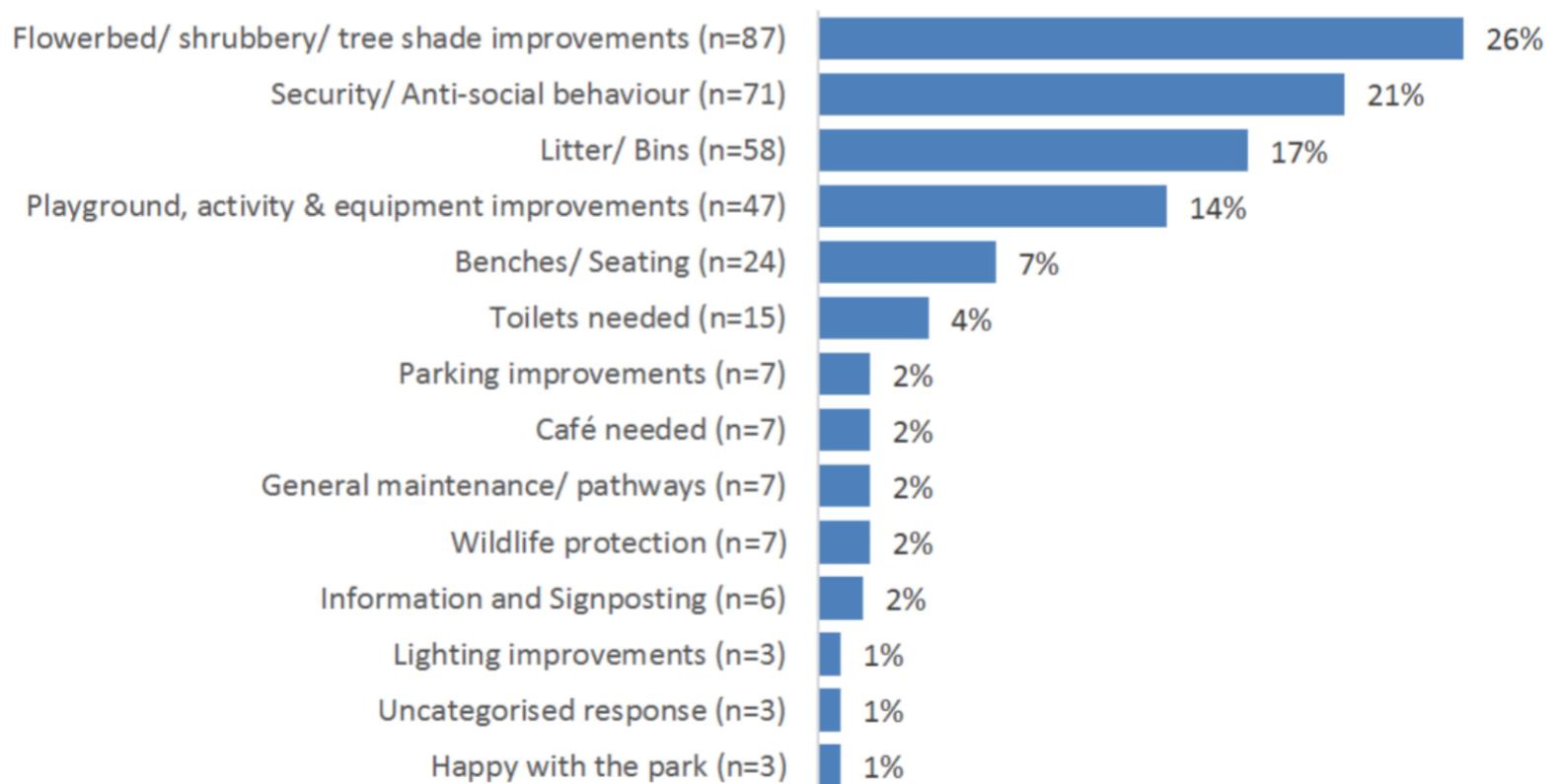


Respondents who gave a negative response to an opinion relating to the grounds were also asked to provide reasons for their answer. The three most prevalent reasons were:

1. 'Flowerbed/shrubbery/tree shade improvements' (26%, n=87/338)
2. 'Security/anti-social behaviour' (21%, n=71/338)
3. 'Litter/bins' (17%, n=58/338).

The table below illustrates additional reasons:

If you ticked 'Poor' or 'Very Poor', on any of the options above, please give your reasons:



Base: All responses=338



Analysis of results

Examples of literal responses include:

| If you ticked 'Poor' or 'Very Poor' on any of the above options, please give your reasons below: (Base: All responses=338) | |
|--|--|
| Theme: | Examples: |
| 1. Flowerbed/ shrubbery/ tree shade improvements | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no flowers or shrubs to enjoy, some of the grass area could be developed to allow for some bedded areas. • Trees in playground would provide shade on equipment in summer. We don't have any flower displays. • Very little in the way of flower displays except the daffodils in the spring. A wild flower area would be nice. • Lack of flowers and more established trees to add interest/shade in the summer. |
| 2. Security/ Anti-social behaviour | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sometimes you can smell cannabis smoke in the playground from the skate park, very unpleasant with my 3 year old and 9 month old children. • Since the expansion of the skate park, the park is overrun with antisocial youth smoking marijuana, buying and selling drugs, drinking, littering and making noise. They intimidate kids on the way home from school and make the park an unpleasant place to visit. • The antisocial behaviour of those that use the skate park makes it feel quite threatening at times. • Park security is very poor. |
| 3. Litter/ Bins | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since the skate park has been enlarged the litter has increased 100%. • Bins at the skate park often overflowing and litter/plastic bottles and rubbish everywhere. Often litter in the children's playground. • Need more litter bins. Litter needs collecting more. |
| 4. Playground, activity & equipment improvements | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whilst the skate park has significant enhanced facilities for older children, the park for younger ones has had zero investment. • There are no facilities really for over 12's except skate park. • The playground could offer more for toddlers. • There are no sports facilities, e.g. outdoor gym. • Open air exercise facilities would be welcome for older people. |
| 5. Benches/ Seating | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could do with more seating, especially around the skate park area. • Not many seats in the children's playground or shaded areas. • Very few seats. • Some picnic tables would be good. |
| 6. Toilets needed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We need toilets. • Toilets (would be good for kids) • This park is in desperate need of toilet facilities. |
| 7. Parking improvements | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No specific car parking other than the school car park. • Car parking is very poor. • During school days parking is very poor in Long Grove Road. |
| 8. Café needed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A cafe or cabin for refreshments open in nice weather would be great. • No café. |
| 9. General maintenance/ pathways | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zip line is not working. • Condition of the paths - uneven, large cracks by the stake park. • Paths cracking badly in several places. |
| 10. Wildlife protection | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I see no evidence of any protected area for wildlife in the park. • No protection for wildlife, no area set aside. |
| 11. Information and Signposting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor signage around the park. • Not many signs on opening times, etc. • Few signs around the park. |
| 12. Lighting improvements | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could do with some lighting. • No lighting = very dangerous when walking back home. |
| 13. Uncategorised response | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is not a 'park'. • Not much. |
| 14. Happy with the park | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The park is beautiful and well used and is fit for purpose, thank you for those that maintain the upkeep of the park. • The park is wonderful, bright and spacious green space. • The skate park is wonderful though. |

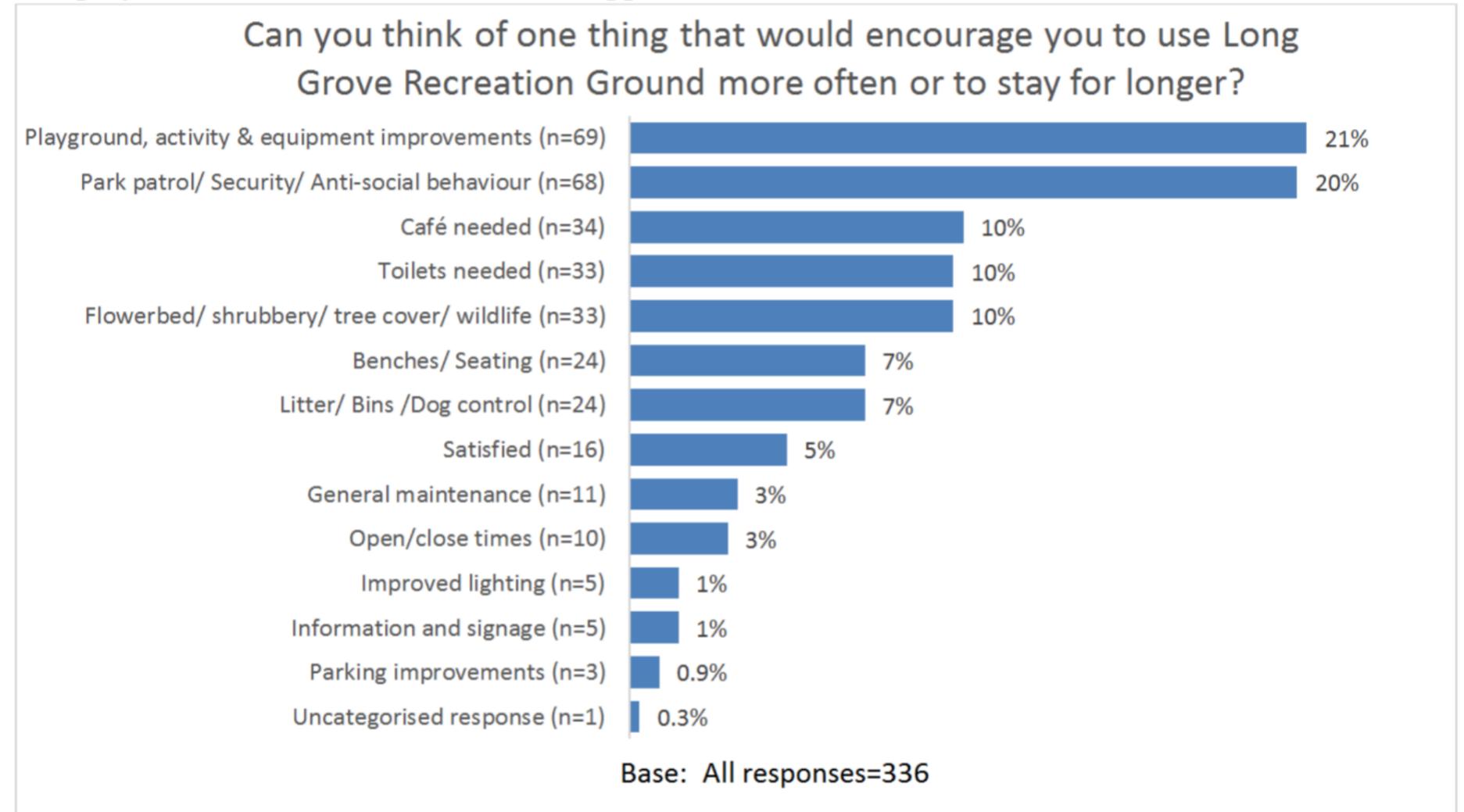


Improving visitor experience and encouraging more use of the grounds or staying for longer:

When considering 'can you think of one thing that would encourage you to use Long Grove Recreation Ground more often or to stay for longer', the three most prevalent suggestions were:

1. 'Playground, activity & equipment improvements' (21%, n=69/336)
2. 'Park patrol/ Security/ Anti-social behaviour' (20%, n=68/336)
3. Tie: 'Café needed' (10%, n=34/336), 'Toilets needed' (10%, n=33/336), and 'Flowerbed/shrubbery/tree cover/wildlife' (10%, n=33/336).

The graph below illustrates common suggestions:





Examples of literal responses include:

| Can you think of one thing that would encourage you to use Long Grove Recreation Ground more often or to stay for longer? (Base: All responses=336) | |
|--|--|
| Theme: | Examples: |
| 1. Playground, activity & equipment improvements | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better play equipment or waterplay/ sandpit, community activities and events. Having a separation between playground for little ones and teenagers. Perhaps some facilities for physical activity/outdoor gym would be good. Permanent football posts x 2 would be amazing. More for younger children. |
| 2. Park patrol/ Security/ Anti-social behaviour | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Get rid of the hooligans that deal drugs and are intimidating as well as threatening. Reduce drug taking/ anti social behaviour that has begun in the park since the skate park opened. CCTV to reduce the antisocial behaviour. If the skate park was supervised/patrolled better to minimise my children's exposure to swearing, littering, drug dealing and cannabis smoking on a daily basis. It would be nice to see a bit more security there so that everybody would feel safe. |
| 3. Café needed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maybe open a coffee/refreshment "hut" to encourage more people/children to visit. Maybe a coffee/hot drink kiosk. Coffee van! Food/beverage facilities. |
| 4. Toilets needed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To have the use of toilets as if spending the day there, there is nowhere for anyone to go to the toilet. Toilet facilities, with young children, toilets are very necessary. Toilets, this is becoming an issue with the amount of skate park users now using the bushes. |
| 5. Flowerbed/ shrubbery/ tree cover/ wildlife | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage more wildlife into the park. More flowers and wildflowers, to encourage more birds, butterflies, wildflowers, small creatures. More trees and flowers. A few more trees would be nice. |
| 6. Benches/ Seating | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> More tables and chairs for picnics. Some more benches to sit and enjoy the nature. Maybe picnic tables would be a good idea. |
| 7. Litter/ Bins /Dog control | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better litter collection. Sadly, some people scatter litter ignoring litter bins. People need to pick up their dog poo! Also, litter at the skate park is an issue. |
| 8. Satisfied | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excellent that you have provided more skateboard facilities. It is a delight to see young people enjoying these new facilities. Lovely park which is very well maintained. Otherwise great park. Thanks. On the whole, it is a great park and provides a lot for everyone - dog walkers, play area, etc. |
| 9. General maintenance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If equipment like the zip wire was maintained and not broken. Zip wire to be fixed, so that kids can play on it. Better upkeep of grass areas. More regular cutting. The children's playground is in desperate need of repair. |
| 10. Open/close times | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Earlier opening times. Often opens too late for dog walkers, turn up and still closed. Regular opening times at weekends. Sometimes the gates are opened at 7.20 and sometimes not until 8.45 or later. I would like the park to stay open longer in the winter months, sometimes it shuts before 5p.m. |
| 11. Improved lighting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor street lighting. Put some lights in there. There could be better lighting at night. |
| 12. Information and signage | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> More signs in the car park about speed. Fixed maps (to the ground), which show and name directions (including) beyond the park. Nature study events or notice board information. |
| 13. Parking improvements | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parking in nearby residential roads and areas in private car parking spaces by users of the skate park. More car parking spaces. |
| 14. Uncategorised response | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Direct access from Christchurch mount. |



The results of the survey show that people visit the grounds on a regular basis – with over six in ten respondents (61%, n=188/309) visiting the grounds multiple times a week. This comprises 32% (n=100/309) visiting daily and 28% (n=88/309) visiting two or three times a week – suggesting they live nearby or in close proximity to the park. Over nine in ten respondents travel to the grounds on foot (95%, n=279/294), whilst 21% (n=62/294) travel by bicycle and 13% (n=38/294) by car.

Overall, the most frequent reason for visiting the grounds was to 'Use the playground' (45%, n=133/294) followed by 'Children/family outing' (44%, n=130/294) and 'Go for a walk' (39%, n=115/294).

Looking at the age profile, most respondents between:

- 16-24yrs use the grounds to 'use skate facilities' (15%, n=4/26)
- 25-34yrs use the grounds for 'children/family outing' (17%, n=23/130)
- 35-44yrs use the grounds to 'use the playground' (19%, n=77/395)
- 45-54yrs use the grounds to 'go for a walk' (14%, n=30/216)
- 55-64yrs use the grounds to 'walk the dog' (15%, n=12/81)
- 65-74yrs use the grounds to 'go for a walk' (18%, n=21/120)
- 75-84yrs use the grounds 'for peace and quiet' (6%, n=2/31).

The top three positively rated aspects of the grounds were 'Grass areas' (88%, n=252/288), 'Accessibility' (85%, n=242/286), and 'Facilities for over 12's' (69%, n=165/240).

The top three negatively rated aspects of the grounds were 'Flower/shrub displays' (52%, n=137/262), 'Sports facilities' (31%, n=75/239), and a tie between: 'Park security' (30%; n=74/249) and 'Range of visitor facilities' (30%, 80/271).

When asking respondents to provide reasons for scoring any aspect of the grounds 'poor' or 'very poor', the three most prevalent reasons were 'Flowerbed/shrubbery/tree shade improvements' (26%, n=87/338), 'Security/anti-social behaviour' (21%, n=71/338), and 'Litter/bins' (17%, n=58/338).

The most popular suggestion to encourage people to use the grounds more often or to stay for longer was 'Playground, activity & equipment improvements' (21%, n=69/336). This was followed by 'Park patrol/ Security/ Anti-social behaviour' (20%, n=68/336), and a tie between: 'Café needed' (10%, n=34/336), 'Toilets needed' (10%, n=33/336), and 'Flowerbed/shrubbery/tree cover/wildlife' (10%, n=33/336). An emerging theme across a number of questions relate to the prevalence of anti-social behaviour – especially around the skate park area.

Overall, 70% (n=202/289) of respondents rated 'the park in general' positively, with a few developmental areas identified.

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POOLE ROAD RECREATION GROUND
(King George V Recreation Ground)
MANAGEMENT PLAN 2018 – 2023



Prepared By
Epsom & Ewell Borough Council

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1 INTRODUCTION

Poole Road Recreation Ground is a designated King George V Playing Field situated in Epsom, in the Northern end of the borough within the West Ewell Ward. It is approximately 12 acres in size and has vehicle access off Poole Road and has pedestrian access via Plough Road and the Hogsmill Open Space. The land was previously was offered to the Council in 1934 by J.T. Overton and was purchased by the Council on 9 January 1935 for £5000. It is owned by Epsom and Ewell Borough Council and managed by the Operational Services department of the Council.

This plan will identify how Poole Road Recreation ground is managed using the green flag assessment criteria. Each year a small, representative selection of the Council’s parks and open spaces are entered into the award scheme and although not all parks are entered, it is the Council’s intention to manage each of our major parks to the same standard.

Part of the Green Flag process is the production of a visitor survey, the results of which are used to inform a five-year management plan and action plan. This process has been carried out for Poole Road Recreation Ground.

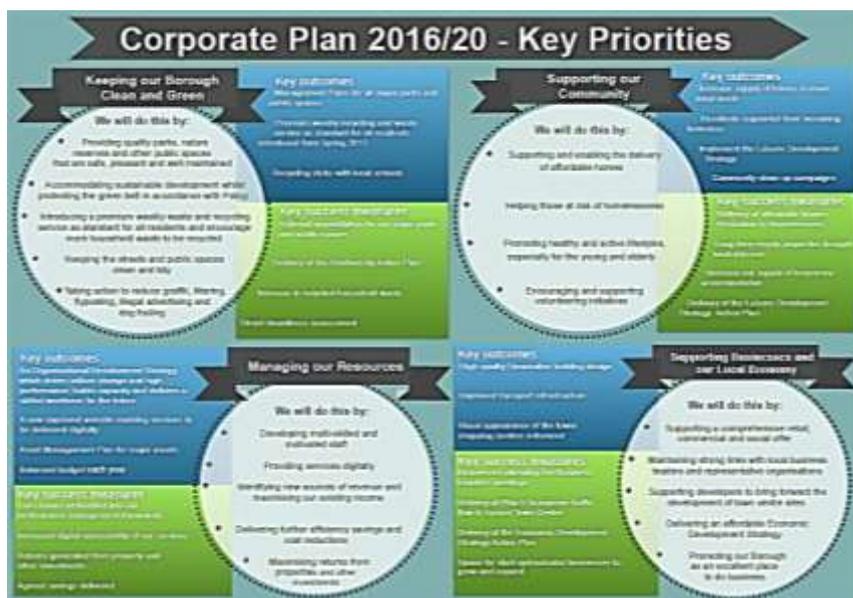
1.1 STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The purpose of the management plan is to:

- Ensure that the objectives of management and maintenance are documented
- To identify the resources required to manage and maintain the park
- To assess priorities and challenges for future action
- To encourage and support community involvement
- To promote and market the park
- To monitor and review changes that occur in the park

The management plan has been written to cover a 5-year period, it is a working document that brings together all information relating to Poole Road Recreation ground. It is important to view the management plan and action plan as organic documents, which can be amended as necessary throughout the five year period to accommodate new information, changes and challenges. The plan will serve as a benchmark against which delivery and performance objectives can be measured.

1.2 THE VISION FOR POOLE ROAD RECREATION GROUND



‘Provide a safe, attractive and sustainable environment for the benefit of all recreation ground users now and in the future’

To achieve this vision we have incorporated the key criteria set out in the Green Flag award scheme as a national benchmark for quality standards for public recreation grounds.

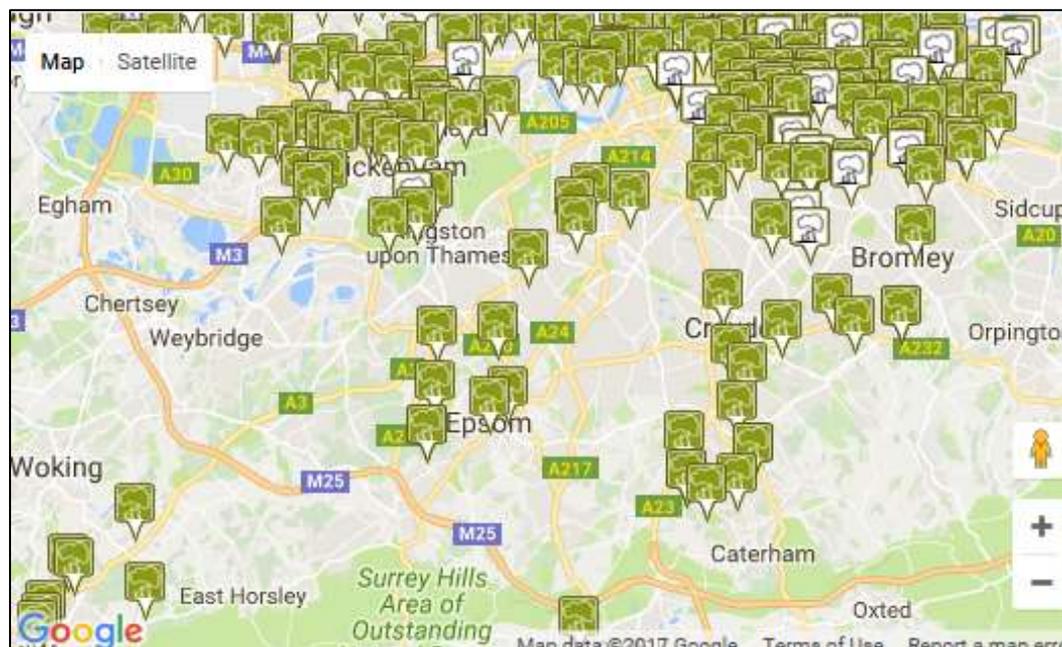


Figure 1 Distribution of Green Flag parks in the South East region

1.3 KEY OBJECTIVES

- To ensure the effective implementation of both financial and staffing resources to deliver a high level of quality management.
- Positively welcome people into the parks, in terms of both physical and social access.
- Ensure a healthy, safe and secure experience for park users.
- Provide a well maintained and clean park.
- Improve the environmental quality and sustainability of practices carried out in the park.
- Maintain the restored historic landscape character, whilst ensuring provision for contemporary users.
- Provide opportunities to increase community use and involvement, particularly through events, education and interpretation.
- Ensure effective promotion of the park as a community resource and as a desirable venue for commercial use.

1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council work to an annual maintenance schedule involving the Grounds Maintenance team, Street Cleansing and the Ranger Service. The teams work in unison to provide a safe, clean and enjoyable environment for all who wish to use Poole Road recreation ground.

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council have strived to ensure its parks and facilities are open to all who wish to use them. In Poole Road Recreation ground there is good disabled access throughout. To ensure work is completed to Council specification there are policies in place for any issues that arise. When working on public areas such as parks and open spaces these issues tend to be litter (including drug paraphernalia), dog fouling, graffiti and vandalism of equipment. These policies ensure that the council can continue to keep its recreation grounds and open spaces as clean and safe as possible for its users.

2 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2.1 SITE OVERVIEW

Address

Poole Road Recreation Ground (King George V Playing Field)
Poole Road
Epsom
Surrey
KT19 9RY

Size

12 Acres

Access

Poole Road
Plough Road
Hogsmill Open Space

Ownership

Epsom and Ewell Borough Council

Management and maintenance

Epsom and Ewell Borough Council

Facilities

Multiuse games area (MUGA)
Pavilion
Running Track
Children's Playground
Over 12's playground
Football Pitches
Sports changing facilities
Rooms for hire
Tennis courts (hard surfaced)

2.2 LOCATION OF POOLE ROAD RECREATION GROUND

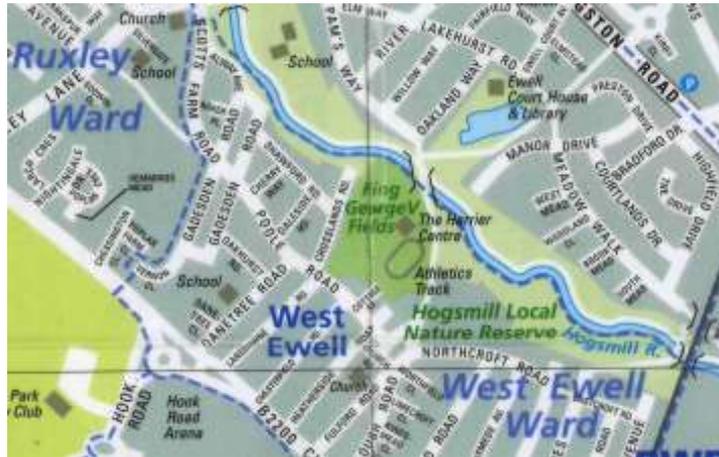


Figure 2 Location of Poole Road Recreation ground and the surrounding roads

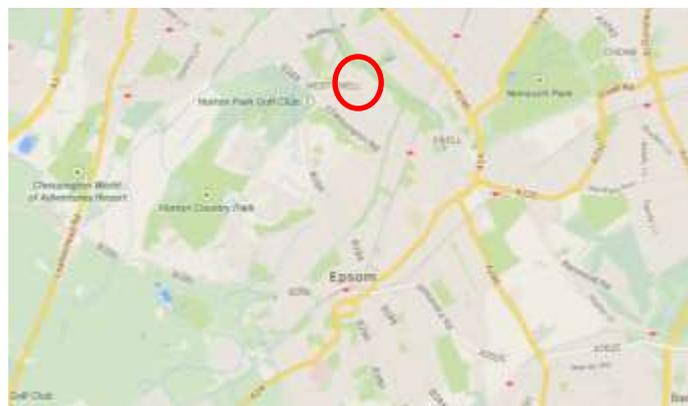


Figure 3 Location of Poole Road Recreation ground in relation to Epsom Town Centre



Figure 4 Location of Epsom in relation to London

2.3 HISTORIC CONTEXT

In 1934 J.T Overton, who was a developer, was about to build on the Ewell Court estate. He had offered the house and the gardens to the Council. At the same time he offered a second property to the Council; this consisted of 12 acres on the south side of the Hogsmill. Plans for a recreation ground in West Ewell had been on the table since 1923, and this purchase meant that they could go ahead. By 1937 a layout was agreed, including four football fields, two cricket tables, eight tennis courts, putting course, a children's playing field and equipment, a lodge and a pavilion. The estimated cost was £12,749, and an application for the loan of £19,000 was made to the Ministry of Health.

In the same year, towards the end of November, plans for the ground were submitted to the King George's Fields Foundation. This was a newly established charity promoting playing fields. In 1936, after the King's death, a committee led by the Lord Mayor of London had agreed to perpetuate his memory by setting up a foundation 'to promote and to assist in the establishment... of playing fields for the use and enjoyment of the people'. Each of these grounds was to be known as 'King George's Field' and marked by heraldic panels.



Figure 5 Official Opening

In March 1939 the Foundation approved the scheme and agreed to a grant of £2,000, subject to various conditions. One of these was the erection of gate pillars carrying concrete plaques with the royal lion and unicorn. No sooner was this agreed than the War broke out, and which the land was taken over by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries for allotments. At the end of the War, land was gradually freed until in 1951 the first part of the ground was ready to be laid out and approval for expenditure of £7,500 was sought from the Ministry. In 1953 the King George's Fields Foundation made their grant, now increased to £3,000, and next June the heraldic panels were set in the gate posts. Memorial gates, to the same design as those fronting Poole Road, were placed at the Auriol Park entrance in Thorndon Gardens. The administration of support was taken over by the National Playing Fields Association.

The new grounds at Poole Road were now home to Epsom and Ewell Harriers, who had previously occupied temporary accommodation at Alexandra and Court Recreation Grounds. They needed a cinder running track which would cost an estimated £13500, including £500 for equipment. The track would be four laps to the mile with seven lanes, the field events taking place in the centre. In November 1962 the National Playing Fields Association offered a grant of £1000 on condition that there would be pits for long jump, high jump, triple jump and pole vault as well as facilities for javelin, shot and discus. These extra facilities added £1750 to the cost.

The Harriers had to transfer their athletic activities back to Court Recreation Ground while work was under way, but by January 1964 this was complete and they were able to apply for the hire of the new running track for match and club championships between May and August. When the Hogsmill was straightened in the 1960s, the excess land between



Figure 6 The Old Harriers' Centre



Figure 7 Epsom Eagles Under 11's, 1977

the embankment and the river was added to the northern end of the playing field; this now contains the children's play area.

In October 1980 the Harriers asked for new headquarters at Poole Road, which would be supported by grants from the Sports Council and the Surrey Playing Field Association. Permission was granted under certain conditions. The new all-weather track was opened with great acclaim, but it only had six lanes which made it unsuitable for competitions and the Harriers held their matches elsewhere, although Poole Road is still used for training. The building inside the track, intended to be their headquarters, was managed by an external management company on behalf of the Council which caters

for both children's and adult activities – aerobics, martial arts, children's play sessions, and birthday parties, but the Council took over the direct management in October 2014 . The Recreation Ground continues to provide other sporting facilities, with two football pitches, two tennis courts, and a basketball court (*Parks in the Past, Carol Hill*).

2.3.1 KING GEORGE'S FIELDS FOUNDATION

On 30 January 1936 upon the death of King George V, the then Lord Mayor of the City of London set up a



committee to consider what form a national memorial to the King should take. In March 1936, the committee decided that there should be a statue in London and a philanthropic scheme of specific character that would benefit the whole country and be associated with King George V's name. As a result in the November of that year, the King George's Fields Foundation was constituted by Trust Deed to give effect to the scheme.

The aim of the Foundation was "to promote and to assist in the establishment throughout the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland of playing fields for the use and enjoyment of the people". Each of the playing fields would be styled 'King George's Field' and to be distinguished by heraldic panels or other appropriate tablet medallion or inscription commemorative of His Late Majesty and of a design approved by the Administrative Council."



The trust deed defined a 'Playing Field' as "any open space used for the purpose of outdoor games, sports and pastimes."

The project was to be a flexible one, focusing on urban areas, but not exclusively so, and carried out in each locality according to its requirements. Each field would have a distinctive uniform tablet as an appropriate visible commemoration of George V.

This was considered to be as the King would have wished, particularly in the service rendered to youth through providing for them an environment and opportunity for open air exercise, for the benefit of individual well-being and the general welfare of the nation (*Fields In Trust.org*).

Figure 8 The Lion and Unicorn Plaques found on King George Playing Fields

2.3.2 POOLE ROAD RECREATION GROUND TODAY

Today, the general layout of the recreation ground remains the same but there have been many changes. What exists in the park today is slightly different to the original plans of 1937. There are no putting greens or cricket tables and only two tennis courts. There is a large car park that can accommodate the many vehicles that turn up for the activities held in The Harrier Centre, including disabled parking directly outside the centre. The Harrier Centre has been completely renewed, which in addition to all the usual facilities, has a separate room which can be hired for private functions. The recreation ground is the home to the Epsom & Ewell Harriers Athletic Club, Gauntlett Boxing Club and Giggles Soft Play. Giggles Soft Play operates every day during the week from The Harrier Centre, offering soft play for babies and toddlers and also private parties at the weekends. Poole Road is a recreational ground rather than an ornamental garden; it has some beautiful trees and shrubs but no flower beds (*Recreation grounds in the Past, Carol Hill*). The park remains a dog free park and is locked daily, half an hour before sunset.

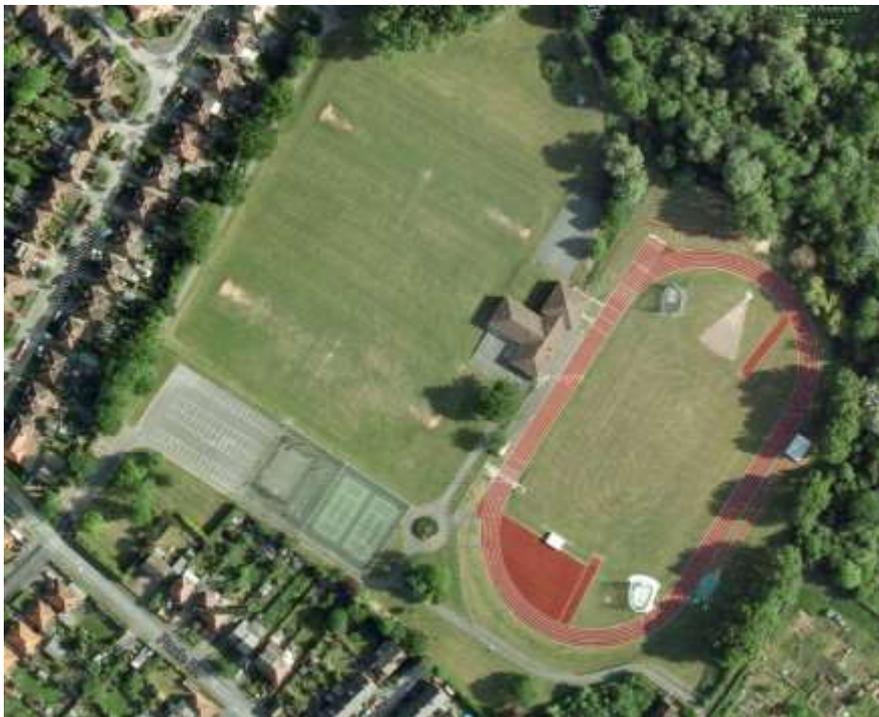


Figure 9 Birds Eye View of Poole Road Recreation Ground (Google Maps)

3 MANAGEMENT

The Epsom and Ewell Borough Council is responsible for the maintenance of all public grounds in the borough. The Operational Services Streetcare team and the borough’s Property and Estates team carry out the majority of works relating to parks and open spaces which include:

- grounds maintenance
- litter collection
- street cleansing
- public realm maintenance
- building and infrastructure maintenance
- graffiti removal
- ranger patrols

Tasks specifically within Poole Road Recreation Ground include grass cutting, pruning and planting, clearance of litter, building and infrastructure maintenance, security, events, football pitch and line marking, playground maintenance and other aspects of park management. Maintenance is output based as far as possible – it specifies the standard to be met, rather than the way in which the service is delivered.

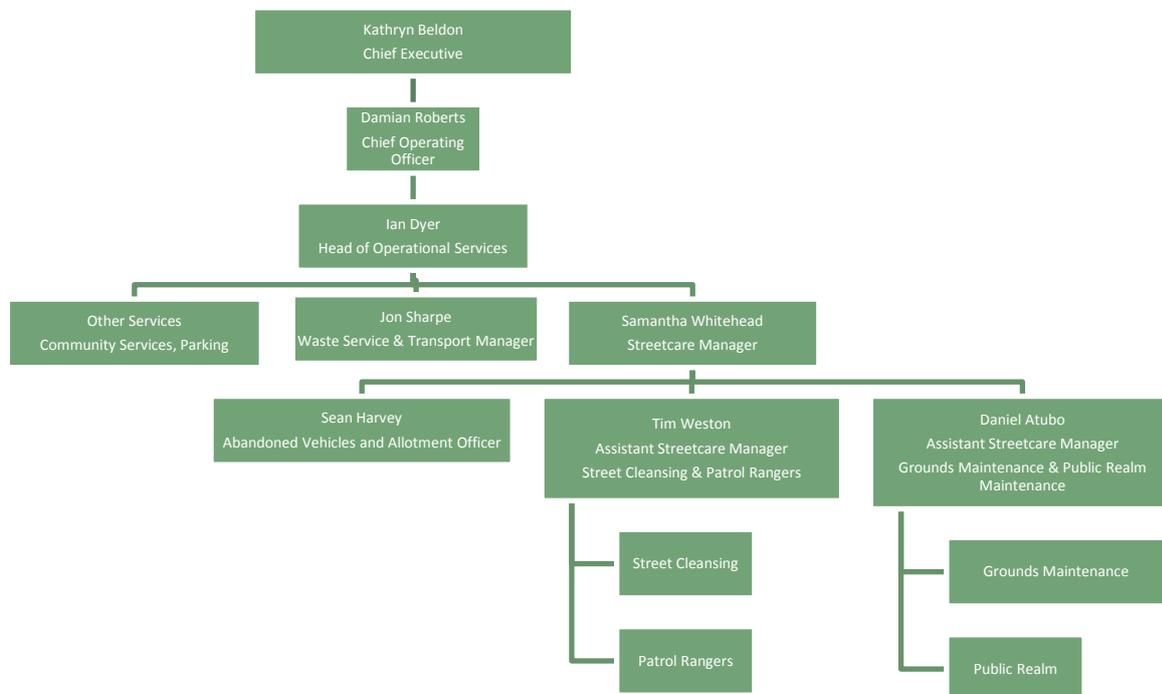


Figure 10 Operational Services Management Structure

4 POOLE ROAD RECREATION GROUND IN RELATION TO GREEN FLAG CRITERIA

4.1 A WELCOMING PLACE

4.1.1 ACCESS

Poole Road Recreation Ground is located within an urban area but also partly adjoins onto the Hogsmill Open Space. There are no direct transport links but local buses serve the nearby Chessington Road. There are five entrances to Poole Road Recreation Ground. There is one main entrance that caters for pedestrians and vehicles and is off Poole Road, here drivers will find a large car park. The second entrance although wide enough to cater for a vehicle it is kept as a pedestrian only entrance and can be found off Plough Road. The third entrance can be found on the Hogsmill Open Space and its nearest road access is Crosslands Road, this gate caters for pedestrians and emergency access for vehicles. The last two gates lead in to the playground and are found coming off the Hogsmill Open Space. These cannot accommodate vehicles so are pedestrian gates only. People using these gates can access the rest of the park by walking through the playground. The main entrance provides an open and welcoming feeling when entering the recreation ground with brick pillars, which hold the King George V playing field plaques, as can be seen in figure 11. The combination of these entrances give access to the recreation ground from all sides as can be seen in figure 12. Due to the layout and location of some of the gates there is very little possibility for shrubbery to overtake the entrances especially at the playground entrances. Wherever possible shrubbery is cut back as the council understands that it provides excellent cover for people who wish to do harm to recreation ground users.



Figure 11 Main entrance to Poole Road Recreation Ground (Google Maps)

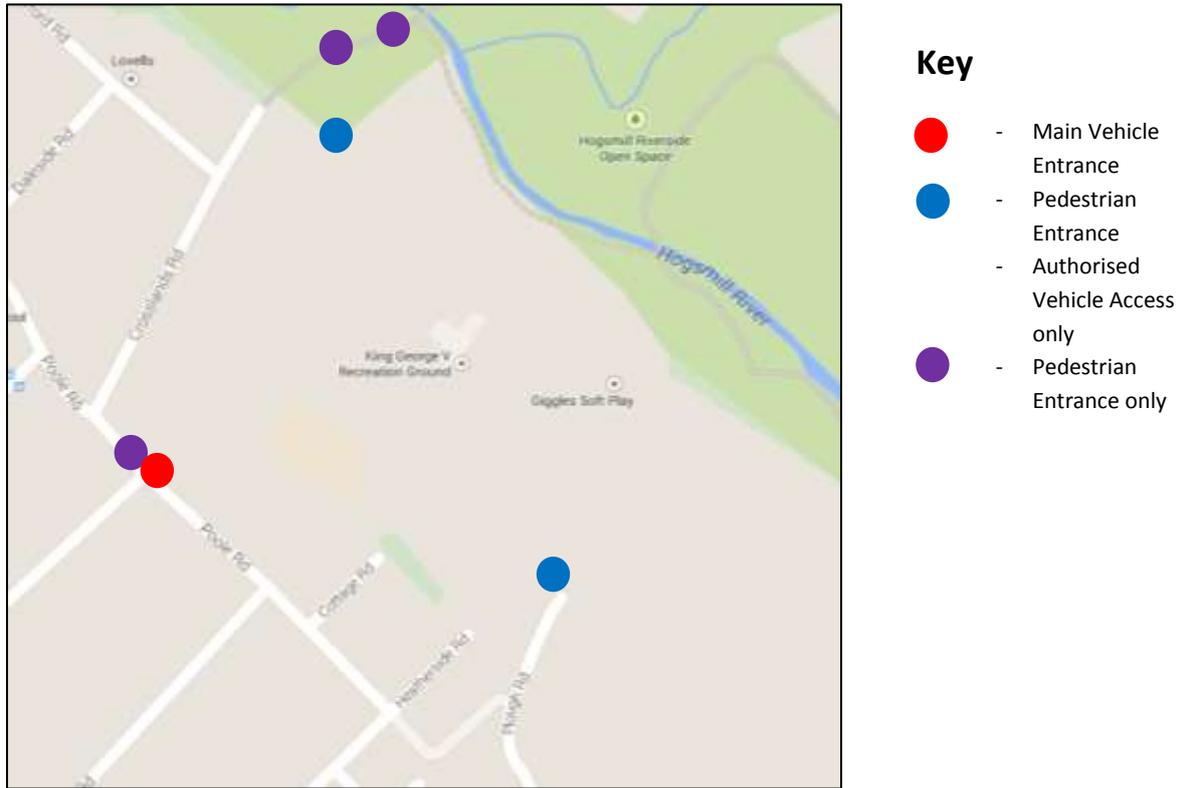


Figure 12 Map Showing the Location of the Five Entrances to Poole Road Recreation ground

4.1.2 SIGNAGE

Throughout the Borough, extensive work is carried out to keep all signs clean and legible. One of the most common problems faced by the ranger service is graffiti. Epsom and Ewell Borough Council are dedicated to ensuring the removal of graffiti, as a result, members of the ranger service were trained in 2017 in the use of graffiti chemicals to help combat the issue. It has been found that it is more beneficial for signs to be fitted with Perspex fronts, which can be cleaned or economically replaced if they are covered in graffiti.

Many of the other parks in the borough have signs regarding dog fouling, however as Poole Road is a dog free park, the signs found here are advising people that no dogs are allowed in the park. These are mainly found on the entrance gates and in the car park.

There is a sign at the entrance to the Harrier Centre and a notice board that is displayed daily showing the classes and activities that are offered and can be seen in figure 14.

There are two main information boards as can be seen in figure 13, one at the main vehicle entrance and the other by the playground. They only show the main details of the park including phone numbers but do not contain any kind of map of the park. In 2015 budget was secured to design new informative signs to go in the park. The boards consist of a map showing the layout of the park and key features as well as historical background. After successful installation of the new notice boards in the boroughs parks of Nonsuch, Auriol Park, Shadbolt Park, Rosebery Park and Alexandra Rec (see figure 15), Poole Road's new boards are currently in the design process and will be installed in 2019. The boards will also have a dedicated notice section where information and events can be displayed when relevant.



Figure 13 Information Board by the Main Vehicle Entrance



Figure 14 Board advertising classes in The Harrier



Figure 15 New Notice Board at Alexandra Rec

4.1.3 FACILITIES

For the groups that have booked the use of the pavilion there are changing rooms, shower facilities, toilets, first aid kit, reception area, a function room, gym room, kitchen and fire safety equipment.

Poole Road Recreation ground is home to:

- One basketball court
- One Multi Use Games Area (MUGA)
- Children's Playground
- Teenage Play Area
- Two football pitches
- The Harrier Centre
- Athletics Track
- Sports changing rooms
- Two tennis courts

As the list of facilities above would suggest, Poole Road Recreation ground prides itself on the facilities it provides to the community. The Council is continually working on 'providing something for everyone'. The recreation ground is the home for The Harriers athletics club who use the athletics track. There is no football home ground agreement for Poole Road as the two football pitches are only approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ the size of full match pitches and as such they do not comply with table fixed matches. Regardless they are available to hire via the Council's contact centre and are well used most weekends during the football season. For a ground with limited size it hosts a remarkable amount of sporting and recreational facilities for the whole family. On a daily basis during the week, Giggles Soft Play operates in the main function hall. They provide soft play for babies and toddlers and a café facility for the parents. At the weekend they also host private soft play parties. Gauntlett Boxing Club leases a section of the building and operate private and group boxing classes from the premises.

The pavilion has several toilets, which can be accessed by the public if the Harrier Centre is open. Due to graffiti and vandalism problems with public toilets in the area, it is not possible to leave them open full-time.

As well as Giggles operating during the day, every evening and weekend there are classes and activities running until late. Currently these are:

| | | | |
|-----------|-------|---------------|---------------------------|
| Monday | Hall | 9:30 -14:45 | Giggles Soft Play |
| | | 16:45 – 17:45 | Epsom Athletics Academy |
| | | 18:00 – 21:00 | Banstead Pilates |
| | Track | 18:00 – 20:30 | Epsom & Ewell Harriers |
| Tuesday | Hall | 9:30 - 14:45 | Giggles Soft Play |
| | Track | 18:00 – 20:30 | Epsom & Ewell Harriers |
| Wednesday | Hall | 9:30- 14:45 | Giggles Soft Play |
| | | 18:00 – 21:00 | Banstead Pilates |
| | Track | 19:00 – 21:00 | Open Track Night |
| Thursday | Hall | 9:30- 14:45 | Giggles Soft Play |
| | | 18:00 – 20:00 | Epsom & Ewell Harriers |
| | Track | 18:00 - 20:30 | Epsom & Ewell Harriers |
| Friday | Hall | 9:30- 14:45 | Giggles Soft Play |
| | | 16:00 – 20:45 | Acorn Gymnastics |
| Saturday | Hall | 9:00 – 12:00 | Giggles Soft Play |
| | | 13:00- 18:00 | Giggles Soft Play Parties |
| | Track | 9:00 – 12:00 | Open Track Session |
| | | 14:00- 16:00 | Surrey Wheels For All |
| Sunday | Hall | 9:00- 18:00 | Giggles Soft Play Parties |



Figure 16 Hard Surfaced Tennis Court



Figure 17 Pictures showing The Harrier Centre with access compliant with the disability discrimination act 1995



Figure 18 The multi-use games area (MUGA)



Figure 19 Children's Playground



Figure 20 Over 12's Play Area



Figure 21 Athletics Track

4.1.4 HEALTHY LIVING

The park contributes to the promotion of healthy living and physical activity through a range of activities operating within the park. People walking Section 8 of the London Loop will be brought past the playground alongside the Hogsmill River.

Epsom & Ewell Council also actively promote health walks for their residents and visitors (see figure 22), and try to educate them on the benefits of walking to maintain a healthy lifestyle



Epsom & Ewell Health Walks
Autumn Programme:
October – December 2018

FACTS ABOUT WALKING

- A 30 minute walk at a moderate pace can burn at least 200 calories
- Walking improves mental alertness and memory and can help prevent/reduce depression
- Walking helps promote restful sleep.

Enjoy the outdoors, step into fitness and walk your way to health

No booking required
Walks for all ages and abilities
Trained Walk Leaders present at all times

Visit www.epsomandewellhealthwalks.org.uk to view the latest Health Walk programme and location maps

Supported by:

Figure 22 Epsom & Ewell Health Walks Programme

4.2 HEALTHY, SAFE AND SECURE

Safety and security is identified as being the main issue for users of parks and open spaces. To allay users concerns a number of steps are put in place to ensure a safe environment. Managers and Rangers are responsible for the identification of hazards and the assessment/reduction of risks including those relating to the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health. The legislation relating to Duty of Care and Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 make the responsibility for public safety of paramount importance.

4.2.1 HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICIES

Training is issued when using new machinery and to new members of staff (in conjunction with the health and safety at work act 1974). This applies to the Ranger team, the Grounds Maintenance team and Street Cleansing team. Training is always available throughout the year for anyone who feels it will benefit them. Risk assessments are carried out on all tools and tasks conducted by the services. Risk assessments are encouraged even if it is felt the risk is manageable. Situated in the council depot there are three fire officers, two health and safety officers and there is a health and safety committee. The health and safety committee meets to discuss the Council health and safety policies to ensure they are up-to-date and relevant to the staff they are placed upon. The system that was used to report accidents in the workplace was updated in 2012. It was originally a paper based reporting system but it was felt the paper trail was too long, leading to a longer time frame from when the accident was reported to it being logged. A new database has been put in place to reduce the amount of time and the paper being used in reporting accidents. By computerising all reports on a spreadsheet, everyone has access to them at all times. This enables results to be analysed at ease. Analysis allows the council to identify patterns and accidents which aids the development of new policies and suitable training for specific areas where accidents occur.

All staff operate in accordance with the Health and Safety Policy and Codes of Practice outlined by the council. Specific risk assessments are undertaken for tools and task based procedure. The health and safety of visitors is taken very seriously and visitors are encouraged to report any possible health and safety risks to either themselves, other park users or staff. These calls or emails made by members of the public are logged as cases on a Customer Relations Management (CRM) system and sent to the relevant department so a case history can be kept and timescales can be met.

4.2.2 RANGER SERVICE

The ranger service are a team of 8, covering 48 sites across the borough, ranging from small open spaces to formal parks and recreation grounds and patrolling the larger sites of Epsom Common and Horton Country Park. They work on a 7 day rota and the shifts are worked out so there are rangers on duty from 8am to 11pm. When rangers are on shift they respond to emergency calls placed to the council. Rangers carry the duty phone with them at all times so they can respond quickly to requests, thus eliminating the need to return to the office. When the rangers finish their shift at 11pm, the duty phone is diverted to a duty officer who takes all out of office hours calls; so effectively if someone has a problem in a park they can reach someone 24 hours a day, seven days a week. All parks and recreation grounds in the borough have signage with the relevant information for contacting the ranger service or the out of office call out service. When rangers are called out to an emergency all correct procedures are completed in compliance with council policy.

Due to the Ranger services job profile it is important to provide a wide spectrum of training, this may include:

- Handling conflict
- Awareness and enforcement of bye-laws
- Dealing with anti-social behaviour

- Emergency first aid
- Playground inspections
- Carrying out patrolling and inspection duties
- Knowledge of green flag, what work is being carried out to achieve green flag status and the overall management plan

4.2.3 FIRE PROCEDURES

In response to the 2017 fire at Grenfell Tower in the borough of Kensington and Chelsea, Epsom & Ewell Council Property Services department has conducted an in-depth fire risk assessment of their buildings. It is planned that in 2018/2019 that all council staff will be trained as fire wardens, this will include: generic topics such as fire science, hazard spotting, good housekeeping and practical use of extinguishers.

Together with the Ranger service, the Council's property maintenance contractors carry out monthly fire checks in the pavilion, this includes ensuring that emergency lighting is operational and that fire exits are clear and unobstructed. Fire extinguishers are checked and/or replaced by an external contractor on a yearly basis.

4.2.4 EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

All facilities at Poole Road Recreation ground comply with the statutory fire and safety regulations. In addition to this all staff are advised and trained on a regular basis. All ranger vans carry a first aid kit. When the Ranger service is on shift they respond to emergency calls placed to the council. When on shift Rangers carry the duty phone with them so they can respond quickly to requests, thus eliminating the need to return to the office. When the Rangers are not on shift, the ranger duty phone is diverted to a duty officer who takes all out of office hours calls. When Rangers are called out to an emergency all correct paperwork procedures are completed in compliance with council policy. All parks and recreation grounds in the borough have signs with the relevant information for contacting the Ranger service or the out of office call out service.

4.2.5 POLICING IN POOLE ROAD RECREATION GROUND

It is probably safe to say that most boroughs in the country have seen an impact of reduced or redeployed police numbers. Epsom & Ewell is no exception with its regular police force reduced to 2 Neighbourhood Officers and 7 Police Community Support Officers (PCSO's) for the whole borough, and emergency 999 responders prioritising life or death situations above any other calls. Poole Road Recreation Ground falls under the 'Epsom and Ewell West' section of the Surrey Police safer Neighbourhood Team. It would be up to the PCSO's to carry out patrols of the park to deal with issues such as anti-social behaviour and other community concerns. The Safer Neighbourhood Team also works in partnership with the ranger service to tackle these relevant issues. The current dedicated Neighbourhood Specialist Officer for the particular area is PC 3701 Elena BOAFO.

An arrangement exists with rangers and PCSO's whereby joint patrols of the parks and open in the spaces are carried out. This includes patrolling Poole Road. As well as joint patrols, the Ranger service and all departments that may be in the parks are encouraged to report any damage or crime to the police. In addition, Ward Councillors and other park tenants are also very active with reporting antisocial behaviour and crime to the police and it is hoped that as a result it will raise the profile of Poole Road Recreation Ground with the Police and the park will benefit from additional police patrols of the area.

In the interests of security, Poole Road Rec is locked at night. It is locked half an hour before sunset and reopened early in the morning. This however cannot rule out those who want to scale the fences and gates and any open space will attract a degree of antisocial behaviour. At present the police do not consider Poole Road Rec to be a crime hotspot.

In order to make users feel safe, Council staff are often visible in the park. The street cleansers are responsible for opening the park in the week and the ranger service for opening at weekends and locking it daily. Rangers also carry out a weekly inspection of park facilities, street cleansers will empty the bins daily and ground maintenance will be carrying out grass cutting and horticultural work. This provides a staff presence, which could act as a deterrent to offenders

Although the Neighbourhood Teams no longer hold Panel Meetings, residents and park users are encouraged to make contact with the Team via the Surrey Police website or through the non-emergency 101 number.

The park usually sees minor issues such as antisocial behaviour, graffiti and litter. The summer months sometimes see small fires started by younger members of the public. The ranger service report any issues to an antisocial spreadsheet, which is regularly reviewed by the police so they can assess whether more patrols may be necessary.

Figure 23 shows the area analysed (Poole Road Recreation Ground) for crimes recorded by the police from November 2017 to October 2018. Figure 24 shows the list of crimes reported and figure 25 shows the outcomes of the listed crimes.

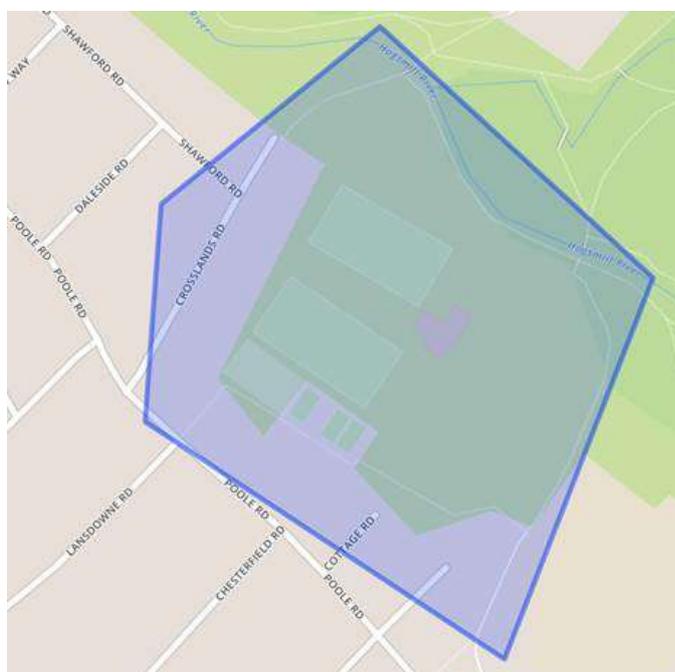


Figure 23 Area analysed for crimes from Nov 17 to Oct 2018 (police.uk)

| Number of crimes | | | Number of crimes | | |
|---------------------------|-------|------------|------------------------------|-------|------------|
| Crime type | Total | Percentage | Crime type | Total | Percentage |
| Anti-social behaviour | 8 | 20.51% | Possession of weapons | 1 | 2.56% |
| Bicycle theft | 1 | 2.56% | Public order | 3 | 7.69% |
| Burglary | 3 | 7.69% | Robbery | 0 | 0.00% |
| Criminal damage and arson | 9 | 23.08% | Shoplifting | 1 | 2.56% |
| Drugs | 0 | 0.00% | Theft from the person | 0 | 0.00% |
| Other crime | 3 | 7.69% | Vehicle crime | 4 | 10.26% |
| Other theft | 1 | 2.56% | Violence and sexual offences | 5 | 12.82% |

Figure 24 List of crimes recorded to the police in this area from Nov 2017 to Oct 2018 (police.uk)

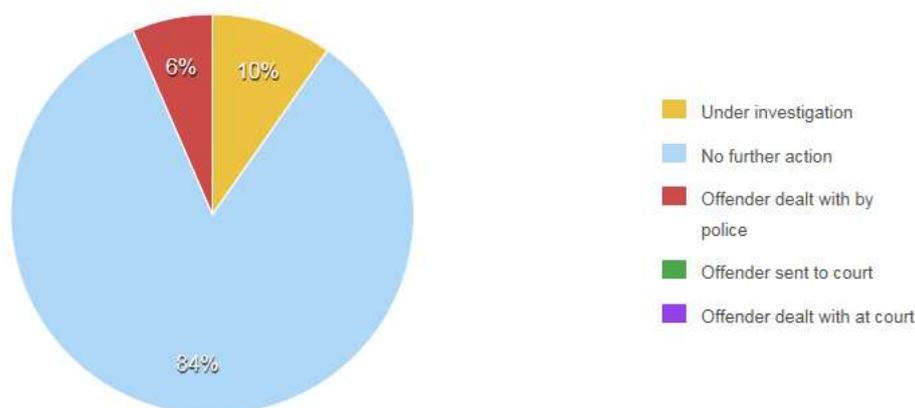


Figure 25 Comparison of outcomes in this area from Nov 2017 to Oct 2018 (police.uk)

As it can be seen from the results, antisocial behaviour was the second highest category for the area (20.51%). Anti-social behaviour covers a wide range of unacceptable activity that causes harm to an individual, to their community or to their environment. This could be an action by someone else that leaves you feeling alarmed, harassed or distressed. It also includes fear of crime or concern for public safety, public disorder or public nuisance. Examples of anti-social behaviour include:

- Nuisance, rowdy or inconsiderate neighbours
- Vandalism, graffiti and fly-posting
- Street drinking
- Environmental damage including littering, dumping of rubbish and abandonment of cars
- Prostitution related activity
- Begging and vagrancy
- Fireworks misuse
- Inconsiderate or inappropriate use of vehicles

(police.uk)

An option that the council are investigating in response to crime in parks and open spaces is the use of Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO's). These could supersede the byelaws and allow fixed penalty notices to be issued to offenders. Repeat offenders could also be taken to court. To implement PSPO's the Council would need to start a borough wide and hold a consultation with the public before it could be implemented.

4.2.6 SECURITY

To aid security, Poole Road Recreation Ground is surrounded by fencing and has gated entrances, and is one of the ten parks in the Borough that are locked at night. All the gates are locked by the ranger service and the procedure for locking is designed to minimise the risk of any members of the public getting accidentally locked in. Should a member of the public get locked in, they can call the number displayed in the recreation ground and will be let out. The recreation ground is locked as early as half an hour before sunset so the locking up times vary throughout the year and it is dependent on the sunset times. As part of the lock up procedure the pavilion is locked and alarmed.

The Harrier Centre is opened daily by the ranger service and when open there is a member of staff on site to oversee the users of the building. At the end of the day when the centre is no longer in use it is locked and alarmed. As well as this, all doors and windows are covered by heavy duty roll down shutters that are locked in

place. Should the alarm go off over night, the duty officer will be alerted and can take the necessary procedures to investigate.

4.2.7 CLOSED-CIRCUIT TELEVISION

It was felt that CCTV was not necessary in Poole Road Recreation Ground as vandalism was not a big problem. When the evening ranger shift finishes, all buildings, including the pavilion at Poole Road Recreation ground are locked up with shutters and are alarmed. When the shutters are down, physical damage to the building is limited, the main concern is graffiti. In 2017 the rangers were supplied with new vehicles that came equipped with CCTV. Should rangers be on site and witness any criminal behaviour, it can be recorded and used as evidence if needed.

As briefly mentioned, the byelaws need to be completely updated to remove outdated language and to cover issues that are relevant today such as people flying drones, playing golf or driving their mopeds and off road vehicles through the parks. However due to the legal nature of the byelaws this would be a very large project for the councils legal team and is unlikely to be updated anytime soon, especially since the council are exploring the use of PSPO's. In the meantime, the rangers continue to confront any unwanted behaviour in parks and report it to the police where necessary.

4.2.8 DOG ENFORCEMENT AND BYELAWS

All of the recreation grounds in the borough are extremely popular with dog walkers which in turn leads to the problem of dog fouling. It is an issue that is a high priority for the council. Under the bye-laws for Epsom & Ewell Borough Council Poole Road Recreation Ground is a dog free park.

Byelaws made by the Council of the Borough of Epsom and Ewell under Section 164 of the Public Health Act 1875, Sections 12 and 15 of the Open Spaces Act 1906 and Section 15 of the Open Spaces Act 1906 with respect to pleasure grounds and open spaces

DOGS PROHIBITED FROM THE GROUNDS

(1) No person (other than a registered blind person) in charge of a dog shall, without reasonable excuse, permit the dog to enter or remain in any of the dog prohibited areas.

(2) An officer of the Council or any constable may require a person in charge of a dog which has entered any of the dog prohibited areas to remove the dog there from.

Under section 164 of the Public Health Act 1875:

| Name of Ground | Whole/Part | Position of Ground |
|--|------------|--------------------|
| King George V (Poole Road) Recreation Ground | Whole | West Ewell |

The byelaws need to be completely updated to remove outdated language and to cover issues that are relevant today such as people flying drones, playing golf or driving their mopeds and off road vehicles through the parks. However due to the legal nature of the byelaws this would be a very large project for the councils legal team and is unlikely to be updated anytime soon, especially since the council are exploring the use of PSPO's (Public Public Spaces Protection Orders). In the meantime, the rangers continue to confront any unwanted behaviour in parks and report it to the police where necessary.

It is proposed that in 2019, the Council will be training certain departments (for example, Rangers, Downkeepers and Environmental Health teams) to carry out enforcement and issue on the spot fines. This will

hopefully reduce littering and antisocial behaviour and in turn make park users and members of the public feel safer.

4.3 CLEAN AND WELL MAINTAINED

4.3.1 WORK SCHEDULING

Epsom and Ewell's work program is designed to ensure that each team is allocated a program of works that is defined prior to the start of each period by the management team.

To reach the required standard in our parks, the program of works is based on a schedule of need, for example grass and hedge cutting, emptying of bins etc. which is on a specific frequency or rotation but is also responsive to seasonal changes and sporadic events which could have an impact like flooding or a large public celebration. As well as this, the council will also respond to user feedback, which could come in the form of a letter, telephone call or CRM case from a member of the public, Councillor or Council staff members. This will be given a priority and then scheduled appropriately into daily tasks to minimise the impact.

4.3.2 MONITORING

Monitoring of the services is undertaken at a number of levels and on an ongoing basis. The Council monitors the performance of the staff to facilitate rapid identification and response to operational issues. A rigorous works order programming system enables each service element to be integrated as part of a seamless approach by enabling effective monitoring and reporting. The Operational Services department also uses the system to perform internal random monitoring of works previously completed. All inspections would be logged and used to monitor performance against established Key Performance Indicators.

4.3.3 LITTER

Poole Road Recreation ground has litter bins placed in a number of locations along the pathways and also in the children's playground. The litter bins were replaced a few years ago to a new style which contain perspex advertising panels in the doors. The advertising panels are widely used by the council to display information relating events/campaigns. In addition, the panels can be rented out to commercial operators who wish to advertise in our Parks, thus providing a source of revenue income for the Council. The bins are checked and emptied Monday through to Friday by the street cleansing team. The Ranger service also provides a litter picking service when they are on patrol. In the summer when there is more activity in the recreation ground additional patrols are made to combat the sharp rise in litter experienced during this period.

4.3.4 CLINICAL WASTE

Any litter such as clinical waste, syringes etc. are collected by the rangers or street cleansers who are 'sharps' trained. Using tools specific to the task, the item is inserted into a lockable 'sharps' box. The location of the 'sharps' will be recorded and when full, the box will be transported to the designated clinical waste disposal point.

4.3.5 GRAFFITI

There is a graffiti team working all year round who respond to call outs from the public and from staff members who have found graffiti on their day to day inspections. Rangers are also trained to use some of the chemicals and can remove on site if possible, however if the graffiti covers a large area or stronger chemicals are needed then the graffiti team will attend. If the graffiti cannot be removed using chemicals then the graffiti team stock

paints that can be used. Epsom and Ewell Borough Council actively seek to prosecute those who spray graffiti in the area.

4.3.6 PAVILION MAINTENANCE

The ranger service is in charge of keeping the pavilions locked at the required times. The council's maintenance contractor are currently in charge of all internal maintenance (cleaning, fire extinguishers and electrical equipment inspections). The contractor carries out monthly planned preventative maintenance (PPM) where the water temperatures and emergency lights are checked. There are other PPM tasks that come up quarterly, half yearly and annually that also get attended to. In the pavilion there are changing rooms, toilets, shower facilities and a kitchen/meeting room with complete cooking facilities.

4.3.7 PARK FURNITURE AND MAINTENANCE

The ranger service not only patrol the parks and open spaces, they also carry out minor maintenance work on amenity infrastructures such as the park signs, benches, bins and playground equipment. The rangers and a dedicated streetcare team operate with a 'find fault and fix it' approach. Repairs are carried out as soon as possible but if the item is considered a risk to health it will be immediately decommissioned and cordoned off with an appropriate sign put in place warning of its danger. If the fix is out of the capabilities of the ranger service it is passed on to the maintenance ranger team. The fault will be given a priority rating based on severity and fixed to an appropriate timescale. The maintenance rangers carry an extensive array of equipment in their vehicles so most issues can be resolved on site without the need to remove.

Poole Road's street furniture and equipment are visually checked by rangers who are RoSPA (The Royal Society for the prevention of accidents) trained to level 1 – Routine Inspections. Although the inspections are largely centred on playground equipment, the rangers are also trained to inspect gates, surfaces, bins and benches. Visual checks are carried out by the rangers on a weekly basis, however all staff who visit the site are encouraged to report any faults that they identify.

Traditionally, inspections were logged on paper inspection sheets but in 2014 Epsom and Ewell Borough Council began to use a playground safety check system called 'Playsafe'. These playground safety checks are carried out using a mobile phone application that links directly with an online 'Playsafe' database. By logging any faults found on the 'Playsafe' handheld devices, it eliminates the need for paper which can get lost and ensures that the maintenance rangers have direct access to the findings so they can see photos, the risk, and then prioritise repairs accordingly. After trialling the software it was felt that the software was not keeping up with how the council wanted to use it and only covered playground equipment and not all assets within a park which was no use to parks like Poole Road Recreation Ground. Eventually it was decided to move back to paper reporting as the rangers were having to use a combination of both. In mid 2017 the Council met with the company who manage the software and have found that it has moved forward and will likely meet the needs of the rangers and the Council. The biggest change being that all park assets can be added regardless of if they have a playground or not. Currently all the park assets are being added to the software and we are in the process of procuring new handheld devices. The Council aim to have this software (now renamed PSS Live) in place and used for inspections by 2019.

4.3.8 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE

All grounds maintenance work is carried out to a schedule managed by the Assistant Streetcare Manager who is responsible for Grounds Maintenance and Public Realm maintenance. After each site is complete it is logged on

the grounds maintenance database with the appropriate times, dates and names of the staff who were on site. The work carried out is varied throughout the according to the season and landscape present at the site. Schedules will vary depending on whether the area has general or ornamental grass, spring-flowering/annual/shrub/rose beds, herbaceous borders, hedges, rockeries and/or woodland. Plants and soft landscape maintenance are all maintained with the aim of providing a safe, attractive and stimulating environment for those who visit. All organic waste accumulated from grounds maintenance work is taken to a composting site until it is suitable for using on the shrub beds.

As well as carrying out scheduled work and responding to seasonal changes, the grounds maintenance team also respond to CRM (customer relationship management) notices. These may have come via a call from a member of the public or from a staff member after visual inspections of the sites.

All hard surface sports facilities (playgrounds, five-a-side pitches, tennis courts and basketball courts) are all spray cleaned when it is felt necessary. A build-up of dust and dirt on these hard services make them increasingly slippery underfoot. Spray cleaning using a jet power washer plate that glides along the surface removes all dust and dirt from in between the tiny crevices in the tarmac surface. All dust and dirt that has been excavated is then removed with either a hard brush or a backpack blower before it has the chance to work its way back into the tarmac.

Weed control

This is carried out in the recreation grounds by staff that are certified with PA1 and PA6 certificates. It is important that only trained staff use these chemicals, not only for their personal safety but when working in recreation grounds as there are animals and recreation ground users to consider. The certificate PA1 is the theory behind pesticide application. It covers legislation regarding environmental, public and personal safety and all procedures regarding health and safety. PA6 is the certificate for manual handling and application of pesticides. Epsom and Ewell Borough Council do not have a schedule for spraying in the recreation grounds. It is felt that scheduled spraying may lead to excessive spraying. When recreation grounds are inspected by the ranger services and grounds maintenance, they will determine as and when spraying may need to be carried out.

Litter

Litter is collected as and when it is necessary. The Ranger service carries out litter picking when on patrol. The grounds maintenance teams also carry out litter picking as part of their duties when working in the recreation ground.

Leaf Clearance

At the end of the grass cutting season, the parks team will go out with a tractor, blowers and a ride on cut and collect mower which they remove the blade from the bottom and use it to Hoover up the leaves. The leaf collection period runs from roughly the end of October up to Christmas. The leaves collected are distributed between council allotment sites and Nonsuch Park where they are left to become leaf mould. Leaf mould is fantastic soil improver and is welcomed by the allotments holders who use it to improve their crops. The leaf mould pile at Nonsuch Park is used by the gardening staff for the Formal Gardens and any remaining is distributed to other flower/shrub beds around the borough.

4.3.9 EQUIPMENT

All grounds maintenance equipment is purchased centrally. Although equipment is selected for functionality, major consideration is also given to emissions and vibration to ensure staff safety and reduced environmental impact. All staff are inducted either internally on equipment such as strimmers and blowers or externally for

equipment such as chainsaws. Annual service programs are in place for all equipment and daily safety checks are carried out and recorded.

Hand-Arm Vibration

Hand-arm vibration is vibration transmitted from work processes into workers' hands and arms. It can be caused by operating hand-held power tools, such as strimmer's, powered lawnmowers, or by holding materials being processed by machines. Hand-arm vibration can cause a range of conditions collectively known as hand-arm vibration syndrome (HAVS), as well as specific diseases such as carpal tunnel syndrome. HAVS is preventable, but once the damage is done it is permanent. In July 2005 the Control of Vibration at Work Regulations 2005 came into force which aims to protect employees from hand-arm vibration. Therefore since then by law, the council as an employer, must assess and identify measures to eliminate or reduce risks from exposure to hand-arm vibration so that they can protect their employees from risks to their health (HSE.gov.uk).

The council records their employee's hand-arm vibration exposure in order to reduce the risk of them developing HAVS. When the council acquire new equipment it is given a unique code and its initial vibration magnitude (m/s^2) value is recorded, this informs the council of how much vibration the piece of equipment produces. Every piece of equipment is tested annually but if a piece of equipment becomes damaged it will be tested after being repaired and its vibration magnitude logged; this is due to the vibration magnitude gradually worsening with age and damage and therefore can be used for less time.

Each new employee is given an initial screening questionnaire and then carry out an assessment which will determine whether or not they have any pre-existing HAVS symptoms, if they do they will be referred to occupational health who will decide if they can use tools that cause hand-arm vibration and for how long each day. Members of staff who show no existing symptoms of HAVS will be allowed to use the tools and every time they do, the operator fills out a sheet at the end of the day with the equipment code and how long they used the equipment for. This is logged into a database that has a points system provided by HSE.gov.uk, the database then calculates how much hand arm vibration that operator has been exposed to. Currently they have a daily exposure action value of 100points and a daily exposure limit value of 400points, this allows the operator to accrue a maximum exposure limit of 2000points per week. Should the operator exceed this before the end of the week they will be stopped from using the tools for the remainder of the week.

4.3.10 ARBORICULTURAL MANAGEMENT

Increasing public concerns about environmental and sustainability issues are focusing our attention on the importance of trees in our towns and countryside. The Borough Council manages and maintains thousands of publicly owned trees; these include 8000 street trees and over 50,000 trees distributed across our 2500 acres of public open space. Trees make a major contribution to the quality of the local environment but they also need careful management and we have a duty of care in respect of tree management to take reasonable steps to ensure that trees do not constitute a danger or a legal nuisance.

To comply with our duty of care and legal responsibility, the Council follow a tree risk management policy. It is important that the Council keep these programmes intact and adequately funded. This will help to ensure we comply with duties over public safety and nuisance as well as promoting environmental care.

As part of this policy the Council operate a comprehensive tree inspection programme every 3 years. Tree care is the responsibility of the Council tree officer Jeremy Young; he oversees all inspections and work carried out and when he is not in the office the deputy tree officer takes over. The professional tree inspections are

undertaken by Council officers and qualified tree inspectors and sites are zoned in accordance with risk. The inspections involve visual tree assessments to evaluate whether there are any observable defects that constitute a danger or actionable nuisance. When defects are identified they are scheduled for work under the defect management programme. The time scales for these works are undertaken in accordance with the assessed priorities as agreed in table 2.

| Priority | Target Response |
|-----------|--|
| Emergency | Within 24 hours |
| High | Within 12 weeks |
| Medium | Within 1 year |
| Low | Within 3 years or reassessed within this time frame. |

Table 1 Agreed timescales for defect tree work

In addition to defect management, the Council operate programmes of routine tree pruning to help control tree growth. Routine tree pruning involves pruning to raise the canopy above the road, clearing phone wires and lamps etc. Access work is the removal of suckers and low branches for pedestrian footway clearance. The work is done as appropriate for subsidence management. One of our main Council priorities is to protect and enhance the environment. Therefore we will not undertake tree works which could be detrimental to natural biodiversity or the aesthetic quality of the landscape, unless absolutely necessary. Where possible trees will be allowed to grow naturally and maintenance tends to focus on higher priority public safety and nuisance factors, such as storm damage, dealing with decayed or dead trees, removing branch obstruction to the highway or pruning branches encroaching onto buildings.

The Council has awarded the tree maintenance contract to a locally based and well equipped arboriculture company called Advanced Tree Services LTD (ATS). ATS undertake the vast majority of council tree maintenance, including emergency call out, routine pruning, tree felling, planting and stump grinding. They also assist the council tree officers with tree inspections. There is at least one team of tree surgeons from ATS that work in the Borough full time.

During spells of adverse weather, the ranger service will inspect the park to check for falling trees or limbs that may be a hazard to park users. This is not as big a problem on some sites like Epsom Common where many of the trees can be left where they fall, but in Poole Road Recreation Ground it is vital to keep the green space and pathways clear from tree debris.

4.4 SUSTAINABILITY

Epsom and Ewell Borough Council strives to maintain and improve its green spaces using sustainable methods. All service departments involved in the maintenance of Poole Road Recreation Ground are encouraged to carry out their duties using methods that are environmentally friendly. As sustainability in definition, is the quality of not being harmful to the environment or depleting natural resources, and thereby supporting long-term ecological balance (*Dictionary.com*), the Council understand the importance of maintaining these standards wherever possible for the long term ecological benefits to its parks and open spaces.

4.4.1 ORGANIC MATERIAL/RECYCLING

Throughout the year, the grounds maintenance teams remove all organic waste produced from pruning and grass cutting. This green waste is taken offsite to a large composting facility in the nearby Horton Country Park. Any leaves are collected and taken to Nonsuch Park or allotment sites. An independent contractor used to be

hired to compost all the green waste, but it is now done in house. This coupled with the fact the council does not have to buy in readymade mulch saves the council a considerable amount of money every year.

The process involves shredding the waste but burning it sufficiently to kill the weed seeds. This compost is piled and left to continue decomposing. When it is sufficiently composted it can be returned to the beds in the form of mulch. This mulch provides nutrients to the beds but it can also serve another purpose. Previous winters, in particular, of 2009 and 2010 left all of Epsom and Ewell covered in snow and dealing with sub-zero temperatures. Newly planted shrubs will struggle to cope with such low temperatures in comparison to established shrubs, therefore leaf mulch can be used to insulate the beds. By insulating the beds it gives the root systems a little extra help in resisting frost damage. Mulching also helps keep weed growth under control.

4.4.2 PESTICIDES AND POLLUTION REDUCTION

The use of pesticides is kept to a minimum, and where they are used, the most eco-friendly products are selected. Currently a basic glyphosate is the chemical utilised within the park. All staff must be trained to PA1 or PA6 standard. The purchase, storage, usage and disposal of chemicals is carefully controlled under COSHH. All chemicals are stored in secure containers that meet health and safety regulations. The distribution of keys is regulated to ensure chemicals are not stolen or mislaid through negligence. Pesticide spraying in the parks is only carried out when absolutely necessary as it's felt that a schedule of regular spraying may lead to excessive spraying, therefore it's always the prerogative to weed manually.

Peat is **not** used in Poole Road and the council uses its own recycled waste as mulch for the shrub beds. They also try to buy their plant stock from responsible nurseries that do not use peat.

4.4.3 WASTE MINIMISATION

Waste is not only expensive to get rid of but represents the underutilisation of a resource which itself has a cost. There are environmental costs for example the pollution caused by the disposal of such waste. Epsom & Ewell Borough Council identifies two ways of tackling this problem 1) reducing actual production of green waste and 2) re-using green waste after composting, with the emphasis being on the former of these. Green Waste can be reduced by avoiding unnecessary pruning, using herbicides correctly and allowing leaves to decompose naturally amongst shrubs and hedge bottoms. As much green waste as possible is recycled, however loads with a high percentage of weed content are not recycled so the risk of seeds spreading is minimised.

4.4.4 ARBORICULTURE AND WOODLAND

Newly planted trees are staked, watered well and checked on a regular basis. Dead wood should be left standing if possible, to provide an important habitat for invertebrates and other habitats. Clippings and cuttings should be composted where possible and re-used within the park environment.

4.4.5 WATER EFFICIENCY AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY

The Epsom & Ewell Environmental Policy aims to reduce the amount of energy used through good management, training, and informed purchasing practices and decisions. Vehicles and machinery are maintained regularly and the operational services team also tries to reduce dependence on mains water supplies for irrigation. Watering of plants is kept to a minimum and watering points are located away from public access. Effective training of staff, including health and safety, and following all environmental legislation relevant to the council, prevents incidents of pollution.

Where possible the pavilions are fitted with self-closing taps for all showers and taps. Changing facilities are notorious for wasting water, the biggest culprits being showers left on after use. Self-closing taps are the most efficient method of saving water. The Harrier Centre has self-closing taps in all its toilets and changing rooms except for the disabled toilets and kitchen. All the water points are checked before the centre is closed, avoiding any of these being left on overnight.

The hard surface sporting facilities in Epsom and Ewell are fitted with floodlights to ensure sport is accessible for as many hours of the day as possible. However as Poole Road Rec is locked at night there is no need for lighting. The lights are programmed to come on only when required. Many of the pavilions and changing rooms in the borough have lighting that only comes on when a sensor is activated meaning that when there is no one in the rooms the lights go off, avoiding wasted energy. For the facilities that do not have light sensors the rangers check that all the lights are turned off when they lock them up. The track lights have recently been upgraded to LED lights in order to increase energy efficiency.

4.4.6 ASSET MANAGEMENT

Work is in progress to write an Asset management plan for all the parks in the borough. This will ensure all assets in the parks are accounted for and managed.

4.5 CONSERVATION AND HERITAGE

Biodiversity, a contraction of "biological diversity," generally refers to the variety and variability of life on Earth. One of the most widely used definitions defines it in terms of the variability within species, between species and between ecosystems. It is a measure of the variety of organisms present in different ecosystems (*United Nations Environment Programme, World Conservation Monitoring Centre*). However, during the last century, decreases in biodiversity have been increasingly observed. In 2007, German Federal Environment Minister Sigmar Gabriel cited estimates that up to 30% of all species will be extinct by 2050 (*BBC News*). As biodiversity contributes to our very existence on this planet, we must adopt the "Think Globally, Act Locally" concept which originally began at the grassroots level, however, it is now a global concept with high importance (*Warren Heaps, International Forum*), and adopting sustainable ways of living will ensure the protection of biodiversity and our future.

4.5.1 AGENDA 21 – LOCAL BIODIVERSITY

The need for biodiversity was recognised at the United Nations 1992 Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit. Leaders recognised that a diverse environment is essential to maintain air quality, to provide valuable species for food and medicine, and to provide a varied and interesting environment for future generations. As a result the Government were asked to produce national and regional biodiversity Action Plans, which filtered down at local authority level through the local agenda 21 initiative.

A 'Local Biodiversity Action Plan' has been produced for Epsom & Ewell to help ensure both the long term protection and enhancement of biodiversity within the Borough. The complete Epsom & Ewell Local Biodiversity Action Plan can be found at:

<https://www.epsom-ewell.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/residents/planning/planning-policy/BiodiversityActionPlan.pdf>

This strategy provides an over-arching review of open space in the borough and has been developed in line with current national, regional and local policy context and initiatives. The following objectives from the biodiversity action plan for Epsom & Ewell 2010 are of particular relevance in informing the Management Plan.

Objective 1: Develop partnerships to ensure that the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity in Epsom and Ewell is maintained in the long term.

Objective 2: Ensure the conservation and enhancement of habitats and species, as specified nationally and in the Surrey Habitat Action Plans.

Objective 3: Ensure opportunities for the conservation and enhancement of the whole biodiversity resource in Epsom and Ewell are identified considered and acted upon.

Objective 4: Raise awareness, appreciation and involvement in the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity in Epsom and Ewell

Objective 5: Provide on-going monitoring of biodiversity in Epsom and Ewell.

Objective 6: Seek to increase the funding available for the long-term conservation, enhancement and monitoring of biodiversity in Epsom and Ewell.

Objective 7: Seek to identify the wider benefits to the community of improving biodiversity

4.5.2 EPSOM AND EWELL'S SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY 2011 – 2022

'A Brighter Future'

A Brighter future is Epsom and Ewell's Sustainable Community Strategy. The Strategy looks at the future for Epsom and Ewell, It sets out how the Borough's many positive aspects will be developed and how the issues and challenges faced by the Borough will be met through partnership working.

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council's ambition is:

"To maintain and develop those distinctive characteristics that make living and working in Epsom and Ewell a matter of conscious choice and, in conjunction with others, provide quality and innovative services that are based on the identified priorities of our residents"

The Local Strategic Partnership has identified the following topics as areas for future focus and partnership working:

- The visual appearance of the surroundings, both in terms of the natural and the built environment
- The impact of organisations and individuals in securing a sustainable future (recognising the need for economic health and more housing)
- The ability to get around (including the use of the existing transport and traffic infrastructure, car movements and alternative means of travel)
- The promotion of community safety and the enhancing of public confidence, recognising the formal position and responsibilities of the Borough's Community Safety Partnership
- The support for particular communities (children & young people, older people and the disabled, the disadvantaged and pockets of relative deprivation)
- Social change and the achievement of a balanced demography
- Economic prosperity
- Improving Epsom Town Centre and maintaining other local centres

4.5.3 GREEN SPACES STRATEGY

The development of a green spaces strategy for the whole of the borough provides the context in which land managers, planners and recreation providers can work to provide this borough with open spaces for the use of the residents and visitors alike. With a simple strategy in place, achievable strides can be made towards improving all Green Space in the borough. The green spaces strategy identified that residents of the borough use the parks on a regular basis for a number of different reasons. In the past the tendency has been to manage parks in isolation without a long term view of their role, the needs of users and their detailed management. In addition it was also felt that the priorities for the development of the parks were unclear. It is now the council's policy to consider the use of the parks in consultation with the users, to develop long term policies for each park and also to plan for their long term development integrating them with other green spaces as a unit.

4.5.4 EPSOM & EWELL GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE POLICY

A Green Infrastructure Policy for the Borough was written in 2013 by the Countryside team and Head of Planning Policy. Green infrastructure (GI) is a term used to refer to the living network of green spaces, water and other environmental features in both urban and rural areas. It is often used in an urban context to cover benefits provided by wildlife, trees, parks, gardens, road verges, allotments, cemeteries, woodlands, rivers and wetlands. The report highlights the important role parks can play in conserving and enhancing biodiversity across the Borough. It was noted that parks and formal gardens provide a valuable community resource and are important open spaces in urban areas. For example, Rosebery Park and Mounthill Gardens provide essential green spaces within Epsom Town Centre which are heavily frequented by residents and those employed there, as well as students from the UCA.

The main objectives of the study are to:

- Bring together existing green infrastructure evidence in Epsom & Ewell
- Identify gaps in the local plan evidence base
- Map the Borough's existing GI assets.

The study's main recommendation is to create a landscape scale Green Infrastructure Strategy that seeks to protect and enhance a Borough-wide network of green infrastructure that delivers a wide range of benefits including improvements to biodiversity, public access, health and well-being, sports provision, allotments, flood protection and air quality.

The full document can be found at:

<https://www.epsom-ewell.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/residents/planning/planning-policy/Green%20Infrastructure%20Study.pdf>

4.5.5 LOCAL NATURE RESERVES

Along with national legislation protecting wildlife, for example the 'Wildlife and Countryside Act, the 'Greenbelt', 'Ancient Woodland', 'Protected Hedgerows, 'Tree Preservation Orders' and areas identified as 'Strategic Open Space', Epsom and Ewell also afford biodiversity some protection by limiting and controlling development. In addition some land in the borough is owned by trusts which aim to protect and enhance biodiversity.

Within Epsom and Ewell there are sites designated for their biodiversity value. There are four Local Nature Reserves (LNR) in the Borough including Epsom Common which is Surrey's largest LNR. The other LNR's are Horton Country Park LNR, Howell Hill LNR, and running parallel with Ewell Court Park, the Hogsmill LNR.

4.5.6 HABITATS, FLORA AND FAUNA

The majority of the recreation ground is mainly grass which is predominantly used for sport. The mature trees that can be found in the park are adjacent to the children’s playground and consists of a cluster of willow trees. There are a few more mature trees on the other side of the rec but these are sporadic as can be seen in figure 26. In terms of shrub beds these are found lining the edges of the recreation ground and pathways. They mainly consist of hardy low lying shrubs that provide a thick ground cover such as pyracantha, dogwood and laurel. Due to the nature of the recreation ground being predominantly for sports it is essential that the shrubs can withstand stray footballs. At the gate leading to Plough Road there is a wall of brambles which are good for biodiversity, providing a safe habitat for a variety of birds and insects. The only flowering plants that can be found in the park are on the mini roundabout which have been planted with daffodil bulbs.



Figure 26 Satellite image of Poole Road Rec showing the distribution and types of vegetation

4.6 COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The amount of classes and facilities that the Harrier Centre provides to the general public is outstanding. Not only does it support local businesses who run the classes, they also cater for a wide range of the community. Giggles caters for babies and toddlers, Wheels For All is a nationally recognised programme that embraces all children and adults with disabilities and differing needs, to engage in a quality cycling activity. By using specially adapted cycles, the activities are both physically and mentally stimulating and conducted in a safe environment, and there are many classes aimed at adults who want to get fit. Charity events are also held in Poole Road Recreation Ground.

Many of the Boroughs larger, well used parks have a 'Friends of' user group. These 'Friends Of' groups are also part of the larger group 'Friends of Epsom and Ewell Parks' (FEPP). The 'FEPP' groups are in place to ensure all parks are looked after as some are so small that they do not attract enough people to form their own individual 'Friends Group'. The 'Friends of Epsom and Ewell Parks' meet every three months along with members of the council to discuss current issues, projects and progress. At present, Poole Road does not have a "Friends Of" group, however the Council will be looking at encouraging resident's and park users to form a group in the near future.

4.7 MARKETING

All recreation grounds are advertised on Epsom and Ewell Borough Council website, which was updated in 2017. All of the parks and recreation grounds facilities are advertised as well as the 'Friends of' groups if applicable. This website is a great form of advertisement as all the information can be found in one accessible place. What we have to remember is that it is only accessible to those who have Internet access. Wherever possible up to date notices and events are displayed in the litter bins for those who use the recreation ground. Also as specified in the action plan we aim to introduce a new noticeboard to Poole Road Recreation ground to promote all events and facilities to those who may be new to the recreation ground or cannot view the information online. Noticeboards also provide a fantastic platform for 'Friends of' groups to advertise themselves and their activities to attract new members. As discussed in 4.1.2 a new noticeboard in Poole Road Recreation ground will provide a great platform for getting information across to all members of the public.

4.7.1 IN HOUSE USER SURVEY

In the past the Council has used GreenStat to carry out surveys so the public can have their say on the green spaces in the borough. GreenStat no longer exists so the Council have created their own in house survey to get the public's opinion on what should happen in their parks. The council trialled their own in-house survey for Nonsuch Park, a well-used and loved park that is shared with the London Borough of Sutton. 1200 postal votes were sent out and 635 returned and was deemed a success. Due to this success the ranger service carried out surveys for Alexandra Recreation Ground in 2015, Auriol Park in 2016, Rosebery Park and Ewell Court Park in 2017. Surveys for Long Grove Recreation Ground and Poole Road Recreation Ground were distributed in October 2018 to coincide with the re-write of the management plans.

4.7.2 IN HOUSE SURVEY RESULTS

Questionnaire development:

The questions were developed in liaison with the Head of Operational Services and the Patrol Ranger. Areas include:

- Frequency of visiting the park
- Method of travel to the park
- Reasons for visiting the park
- Opinions on various aspects of the park
- Improving visitor experience and encouraging more use of the park, or staying for longer
- Volunteering opportunities.

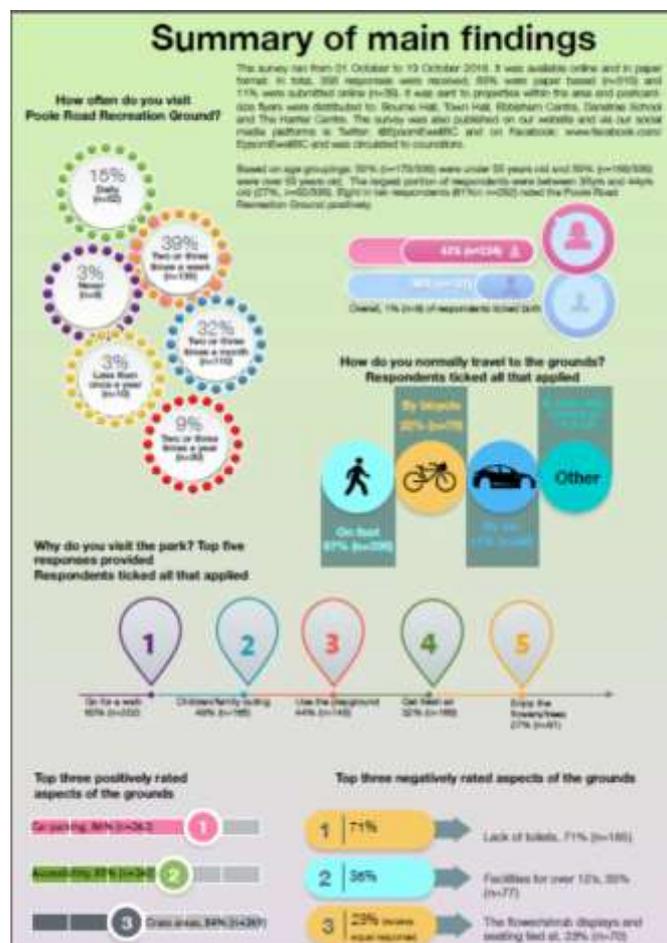
Methodology:

The survey ran from 01 October to 19 October 2018. The survey was available in paper and electronic formats. 1,200 paper surveys were distributed to properties in the surrounding area and 1,000 postcard-size flyers were distributed to:

- Bourne Hall
- Town Hall
- Harrier Centre
- Ebbisham Centre
- Danetree School

The electronic version was featured on the Council’s main webpage and publicised in Members’ Update and via our social media channels:

- Twitter: @EpsomEwellBC
- Facebook: www.facebook.com/EpsomEwellBC



4.8 MANAGEMENT PLAN

This management plan has been completed using the criteria for the Green Flag Award and the feedback gained from the recent visitor survey. Whilst Green Flag status has been achieved for a number of our parks and open spaces, Epsom & Ewell Borough Council is committed to managing all our major parks to the same high standard, which is predominately achieved by the preparation of a structured management plan and accompanying action plan.

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**LONG GROVE PARK
MANAGEMENT PLAN 2018 – 2023**



**Prepared By
Epsom & Ewell Borough Council**

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1 INTRODUCTION

Long Grove Park is situated in the northern half of the borough of Epsom and Ewell, and lies adjacent to the Livingstone Park housing development, on the former site of the playing fields of Horton Hospital. The park was opened in April 2004 after the land was handed over to Epsom and Ewell Council in 2001. The park is approximately 15 acres and incorporates an open space, children’s playground and a skate park. The park can accessed from Long Grove road by car and on foot from Horton Crescent and Livingstone Park.

The plan will identify how Long Grove Park is managed using the green flag assessment criteria. The management plan addresses the good practices and recommendations suggested by the Green Flag judges along with further opportunities. Long Grove Park has never been entered or awarded Green Flag but by producing a management plan that reflects the standard for Green Flag awards, this means that Long Grove Park could be entered for the award in the future.

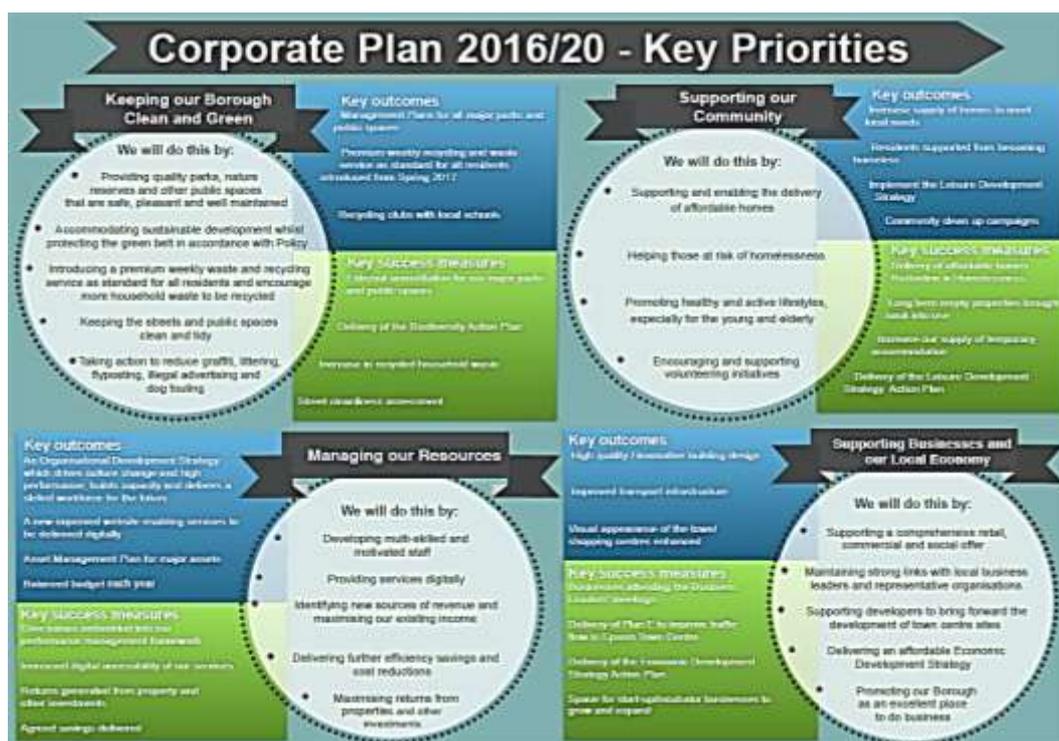
1.1 STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The purpose of the management plan is to:

- Ensure that the objectives of management and maintenance are documented
- To identify the resources required to manage and maintain the park
- To assess priorities and challenges for future action
- To encourage and support community involvement
- To promote and market the park
- To monitor and review changes that occur in the park

The management plan has been written to cover a 5-year period. It is a working document that brings together all information relating to Long Grove Recreation ground. It will be updated, and revised on an annual basis as part of the Green Flag award scheme process. The plan will serve as a benchmark against which delivery and performance objectives can be measured.

1.2 THE VISION FOR LONG GROVE PARK



‘Provide a safe, attractive and sustainable environment for the benefit of all recreation ground users now and in the future’

To achieve this vision we have incorporated the key criteria set out in the Green Flag award scheme as a national benchmark for quality standards for public recreation grounds.

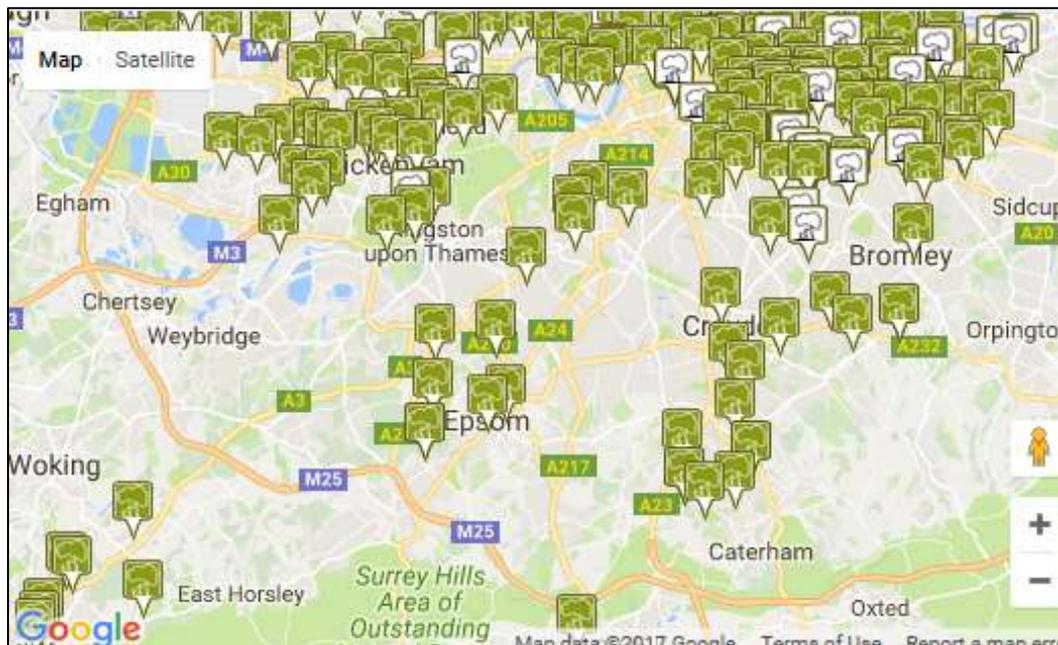


Figure 1 Distribution of Green Flag parks in the South East region

1.3 KEY OBJECTIVES

- To ensure the effective implementation of both financial and staffing resources to deliver a high level of quality management.
- Positively welcome people into the parks, in terms of both physical and social access.
- Ensure a healthy, safe and secure experience for park users.
- Provide a well maintained and clean park.
- Improve the environmental quality and sustainability of practices carried out in the park.
- Maintain the restored historic landscape character, whilst ensuring provision for contemporary users.
- Provide opportunities to increase community use and involvement, particularly through events, education and interpretation.
- Ensure effective promotion of the park as a community resource and as a desirable venue for commercial use.

1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council work to an annual maintenance schedule involving the Grounds Maintenance team, Street Cleansing and the Ranger Service. The teams work in unison to provide a safe, clean and enjoyable environment for all who wish to use Long Grove recreation ground.

Agenda Item 8 Annex 4

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council have strived to ensure its parks and facilities are open to all who wish to use them. In Long Grove Recreation ground there is good disabled access throughout. To ensure work is completed to Council specification there are policies in place for any issues that arise. When working on public areas such as parks and open spaces these issues tend to be litter (including drug paraphernalia), dog fouling, graffiti and vandalism of equipment. These policies ensure that the council can continue to keep its recreation grounds and open spaces as clean and safe as possible for its users.

2 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2.1 SITE OVERVIEW

Address

Long Grove Recreation Ground
Long Grove Road
Epsom
Surrey
KT19 8PZ

Size

12 Acres

Access

Long Grove Road
Livingstone Park

Ownership

Epsom and Ewell Borough Council

Management and maintenance

Epsom and Ewell Borough Council

Facilities

Skate Bowl and Ramps
Beginner's skate ramps
Children's Playground
Basketball hoop
Aerial Runway

2.2 LOCATION OF LONG GROVE RECREATION GROUND



Figure 2 Location of Long Grove Park and the surrounding roads



Figure 3 Location of Long Grove Park in relation to Epsom Town Centre



Figure 4 Location of Epsom in relation to London

2.3 HISTORIC CONTEXT

As well as Epsom's NHS General Hospital, the town was also known for having a large number of psychiatric hospitals, only today only two remain (St. Ebba's and West Park Hospital). Before their closure in the 1980's and 1990's, there were five such hospitals in the area, known as the "Epsom Cluster".

- Long Grove Hospital
- West Park Hospital
- St. Ebba's Hospital
- Manor Hospital
- Horton Hospital

Following legislation in 1888, the London County Council (LCC) began building institutions to house up to 2000 pauper lunatics. Over a thousand acres at Horton were acquired in 1896. The London County Council bought the estate from Sir Thomas Foxwell Buxton, who had immigrated to Australia. The LCC acquired the land for £35900.

The first hospital to start accepting patients was Manor Hospital in 1899. Horton Hospital was built to a semi-circular design and opened in 1903. Long Grove Hospital, with the same basic design was finished in 1906. St. Ebba's Hospital opened in 1904. West Park Hospital did not open until 1924. The hospitals shared a central 'engineering works' which supplied all 5 hospitals with water and electricity. The hospitals were also served by the Horton Light Railway. The cluster hospitals were planned together to be self-sufficient for water, gas, electricity, sewage disposal and even the burial of the dead. Each had a central water tower acting as a focal point, and the footprint hospitals (Horton, Long Grove and West Park) lay over a network of access tunnels.

Of the asylums that have closed, three have been converted into housing: Horton, The Manor and Long Grove Hospitals, and the remaining two (West Park and St. Ebba's) continue to run with limited usage including day services and a cottage hospital. Interestingly Long Grove Park was not developed on the site of Long Grove Hospital as some may believe (the Long Grove Hospital site is now the Clarendon Park Housing Development), but was created out of the sports ground of the former Horton Hospital and named after Long Grove Road. In the proposed development plan a corner of the land was to be used as a primary school (now Southfield Park Primary School), Cherryfield Nursery is also situated on the land.

Composite 1930s OS Map showing Horton Hospital

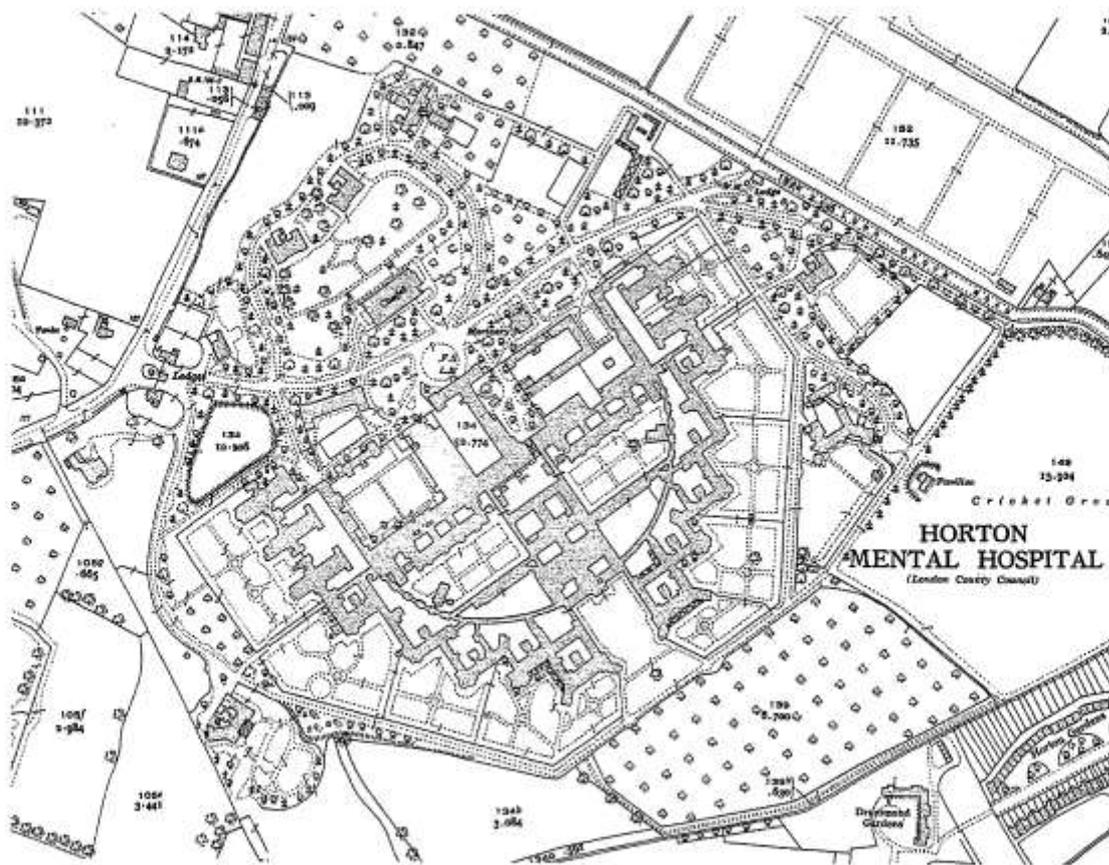


Figure 5 1930's OS map of Horton Hospital

In 2000, the brief given to Roger Steadman, the project manager, was “to provide a pleasant open space for people to enjoy”. There was to be a children’s playground and skatepark, but the atmosphere was to be that of a landscaped park rather than recreation ground. (*Parks in the Past* by Carol Hill)

2.3.1 FIELDS IN TRUST



Figure 5 Fields in trust plaque

Fields in Trust was founded back in 1925 as the National Playing Fields Association by King George V. Their mission is the same now and as it was then: to ensure that everyone – young or old, able or disabled and wherever they live – should have access to free, local outdoor space for sport, play and recreation. These spaces are vital to building happy and healthy communities and sadly continue to be threatened by all kinds of development.

They are a national charity and operate throughout the UK to safeguard recreational spaces and campaign for better statutory protection for all kinds of outdoor sites. Long Grove Park is one of their sites in Epsom and Ewell and in 2015 Fields in Trust celebrated

their 90th anniversary. 90 years of protecting parks and playing fields across the UK for current and future generations to enjoy.

Since it was founded by King George V in 1925, Fields in Trust has been privileged to have the support of the Royal Family. The Duke of Edinburgh was President of Fields in Trust for 64 years - without his help and contribution the organisation could not have achieved what it has done if, indeed, it still existed as an independent charity.

In 2013 his grandson The Duke of Cambridge stepped into the role of President following this patronage of the successful Queen Elizabeth II Fields Challenge (*Fields In Trust.org*).

In 2012 Long Grove Park was one of seven recreational spaces in Epsom & Ewell given QEII status. Known as the Queen Elizabeth Fields Challenge in Scotland, where it is still ongoing, this is the most successful engagement and land protection programme ever run by Fields in Trust. They created a grassroots legacy across the UK from 2012's big events, the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and the London Olympic & Paralympic Games. They worked with 873 landowners from parish councils to sports clubs, local authorities to charitable groups. Over 20,000 acres have been nominated for protection through the Challenge, on 1585 sites. Fields in Trust were committed to producing a strong and enduring legacy from the Olympics, in the name of Her Majesty, which shows in the numbers. Operating since 1925, in the years before the Challenge, Fields in Trust protected 1,180 sites covering 7,377 acres (*qe2fields.com*).

2.3.2 LONG GROVE PARK TODAY

Today, there are several hard-surfaced paths that lead through the park and into the grounds of the housing development. The park contains mature trees and new trees have been planted since the park was opened. There are a few shrub beds close to the paths. The children's playground and original skate park were installed in 2003. Long Grove's current concrete skate ramp and skate bowl were designed by Wheelscapes and built in 2013. An extension to the skating area (beginner's skate ramps) was completed in the early part of 2018. Members of the public using Long Grove Park are able to use the car park to the right hand side of the park. The car park is split into two parts; the first area on the right hand side intended for use by the staff and visitors of the primary school, and the second part for shared use between park users and the nursery.



Figure 6 Birds Eye View of Long Grove Park 2018 (Google)

3 MANAGEMENT

The Epsom and Ewell Borough Council is responsible for the maintenance of all public grounds in the borough. The Operational Services Streetcare team and the borough’s Property and Estates team carry out the majority of works relating to parks and open spaces which include:

- grounds maintenance
- litter collection
- street cleansing
- public realm maintenance
- building and infrastructure maintenance
- graffiti removal
- ranger patrols

Tasks specifically within Long Grove Park include grass cutting, pruning and planting, clearance of litter, security, events, playground maintenance and other aspects of park management. Maintenance is output based as far as possible – it specifies the standard to be met, rather than the way in which the service is to be provided.

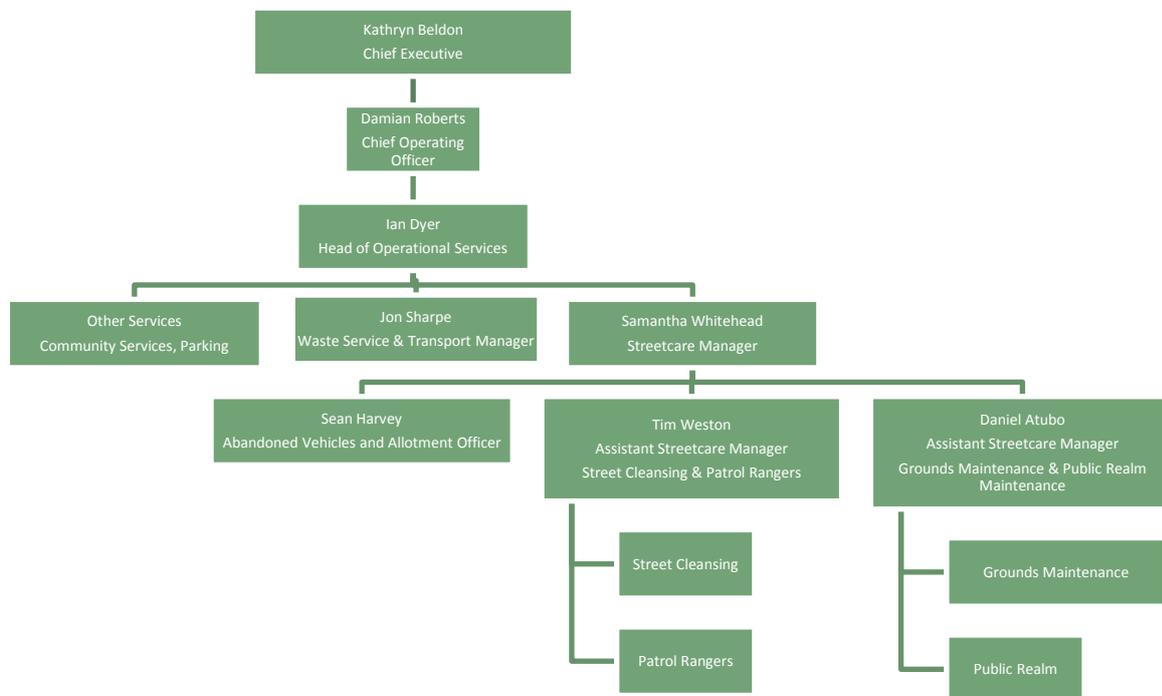


Figure 7 Operational Services Management Structure

4 LONG GROVE PARK IN RELATION TO GREEN FLAG CRITERIA

4.1 A WELCOMING PLACE

4.1.1 ACCESS

There are six access points in to Long Grove Park, all of which are gated entrances as shown in figure 8. The main entrance to the park is at the junction of Long Grove Road and Brettgrave, immediately to the left of the roundabout when approaching from Long Grove Road. At the main entrance there are double gates providing vehicular access to the park via a tarmac path. These double gates remain locked at all times to prevent unauthorised vehicles entering the park. As an extra security measure a heavy duty locking post is in place and recently a height barrier has been installed (see figure 9). Key holders include Operational Services staff and Contractors. Next to the double gates is a single gated entrance allowing members of the public into the park.

To the left of the main entrance is a shared car parking area for Cherry Field Nursery, Southfield Park Primary School and for members of the public using the park. At the top end of the car park there is a double gated entrance. This entrance provides access to Operational Services staff vehicles, although it is a fairly narrow opening and one gate is locked closed to allow pedestrian access only. There are two further access points into Long Grove Park from the open space adjacent to Horton Crescent in the Livingstone Park housing development. These are both single gated entrances. The fifth entrance lies on the bend of Long Grove Road and is also a single gated entrance.

The sixth entrance into the park is via a pair of double gates at the top end of the open space. These provide vehicular access into the park but there is no hard standing accompanying this. For this reason these gates remain locked at all times and are only to be used in emergency situations.

Due to concerns with antisocial behaviour in the car park, a Joint Action Group meeting was called in **date**. Attendees included Epsom Police, Nursery and Primary school staff and a Council representative. At this meeting it was decided that in an effort to deter or prevent this antisocial behaviour, the large car park gates would be locked by the Rangers at 8pm on weekdays and half an hour before sunset on bank holidays and weekends. Operational Services staff hold the keys to the locks on the gates, and the nursery, Primary School, police and fire service will also be issued keys.

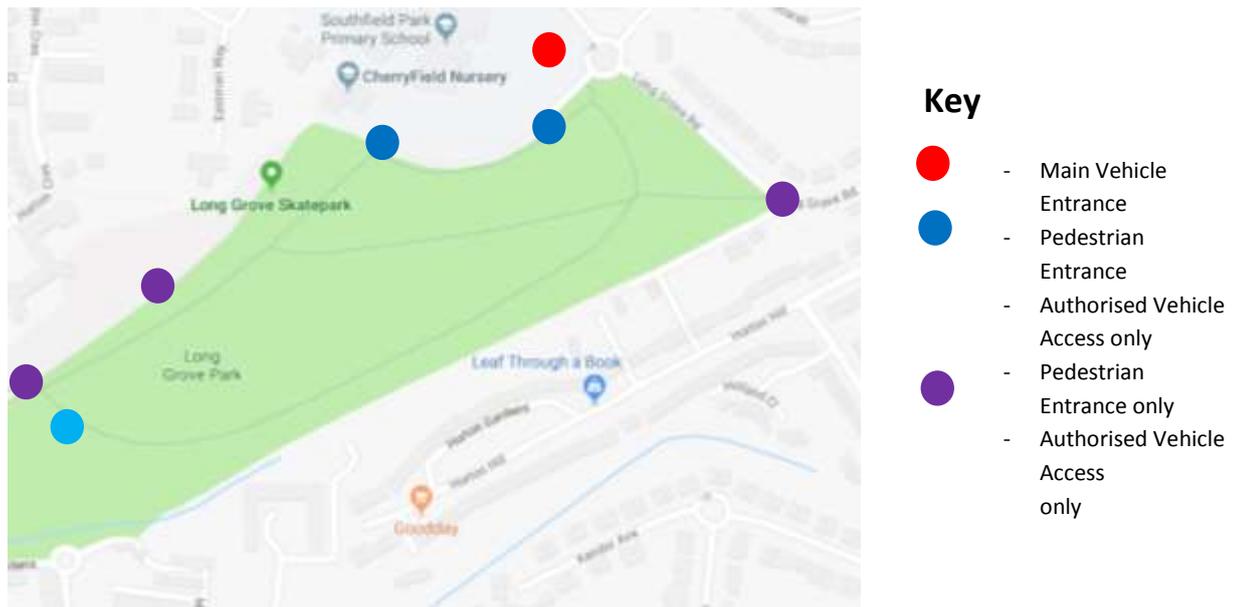


Figure 8 Map Showing the Location of the six Entrances to Long Grove Park



Figure 9 Height Barrier installed December 2018

4.1.2 SIGNAGE

Throughout the Borough, extensive work is carried out to keep all signs clean and legible. One of the most common problems faced by the Ranger service is graffiti. Epsom and Ewell Borough Council are dedicated to

ensuring the removal of graffiti, as a result, members of the ranger service were trained in 2017 in the use of graffiti chemicals to help combat the issue. It has been found that it was more beneficial to use signs with Perspex fronts. By using Perspex fronts on signs and noticeboards it is easier to clean away graffiti.

One of the most common signs that can be seen in Long Grove Park is the dog fouling sign asking all dog walkers to pick up after their dog. During the dry, summer months, the Rangers spray the pathways around the park with anti-dog fouling stencils. These signs and stencils have proved to be a successful deterrent to help tackle the nuisance of dog fouling.

There is one main information board as can be seen in figure 10, located at the main vehicle entrance. This only shows the main details of the park including a phone number but do not contain any kind of map of the park. Signage with park rules can be seen on each entrance to the park. In 2015, budget was secured to design new informative signs to go in some of the other parks in the borough. The boards consist of a map showing the layout of the park and key features as well as historical background. After successful installation of the new notice boards in the borough's parks of Nonsuch, Auriol Park, Shadbolt Park, Rosebery Park and Alexandra Rec (see figure 11), Long Grove's new boards are currently in the design process and will be installed in 2019. The boards will also have a dedicated notice section where information and events can be displayed when relevant.



Figure 10 Information Board by the Main Vehicle Entrance

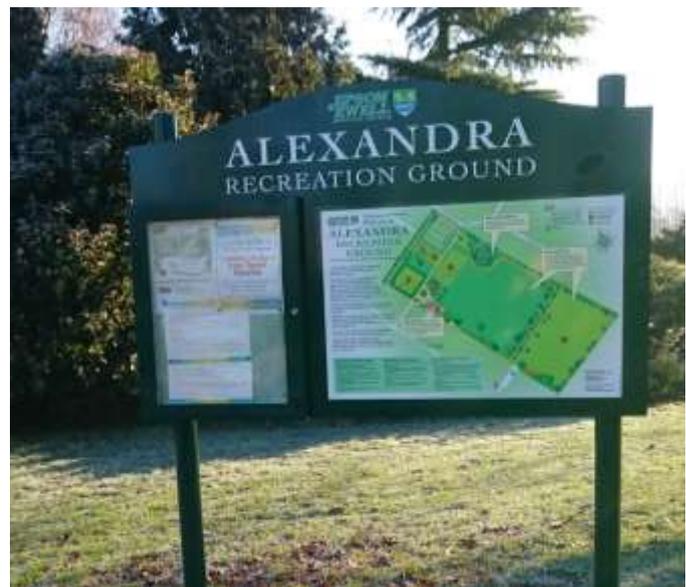


Figure 11 New Notice Board at Alexandra Recreation Ground

4.1.3 FACILITIES

Long Grove Park is home to:

- Under 12's children's playground
- Skate bowl and ramp
- Beginner's skate ramps
- Aerial runway
- Basketball hoop

As the list of facilities above would suggest Long Grove Park prides itself on being an open space within an urban environment, sporting large swathes of grass, a children's playground and a popular and well used skating area, rather than extensive infrastructure such as pavilion, sports pitches and tennis courts.

The under 12's playground is split into two sections; a junior area and an area designed for toddlers.



Figure 12 Junior playground area (Google Images)

The skate park was originally installed in 2003, however it became apparent that the ramps were subject to vandalism and became easily damaged. In 2013 Wheelscapes designed and built a sturdier concrete bowl and ramps (an advanced skate park). The skate park is very popular with local skaters and BMX bikers as well as people from further afield. As such, an extension was designed and built by Gravity Engineering Ltd in May 2018 (a beginner's skate park). To accommodate the extension, the aerial runway (sometimes referred to as the zip wire) that stood beyond the skate bowl was moved to the other side of the path. Unfortunately it was decided that the aerial runway was no longer fit for purpose and quotes are being sought to replace the unit in 2019.

There are no football pitches in Long Grove Park as the nearby Court Recreation Ground has extensive facilities for this purpose.



Figure 13 skate park 'bowl' area (Google Images)



Figure 14 Beginner's skate park after installation in May 2018



Figure 15 Aerial Runway pre relocation (PSS Live Image)

4.1.4 HEALTHY LIVING

The park is popular with dog walkers, cyclists and families and thus contributes to the promotion of healthy living and physical activity.

Epsom & Ewell Council also actively promote health walks for their residents and visitors (see figure 22), and try to educate them on the benefits of walking to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

A promotional poster for Epsom & Ewell Health Walks Autumn Programme, October - December 2018. The poster features a background of autumn foliage. The text is as follows:
Epsom & Ewell Health Walks
Autumn Programme:
October – December 2018
FACTS ABOUT WALKING
• A 30 minute walk at a moderate pace can burn at least 200 calories
• Walking improves mental alertness and memory and can help prevent/reduce depression
• Walking helps promote restful sleep.
Enjoy the outdoors, step into fitness and walk your way to health
No booking required
Walks for all ages and abilities
Trained Walk Leaders present at all times
Visit www.epsomandewellhealthwalks.org.uk to view the latest Health Walk programme and location maps
Supported by:
Logos for Epsom & Ewell Council, walking for health, and Epsom & Ewell Borough of Culture are visible at the bottom.

Figure 16 Epsom & Ewell Health Walks Programme

4.2 HEALTHY, SAFE AND SECURE

Safety and security is identified as being the main issue for users of parks and open spaces. To allay users concerns a number of steps are put in place to ensure a safe environment. Managers and Rangers are responsible for the identification of hazards and the assessment/reduction of risks including those relating to the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health. The legislation relating to Duty of Care and Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 make the responsibility for public safety of paramount importance.

4.2.1 HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICIES

Training is issued when using new machinery and to new members of staff (in conjunction with the health and safety at work act 1974). This applies to the Ranger team, the Grounds Maintenance team and Street Cleansing team. Training is always available throughout the year for anyone who feels it will benefit them. Risk assessments are carried out on all tools and tasks conducted by the services. Risk assessments are encouraged even if it is felt the risk is manageable. Situated in the council depot there are three fire officers, two health and safety officers and there is a health and safety committee. The health and safety committee meets to discuss the Council health and safety policies to ensure they are up-to-date and relevant to the staff they are placed upon. The system that was used to report accidents in the workplace was updated in 2012. It was originally a paper based reporting system but it was felt the paper trail was too long, leading to a longer time frame from when the accident was reported to it being logged. A new database has been put in place to reduce the amount of time and the paper being used in reporting accidents. By computerising all reports on a spreadsheet, everyone has access to them at all times. This enables results to be analysed at ease. Analysis allows the council to identify patterns and accidents which aids the development of new policies and suitable training for specific areas where accidents occur.

All staff operate in accordance with the Health and Safety Policy and Codes of Practice outlined by the council. Specific risk assessments are undertaken for tools and task based procedure. The health and safety of visitors is taken very seriously and visitors are encouraged to report any possible health and safety risks to either themselves, other park users or staff. These calls or emails made by members of the public are logged as cases on a Customer Relations Management (CRM) system and sent to the relevant department so a case history can be kept and timescales can be met.

4.2.2 RANGER SERVICE

The ranger service are a team of 8, covering 48 sites across the borough, ranging from small open spaces to formal parks and recreation grounds and patrolling the larger sites of Epsom Common and Horton Country Park. They work on a 7 day rota and the shifts are worked out so there are rangers on duty from 8am to 11pm. When rangers are on shift they respond to emergency calls placed to the council. Rangers carry the duty phone with them at all times so they can respond quickly to requests, thus eliminating the need to return to the office. When the Rangers finish their shift at 11pm, the duty phone is diverted to a duty officer who takes all out of office hours calls; so effectively if someone has a problem in a park they can reach someone 24 hours a day, seven days a week. All parks and recreation grounds in the borough have signage with the relevant information for contacting the ranger service or the out of office call out service. When rangers are called out to an emergency all correct procedures are completed in compliance with council policy.

Due to the Ranger services job profile it is important to provide a wide spectrum of training, this may include:

- Handling conflict
- Awareness and enforcement of bye-laws
- Dealing with anti-social behaviour
- Emergency first aid
- Playground inspections
- Carrying out patrolling and inspection duties
- Knowledge of green flag, what work is being carried out to achieve green flag status and the overall management plan

4.2.3 FIRE PROCEDURES

In response to the 2017 fire at Grenfell Tower in the borough of Kensington and Chelsea, Epsom & Ewell Council Property Services department has conducted an in-depth fire risk assessment of their buildings and properties. It is planned that in 2018/2019 that all council staff will be trained as fire wardens, this will include: generic topics such as fire science, hazard spotting, good housekeeping and practical use of extinguishers. New Ranger vehicles were acquired in 2017 and are fitted with small fire extinguishers.

4.2.4 EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

If the emergency services are needed the Ranger service do not hesitate to get in contact with them and also encourage the public to contact the emergency services if the rangers are not on site. All ranger vans carry a first aid kit and Rangers are first aid at work trained. When the Ranger service is on shift they respond to emergency calls placed to the council. When on shift Rangers carry the duty phone with them so they can respond quickly to requests, thus eliminating the need to return to the office. When the Rangers are not on shift, the ranger duty phone is diverted to a duty officer who takes all out of office hours calls. When Rangers are called out to an emergency all correct paperwork procedures are completed in compliance with Council policy. All parks and recreation grounds in the borough have signage with the relevant information for contacting the Ranger service or the out of office call out service. Accidents in the skate bowl and removal of injured persons can prove quite challenging as there are no steps or emergency exit points (due to the need for the skate bowl to be clear of obstructions). In the past the Rangers have assisted with helping the emergency services extract injured persons from the bowl and specialised emergency services such as HART (Hazardous Area Response Team) have had to assist in some circumstances.

4.2.5 POLICING IN LONG GROVE PARK

It is probably safe to say that most boroughs in the country have seen an impact of reduced or redeployed police numbers. Epsom & Ewell is no exception with its regular police force reduced to 2 Neighbourhood Officers and 7 Police Community Support Officers (PCSO's) for the whole borough, and emergency 999 responders prioritising life or death situations above any other calls. Long Grove Park falls under the 'Epsom and Ewell South' section of the Surrey Police safer Neighbourhood Team. It would be up to the PCSO's to carry out patrols of the park to deal with issues such as anti-social behaviour and other community concerns. The Safer Neighbourhood Team also works in partnership with the Ranger Service to tackle these relevant issues. The current dedicated Neighbourhood Specialist Officer for the particular area is PC 3701 Elena BOAFO.

In order to make users feel safe, Council staff are often visible in the park. The street cleansers are responsible for opening the park in the week and the ranger service for opening at weekends and locking it daily. Rangers also carry out a weekly inspection of park facilities, street cleansers will check the bins daily and ground

maintenance will be carrying out grass cutting and horticultural work. This provides a staff presence, which could act as a deterrent to offenders.

An arrangement exists with Rangers and PCSO's whereby joint patrols of the parks and open spaces are carried out. This includes patrolling Long Grove Park. As well as joint patrols, the Ranger service and all departments that may be in the parks are encouraged to report any damage or crime to the police. In addition, Ward Councillors and other park tenants are also very active with reporting antisocial behaviour and crime to the police and it is hoped that as a result it will raise the profile of Long Grove Park with the Police and the Park will benefit from additional police patrols of the area.

In the interests of security, Long Grove Park is locked at night. It is locked half an hour before sunset and reopened early in the morning. This however cannot rule out those who want to scale the fences and gates and any open space will attract a degree of antisocial behaviour. As mentioned in 4.1.1 ACCESS, recent bouts of antisocial behaviour have resulted in a Joint Action Group meeting, bringing together the Council, police, Head teacher of the Primary school, and Nursery Manager. This meeting was held to set up practices going forward to help reduce antisocial behaviour. This led to park rangers doing more regular patrols around school pick up time and police increasing their patrols. The Ranger Service and Police attend bi-monthly meetings to discuss any particular issues in certain areas or parks which helps to decide where patrols may be more necessary. To help reduce the antisocial behaviour in the car park, the gates to the car park will be locked overnight in addition to the park being locked.

Another option that the council are investigating in response to crime in parks and open spaces is the use of Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO's). These could supersede the byelaws and allow fixed penalty notices to be issued to offenders. Repeat offenders could also be taken to court. To implement PSPO's the Council would need to start a borough wide and hold a consultation with the public before it could be implemented.

Figure 17 shows the area analysed (Long Grove Park) for crimes recorded by the police from November 2017 to October 2018. Figure 18 shows the list of crimes reported and figure 19 shows the outcomes of the listed crimes.

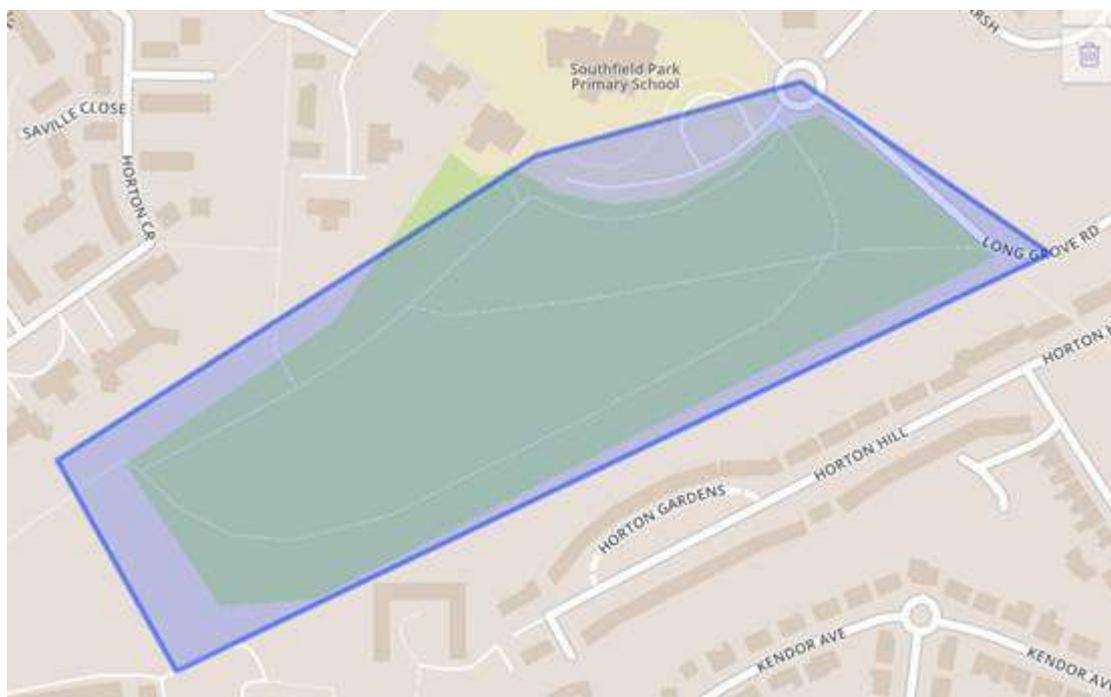


Figure 17 Area analysed for crimes from Nov 17 to Oct 2018 (police.uk)

| Crime type | Number of crimes | | Crime type | Number of crimes | |
|---------------------------|------------------|------------|------------------------------|------------------|------------|
| | Total | Percentage | | Total | Percentage |
| Anti-social behaviour | 32 | 56.14% | Possession of weapons | 0 | 0.00% |
| Bicycle theft | 1 | 1.75% | Public order | 6 | 10.53% |
| Burglary | 0 | 0.00% | Robbery | 0 | 0.00% |
| Criminal damage and arson | 3 | 5.26% | Shoplifting | 2 | 3.51% |
| Drugs | 0 | 0.00% | Theft from the person | 0 | 0.00% |
| Other crime | 0 | 0.00% | Vehicle crime | 2 | 3.51% |
| Other theft | 5 | 8.77% | Violence and sexual offences | 6 | 10.53% |

Figure 18 List of crimes recorded to the police in this area from Nov 2017 to Oct 2018 (police.uk)

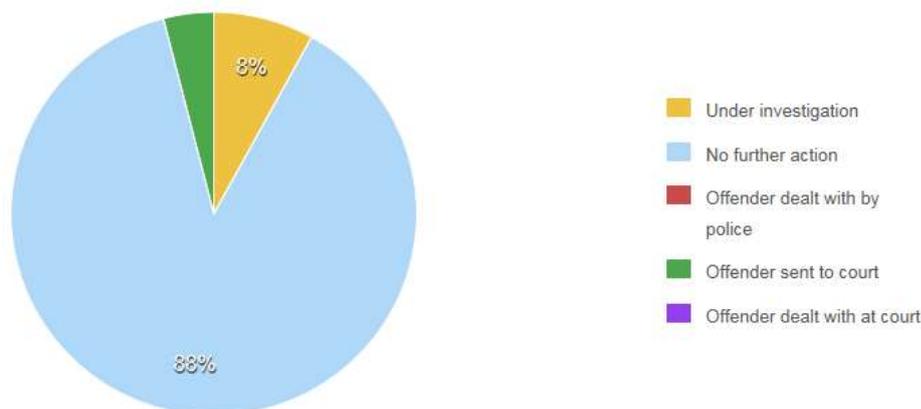


Figure 19 Comparison of outcomes in this area from Nov 2017 to Oct 2018 (police.uk)

As it can be seen from the results, antisocial behaviour was the highest category for the area (56.14%). Anti-social behaviour covers a wide range of unacceptable activity that causes harm to an individual, to their community or to their environment. This could be an action by someone else that leaves you feeling alarmed, harassed or distressed. It also includes fear of crime or concern for public safety, public disorder or public nuisance. Examples of anti-social behaviour include:

- Nuisance, rowdy or inconsiderate neighbours
- Vandalism, graffiti and fly-posting
- Street drinking
- Environmental damage including littering, dumping of rubbish and abandonment of cars
- Prostitution related activity
- Begging and vagrancy
- Fireworks misuse
- Inconsiderate or inappropriate use of vehicles

(police.uk)

4.2.6 SECURITY

To aid security, Long Grove Park is surrounded by fencing and has gated entrances, and is one of the ten parks in the Borough that are locked at night. All the gates are locked by the ranger service and the procedure for locking is designed to minimise the risk of any members of the public getting accidentally locked in. Should a member of the public get locked in, they can call the number displayed in the park and will be let out. The park is locked as early as half an hour before sunset so the locking up times vary throughout the year and it is dependent on the sunset times.

4.2.7 CLOSED-CIRCUIT TELEVISION

CCTV has not been installed in Long Grove as it has not been felt a necessary measure thus far. As the park is monitored for bye-law offences and criminal offences, should it seem CCTV would be beneficial to the park it may an option for the future.

4.2.8 BYELAWS

Byelaws apply to all pleasure grounds and open spaces in the Borough of Epsom and Ewell. The Byelaws for Long Grove Park are made under Section 164 of the Public Health Act, 1875, and Section 15 of the Open Spaces Act, 1906.

Particular byelaws have been chosen from Section 12 and 15 of the Open Spaces Act 1906 and section 164 of the Public Health Act 1875. These byelaws are consistent across all areas designated as pleasure grounds and open spaces except for byelaws pertaining to dog prohibition, canine faeces and dogs on leads, which are allocated to individual named areas. Long Grove Park has two areas where dogs are prohibited (Schedule 1, Part 1, Under section 164 of the Public Health Act 1875), these being the skate ramps and children's playground. The rest of Long Grove Park, outside of the dog exclusion zone is covered by the canine faeces removal byelaw (Schedule 2, Part 2, Section 12 and 15 of the Open Spaces Act 1906). The byelaw requiring that dogs must be kept on a lead (Schedule 3, Part 1, Section 164 of the Public Health Act 1875) do not apply to Long Grove Park.

The current byelaws that the council use are severely out of date in both language and context. For example:

4. A person shall not bring or cause to be brought into the pleasure ground any cattle, sheep, goats, or pigs, or any beast of draught or burden, unless, in pursuance of an agreement with the Council, or otherwise in the exercise of any lawful right or privilege, he is authorised to do so.

It is highly unlikely that this will occur in today's times and both the language and context should be updated to reflect the current climate. Whilst all of the byelaws use outdated language some are still very relevant and the rangers will uphold these if they witness the following activity for example:

3. A person shall not in the pleasure ground

- (a) carelessly or negligently deface, injure or destroy any wall or fence in or enclosing the pleasure ground, or any building, barrier, railing, post or seat or any erection or ornament;**
- (b) climb any wall or fence in or enclosing the pleasure ground, or any tree, or any barrier, railing, post, or other erection;**
- (c) wilfully, carelessly, or negligently remove or displace any barrier, railing, post or seat, or any part of any erection or ornament, or any implement, provided for use in the laying out or maintenance of the pleasure ground.**

The ways in which the byelaws would be enforced would be an on the spot fine of £2 or to be forcibly removed by an officer of the council or constable. Again due to the change in times and peoples priorities and liabilities, it would only be an incredibly serious offence resulting in criminal activity that a person would be removed from the park and this would be left to the police rather than the ranger service. Therefore, if a ranger came across a member of the public who was breaking a byelaw but not causing criminal activity they would take the approach of speaking to the person and explain the reasons why they need to stop what they are doing. This approach lends itself to the notion that education is more effective than punishment.

As briefly mentioned, the byelaws need to be completely updated to remove outdated language and to cover issues that are relevant today such as people flying drones, playing golf or driving their mopeds and off road vehicles through the parks. However due to the legal nature of the byelaws this would be a very large project for the councils legal team and is unlikely to be updated anytime soon, especially since the council are exploring the use of PSPO's. In the meantime, the rangers will aim to confront any unwanted behaviour when witnessed in parks and report it to the police where necessary.

4.2.9 DOG ENFORCEMENT

All of the parks in the borough are extremely popular with dog walkers which in turn lead to the problem of dog fouling. It is an issue that is a high priority for the council. If dog walkers find themselves in a need of a dog poo bag, Rangers carry bags on them or in their vehicles at all times. There are notices up all over the park instructing people to pick up after their dog. These include stickers and bin posters, and the rangers carry out stencilling on the ground as can be seen in figure 22. When carrying out inspections, the ranger service will pick up any dog mess they come across on public walkways.

It is important to encourage the public to pick up after their dog as the health impacts of dog mess when making contact with eyes is well documented. Toxocariasis occurs when toxocara worm eggs in dog mess come into contact with the eyes. This can lead to partial and/or complete blindness.

Over the course of the last few years there has been an increase in the concern over multiple dog walkers. This ranges from members of the public who own more than two dogs to people who run dog walking businesses and have been seen to have in excess of ten dogs. The concern is that as commercial dog walking is a fairly new concept, the legislation on what is acceptable is not clear. The issues range from: should there be a limit to the amount of dogs per person? Should they be on a lead? Does the walker have the necessary insurances? etc. The Council understand that this is an issue that needs to be addressed and has started investigating the legislation surrounding this topic and will aim to decide, along with members of the Leisure Committee, whether they wish to put more stringent measures in place to control commercial/multiple dog walking in parks. Naturally, this is a controversial topic as it has strong opinions from both sides.



Figure 20 Bag it bin it pavement stencil

4.3 CLEAN AND WELL MAINTAINED

4.3.1 WORK SCHEDULING

Epsom and Ewell's work program is designed to ensure that each team is allocated a program of works that is defined prior to the start of each period by the management team.

To reach the required standard in our parks, the program of works is based on a schedule of need, for example grass and hedge cutting, emptying of bins etc. which is on a specific frequency or rotation but is also responsive to seasonal changes and sporadic events which could have an impact like flooding or a large public celebration. As well as this, the Council will also respond to user feedback which could come in the form of a letter, telephone call or CRM case from a member of the public, Councillor or Council staff members. This will be given a priority and then scheduled appropriately into daily tasks to minimise the impact.

4.3.2 MONITORING

Monitoring of the services is undertaken at a number of levels and on an ongoing basis. The Council monitors the performance of the staff to facilitate rapid identification and response to operational issues. A rigorous works order programming system enables each service element to be integrated as part of a seamless approach by enabling effective monitoring and reporting. The Operational Services department also uses the system to perform internal random monitoring of works previously completed. All inspections would be logged and used to monitor performance against established Key Performance Indicators.

4.3.3 LITTER

Long Grove Park ground has litter bins placed in a number of locations along the pathways and also in the children's playground. The litter bins were replaced a few years ago to a new style which can also advertise in the perspex doors and can also be used to dispose of dog waste. The bins are checked and emptied Monday through to Friday by the street cleansing team. The ranger service also provides a litter picking service when they are on patrol. In the summer when there is more activity in the park additional patrols are made to combat the increased activity which leads to a sharp rise in litter.

4.3.4 CLINICAL WASTE

Any litter such as clinical waste, syringes etc are collected by the rangers or street cleansers who are 'sharps' trained. Using tools specific to the task, the item is inserted into a lockable 'sharps' box. The location of the 'sharps' will be recorded and when full, the box will be transported to the designated clinical waste disposal point.

4.3.5 GRAFFITI

There is a graffiti team working all year round who respond to call outs from the public and from staff members who have found graffiti on their day to day inspections. Rangers are also trained to use some of the chemicals and can remove on site if possible, however if the graffiti covers a large area or stronger chemicals are needed then the graffiti team will attend. If the graffiti cannot be removed using chemicals then the graffiti team stock paints that can be used. Epsom and Ewell Borough Council actively seek to prosecute those who spray graffiti in the area.

4.3.6 PARK FURNITURE AND MAINTENANCE

The ranger service not only patrol the parks and open spaces, they also carry out minor maintenance work on amenity infrastructures such as the park signs, benches, bins and playground equipment. The rangers and a dedicated street care team operate with a 'find fault and fix it' approach. Repairs are carried out as soon as possible but if the item is considered a risk to health it will be immediately decommissioned and cordoned off with an appropriate sign put in place warning of its danger. If the fix is out of the capabilities of the ranger service it is passed on to the maintenance ranger team. The fault will be given a priority rating based on severity and fixed to an appropriate timescale. The maintenance rangers carry an extensive array of equipment in their vehicles so most issues can be resolved on site without the need to remove.

Long Grove Park's street furniture and equipment are visually checked by rangers who are RoSPA (The Royal Society for the prevention of accidents) trained to level 1 – Routine Inspections. Although the inspections are largely centred on playground equipment, the rangers are also trained to inspect gates, surfaces, bins and benches. Visual checks are carried out by the Rangers on a weekly basis, however all staff who visit the site are encouraged to report any faults that they identify.

Traditionally, inspections were logged on paper inspection sheets but in 2014 Epsom and Ewell Borough Council began to use a playground safety check system called 'Playsafe'. These playground safety checks are carried out using a mobile phone application that links directly with an online 'Playsafe' database. By logging any faults found on the 'Playsafe' handheld devices, it eliminates the need for paper which can get lost and ensures that the maintenance rangers have direct access to the findings so they can see photos, the risk, and then prioritise repairs accordingly. After trialling the software it was felt that the software was not keeping up with how the Council wanted to use it and only covered playground equipment and not all assets within a park. Eventually it was decided to move back to paper reporting as the rangers were having to use a combination of both. In mid 2017 the Council met with the company who manage the software and have found that it has moved forward and will likely meet the needs of the rangers and the council. The biggest change being that all park assets can be added regardless of if they have a playground or not. Currently all the park assets are being added to the software and we are in the process of procuring new handheld devices The Council aim to have this software (now renamed PSS Live) in place and used for inspections by 2019.

4.3.7 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE

All grounds maintenance work is carried out to a schedule managed by the Assistant Streetcare Manager who is responsible for Grounds Maintenance and Public Realm maintenance. After each site is complete it is logged on the grounds maintenance database with the appropriate times, dates and names of the staff who were on site. The work carried out is varied throughout the according to the season and landscape present at the site. Schedules will vary depending on whether the area has general or ornamental grass, spring-flowering/annual/shrub/rose beds, herbaceous borders, hedges, rockeries and/or woodland. Plants and soft landscape maintenance are all maintained with the aim of providing a safe, attractive and stimulating environment for those who visit. All organic waste accumulated from grounds maintenance work is taken to a composting site until it is suitable for using on the shrub beds.

As well as carrying out scheduled work and responding to seasonal changes, the grounds maintenance team also respond to CRM (customer relationship management) notices. These may have come via a call from a member of the public or from a staff member after visual inspections of the sites.

All hard surface sports facilities (playgrounds, five-a-side pitches, tennis courts and basketball courts) are all spray cleaned when it is felt necessary. A build-up of dust and dirt on these hard services make them increasingly slippery underfoot. Spray cleaning using a jet power washer plate that glides along the surface removes all dust

and dirt from in between the tiny crevices in the tarmac surface. All dust and dirt that has been excavated is then removed with either a hard brush or a backpack blower before it has the chance to work its way back into the tarmac.

Weed control

This is carried out in the parks and recreation grounds by staff that are certified with PA1 and PA6 certificates. It is important that only trained staff use these chemicals, not only for their personal safety but when working in recreation grounds as there are animals and recreation ground users to consider. The certificate PA1 is the theory behind pesticide application. It covers legislation regarding environmental, public and personal safety and all procedures regarding health and safety. PA6 is the certificate for manual handling and application of pesticides. Epsom and Ewell Borough Council do not have a schedule for spraying in the recreation grounds. It is felt that scheduled spraying may lead to excessive spraying. When recreation grounds are inspected by the Ranger services and Grounds Maintenance, they will determine as and when spraying may need to be carried out.

Litter

Litter is collected as and when it is necessary. The Ranger service carries out litter picking when on patrol. The grounds maintenance teams also carry out litter picking as part of their duties when working in the recreation ground.

Leaf Clearance

At the end of the grass cutting season, the parks team will go out with a tractor, blowers and a ride on cut and collect mower which they remove the blade from the bottom and use it to Hoover up the leaves. The leaf collection period runs from roughly the end of October up to Christmas. The leaves collected are distributed between council allotment sites and Nonsuch Park where they are left to become leaf mould. Leaf mould is fantastic soil improver and is welcomed by the allotments holders who use it to improve their crops. The leaf mould pile at Nonsuch Park is used by the gardening staff for the Formal Gardens and any remaining is distributed to other flower/shrub beds around the borough.

4.3.8 EQUIPMENT

All grounds maintenance equipment is purchased centrally with great consideration for staff safety in regards to emissions and vibration. All staff are inducted either internally on equipment such as strimmers and blowers but for equipment like chainsaws, staff are sent for external training. Annual service programs are in place for all equipment and daily safety checks are carried out and recorded.

Hand-Arm Vibrations

Hand-arm vibration is vibration transmitted from work processes into workers' hands and arms. It can be caused by operating hand-held power tools, such as strimmer's, powered lawnmowers, or by holding materials being processed by machines. Hand-arm vibration can cause a range of conditions collectively known as hand-arm vibration syndrome (HAVS), as well as specific diseases such as carpal tunnel syndrome. HAVS is preventable, but once the damage is done it is permanent. In July 2005 the Control of Vibration at Work Regulations 2005 came into force which aims to protect employees from hand-arm vibration. Therefore since then by law, the council as an employer, must assess and identify measures to eliminate or reduce risks from exposure to hand-arm vibration so that they can protect their employees from risks to their health (HSE.gov.uk).

The council records their employee’s hand–arm vibration exposure in order to reduce the risk of them developing HAVS. When the council acquire new equipment it is given a unique code and its initial vibration magnitude (m/s²) value is recorded, this informs the council of how much vibration the piece of equipment produces. Every piece of equipment is tested annually but if a piece of equipment becomes damaged it will be tested after being repaired and its vibration magnitude logged; this is due to the vibration magnitude gradually worsening with age and damage and therefore can be used for less time.

Each new employee is given an initial screening questionnaire and then carry out an assessment which will determine whether or not they have any pre-existing HAVS symptoms, if they do they will be referred to occupational health who will decide if they can use tools that cause hand-arm vibration and for how long each day. Members of staff who show no existing symptoms of HAVS will be allowed to use the tools and every time they do, the operator fills out a sheet at the end of the day with the equipment code and how long they used the equipment for. This is logged into a database that has a points system provided by HSE.gov.uk, the database then calculates how much hand arm vibration that operator has been exposed to. Currently they have a daily exposure action value of 100points and a daily exposure limit value of 400points, this allows the operator to accrue a maximum exposure limit of 2000points per week. Should the operator exceed this before the end of the week they will be stopped from using the tools for the remainder of the week.

4.3.9 ARBORICULTURAL MANAGEMENT

Increasing public concerns about environmental and sustainability issues are focusing our attention on the importance of trees in our towns and countryside. The Borough Council manages and maintains thousands of publicly owned trees; these include 8000 street trees and over 50,000 trees distributed across our 2500 acres of public open space. Trees make a major contribution to the quality of the local environment but they also need careful management and we have a duty of care in respect of tree management to take reasonable steps to ensure that trees do not constitute a danger or a legal nuisance.

To comply with our duty of care and legal responsibility, the Council follow a tree risk management policy. It is important that the Council keep these programmes intact and adequately funded. This will help to ensure we comply with duties over public safety and nuisance as well as promoting environmental care.

As part of this policy the Council operate a comprehensive tree inspection programme every 3 years. Tree care is the responsibility of the Council tree officer Jeremy Young; he oversees all inspections and work carried out and when he is not in the office the deputy tree officer takes over. The professional tree inspections are undertaken by Council officers and qualified tree inspectors and sites are zoned in accordance with risk. The inspections involve visual tree assessments to evaluate whether there are any observable defects that constitute a danger or actionable nuisance. When defects are identified they are scheduled for work under the defect management programme. The time scales for these works are undertaken in accordance with the assessed priorities as agreed in table 1.

| Priority | Target Response |
|-----------|--|
| Emergency | Within 24 hours |
| High | Within 12 weeks |
| Medium | Within 1 year |
| Low | Within 3 years or reassessed within this time frame. |

Table 1 Agreed timescales for defect tree work

In addition to defect management, the council operate programmes of routine tree pruning to help control tree growth. Routine tree pruning involves pruning to raise the canopy above the road, clearing phone wires and

lamps etc. Access work is the removal of suckers and low branches for pedestrian footway clearance. The work is done as appropriate for subsidence management. One of our main council priorities is to protect and enhance the environment. Therefore we will not undertake tree works which could be detrimental to natural biodiversity or the aesthetic quality of the landscape, unless absolutely necessary. Where possible trees will be allowed to grow naturally and maintenance tends to focus on higher priority public safety and nuisance factors, such as storm damage, dealing with decayed or dead trees, removing branch obstruction to the highway or pruning branches encroaching onto buildings.

The Council has awarded the tree maintenance contract to a locally based and well equipped arboriculture company called Advanced Tree Services LTD (ATS). ATS undertake the vast majority of council tree maintenance, including emergency call out, routine pruning, tree felling, planting and stump grinding. They also assist the council tree officers with tree inspections. There is at least one team of tree surgeons from ATS that work in the Borough full time.

During spells of adverse weather, the ranger service will inspect the park to check for falling trees or limbs that may be a hazard to park users. This is not as big a problem on some sites like Epsom Common where many of the trees can be left where they fall, but in Long Grove Park it is vital to keep the green space and pathways clear from tree debris.

4.4 SUSTAINABILITY

Epsom and Ewell Borough Council strives to maintain and improve its green spaces using sustainable methods. All service departments involved in the maintenance of Long Grove Park are encouraged to carry out their duties using methods that are environmentally friendly. As sustainability in definition, is the quality of not being harmful to the environment or depleting natural resources, and thereby supporting long-term ecological balance (*Dictionary.com*), the council understand the importance of maintaining these standards wherever possible for the long term ecological benefits to its parks and open spaces.

4.4.1 ORGANIC MATERIAL/RECYCLING

Throughout the year, the grounds maintenance teams remove all organic waste produced from pruning and grass cutting. This green waste is taken offsite to a large composting facility in the nearby Horton Country Park. Any leaves are collected and taken to Nonsuch Park or allotment sites. An independent contractor used to be hired to compost all the green waste, but it is now done in house. This coupled with the fact the council does not have to buy in readymade mulch saves the council a considerable amount of money every year.

The process involves shredding the waste but burning it sufficiently to kill the weed seeds. This compost is piled and left to continue decomposing. When it is sufficiently composted it can be returned to the beds in the form of mulch. This mulch provides nutrients to the beds but it can also serve another purpose. Previous winters, in particular, of 2009 and 2010 left all of Epsom and Ewell covered in snow and dealing with sub-zero temperatures. Newly planted shrubs will struggle to cope with such low temperatures in comparison to established shrubs, therefore leaf mulch can be used to insulate the beds. By insulating the beds it gives the root systems a little extra help in resisting frost damage. Mulching also helps keep weed growth under control.

4.4.2 PESTICIDES AND POLLUTION REDUCTION

The use of pesticides is kept to a minimum, and where they are used, the most eco-friendly products are selected. Currently a basic glyphosate is the chemical utilised within the park. All staff must be trained to PA1 or PA6 standard. The purchase, storage, usage and disposal of chemicals is carefully controlled under COSHH. All chemicals are stored in secure containers that meet health and safety regulations. The distribution of keys is

regulated to ensure chemicals are not stolen or mislaid through negligence. Pesticide spraying in the parks is only carried out when absolutely necessary as it's felt that a schedule of regular spraying may lead to excessive spraying, therefore it's always the prerogative to weed manually.

Peat is **not** used in Long Grove Park and the Council uses its own recycled waste as mulch for the shrub beds. They also try to buy their plant stock from responsible nurseries that do not use peat.

4.4.3 WASTE MINIMISATION

Waste is not only expensive to get rid of but represents the underutilisation of a resource which itself has a cost. There are environmental costs for example the pollution caused by the disposal of such waste. Epsom & Ewell Borough Council identifies two ways of tackling this problem 1) reducing actual production of green waste and 2) re-using green waste after composting, with the emphasis being on the former of these. Green Waste can be reduced by avoiding unnecessary pruning, using herbicides correctly and allowing leaves to decompose naturally amongst shrubs and hedge bottoms. As much green waste as possible is recycled, however loads with a high percentage of weed content are not recycled so the risk of seeds spreading is minimised.

4.4.4 ARBORICULTURE AND WOODLAND

Newly planted trees are staked, watered well and checked on a regular basis. Dead wood should be left standing if possible, to provide an important habitat for invertebrates and other habitats. Clippings and cuttings should be composted where possible and re-used within the park environment.

4.4.5 WATER EFFICIENCY AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY

The Epsom & Ewell Environmental Policy aims to reduce the amount of energy used through good management, training, and informed purchasing practices and decisions. Vehicles and machinery are maintained regularly and the operational services team also tries to reduce dependence on mains water supplies for irrigation. Watering of plants is kept to a minimum and watering points are located away from public access. Effective training of staff, including health and safety, and following all environmental legislation relevant to the council, prevents incidents of pollution.

4.4.6 ASSET MANAGEMENT

Work is in progress to write an Asset management plan for all the parks in the borough. This will ensure all assets in the parks are accounted for and managed.

4.5 CONSERVATION AND HERITAGE

Biodiversity, a contraction of "biological diversity," generally refers to the variety and variability of life on Earth. One of the most widely used definitions defines it in terms of the variability within species, between species and between ecosystems. It is a measure of the variety of organisms present in different ecosystems (*United Nations Environment Programme, World Conservation Monitoring Centre*). However, during the last century, decreases in biodiversity have been increasingly observed. In 2007, German Federal Environment Minister Sigmar Gabriel cited estimates that up to 30% of all species will be extinct by 2050 (*BBC News*). As biodiversity contributes to our very existence on this planet, we must adopt the "Think Globally, Act Locally" concept which originally began at the grassroots level, however, it is now a global concept with high importance (*Warren Heaps, International Forum*), and adopting sustainable ways of living will ensure the protection of biodiversity and our future.

4.5.1 AGENDA 21 – LOCAL BIODIVERSITY

The need for biodiversity was recognised at the United Nations 1992 Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit. Leaders recognised that a diverse environment is essential to maintain air quality, to provide valuable species for food and medicine, and to provide a varied and interesting environment for future generations. As a result the Government were asked to produce national and regional biodiversity Action Plans, which filtered down at local authority level through the local agenda 21 initiative.

A 'Local Biodiversity Action Plan' has been produced for Epsom & Ewell to help ensure both the long term protection and enhancement of biodiversity within the Borough. The complete Epsom & Ewell Local Biodiversity Action Plan can be found at:

<https://www.epsom-ewell.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/residents/planning/planning-policy/BiodiversityActionPlan.pdf>

This strategy provides an over-arching review of open space in the borough and has been developed in line with current national, regional and local policy context and initiatives. The following objectives from the biodiversity action plan for Epsom & Ewell 2010 are of particular relevance in informing the Management Plan.

Objective 1: Develop partnerships to ensure that the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity in Epsom and Ewell is maintained in the long term.

Objective 2: Ensure the conservation and enhancement of habitats and species, as specified nationally and in the Surrey Habitat Action Plans.

Objective 3: Ensure opportunities for the conservation and enhancement of the whole biodiversity resource in Epsom and Ewell are identified considered and acted upon.

Objective 4: Raise awareness, appreciation and involvement in the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity in Epsom and Ewell

Objective 5: Provide on-going monitoring of biodiversity in Epsom and Ewell.

Objective 6: Seek to increase the funding available for the long-term conservation, enhancement and monitoring of biodiversity in Epsom and Ewell.

Objective 7: Seek to identify the wider benefits to the community of improving biodiversity

4.5.2 EPSOM AND EWELL'S SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY 2011 – 2022

'A Brighter Future'

A Brighter future is Epsom and Ewell's Sustainable Community Strategy. The Strategy looks at the future for Epsom and Ewell, It sets out how the Borough's many positive aspects will be developed and how the issues and challenges faced by the Borough will be met through partnership working.

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council's ambition is:

"To maintain and develop those distinctive characteristics that make living and working in Epsom and Ewell a matter of conscious choice and, in conjunction with others, provide quality and innovative services that are based on the identified priorities of our residents"

The Local Strategic Partnership has identified the following topics as areas for future focus and partnership working:

- The visual appearance of the surroundings, both in terms of the natural and the built environment
- The impact of organisations and individuals in securing a sustainable future (recognising the need for economic health and more housing)
- The ability to get around (including the use of the existing transport and traffic infrastructure, car movements and alternative means of travel)
- The promotion of community safety and the enhancing of public confidence, recognising the formal position and responsibilities of the Borough's Community Safety Partnership
- The support for particular communities (children & young people, older people and the disabled, the disadvantaged and pockets of relative deprivation)
- Social change and the achievement of a balanced demography
- Economic prosperity
- Improving Epsom Town Centre and maintaining other local centres

4.5.3 GREEN SPACES STRATEGY

The development of a green spaces strategy for the whole of the borough provides the context in which land managers, planners and recreation providers can work to provide this borough with open spaces for the use of the residents and visitors alike. With a simple strategy in place, achievable strides can be made towards improving all Green Space in the borough. The green spaces strategy identified that residents of the borough use the parks on a regular basis for a number of different reasons. In the past the tendency has been to manage parks in isolation without a long term view of their role, the needs of users and their detailed management. In addition it was also felt that the priorities for the development of the parks were unclear. It is now the council's policy to consider the use of the parks in consultation with the users, to develop long term policies for each park and also to plan for their long term development integrating them with other green spaces as a unit.

4.5.4 EPSOM & EWELL GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE POLICY

A Green Infrastructure Policy for the Borough was written in 2013 by the Countryside team and Head of Planning Policy. Green infrastructure (GI) is a term used to refer to the living network of green spaces, water and other environmental features in both urban and rural areas. It is often used in an urban context to cover benefits provided by wildlife, trees, parks, gardens, road verges, allotments, cemeteries, woodlands, rivers and wetlands. The report highlights the important role parks can play in conserving and enhancing biodiversity across the

Borough. It was noted that parks and formal gardens provide a valuable community resource and are important open spaces in urban areas. For example, Rosebery Park and Mounthill Gardens provide essential green spaces within Epsom Town Centre which are heavily frequented by residents and those employed there, as well as students from the UCA.

The main objectives of the study are to:

- Bring together existing green infrastructure evidence in Epsom & Ewell
- Identify gaps in the local plan evidence base
- Map the Borough's existing GI assets.

The study's main recommendation is to create a landscape scale Green Infrastructure Strategy that seeks to protect and enhance a Borough-wide network of green infrastructure that delivers a wide range of benefits including improvements to biodiversity, public access, health and well-being, sports provision, allotments, flood protection and air quality.

The full document can be found at:

<https://www.epsom-ewell.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/residents/planning/planning-policy/Green%20Infrastructure%20Study.pdf>

4.5.5 LOCAL NATURE RESERVES

Along with national legislation protecting wildlife, for example the 'Wildlife and Countryside Act, the 'Greenbelt', 'Ancient Woodland', 'Protected Hedgerows, 'Tree Preservation Orders' and areas identified as 'Strategic Open Space', Epsom and Ewell also afford biodiversity some protection by limiting and controlling development. In addition some land in the borough is owned by trusts which aim to protect and enhance biodiversity.

Within Epsom and Ewell there are sites designated for their biodiversity value. There are four Local Nature Reserves (LNR) in the Borough including Epsom Common which is Surrey's largest LNR. The other LNR's are Horton Country Park LNR, Howell Hill LNR, and running parallel with Ewell Court Park, the Hogsmill LNR.

4.5.6 HABITATS, FLORA AND FAUNA

During the last century wildlife habitats have greatly diminished in size. Urban parks and gardens can be relatively wildlife rich and should therefore be recognised for their value and seek to conserve. It is not uncommon to see a Roe deer or two in Long Grove Park.

When looking across Long Grove Park from most entrances, the look of the park is of a wide open space. Most of the flora in the park is kept to the edges of the park, particularly along the Horton Hill side of the park, although there are shrub beds close to the playground and skate ramps.

Although there are no veteran trees in Long Grove Park, there are a number of trees and many of these have Tree Preservation Orders (TPO) orders on them.

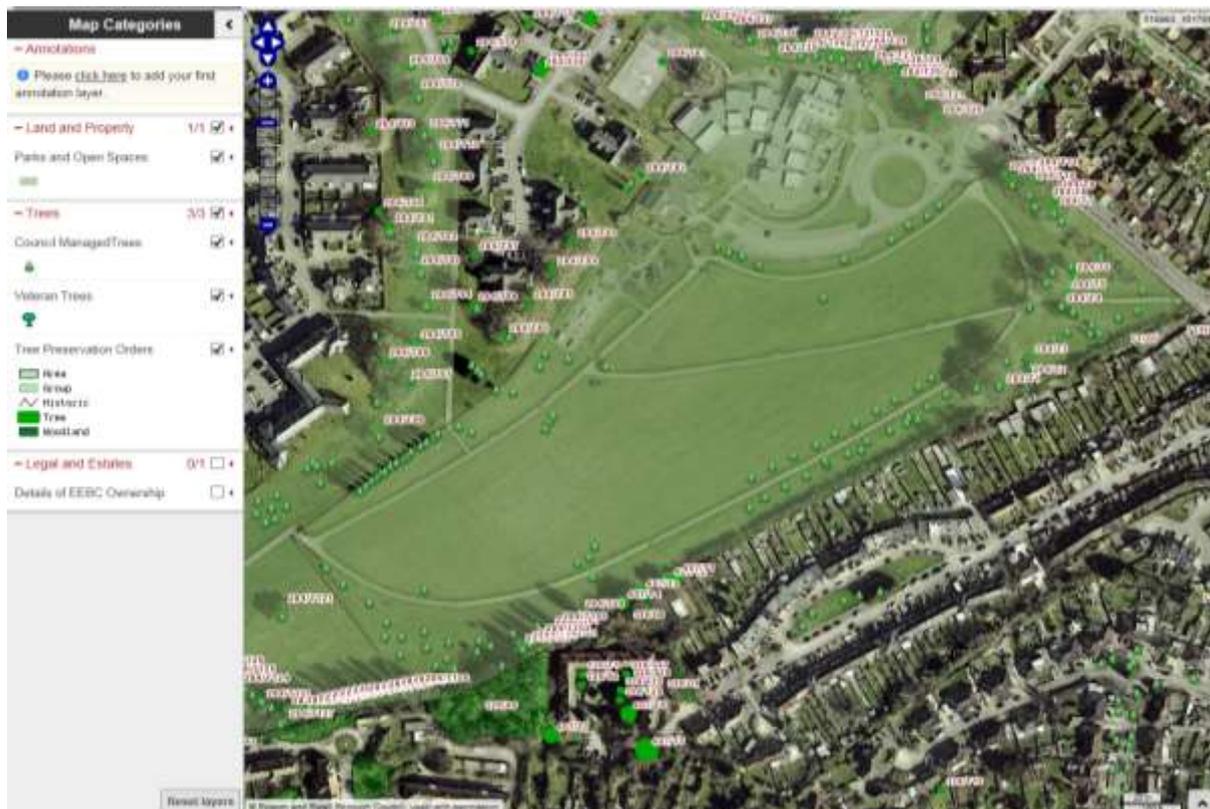


Figure 21 Satellite image of Poole Road Rec showing the distribution and types of vegetation

4.6 COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Many of the Boroughs larger, well used parks have a 'Friends of' user group. These 'Friends Of' groups are also part of the larger group 'Friends of Epsom and Ewell Parks' (FEPP). The 'FEPP' groups are in place to ensure all parks are looked after as some are so small that they do not attract enough people to form their own individual 'Friends Group'. The 'Friends of Epsom and Ewell Parks' meet every three months along with members of the council to discuss current issues, projects and progress. At present, Long Grove Park does not have a "Friends Of" group, however the Council will be looking at encouraging resident's and park users to form a group in the near future.

4.7 MARKETING

All recreation grounds are advertised on Epsom and Ewell Borough Council website, which was updated in 2017. All of the parks and recreation grounds facilities are advertised as well as the 'Friends of' groups if applicable. This website is a great form of advertisement as all the information can be found in one accessible place. What we have to remember is that it is only accessible to those who have Internet access. Wherever possible up to date notices and events are displayed in the litter bins for those who use the recreation ground. As specified in the action plan we aim to introduce a new noticeboard to Long Grove Park to promote all events and facilities to those who may be new to the recreation ground or cannot view the information online. Noticeboards also

provide a fantastic platform for 'Friends of' groups to advertise themselves and their activities to attract new members. As discussed in 4.1.2 a new noticeboard in Long Grove Park will provide a great platform for getting information across to all members of the public.

4.7.1 IN HOUSE USER SURVEY

In the past the Council has used GreenStat to carry out surveys so the public can have their say on the green spaces in the borough. GreenStat no longer exists so the Council have created their own in house survey to get the public's opinion on what should happen in their parks. The council trialled their own in-house survey for Nonsuch Park, a well-used and loved park that is shared with the London Borough of Sutton. 1200 postal votes were sent out and 635 returned and was deemed a success. Due to this success the ranger service carried out surveys for Alexandra Recreation Ground in 2015, Auriol Park in 2016, Rosebery Park and Ewell Court Park in 2017. Surveys for Long Grove Recreation Ground and Poole Road Recreation Ground were distributed in October 2018 to coincide with the re-write of the management plans.

4.7.2 IN HOUSE SURVEY RESULTS

Questionnaire development:

The questions were developed in liaison with the Head of Operational Services and the Patrol Ranger. Areas include:

- Frequency of visiting the park
- Method of travel to the park
- Reasons for visiting the park
- Opinions on various aspects of the park
- Improving visitor experience and encouraging more use of the park, or staying for longer
- Volunteering opportunities.

Methodology:

The survey ran from 01 October to 19 October 2018. The survey was available in paper and electronic formats. 1,200 paper surveys were distributed to properties in the surrounding area and 1,000 postcard-size flyers were distributed to:

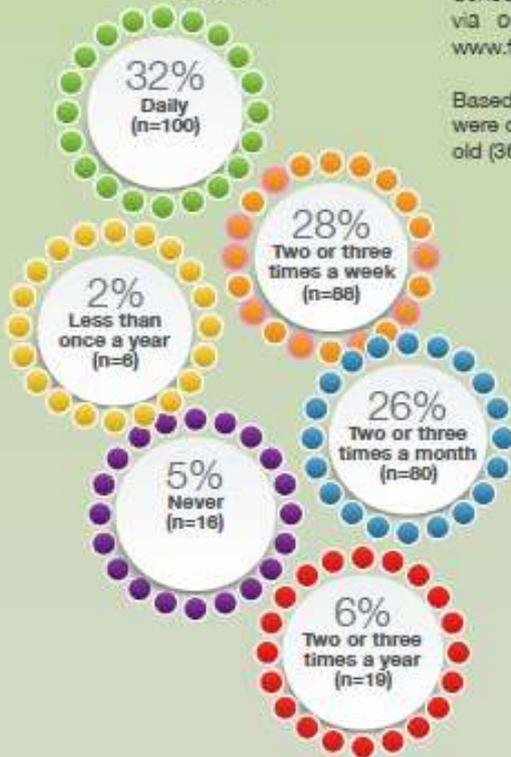
- Bourne Hall
- Town Hall
- Cherryfield Nursery
- Southfield Park Primary School
- Ebbisham Centre school

The electronic version was featured on the Council's main webpage and publicised in Members' Update and via our social media channels:

- Twitter: @EpsomEwellBC
- Facebook: www.facebook.com/EpsomEwellBC

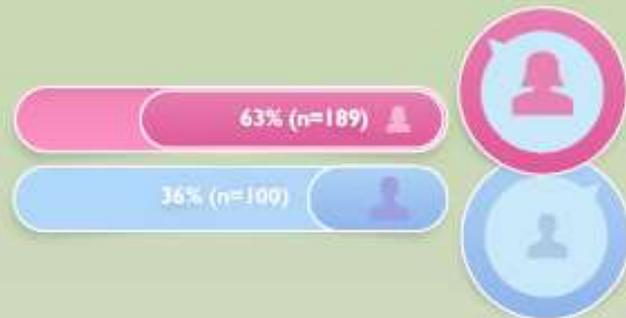
Summary of main findings

How often do you visit Long Grove Recreation Ground?



The survey ran from 01 October to 19 October 2019. It was available online and in paper format. In total, 310 responses were received; 73% were paper based (n=225) and 27% were submitted online (n=85). It was sent to properties within the area and postcard-size flyers were distributed to: Bourne Hall; Town Hall; Ebbisham Centre, Southfield Park Primary School and Cherry Field Nursery School. The survey was also published on our website and via our social media platforms ie Twitter: @EpsomEwellBC and on Facebook: www.facebook.com/EpsomEwellBC and circulated to councillors.

Based on age groupings: 73% (n=219/302) were under 55 years old and 27% (n=83/302) were over 55 years old. The largest portion of respondents were between 35yrs and 44yrs old (36%, n=110/302). Seven in ten respondents rated the park positively (70%, n=202).



How do you normally travel to the park?



Why do you visit the park? Top five responses provided Respondents ticked all that applied



Top three positively rated aspects of the park



Top three negatively rated aspects of the park?



4.8 MANAGEMENT PLAN

In completing this management plan using the criteria for Green Flag and having put other recreation grounds in the borough successfully through the Green Flag process we now understand the importance of a structured management plan. An improved management plan is not just for the day-to-day running of the facility but also for its long-term future. Our management plan will be a work in progress with the help of the recreation grounds user groups.

4.9 ACTION PLAN

See Appendix A for the Long Grove Park Action Plan

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POOLE ROAD ACTION PLAN

| Green Flag Criteria | Objective | Implementation/ Task | Target Date | Achieved | Progress | | | | | Project Managed By |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|---|-------------|--|--|------|------|------|------|--|
| | | | | | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | |
| Page 199 A Welcoming Place | New Notice Boards | Remove dated and uninformative signs | Summer 2019 |  | New notice boards are due to be installed by the Summer of 2019. These will be monitored for vandalism and up to date information will be displayed. | | | | | Ranger Service & Operational Services Management |
| | Name Plaques | To install name plaques on the main entrances and smaller entrances of the park | Summer 2019 |  | The leftover noticeboard budget has been allocated to getting name plaques on most of the main entrances of the park so the public know which park they are entering even from the smaller less obvious entrances. They will match the header board of the new noticeboards and will create a uniform look across all the parks in the borough. Quotes are being obtained. | | | | | Ranger Service & Operational Services Management |

Facilities

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|--------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| <p>It was highlighted in the 2018 survey that the park and playground could benefit from more equipment e.g. a trim trail</p> | <p>Spring 2020</p> |  | <p>New equipment was installed in the over 12's playground in 2017 and 2018. As a trim trail/outdoor gym has been identified as equipment park users would like to see in Poole Road, the Council will consider installation of equipment, subject to suitable funding becoming available.</p> | | | | | <p>Rangers/ Streetcare managers</p> |
| <p>It was highlighted in the 2018 survey that the park required toilets</p> | <p>N/A</p> |  | <p>Due to the cost associated with public toilets the majority of them were closed across the whole borough. When the pavilion is open, the public can access the building and use the toilets.</p> | | | | | <p>Managers/ Outside contractors</p> |
| <p>It was highlighted in the 2018 survey that there is no café or refreshments on sale</p> | <p>N/A</p> |  | <p>The nearby Ewell Court Park has a café that serves beverages and hot food. The Harrier centre does carry a small selection of seats and drinks to sell when the office is manned (Monday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings, and Saturday mornings).</p> | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|-----------------------|---|----------|--|---|--|--|--|--|-------------------------------|
| | | | | | Giggles soft play are open most days and sell beverages and hot food. We do not feel that there is a need for another café at present. | | | | | |
| | Police Patrol | Liaise with local police and PCSO's to include Poole Road in their patrols | Monthly |  | Poole Road is not considered a crime hot spot, and due to police resources, monthly police patrols are no longer carried out. However, Rangers and PCSO's carry out joint patrols in the Borough, this includes patrols of Poole Road Rec. | | | | | Ranger Service / Local Police |
| | Anti-Social Behaviour | Poole Road Recreation Ground is a locked park and accessible until half an hour before sunset or until the last booking at the centre. The survey identified that park users would like to see more patrols | On-Going |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2017 and 2018 the benches were removed from near the MUGA and from the footpath to the Playground in an effort to discourage anti-social behaviour. The rangers log any incidents they encounter on their own internal spreadsheet and to the police. As mentioned above, the Rangers and PCSO's | | | | | Ranger Service/ Local Police |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|-----------|--|---------------------------------------|--|---|--|--|--|--|---------------------------------------|
| | | | | | communicate with each other and undertake joint patrols in the parks and visit areas of concern. | | | | | |
| | Car parks | It was highlighted that the entrance to the park is too narrow and should be double gated. | N/A |  | The gates are double gates, however the opening is only wide enough to allow 1 car to pass through it at a time. The car parking facilities are intended for use by people visiting the park. As the car park is in close proximity to a school it does become congested at school drop off and pick up times by parents parking in the car park. There are no plans to increase the width of the gates at this time. | | | | | Procurement |
| Clean & Well Maintained | Bins | Emptying and maintenance | Weekdays (increased in busier months) |  | New multiuse bins installed in 2012. Bins are emptied to a weekly schedule. All bins inspected during weekly checks for damage and are replaced/repared as and when required. | | | | | Operational Services / Ranger Service |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------------|----------------------------------|--|----------|--|--|--|--|--|--|-----------------------------------|
| | Litter | Removal of rubbish in the park | Daily |  | Any litter found is removed by the team that empties the bins on a daily basis. When the ranger team inspect the park on a weekly basis any litter found is removed. Patrols are increased in the busy summer months. | | | | | Ranger Service / Street Cleansing |
| | Maintenance of pathways | The 2018 survey highlighted that park users felt that the condition of the paths were poor | On-Going |  | In accordance with the parks visual inspection regime, Rangers note the conditions of the pathways and report issues to Procurement. Repair work will be undertaken according to funds available and prioritising of work. | | | | | Procurement |
| Sustainability | Electricity and Water Efficiency | Ensure all taps and showers in pavilion are functioning properly. Check all light bulbs in pavilion and lamp posts are energy efficient and are timed to come on | Monthly |  | Lamps and lights within the park are maintained by the Council's external maintenance contractor) and any faults are reported directly to them. The external contractor carries out monthly planned preventative maintenance (PPM) where | | | | | External Contractor |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|-------------|--|---|--|--|--|--|--------------------------------------|
| | | at the correct times. | | | the water temperatures and emergency lights are checked. There are other PPM tasks that come up quarterly, half yearly and annually that also get attended to. In 2018 the track floodlights were replaced with LED lighting, which are cheaper to run and are more environmentally friendly. | | | | | |
| Conservation and Heritage Page 204 | Flowerbed | It was identified in the 2018 survey that there is a lack of flowerbeds | Summer 2020 |  | Streetcare department to build flowerbed near the entrance and to plant with a sustainable planting scheme. | | | | | Grounds Maintenance / Ranger Service |
| Community Involvement | Assess the number and profile of users, the pattern of use and users perception of safety and enjoyment | The recent in house survey allowed the local community to voice their opinion on how they feel the park can be improved | Winter 2018 |  | The in house survey was carried out in October 2018 to coincide with the re-write of the management plan. An in house survey will be carried out in Autumn 2023 to coincide with the re-write and a comparison of responses can be carried out. | | | | | Ranger Service/ Marketing |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|--|--|-------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | Increase the number of "Friend Of" members | Encourage the formation of a "Friend's Of" group | On-Going |  | The Council will advertise for park users to form a "Friends Of" group via the new noticeboards, the website and social media | | | | | Ranger Service/Sandra Laxton |
| Page 205 Marketing | Make informative, interpretive and up to date material available about the history, landscape and ecological value of the park – and also environmental management in the park | Internet (the Council website) and leaflets. | Spring 2017 |  | The Council launched a new external site to the public in late 2016. The parks pages will be updated with useful and up to date information | | | | | Ranger Service |
| | | Use the new noticeboard to advertise future events and up to date information about the park | On Going |  | Checked during weekly inspections and updated as and when required | | | | | Ranger Service/Future "Friends Of" group |
| | | Bins | Monthly |  | Advertisement of events/campaigns in litter bins as and when needed. The advertising panels on bins are available to hire with a view to generating a small income to the Council. | | | | | Street Cleansing /Ranger Service |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------|--|---|--------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|-----------------------------------|
| Management | Write an up to date management plan available to staff at all levels and by different park user groups | Copy to be made available to all concerned members | January 2019 |  | Completed in December 2018 | | | | | Ranger Service/Sam Whitehead |
| | Ensure effective monitoring of the management plan | Implement monitoring process by meetings between the Council and user groups thereby continually reviewing and updating the management plan | Quarterly |  | A formal review of the management plan is conducted on an annual basis, however we consider both the management and action plans to be organic documents that can be updated as necessary during the five year period. | | | | | Ranger Service & Relevant Parties |

| | |
|-------|---|
| GREEN | Projects are on track and in control |
| AMBER | The project has been postponed to explore alternatives or is not required to be active at this time |
| RED | The project has been stopped and will not meet its commitments for cost, schedule or scope. Projects in the red will need their budget and schedule increased, or their scope of work increased, to get back on track |

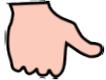
LONG GROVE PARK ACTION PLAN

| Green Flag Criteria | Objective | Implementation/ Task | Target Date | Achieved | Progress | | | | | Project Managed By |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|---|-------------|--|--|------|------|------|------|--|
| | | | | | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | |
| Page 207 A Welcoming Place | New Notice Boards | Remove dated and uninformative signs | Summer 2019 |  | New notice boards are due to be installed by the Summer of 2019. These will be monitored for vandalism and up to date information will be displayed. | | | | | Ranger Service & Operational Services Management |
| | Name Plaques | To install name plaques on the main entrances and smaller entrances of the park | Summer 2019 |  | The leftover noticeboard budget has been allocated to getting name plaques on most of the main entrances of the park so the public know which park they are entering even from the smaller less obvious entrances. They will match the header board of the new noticeboards and will create a uniform look across all the parks in the Borough. Quotes are being obtained. | | | | | Ranger Service & Operational Services Management |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|-------------------------|--|---------------------|---|--|--|--|--|--|---|
| | <p>Car Park Signage</p> | <p>To install new car park signs on the car park gates and lamp posts</p> | <p>January 2019</p> |  | <p>In July 2018 a Joint Action Group (JAG) was held to discuss the ongoing issue of antisocial behaviour in the car park. It was decided that the Rangers will lock the car park gates daily. New signage is in the design process and will be installed over the winter period.</p> | | | | | <p>Ranger Service & Operational Services Management</p> |
| | <p>Facilities</p> | <p>It was highlighted in the 2018 survey that there are few facilities for over 12's and that the park could benefit from more outdoor fitness equipment</p> | <p>Spring 2020</p> |  | <p>A new beginner's skate ramp was completed in May 2018. This, along with the existing skate ramp and skate bowl, allows the opportunity for skaters and bike riders of varying skill and age to enjoy the skate facilities. The aerial runway is due to be replaced in 2019, this is a piece of equipment that can be used by over 12's. The results of the park user survey have identified the desire for a trim trail/outdoor gym. The Council will consider installation of equipment,</p> | | | | | <p>Rangers/ Streetcare managers</p> |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|---|----------|--|--|--|--|--|--|----------------------------------|
| | | | | | subject to suitable funding becoming available. | | | | | |
| | | It was highlighted in the 2018 survey that the park required toilets | N/A |  | Due to the cost associated with public toilets the majority of them were closed across the whole borough. | | | | | Managers/ Outside contractors |
| | | It was highlighted in the 2018 survey that there is no café or refreshments on sale | N/A |  | If an external company proposed a café in the park to the Council, the Venues department would consider the application. | | | | | Venues/ Outside contractors |
| Healthy, Safe & Secure | Police Patrol | Liaise with local police and PCSO's to include Long Grove Park in their patrols | Monthly |  | Due to police resources, monthly police patrols are no longer carried out. However, Rangers and PCSO's carry out joint patrols in the Borough, this includes patrols of Long Grove Park. | | | | | Ranger Service / Local Police |
| | Anti-Social Behaviour | Long Grove Park is a locked park and accessible until half an hour before | On-Going |  | Due to the skate/BMX area, the park does attract a lot of youths. Whilst most of the youths are | | | | | Ranger Service/ Local Police |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------|--|-----|--|---|--|--|--|--|----------------|
| | <p>sunset. The survey identified that park users felt there is a lot of antisocial behaviour particularly around the skate park.</p> | | | <p>respectful, there are a minority that engage in antisocial behaviour.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Rangers log any incidents they encounter on their own internal spreadsheet and to the police • As mentioned above, the Rangers and PCSO's communicate with each other and undertake joint patrols in the parks and visit areas of concern. Long Grove is a park that is prioritised when arranging joint patrols. | | | | | |
| Car parks | <p>It was highlighted in the 2018 survey and JAG meeting that there is a problem with antisocial behaviour in the car park.</p> | N/A |  | <p>The JAG meeting resulted in a decision to lock the main car park gates at 8pm on weekdays and half an hour before sunset on weekends. A height barrier has been installed at the main vehicle access gate to the park and the Locking of the main car park gates will commence</p> | | | | | Ranger Service |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|----------------|--|---------------------------------------|--|---|--|--|--|--|---------------------------------------|
| | | | | | once repairs to the gates have been undertaken. | | | | | |
| Page 211 | Park Furniture | In was highlighted in the 2018 survey that more seating is required around the skate park and playground. Picnic tables were also requested. | Summer 2019 |  | There are limited seating areas near the skate park as it was found that more seating encouraged antisocial behaviour and littering. The Council will consider the placement of picnic benches in the grass area away from the skate park as this would encourage families to use the park for picnics and outings. Consideration will be based on available funds. | | | | | Operational Services Management |
| Clean & Well Maintained | Bins | Emptying and maintenance | Weekdays (increased in busier months) |  | New multiuse bins installed in 2012. Bins are emptied to a weekly schedule. All bins inspected during weekly checks for damage and are replaced/repaired as and when required. | | | | | Operational Services / Ranger Service |

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|--|-------------------------|--|----------|--|--|--|--|--|--|-----------------------------------|
| | Litter | Removal of rubbish in the park | Daily |  | Any litter found is removed by the team that empties the bins on a daily basis. When the ranger team inspect the park on a weekly basis any litter found is removed. Patrols are increased in the busy summer months. | | | | | Ranger Service / Street Cleansing |
| | Maintenance of pathways | The 2018 survey highlighted that park users felt that the condition of the paths were poor | On-Going |  | In accordance with the parks visual inspection regime, Rangers note the conditions of the pathways and report issues to Procurement. Repair work will be undertaken according to funds available and prioritising of work. Procurement are aware of cracking on the pathway due to tree root growth, this is currently being investigated. | | | | | Procurement |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|---|-------------|--|---|--|--|--|--|--------------------------------------|
| Sustainability | Electricity and Water Efficiency | It was identified in the 2018 survey that there was little lighting in the park. | Monthly |  | There is limited lighting in the park this partly to discourage night time activity at the skate park. Lighting in the car park is maintained by an external contractor. | | | | | External Contractor |
| Conservation and Heritage | Flowerbed | It was identified in the 2018 survey that there is a lack of flowerbeds | Summer 2020 |  | Streetcare department to build flowerbed near the playground and to plant with a sustainable planting scheme. | | | | | Grounds Maintenance / Ranger Service |
| Page 213 Community Involvement | Assess the number and profile of users, the pattern of use and users perception of safety and enjoyment | The recent in house survey allowed the local community to voice their opinion on how they feel the park can be improved | Winter 2018 |  | The in house survey was carried out in October 2018 to coincide with the re-write of the management plan. An in house survey will be carried out in Autumn 2023 to coincide with the re-write and a comparison of responses can be carried out. | | | | | Ranger Service/ Marketing |
| | Increase the number of "Friend Of" members | Encourage the formation of a "Friend's Of" group | On-Going |  | The Council will advertise for park users to form a "Friends Of" group via the new noticeboards, the website and social media | | | | | Ranger Service/Sandra Laxton |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------|--|--|--------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| Marketing | Make informative, interpretive and up to date material available about the history, landscape and ecological value of the park – and also environmental management in the park | Internet (the Council website) and leaflets. | Spring 2017 |  | The Council launched a new external site to the public in late 2016. The parks pages will be updated with useful and up to date information | | | | | Ranger Service |
| | | Use the new noticeboard to advertise future events and up to date information about the park | On Going |  | Checked during weekly inspections and updated as and when required | | | | | Ranger Service/Future "Friends Of" group |
| | | Bins | Monthly |  | Advertisement of events/campaigns in litter bins as and when needed. The advertising panels on bins are available to hire with a view to generating a small income to the Council. | | | | | Street Cleansing /Ranger Service |
| Management | Write an up to date management plan available to staff at all levels and by different park user groups | Copy to be made available to all concerned members | January 2019 |  | Completed in December 2018 | | | | | Ranger Service/Sam Whitehead |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|---|-----------|--|--|--|--|--|--|-----------------------------------|
| | Ensure effective monitoring of the management plan | Implement monitoring process by meetings between the Council and user groups thereby continually reviewing and updating the management plan | Quarterly |  | A formal review of the management plan is conducted on an annual basis, however we consider both the management and action plans to be organic documents that can be updated as necessary during the five year period. | | | | | Ranger Service & Relevant Parties |
|--|--|---|-----------|--|--|--|--|--|--|-----------------------------------|

| | |
|-------|---|
| GREEN | Projects are on track and in control |
| AMBER | The project has been postponed to explore alternatives or is not required to be active at this time |
| RED | The project has been stopped and will not meet its commitments for cost, schedule or scope. Projects in the red will need their budget and schedule increased, or their scope of work increased, to get back on track |

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CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2019/20

| | |
|---|---|
| Head of Service/Contact: | Lee Duffy, Chief Finance Officer |
| Urgent Decision?(yes/no) | No |
| If yes, reason urgent decision required: | N/A |
| Annexes/Appendices (attached): | Annex 1 – Proposed Capital Programme Annex 2 – Capital Appraisal form for Bid 1 Annex 3 – Capital Appraisal form for Bid 9 |
| Other available papers (not attached): | Financial Policy Panel papers 4 December 2018 Capital Strategy |

Report summary

This report summarises the proposed 2019/20 capital programme and a provisional programme for 2020-22. The Committee's approval is sought for the programme to be submitted to Council in February 2019.

Recommendation (s)

That the Committee:

- (1) Submits the Capital Programme for 2019/20 as identified in section 4 and 5 of this report to the Council for approval on 19 February 2019;**
- (2) Confirms that it supports all of the schemes included in the provisional programme for 2020-22 as identified in section 6 of this report;**
- (3) Notes that:-**
 - (a) schemes subject to external funding from Disabled Facilities Grants only proceed when funding has been received;**
 - (b) schemes for 2020-22 are provisional pending an annual review of funds available for capital investment.**

1 Implications for the Council's Key Priorities, Service Plans and Sustainable Community Strategy

- 1.1 The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) includes the following guidelines relevant to investment in services:-
 - 1.1.1 Prioritise capital investment to ensure retained property is fit for purpose.
 - 1.1.2 Maximise the use of external funding opportunities to deliver improvements to the community infrastructure, including affordable housing.
 - 1.1.3 Maintain a minimum uncommitted level of capital reserves of £1 million.
- 1.2 A baseline criteria for schemes is 'Investment required to meet Health and Safety or other new legislative requirements' as identified in the project appraisals.

2 Background

- 2.1 The Capital Strategy was last agreed by the Council on 20 February 2018 at which time the capital programme was approved for 2018/19. Schemes for 2019-2021 were provisional pending the annual budget review and an annual assessment of funds for capital investment.
- 2.2 The Financial Policy Panel ('the Panel') provided the Capital Member Group (CMG) with a remit for the preparation of a capital programme for 2019/20. Under this remit, CMG assessed all capital bids and recommended a programme to the Panel for approval on 4 December 2018.
- 2.3 The programme presented to the Panel assumed funding from capital receipts and government grants. The Panel were advised that the proposed level of investment of £2.4 million over three years 2019/20 to 2021/22, of which £464k was to be funded from capital receipts and revenue, would reduce the available capital receipts balance to £2.8 million at the end of this period. The agreed minimum threshold of capital receipts is £1 million.
- 2.4 The receipts forecast assumes a £100k revenue contribution to fund capital schemes in 2019/20. This contribution is subject to the budget being approved at Council in February 2019.
- 2.5 The Panel's guidance relevant to this policy committee's recommendations was as follows:-

2.5.1 Priority schemes identified by the Capital Member Group should be presented with project appraisals to the policy committees in January to establish whether there is support for the individual projects, with any projects not supported being removed from the draft programme.

2.5.2 Schemes identified in section 4 and 5 of this report, totalling £690k, requiring £40k use of capital reserves and £650k externally funded from grants, should be included in the capital programme, subject to support for the project appraisal by this Committee and subject to external funding being received before expenditure is committed.

3 Proposals

3.1 The Committee is asked:-

3.1.1 To approve the proposed capital programme for 2019/20; and

3.1.2 To agree to the provisional programme for 2020-22.

3.2 The timing of the programme should be based on the ability to deliver with a realistic number of projects in any one year.

3.3 If all schemes in the proposed corporate capital programme for 2019/20 were to progress, and given the use of £100k of revenue funds, this would reduce the capital reserves to £2.82 million at 31 March 2022. Where possible the Council will prioritise the use of other funding sources such as revenue, external grants, S106 and Community Infrastructure Levy to preserve the level of capital receipts.

4 Core Programme 2019/20 Funded from Capital Reserves

4.1 The Financial Policy Panel recommended that the following schemes should be considered by this Committee for inclusion in the capital programme in 2019/20, subject to the Committee approving the project appraisals.

4.2 The proposed core programme for 2019/20 funded from capital reserves consists of the following scheme:-

| Capital Appraisal form reference | Scheme | 2019/20 £000s |
|---|--|--------------------------|
| Community & Wellbeing Bid 9 | Bourne Hall – refurbishment of toilets | 40 |
| Total | | 40 |

5 Core Programme 2019/20 Externally Funded

- 5.1 The Financial Policy Panel recommended that the following schemes should be considered by this Committee for inclusion in the capital programme in 2018/19, subject to the external funding identified being available.

| Capital Appraisal form reference | Scheme | 2019/20 £000s | Funding |
|----------------------------------|---|------------------|-------------|
| Community & Wellbeing Bid 1 | Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) Programme | 650 | MHCLG Grant |
| | Total externally funded schemes | 650 | |

6 Proposed Capital Programme 2020/21 to 2021/22

- 6.1 The provisional programme proposed for 2020-22 is:-

| Capital Appraisal form reference | Scheme | 2020/21 (£'000) | 2021/22 (£'000) | Funding |
|----------------------------------|--|--------------------|--------------------|-------------|
| Community & Wellbeing Bid 1 | Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) Programme | 650 | 650 | MHCLG Grant |
| | Total proposed capital programme 2020/21 to 2021/22 | 650 | 650 | |

- 6.2 Bids for these schemes will be prepared and submitted to future Capital Member Group meetings for their support to be included within the capital programme for 2020/21 and 2021/22.

7 Financial and Manpower Implications

- 7.1 The Committee will wish to ensure that the Council has the capacity to deliver the recommended schemes.
- 7.2 **Chief Finance Officer's comments:** all financial implications are included in the body of the report.

8 Legal Implications (including implications for matters relating to equality)

- 8.1 **Monitoring Officer's comments:** There are no legal issues arising from this report.

9 Sustainability Policy and Community Safety Implications

9.1 None for the purposes of this report.

10 Partnerships

10.1 There are no schemes dependent upon partnership agreement or funding. Schemes may, subject to evaluation, involve partnership for procurement or service delivery.

11 Risk Assessment

11.1 The CMG have used the Capital Strategy to balance the need for prioritised investment against a reducing level of capital reserves.

11.2 To help manage risks to the General Fund revenue account business case investment has been prioritised where it demonstrates a payback within 5 years or 7 years for renewable energy projects.

11.3 Funding has been identified to enable the delivery of the capital programme for 2019/20 and officers believe that there should be sufficient capacity to deliver these projects.

12 Conclusion and Recommendations

12.1 A programme of £690k, excluding any carry forward provisions from 2018/19, is recommended for this Committee in 2019/20.

12.2 To agree the provisional programme for 2020-2022.

Ward(s) Affected: (All Wards);

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Community & Wellbeing Committee Proposed Capital Programme 2019/20 - 2021/22

| | Original Budget 2019/20 £'000 | Proposed Budget 2020/21 £'000 | Proposed Budget 2021/22 £'000 | Total Provision 2019/20- 2021/22 £'000 |
|--|---|---|---|--|
| C&W Bid 1: Disabled Facilities Grants | 650 | 650 | 650 | 1,950 |
| C&W Bid 9: Bourne Hall - refurbishment of toilets | 40 | 0 | 0 | 40 |
| Total Community and Wellbeing Committee | 690 | 650 | 650 | 1,990 |

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Capital Programme Review 2019-20 Project Appraisal Form

COMMITTEE & BID NUMBER

Community & Wellbeing Bid 1

PROJECT TITLE

DISABLED FACILITIES GRANT (DFG) PROGRAMME

ACCOUNTABLE OFFICER

Officer responsible for project planning and delivery of the scheme. Accountable officers are also responsible for post project review.

RACHEL JACKSON

DETAILS OF PROJECT

| | |
|--|---|
| Project scope, what is included/excluded in the scheme | <p>The Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) is a mandatory grant which provides adaptations to enable vulnerable residents to remain in their home independently, thereby reducing the need for hospital services or sheltered housing.</p> <p>Within the scheme we also provide the Discretionary Housing Grants Policy, which provides a greater level of flexibility in delivering adaptations.</p> <p>The project links to our Key Priority of Supporting our Community.</p> |
| Project outcomes and benefits | <p>The DFG is a mandatory grant, and provides adaptations to enable vulnerable residents to maintain independence and remain in their own homes, and can prevent the need for NHS services/hospitalisation and/or sheltered housing. Provision of the DFG meets our statutory obligations.</p> <p>In addition, the flexibility of the DFG programme has allowed the introduction of a Discretionary Grants programme which will reach out to an even greater range of vulnerable residents.</p> |

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

| | | Cost of Project £ | Comments and detail where necessary. Provide appendices where relevant. Examples of business cases spreadsheets can be found in the Finance Handbook |
|---|---|----------------------|--|
| a | Estimated cost of purchase, works and/or equipment | £600-650K estimated | The figure has not been confirmed as yet, and may be increased or decreased (there will be the carry over of the underspend from 2018/19) |
| b | Consultancy or other fees | | |
| c | Total Scheme Capital Costs (a+b) | £600-650K | |
| d | External Funding Identified (e.g. s106, grants etc.) Please give details, including any unsuccessful funding enquiries you may have made. | £600-650K | In 2014/15 the Better Care Fund (BCF) was introduced which pools together £3.8 bn funds for health, social care and housing. For 2018/19 the DFG element was protected by way of a ring-fenced grant to each Local Authority, which resulted in £600K being allocated for the programme, no additional capital funding was |

Capital Programme Review 2019-20 Project Appraisal Form

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | allocated. The high level of funding was due to the fact that Surrey County Council were not allocated any funding under this scheme. We worked with SCC to meet some of the costs in delivering Community Services Equipment (CES) which could fall under the DFG such as hoists and ramps. It is expected that the funding for the CES will continue in 2019/20. |
| e | Net Costs to Council (c-d) | | |
| f | Internal Sources of Capital Funds Identified (e.g. repairs & renewals reserve etc.) | 0 | |
| g | Capital Reserves Needed to Finance Bid (e-f) | | |
| h | Annual Ongoing Revenue Additional Savings as a Direct Result of the Project | 0 | |
| i | Annual Ongoing Revenue Additional Costs as a Direct Result of the Project | | |

| Year | 2019/20 £ | 2020/21 £ | 2021/22 £ |
|---|--------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Spend Profile of Scheme – please identify which year (s) the scheme spend will fall into | £650,000 | £650,000 (plus any carry over) | £650,000 (plus any carry over) |

REVENUE IMPACT

| | |
|--|--|
| Can Revenue Implications Be Funded From the Committee Base Budget? – Please give details | |
|--|--|

CORPORATE PLAN 2016/20

| | |
|---|--|
| Is this investment linked to EEBC's Key Priorities? If so, say which ones and evidence how. How does project fit within service objectives? | The project links to our Key Priority of Supporting our Community. |
|---|--|

TIMESCALES

What is the proposed timetable for completion of the project? Give estimated start and finish dates for each stage of the project. These dates will be used as milestones during quarterly budget monitoring to assess performance of project delivery.

Capital Programme Review 2019-20 Project Appraisal Form

| | | Target Start Date | Target Finish Date |
|---|--------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Design & Planning | Ongoing | |
| 2 | Further Approvals Needed | n/a | |
| 3 | Tendering (if necessary) | n/a | |
| 4 | Project start date | Ongoing | |
| 5 | Project Finish Date | Ongoing | |

BASELINE CRITERIA

All capital schemes are assessed against criteria set by the Capital Member Group annually. Bids should meet at least one of these criteria. State which capital criteria(s) for assessing bids are met and why. Leave blank any which are not met.

Spend to Save schemes should meet the following criteria:

- Payback of the amount capital invested within the project within 5 years (7 years for renewable energy projects).
- The return required on capital employed should be linked to the potential cost of borrowing (MRP) rather than potential loss of investment income.
- Risk of not achieving return on investment is low.
- Clear definition of financial cost/benefits of the scheme.

Members may consider schemes with longer paybacks on major spend to save projects going forward, especially those that incur borrowing.

| | |
|---|-----------------------|
| <p>Is there a guarantee of the scheme being fully externally funded and is it classed as a high priority? Please give details of funding streams, including any restrictions on the funding.</p> | <p>Yes. As above.</p> |
| <p>Is the Scheme a Spend to Save Project? Will investment improve service efficiency including cost savings or income generation? What is the payback in years?</p> | <p>No.</p> |

Capital Programme Review 2019-20 Project Appraisal Form

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>It is mandatory for the Council to provide the scheme? Is investment required to meet Health and Safety or other legislative requirements? If so state which requirements.</p> | <p>Yes. There is a need to ensure that sufficient resources are made available to deliver the mandatory grant programme.</p> |
| <p>Is this project the minimum scheme required to continue to deliver the services of the Council? - Is investment required for the business continuity of the Council? If so say how.</p> | <p>Yes, as above. Should the DFG programme not be delivered, there is a risk the Authority would be judicially challenged for failing to meet its statutory obligations.</p> |

ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN

| | |
|---|------------|
| <p>Is investment identified in the Council's Asset Management Plan?</p> | <p>No.</p> |
|---|------------|

PRIORITISATION

State which **one** of the four prioritisation categories are met and why.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | <p>Investment essential to meet statutory obligation.</p> | <p>Yes. The DFG is a mandatory grant.</p> |
| 2 | <p>Investment Important to achieve Key Priorities.</p> | |
| 3 | <p>Investment important to secure service continuity and improvement.</p> | |
| 4 | <p>Investment will assist but is not required to meet one of the baseline criteria.</p> | |

RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH SCHEME

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| 1 | <p>Outline the risks of delivering this project to timetable and budget. (Please do not include risks to the service or asset if project is not approved.)</p> | |
| 2 | <p>Are there any risks relating to the availability of resources internally to deliver this project</p> | <p>The budget is monitored closely on a monthly basis and to ensure the programme is delivered within the financial limits. In addition, the approved priority assessment scheme is implemented when necessary to ensure the most vulnerable applicants received assistance. An additional part time technical officer has been recruited to, and will join the team in October 2018. It is anticipated that this support will ensure greater completion of DFG cases in 2019/20.</p> |

**Capital Programme Review 2019-20
Project Appraisal Form**

| | | |
|---|--|------------------------------------|
| 3 | Consequences of not undertaking this project | As detailed within this appraisal. |
| 4 | Alternative Solutions (Other solutions considered – cost and implications) | None. |

| | |
|--|-----|
| Is consultation required for this project? Please give details of the who with and when by. | No. |
|--|-----|

| | |
|---------------------------------------|-----|
| Ward(s) affected by the scheme | All |
|---------------------------------------|-----|

Accountable Officer Responsible for Delivery of the Scheme

Name and Signature **Rachel Jackson**

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Capital Programme Review 2019-20 Project Appraisal Form

COMMITTEE & BID NUMBER

Community & Wellbeing Bid 9

PROJECT TITLE

Bourne Hall refurbishment of toilets

ACCOUNTABLE OFFICER

Officer responsible for project planning and delivery of the scheme. Accountable officers are also responsible for post project review.

Mark Shephard

DETAILS OF PROJECT

| | |
|--|---|
| Project scope, what is included/excluded in the scheme | <p>After inspecting toilets again, a reduced project scope would be as follows;</p> <p>In gents toilets to replace all wash hand basins and taps and vanity unit, allow to replace all existing taps with concussive taps. Supply and fit new modern wc cubicles. Replace waste pipework to try to combat smell. Carry out decorations to ceilings and woodwork.</p> <p>To ladies and disabled toilets, replace defective radiators, replace defective concussive taps. Carry out decorations to ceilings and woodwork.</p> <p>Replace lighting with LED lights if budget allows.</p> |
| Project outcomes and benefits | <p>The existing toilets are very smelly and are off putting for hirers, new energy saving measures and water saving measures with increase efficiencies and refurbishment will improve aesthetics</p> |

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

| | | Cost of Project £ | Comments and detail where necessary. Provide appendices where relevant. Examples of business cases spreadsheets can be found in the Finance Handbook |
|---|---|----------------------|---|
| a | Estimated cost of purchase, works and/or equipment | 35 | |
| b | Consultancy or other fees | 5 | |
| c | Total Scheme Capital Costs (a+b) | 40 | |
| d | External Funding Identified (e.g. s106, grants etc.) Please give details, including any unsuccessful funding enquiries you may have made. | | |

Capital Programme Review 2019-20 Project Appraisal Form

| | | | |
|---|---|----|--|
| e | Net Costs to Council (c-d) | 40 | |
| f | Internal Sources of Capital Funds Identified (e.g. repairs & renewals reserve etc.) | | |
| g | Capital Reserves Needed to Finance Bid (e-f) | 40 | |
| h | Annual Ongoing Revenue Additional Savings as a Direct Result of the Project | | |
| i | Annual Ongoing Revenue Additional Costs as a Direct Result of the Project | | |

| Year | 2019/20 £ | 2020/21 £ | 2021/22 £ |
|---|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Spend Profile of Scheme – please identify which year (s) the scheme spend will fall into | 40 | | |

REVENUE IMPACT

| | |
|--|--|
| Can revenue implications be funded from the Committee Base Budget? – Please give details | |
|--|--|

CORPORATE PLAN 2016/20

| | |
|---|--------------------------|
| Is this investment linked to EEBC's Key Priorities? If so, say which ones and evidence how. How does project fit within service objectives? | Supporting the community |
|---|--------------------------|

TIMESCALES

What is the proposed timetable for completion of the project? Give estimated start and finish dates for each stage of the project. These dates will be used as milestones during quarterly budget monitoring to assess performance of project delivery.

Capital Programme Review 2019-20 Project Appraisal Form

| | | Target Start Date | Target Finish Date |
|---|--------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Design & Planning | September 2019 | |
| 2 | Further Approvals Needed | N/A | |
| 3 | Tendering (if necessary) | Oct/Nov 2019 | |
| 4 | Project start date | Jan 2020 | |
| 5 | Project Finish Date | Feb 2020 | |

BASELINE CRITERIA

All capital schemes are assessed against criteria set by the Capital Member Group annually. Bids should meet at least one of these criteria. State which capital criteria(s) for assessing bids are met and why. Leave blank any which are not met.

Spend to Save schemes should meet the following criteria:

- Payback of the amount capital invested within the project within 5 years (7 years for renewable energy projects).
- The return required on capital employed should be linked to the potential cost of borrowing (MRP) rather than potential loss of investment income.
- Risk of not achieving return on investment is low.
- Clear definition of financial cost/benefits of the scheme.

Members may consider schemes with longer paybacks on major spend to save projects going forward, especially those that incur borrowing.

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>Is there a guarantee of the scheme being fully externally funded and is it classed as a high priority? Please give details of funding streams, including any restrictions on the funding.</p> | |
| <p>Is the Scheme a Spend to Save Project? Will investment improve service efficiency including cost savings or income generation? What is the payback in years?</p> | |

Capital Programme Review 2019-20 Project Appraisal Form

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>It is mandatory for the Council to provide the scheme? Is investment required to meet Health and Safety or other legislative requirements? If so, state which requirements.</p> | |
| <p>Is this project the minimum scheme required to continue to deliver the services of the Council? - Is investment required for the business continuity of the Council? If so, say how.</p> | <p>Bourne Hall is a community facility of which many public users attend, complaints about condition of toilets do not help image of council. If not updated and kept in reasonable condition will lead to increased maintenance cost or shutting down toilets.</p> |

ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN

| | |
|---|------------|
| <p>Is investment identified in the Council's Asset Management Plan?</p> | <p>Yes</p> |
|---|------------|

PRIORITISATION

State which **one** of the four prioritisation categories are met and why.

| | | |
|---|---|-----|
| 1 | <p>Investment essential to meet statutory obligation.</p> | |
| 2 | <p>Investment Important to achieve Key Priorities.</p> | |
| 3 | <p>Investment important to secure service continuity and improvement.</p> | Yes |
| 4 | <p>Investment will assist but is not required to meet one of the baseline criteria.</p> | |

RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH SCHEME

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| 1 | <p>Outline the risks of delivering this project to timetable and budget. (Please do not include risks to the service or asset if project is not approved.)</p> | <p>No risks are anticipated at this point</p> |
| 2 | <p>Are there any risks relating to the availability of resources internally to deliver this project</p> | No |

**Capital Programme Review 2019-20
Project Appraisal Form**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 3 | Consequences of not undertaking this project | If toilets are not refurbished may lead to higher maintenance repair costs. |
| 4 | Alternative Solutions (Other solutions considered – cost and implications) | |

| | |
|--|----|
| Is consultation required for this project? Please give details of who with and when by. | No |
|--|----|

| | |
|---------------------------------------|------------|
| Ward(s) affected by the scheme | Ewell Ward |
|---------------------------------------|------------|

Accountable Officer Responsible for Delivery of the Scheme

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FEES AND CHARGES 2019/20

| | |
|---|--|
| Head of Service/Contact: | Lee Duffy, Chief Finance Officer |
| Urgent Decision?(yes/no) | No |
| If yes, reason urgent decision required: | N/A |
| Annexes/Appendices (attached): | Annex 1 - Fees and Charges Schedule 2019/20 |
| Other available papers (not attached): | Budget Targets Report and Minutes, 25 September 2018 |

Report summary

This report recommends fees and charges for which this Committee is responsible, with the new charges being effective from 1 April 2019.

Recommendation (s)

That the Committee:

- (1) Authorises the Chief Finance Officer to vary fees and charges for items generating income under £1,000 per annum and/or for one-off services or items;**

And, subject to the approval of Council:

- (2) Agrees the fees and charges for 2019/20 as set out at Annex 1.**

1 Implications for the Council's Key Priorities, Service Plans and Sustainable Community Strategy

- 1.1 As set out in the revenue estimates report on this agenda.

2 Background

- 2.1 The Council will meet to agree the budget, including estimates of income and expenditure, on 19 February 2019. To enable the budget to be finalised, the Policy Committees are asked to recommend fees and charges covering the services for which they are responsible.

- 2.2 The fees and charges presented in this report are discretionary charges only. For discretionary charges there is scope to generate additional income, to reduce any subsidy of the service or to contribute to an improved budget position.
- 2.3 There are a number of charges set externally that the Council has no power to alter. This restricts the Council's ability to raise additional income and therefore the fees and charges set by statute are not presented to this Committee for approval.
- 2.4 The budget guidelines agreed by Strategy and Resources in September 2018 included an overall increase in revenue from discretionary fees and charges of 3%. The guidelines also anticipate that additional income may be generated to contribute to the required savings target.
- 2.5 When preparing estimates, fees and charges have been reviewed by service managers and any negative impact on demand anticipated by increased charges has been considered.
- 2.6 Members should refer to the estimates report on this agenda for an overview of the Committee's budget position.
- 2.7 In January 2018, to reflect changes to the Council's management structure, the Committee agreed that the Chief Finance Officer should have delegated authority to vary fees and charges for items generating income under £1,000 per annum. The Committee also agreed that this officer be permitted under delegated authority to set charges for one off services or items not included in the fees and charges schedule.

3 Proposals

- 3.1 The proposed fees and charges for 2019/20 are set out at **Annex 1** to this report. The main variations in fees and charges for each service area outside the range of an increase between 3% and 5% are set out below:

3.1.1 Venues

Playhouse

No increases to membership fees are proposed, pending the introduction of a revised membership scheme in 2019/20 as part of the Scrutiny Review.

Ewell Court House

It is proposed to reduce the charge for the hire of the Celebratory Rooms on Sundays during the peak season, to encourage bookings for small celebrations, e.g., christenings.

Charges for advance bookings for subsequent years are not generally included in the annual schedules. It is proposed that these be charged at the current year cost plus approximately 3% per annum, representing the inflationary increases incorporated in the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

3.1.2 Local Nature Reserve

No increases are proposed to the fees for annual guided walks as officers feel that the modest charge maintains participation. New marketing strategies are planned to encourage an uptake in participation.

3.1.3 Sports Pitches

An increase of 6.2% is proposed for the hire of the Harrier Centre track for Sports days. This is to reflect the increased cost of these events as staff are now required to manage them.

3.1.4 Community & Wellbeing Centre

Currently, room hire charges at the Community & Wellbeing Centre are discounted by 5% where hirers self-caretake. It is proposed that the hire charges be held at 2018/19 rates where no caretaking is required, e.g., when the hirers self-caretake or if the building is already open. It is proposed that bookings requiring caretaking services are increased by 5% (+/- small roundings) to cover additional costs.

Other charges have generally been increased between 3%-5%, although there are some variations due to rounding of charges. Increases above 5% are proposed to reflect increased costs or where officers felt that higher charges could be introduced without creating a reduction in demand.

Charges for Extra Support Day Care sessions have not been increased in order to encourage uptake of the service.

3.1.5 Community Services

Community Alarm

No increase is proposed to Community Alarm monthly standard charges as current charges represent market rates and officers consider that an increase in price per unit could potentially have an adverse effect on customer volume.

Shopping Service

To remain competitive with the current market no increase to charges are proposed.

Transport from Home

In recent years there has been a decline in the use of this service, so in order to retain client levels, officers are proposing an increase in fares of approximately 2%. No increase in Membership fees is proposed for 2019/20, as a review of the Membership schemes across Community Services is planned.

Shopmobility

As there was a substantial increase in charges last year, it is proposed that the charges remain unchanged for 2019/20.

Private Sector Housing

The fees for applications for Houses of Multiple Occupation are charged on a cost recovery basis only. No increase in fees is proposed for 2019/20.

3.2 Disabled Facility Grant Fees

The Council has a statutory duty to operate a Disabled Facilities Grant Scheme, funded by central Government. Over recent years this role has become more complex, with a broader remit than previously, involving multi agency working and a wide variety of assistance required by clients. To reflect the officer time and general administrations costs incurred as a result of this work, it is proposed that the Council charges fees to the fund.

The proposed fee structure is as follows:

Mandatory Grants: These are provided to enable adaptations to allow residents access to essential facilities within and around the home.

| | | |
|--|-----------------------------|--|
| Minimum fee charge | £300 | e.g. level access showers / stair lifts |
| Works up to £30k | 10% | |
| Works between £30k-£45k Fees capped at maximum works level £45k | 7.5% | e.g. ground floor extensions to provide downstairs wetroom/bathroom facilities |
| Aborted works: Pre-tender stage | £300 | Works may be aborted where an applicant's level of need has changed significantly since receipt of the original Occupational Therapist's report, or where the applicant has passed away. |
| Post-tender stage depending on grant value Limited at £45k | 10%/7.5% of 70% of works | |

Discretionary Grants (funded through DFG allocation)

e.g. Installation of galvanised (outdoor) handrails or measures to address thermal discomfort, e.g., replacement windows and heating.

| | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| Minimum fee charge | £150 |
| All works | 10% |
| Aborted works Pre-tender stage Post tender stage | £150 10% of 70% of cost of works |

Handyperson Grants

e.g., small odd jobs such as garden clearance and bathroom grab rails.
No fee applied.

4 Financial and Manpower Implications

- 4.1 The impact of the proposed fees and charges for services in 2019/20 is set out below.
- 4.2 The table sets out the original additional income target as per the Medium Term Financial Strategy in the first column.
- 4.3 The second column presents additional income anticipated from the changes to tariffs proposed in the appendix to this report, on the assumption that current utilisation levels continue.
- 4.4 The third column shows changes to income budgets for fees and charges that are not related to changes to tariffs. Examples will be changes to customer numbers or where a new fee or charge has been introduced.

- 4.5 The last column sets out the difference between the 3% budget target increase and the final income budget, which incorporates changes to both tariffs and volumes.

| | Increase in Income Budget Target (3%) £'000 | Total Increase or (Decrease) due to changes to Tariffs £'000 | Variations resulting from changes to volumes £'000 | Variation between Target and total change £'000 |
|------------------------------|---|--|--|---|
| Community & Wellbeing Centre | 4 | 4 | (4) | (4) |
| Community Services | 7 | 5 | 3 | 1 |
| Bourne Hall | 8 | 8 | 0 | 0 |
| Ewell Court House | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Playhouse | 4 | 3 | 22 | 21 |
| Allotments | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Parks & Open Spaces | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 28 | 25 | 22 | 19 |

- 4.6 The charges proposed will generate an additional estimated income of £25,000. This has been taken into account in the budget to be presented to the Council next month.
- 4.7 Overall, the effect of increased charges and changes to volumes is that Community & Wellbeing Committee has exceeded the targeted budgeted income from fees and charges for 2019/20 by £19,000.
- 4.8 A net income budget of £22,500 is included in the figures above to represent the introduction of transaction fee charges on tickets sold at the Playhouse. It was agreed by this Committee in October that any income in excess of this would be set aside for repairs and renewals at the Playhouse.
- 4.9 Take up of the Extra Care Service at the Community & Wellbeing Centre has been slow during 2018/19; income budgets for 2019/20 have been reduced to reflect this.
- 4.10 The revised level of income has been included in the medium term financial strategy to help towards a balanced budget over the next four years. A detailed breakdown of the 2019/20 budget can be found in the budget report included on this agenda.
- 4.11 **Chief Finance Officer's comments:** All financial implications are included within this report.

5 Legal Implications (including implications for matters relating to equality)

5.1 There are no specific issues arising from this report but the Council's resources will need to be applied to ensure that it fulfils its statutory obligations and delivers its policy on equalities.

5.2 **Monitoring Officer's comments:** There are no legal issues arising from this report.

6 Sustainability Policy and Community Safety Implications

6.1 None for the purposes of this report.

7 Partnerships

7.1 None for the purposes of this report.

8 Risk Assessment

8.1 Income from services remains at risk due to the state of the economy. Charges have been set taking into account market conditions.

8.2 The continued delivery of Council services is dependent upon income generation, creating a risk to service delivery if charges are not set at levels that make a significant contribution to the Council's finances.

9 Conclusion and Recommendations

9.1 This report proposes new fees and charges for services with effect from 1 April 2019.

9.2 The impact of changes in fees and charges has been estimated and incorporated into the Committee's budget estimates for 2019/20. If lower charges are agreed the Committee will be required to identify cost savings to enable the Council to meet its overall budget target.

Ward(s) Affected: (All Wards);

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Service: Community Services

Service Manager: Ian Dyer

| Service | Description | Unit | 2018/19 | 2019/20 | % Change |
|----------------------------|---|-------------------------------|------------|------------|----------|
| Community Alarm | | | | | |
| | Equipment not returned on discontinuance of service | Alarm and pendant | 135.00 | 139.00 | 3.0% |
| | Key safe rental | Per month | 2.75 | 2.85 | 3.6% |
| | Replacement of lost pendants | Per item | 53.55 | 55.00 | 2.7% |
| | Sale of key boxes | Per item | 53.55 | 55.00 | 2.7% |
| | Standard charge | Per person per unit per month | 21.50 | 21.50 | 0.0% |
| | Standard Charge - mobile phone units | Per person per unit per month | 26.80 | 27.60 | 3.0% |
| | Standard charge (existing client in residential home on benefits 2,3,7) | Per person per unit per month | 18.55 | 19.00 | 2.4% |
| Meals at Home | | | | | |
| | Delivery Service | Per sandwich | 2.55 | 2.60 | 2.0% |
| | Delivery Service | Main Meal only | 3.35 | 3.45 | 3.0% |
| | Delivery Service | Dessert only | 1.25 | 1.30 | 4.0% |
| | Delivery service out of borough | Per sandwich | 2.70 | 2.80 | 3.7% |
| | Delivery service out of borough | Main meal only | 3.80 | 4.00 | 5.3% |
| | Delivery service out of borough | Dessert only | 1.30 | 1.40 | 7.7% |
| | Shopping Service | Per occasion | 6.00 | 6.00 | 0.0% |
| | Shopping Service - reduced charge | Per occasion | 4.30 | 4.30 | 0.0% |
| Transport from Home | | | | | |
| | Day Centre Transport | Return | 4.30 | 4.40 | 2.3% |
| | Dial-a-bus | Return | 6.40 | 6.50 | 1.6% |
| | Dial-a-ride | Single | 5.80 | 5.90 | 1.7% |
| | Dial-a-ride | Return | 11.60 | 11.80 | 1.7% |
| | Excursions | Per excursion | as advised | as advised | |
| | Membership | Annual | 15.00 | 15.00 | 0.0% |
| | Nursing Home adj Borough | Return | 11.90 | 12.20 | 2.5% |
| | Out of Borough Hospitals | Return | 21.70 | 22.30 | 2.8% |
| Shopmobility | | | | | |
| | Annual membership (2 hours free equipment use per visit) | Annual | 22.00 | 22.00 | 0.0% |
| | Non members - Day rate (includes 2 hours use of equipment) | Per visit | 5.50 | 5.50 | 0.0% |

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REVENUE BUDGET 2019/20

| | |
|---|--|
| Head of Service/Contact: | Lee Duffy, Chief Finance Officer |
| Urgent Decision?(yes/no) | No |
| If yes, reason urgent decision required: | N/A |
| Annexes/Appendices (attached): | |
| Other available papers (not attached): | Budget Target Report to S&R Committee on 25 September 2018 |

Report summary

This report sets out estimates for income and expenditure on services in 2019/20.

Recommendation (s)

- (1) That the Committee recommends the 2019/20 service estimates, for approval at the budget meeting of Full Council in February 2019.

1 Implications for the Council's Key Priorities, Service Plans and Sustainable Community Strategy

- 1.1 The Medium Term Financial Strategy and Efficiency Plan aims to maintain the financial health of the Council whilst delivering the priorities in the Corporate Plan.
- 1.2 The Service Plan for the Corporate Priority "Managing Resources" includes service targets designed to maintain a balanced budget.

2 Background

- 2.1 Government reductions to the revenue support grant and welfare benefit changes continue to create pressure on Council finances and are likely to do so for the foreseeable future. The Council's budget strategy has been, as far as practical, to make operational and efficiency savings to minimise service reduction affecting residents.
- 2.2 For 2016/17 to 2019/20, Council agreed a four year Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and Efficiency Plan to maintain the financial health of the Council whilst delivering the priorities in the Corporate Plan. The recommendation in this report is consistent with the MTFS.

- 2.3 The overall Council revenue budget target for 2019/20 was agreed by Strategy & Resources Committee on 25 September 2018 as follows:-
- Estimates should include options to reduce organisational costs by £406,000 in order to minimise the use of working balances and maintain a minimum working balance of £2.5 million in accordance with the MTFS;
 - That at least £200,000 additional revenue is generated from an increase in discretionary fees and charges;
 - That a provision for pay award is made of £280,000 that represents an increase to the staffing budget of 2.5%, 1% for cost of living and 1.5% for progression;
 - That further savings and efficiencies be identified to address the budget shortfall of £113,000 in 2019/20;
 - That £200,000 from the financial gain of being part of the Pilot for Business Rates is used to mitigate the potential payment of £625,000 to government for 'negative RSG'.
- 2.4 The figures in this report are final and are representative of the local government finance settlement. Any subsequent changes to service estimates should either be self-financing or produce a saving within the Committee's overall recommended budget.
- 2.5 The service estimates for this Committee are to be included in the draft Budget Book 2019/20 that will be made available to all Councillors.
- 2.6 Estimates have been prepared on the basis that all existing services to residents are maintained.
- 2.7 No general allowance for price inflation has been utilised for the revenue estimates 2019/20. However, where the Council incurs contractual inflationary uplifts, budgets have been adjusted accordingly.
- 2.8 For pay inflation, a budgeted increase £280,000 has been allowed for within the MTFS.
- 2.9 The Council agreed a target to increase overall income from locally set fees and charges by a minimum of 3%, after making allowance for any further changes in service. Proposals have been included in a separate report on this agenda.
- 2.10 To allow the Council to determine the budget and Council Tax in February, the Committee estimates have been presented as follows:-
- The Budget Book contains the service estimates for 2019/20.

- All unavoidable cost increases and income reductions are reflected in the estimates.
- All operational savings identified to date are reflected in the base estimates.
- Recommended increases to fees and charges have been included within the Budget Book and the income estimates.
- All increases in charges are subject to approval by the Council.

3 Revenue Estimates 2018/19

- 3.1 Before considering the revenue estimates for 2018/19, this section provides a summary of the forecast outturn for the current financial year. Variations identified with on-going effects have been taken into account in preparing next year's budget.
- 3.2 The Council's probable revenue outturn at Q2 monitoring for all Committees in 2018/19 anticipates an overspend of £144,000, as set out in the Q2 monitoring report below:

| Committee | 2018/19 Current Approved Budget £'000 | 2018/19 Q2 Forecast £'000 | Variance £'000 |
|---------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Strategy & Resources | 2,132 | 1,889 | (243) |
| Environment & Safe Communities | 2,180 | 2,473 | 293 |
| Community & Wellbeing | 6,351 | 6,446 | 95 |
| Capital charges | (2,879) | (2,879) | 0 |
| Total budget requirement | 7,784 | 7,928 | 144 |

- 3.3 Assuming that this level of overspend continues to 31 March 2019, a contribution from working balances at year end of £144,000 would be required. Currently, the Council's working balance stands at £3,348,000, i.e., before any contribution is made.
- 3.4 The probable outturn specifically for Community and Wellbeing Committee for 2018/19 is an overspend of £95,000, which is shown in the following table. The key reasons for the major variances are explained in the subsequent paragraphs.

| Service Group | Published Budget 2018/19 | Current Approved Budget 2018/19 | Probable Outturn 2018/19 | Probable Variance 2018/19 |
|--|--------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| | £'000 | £'000 | £'000 | £'000 |
| Housing | 1,394 | 1,408 | 1,403 | (5) |
| Community Services | 310 | 362 | 431 | 69 |
| Support for Voluntary Organisations | 180 | 260 | 260 | 0 |
| Community Centres | 441 | 468 | 501 | 32 |
| Parks and Open Spaces | 1,927 | 1,953 | 1,952 | (1) |
| Sports, Leisure & Cultural | 1,429 | 1,564 | 1,563 | 0 |
| Precepting/Levying Bodies | 333 | 336 | 336 | 0 |
| Community & Wellbeing Committee | 6,014 | 6,351 | 6,446 | 95 |

- 3.5 The current approved budget in the table above represents the published budget updated with authorised transfers of funds since approval of the budget at Council in February 2018.
- 3.6 Changes to storage facilities within the homeless service are expected to result in a reduction in costs by year end. (£5k favourable)
- 3.7 Within Community Services, the Daycare+ service has been slow to build clients, including referrals from County. Numbers are now growing but it is not anticipated that the full income budget will be achieved for 2018/19. (£69k adverse)
- 3.8 At Community Centres, building running costs are ongoing at the Wells centre. At the Community & Wellbeing Centre, no income from Extra Care clients has been achieved to Q2. (£32k adverse)
- 3.9 The Committee's probable outturn (estimated net expenditure) for 2018/19 is included in the draft Budget Book on each service group page, with a detailed analysis of variations to budget. The outturn forecasts are all based on quarter two budget monitoring reports used by all managers.

4 Proposals for 2019/20 Budget

- 4.1 The service estimates are included in the draft Budget Book 2019/20, circulated to Councillors in January.
- 4.2 A summary of the Committee's revenue estimates for 2019/20 is set out below:

| Service Group | Published Budget 2018/19 £'000 | Base Position 2019/20 £'000 |
|--|---|--|
| Housing | 1,394 | 1,349 |
| Community Services | 310 | 355 |
| Support for Voluntary Organisations | 180 | 261 |
| Health & Wellbeing | 0 | 36 |
| Community Centres | 441 | 497 |
| Parks and Open Spaces | 1,927 | 1,865 |
| Sports, Leisure & Cultural | 1,429 | 1,326 |
| Precepting/Levying Bodies | 336 | 345 |
| Total | 6,017 | 6,034 |

- 4.3 The following table comprises a summary of the main changes to the Committee's proposed budget for 2019/20 compared with the published budget for 2018/19.

| Community & Wellbeing Committee | 2019/20 Budget £'000 |
|--|---------------------------------|
| Published Budget 2018/19 | 6,017 |
| Variation in pay, pension (IAS19) & support service recharges | 403 |
| Completion of Ebbisham Centre service review | (84) |
| Rangers service review savings to be finalised | (77) |
| Reallocation of contingency and management fee budgets | (72) |
| Part reinstatement of Better Care Funding | (35) |
| Reduced transport and contract costs | (34) |
| Additional income from increases to tariffs | (25) |
| Cessation of staff funding | 23 |

| | |
|--|--------------|
| Net income from introduction of transaction fees on ticket sales at Playhouse | (22) |
| Net increased box office income at Playhouse | (16) |
| Increased Playhouse bar and lettings income | (16) |
| Fee income on completed Disabled Facility works | (15) |
| Loss of Meals at Home grant from County | 14 |
| Net income from issue of additional licences on Houses of Multiple Occupation | (12) |
| Increased income from sporting activities and lettings | (12) |
| Sundry Variations | (3) |
| Base Position 2019/20 | 6,034 |

5 Financial and Manpower Implications

- 5.1 Consultation processes will be progressed should operational changes affect staffing levels or staff duties.
- 5.2 The draft Budget Book 2019/20 is highly detailed and therefore any questions or queries should be sent to relevant officers in advance of this Committee meeting wherever possible.
- 5.3 **Chief Finance Officer's comments:** Financial implications are contained within the body of this report.

6 Legal Implications (including implications for matters relating to equality)

- 6.1 The Council will fulfil its statutory obligations and comply with its policy on equalities.
- 6.2 **Monitoring Officer's comments:** There are no direct legal implications arising from this report. However, decisions taken about the budget will impact the services which can be delivered. It is important that statutory services are appropriately funded, which the recommended budget seeks to achieve.

7 Sustainability Policy and Community Safety Implications

- 7.1 There are no specific particular implications for Sustainability Policy or Community Safety arising out of this report.

8 Partnerships

8.1 Many services are provided by the Council without the direct involvement of other agencies. There is, however, an increasing role for partnership working with others to achieve mutually agreed objectives. The benefits and risks need to be assessed in each specific case to ensure that value for money is secured and the Council's priorities are delivered in the most efficient and effective manner.

9 Risk Assessment

9.1 In preparing the revenue budget estimates officers have identified the main risks facing the Committee in delivering services within the budget. These budgets will require careful management during the year.

| Service | Risk | Budget Estimate 2019/20 £'000 | Risk Management |
|--------------------|---|-------------------------------------|--|
| Homelessness | Medium: Increase in numbers of presentations | 715 | Continuing with preventative initiatives and alternative temporary accommodation options |
| Venues | Medium: Reduction in letting income. | 258 | Marketing and advertising of venues. |
| Community Services | Medium: Insufficient take up of Daycare+ service to cover costs | 80 | Promotion of service |

10 Conclusion and Recommendations

10.1 The Committee is asked to agree the service revenue estimates set out in the draft Budget Book 2019/20.

10.2 The Council will consider the budget at its meeting on 19 February 2019.

Ward(s) affected: (All Wards);

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