



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.

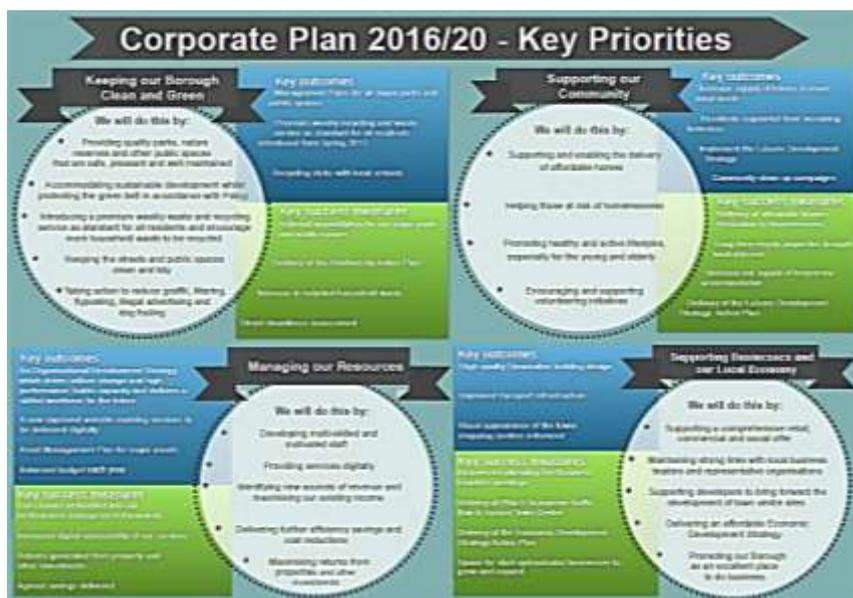
1.1 STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

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.

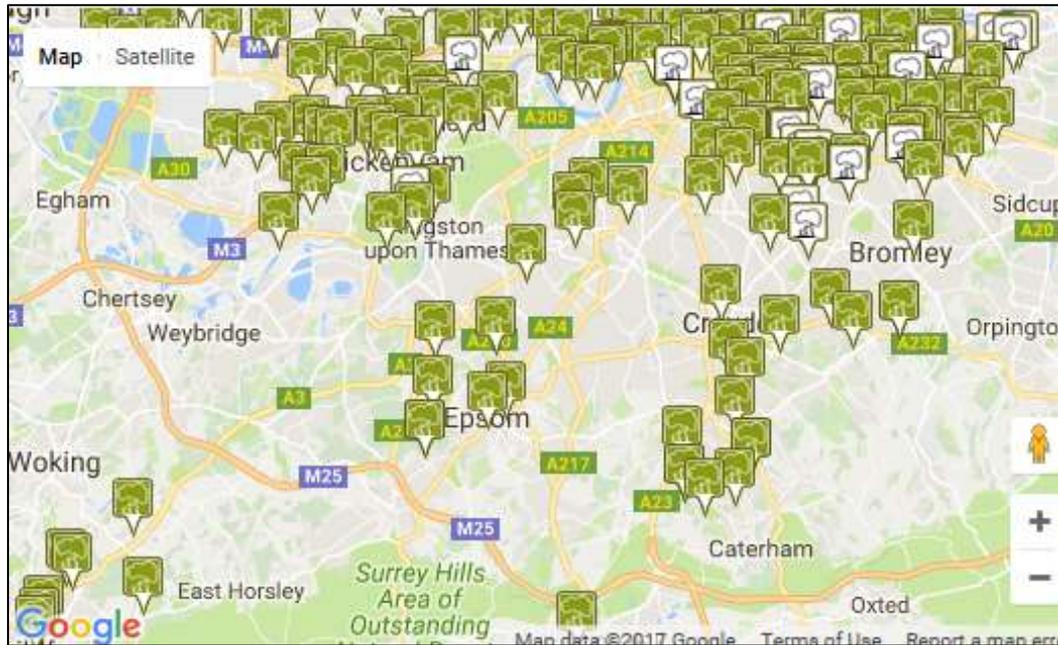


Figure 1 Distribution of Green Flag parks in the South East region

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.

ANNEXE 3

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

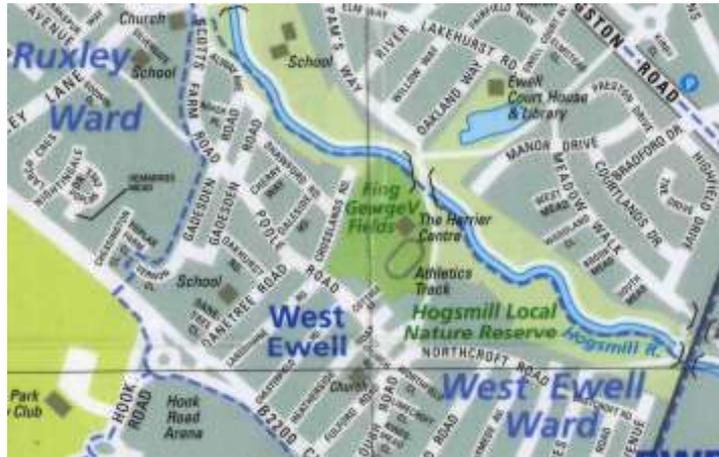


Figure 2 Location of Poole Road Recreation ground and the surrounding roads

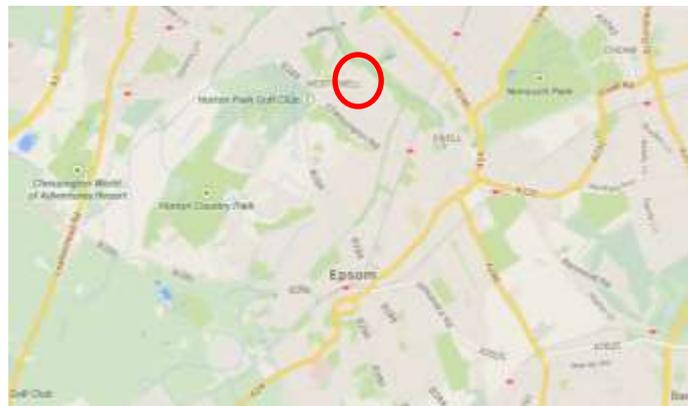


Figure 3 Location of Poole Road Recreation ground in relation to Epsom Town Centre



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.

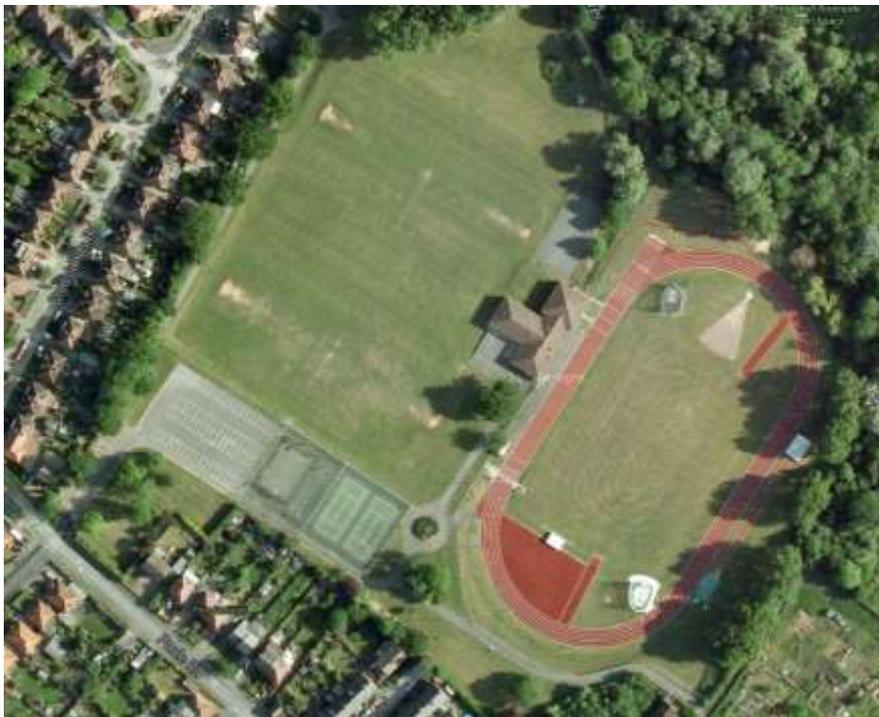


Figure 9 Birds Eye View of Poole Road Recreation Ground (Google Maps)

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.

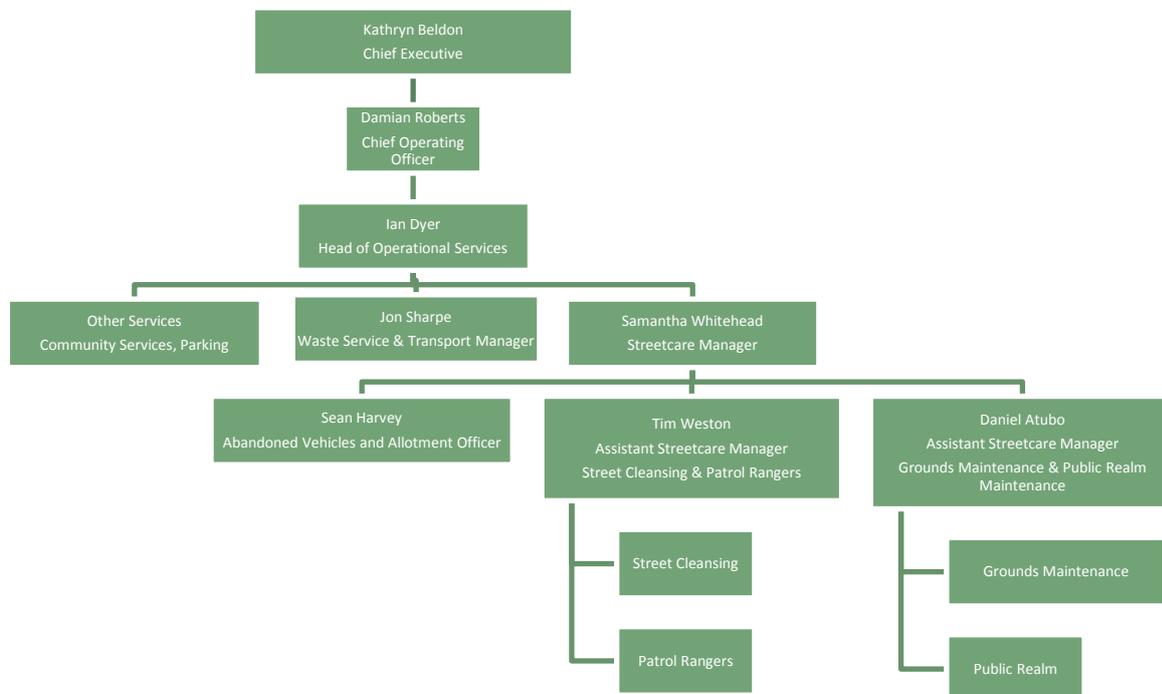


Figure 10 Operational Services Management Structure

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)

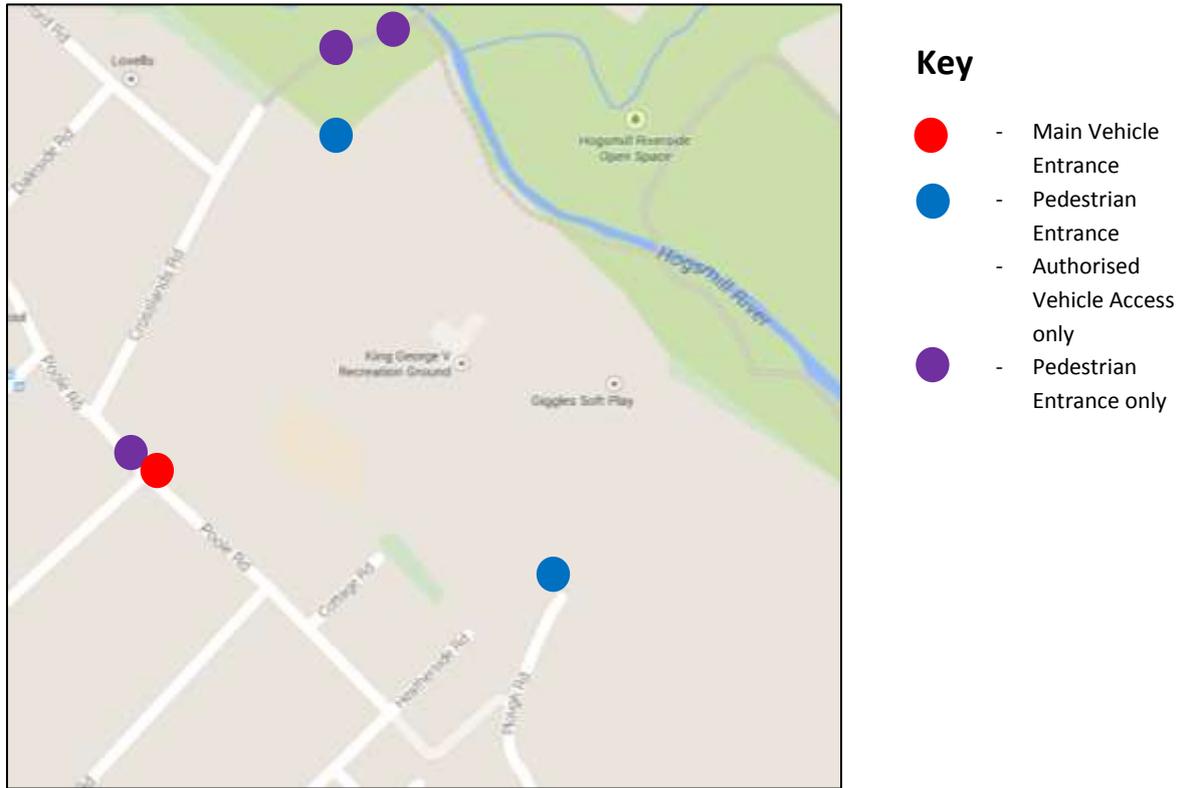


Figure 12 Map Showing the Location of the Five Entrances to Pooler Road Recreation ground

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.

ANNEXE 3

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.

ANNEXE 3

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)

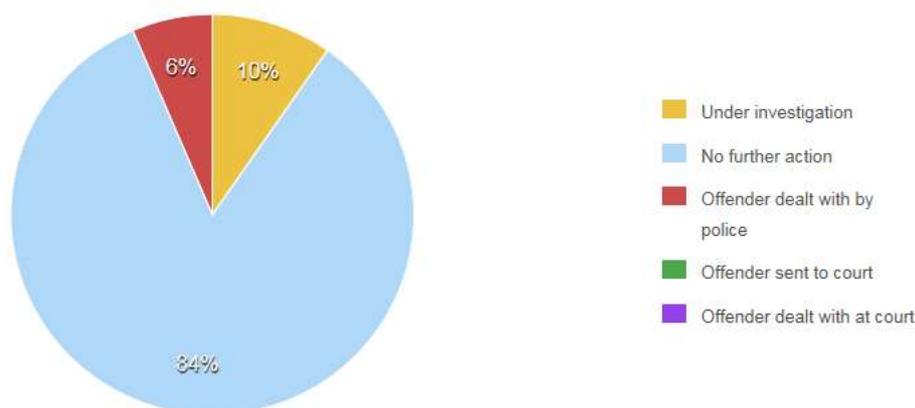


Figure 25 Comparison of outcomes in this area from Nov 2017 to Oct 2018 (police.uk)

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, Downskeepers 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.

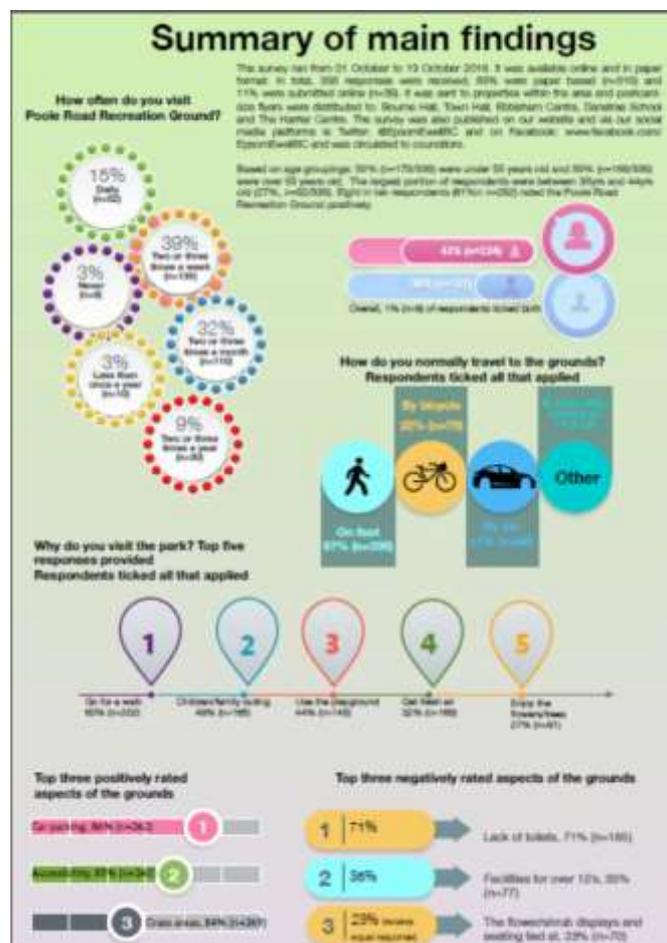
Methodology:

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.