

NONSUCH PARK SOLAR SYSTEM EXPLORATION WALK

Head of Service:	Ian Dyer, Head of Operational Services
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Wards affected:	Nonsuch Ward;
Urgent Decision?(yes/no)	No
If yes, reason urgent decision required:	
Appendices (attached):	Appendix 1 – Ewell Astronomical Society's Nonsuch Park Solar System Exploration Walk Proposal

Summary

To present the Committee with a proposal from the Ewell Astronomical Society for the creation of a Solar System Exploration Walk in Nonsuch Park.

Recommendation (s)

The Committee is asked to:

- (1) Agree in principle to the creation of a Solar System Exploration Walk within the Park.**
- (2) Nominate and Authorise the Assistant Head of Service (Streetcare) to investigate the viability of a Solar System Exploration Walk within the Park.**
- (3) Agree to receive a further report to approve arrangements for the implementation of a Solar System Exploration Walk within the Park at the 24 March 2025 meeting.**

1 Reason for Recommendation

- 1.1 The concept of a Solar System Exploration Walk in Nonsuch Park is still in its early stages. Further details regarding the final design and funding need to be established before the project can progress.
- 1.2 Therefore, the Committee is asked to provide their opinion on whether they would be willing to support the project in principle, allowing further investigation to proceed.

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2 Background

- 2.1 The Ewell Astronomical Society has approached the Joint Management Committee with a proposal for a Solar System Exploration Walk in Nonsuch Park.
- 2.2 A Solar System Walk is an educational and interactive outdoor exhibit that models the Solar System on a scaled-down level. It would involve a trail around the park with markers placed at intervals, each representing a planet or other celestial body in our solar system. The distances between the markers would be scaled to reflect the relative positions of the planets, providing visitors with a tangible and engaging way to experience the vast size of space.
- 2.3 The Solar System Walk provides an engaging way to learn about astronomy, particularly helping children understand the immense scale of space.
- 2.4 By walking the path, visitors can grasp complex concepts, such as the vast distances between planets, in a simple and relatable format. The walk aims to transform abstract scientific facts into something tangible, making science enjoyable and interactive. It could include elements such as informative plaques, games, or QR codes linking to more detailed online content.
- 2.5 The Solar System Walk at Ruislip Lido supported by Hillingdon Council www.hillingdon.gov.uk/walktheplanets is a good example. It follows a similar concept, where markers representing the planets are placed along a trail, helping visitors to better understand the scale of the solar system while enjoying a scenic walk around the lido.
- 2.6 There is also a similar example of a Solar System Walk in the village of Otford. This trail has a series of nine concrete pillars spaced around the village and noticeboard explaining how the trail works. <https://londonist.com/london/beyond-london/otford-solar-system-walk-sevenoaks-kent-location-where-route>
- 2.7 If the Joint Management Committee is broadly in agreement with launching a similar project in Nonsuch Park, it is recommended that officers work with the Ewell Astronomical Society to develop the project's details and present these to the Committee at their next meeting.
- 2.8 This project is not on the Committees current work programme and there is no budget and limited officer resource available to support the project, if the Committee agree to support the project in principle it will be up to the Ewell Astronomical Society to provide the funding for the installation and future upkeep of the facility.

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3 Risk Assessment

Legal or other duties

3.1 Equality Impact Assessment

3.1.1 None for the purpose of this report

3.2 Crime & Disorder

3.2.1 None for the purpose of this report

3.3 Safeguarding

3.3.1 None for the purpose of this report

3.4 Dependencies

3.4.1 None for the purpose of this report

3.5 Other

3.5.1 None

4 Financial Implications

4.1 There are no financial implications at this stage of the proposal, if the Committee choose to pursue this project financial details will be presented as part of a detailed proposal. The Ewell Astronomical Society have been informed that the Committee does not have any available budget to provide financial support to any aspect of the project and funds will need to be raised by The Society for the installation and upkeep of the facility if they wish to progress this with in the park,

4.2 **Section 151 Officer's comments:** None for the purpose of this report.

5 Legal Implications

5.1 Whilst there are no legal implications at this stage of the proposal, if an approach is agreed by the Joint Management Committee at their next meeting, a legal agreement formalising arrangements between parties will be necessary.

5.2 **Legal Officer's comments:** None arising from the contents of this report.

6 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

6.1 **Council's Key Priorities:** The following Key Priorities are engaged:

- Cultural and Creative

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- 6.2 **Service Plans:** The matter is not included within the current Service Delivery Plan.
- 6.3 **Climate & Environmental Impact of recommendations:** None arising from the contents of this report.
- 6.4 **Sustainability Policy & Community Safety Implications:** None
- 6.5 **Partnerships:** This project is in partnership with the Ewell Astronomical Society

7 Background papers

- 7.1 The documents referred to in compiling this report are as follows: None

Previous reports:

- None

Other papers:

- None