

A photograph showing two young children in a park, bent over and raking fallen leaves. The child on the left is wearing a dark blue jacket with white polka dots and a white fur collar, and pink boots with yellow hearts. The child on the right is wearing a bright pink jacket and light blue boots with pink polka dots. They are on a grassy area with scattered brown leaves. A dark green banner is overlaid on the top right of the image.

Management Plan 2023-2028

Lionmede Park

Protect manage and enhance green space assets

Foreword

Good quality green spaces generate enormous social, economic, environmental and ecological benefits as well as making areas more attractive. They are central to every community. They bring people together, encourage physical activity and allow our communities to spend time enjoying the great outdoors. In short, they are essential for a healthy and active nation.

The City Councils Our Chelmsford Our Plan puts down a marker on its intent to deliver quality parks and green spaces. The plan states we will strive to achieve quality accreditation for the care of our parks and green spaces.

We also have to recognise that, important as the immediate benefits are to communities, the decisions we make about the places where we work and live today will long outlast us. Good, proactive management of our Parks today will leave a real legacy for those who come after us.

Our parks and green spaces are some of the most valuable community assets we have. They are the precious jewels of our landscape to be treasured and maintained for people of all ages and from all backgrounds. Their importance cannot be underestimated nor their necessity overlooked.

Over the life of this plan it is our aim to provide parkland that caters for the needs of the visiting public. We will listen and will aim to make improvements year on year to make the sites more attractive, well respected and safe for all.



Cllr Rose Moore
Cabinet member for Parks & Green Spaces

Summary and Outlook

Guidance in reading the management plan.

Management plans within Chelmsford's Parks Services are all about review and improvement to both site facilities and management practices. The route to excellence is paved with continuous improvement, self-assessment, good management practices and a discipline of planning.

This management plan is designed to raise the standard and to be used as an easy reference manual, that can be understood by all interested parties.

In writing management plans we seek to involve and where appropriate, be of benefit to the following groups.

- Parks and Sport user groups
- Internal & External partners
- Local Members
- The Public
- Professional organisations & Institutions

Structure of the Plan

In drafting the document the Green Flag judging criteria were used as an audit tool with each component part being considered.

The management plan that emerged from that process is in reality a number of plans bound as one, and in some instances, will be read as distinct plans. The plans can be read as a whole or the reader can choose to follow only the sections of interest to them. To ensure context is not lost, it is important to consider each section and how it relates to the whole.

We recognise the importance of working towards an agreed national standard for good practice in the management of parks and have adopted the Green Flag criteria to form our eight key service objectives:

- A Welcoming Place
- Healthy, Safe and Secure
- A Well Maintained and Clean Park
- Environmental Management
- Biodiversity, Landscape & Heritage
- Community Involvement
- Marketing and Communication
- Management

Use of the Green Flag criteria provides a standard for systematic and committed approach to maintaining and improving the quality of parks enjoyed by local communities. In addition, it is essential to develop a public based benchmark audited externally by a third party. Green Flag being the recognised National Standard for Parks and Green Spaces.

The project brief was to undertake an assessment of internal strengths and weaknesses and external factors affecting the business and marketing environment ('SWOT' analysis) and to drive change where necessary.

Strengths

Long established green space

Managed car parking

Good relationship between Council and Community

Weaknesses

Lack of horticultural features

Capital funding is not guaranteed, or likely for this site.

Opportunities

To further investigate external funding sources.

To manage the site to benefit biodiversity.

To develop further understanding of the historical nature of the site.

To reduce the effect of a small minority of dog walkers who are inconsiderate.

To create a pocket park of note.

Threats

Any lack of capital investment may have a long-term effect.

Any lack of capital investment in essential infrastructure may result in a missed opportunity to improve service provision.

Following on from this we set about compiling the content required for the plan. To this end we chose to use the Green Flag model to ensure we examined all the key elements that contribute to making a good and vibrant public space that people want to use.

Well managed parks can have a positive bearing in;

- Promoting health & activity
- Supporting education & learning
- Encouraging diversity & inclusion
- Ensuring safety & security
- Greater community involvement
- Promoting fun & enjoyment

Green Flag plus Partnership research report: People, Places and their Green Spaces.

This piece of research confirms that over 50% of us visit a park at least once a week, to improve physical and mental health, to enhance our closest relationships, to chill out, to interact with our communities, and to have a good time.

Four green space user segments were identified during the research process and both their universal and their unique needs were explored in depth.

In summary, these segments were described under the following headings. It appears that they could be used in the Award scheme in the future to identify/define type of Green Space.

Great Outdoors

At 40% of the population, the Great Outdoors was the largest of the green space user segments. They often had quite intense relationships with green spaces which they tended to conceptualise as ideal venues for their self-expression. They were often quite physically active and were social. The Great Outdoors segment is very much a segment that engages with the environment – they are very observant and they are mainly motivated by the need to be active and interact with the natural environment.

Sanctuary

A representative 25% of the population identified with this segment. They tended to seek peace and tranquillity above all but were also strongly drawn to the natural aspect of a green space.

Interestingly a theme for the above two segments is that 65% of the population feel connected to the natural environment.

Playground

The Playground segment is much more dependent on an individual's life stage and their respective role as parent or carer. Consequently, the needs and activities described by respondents falling in to this segment (19% of the population) were often driven by externally moulded motivations and needs, rather than personal desires.

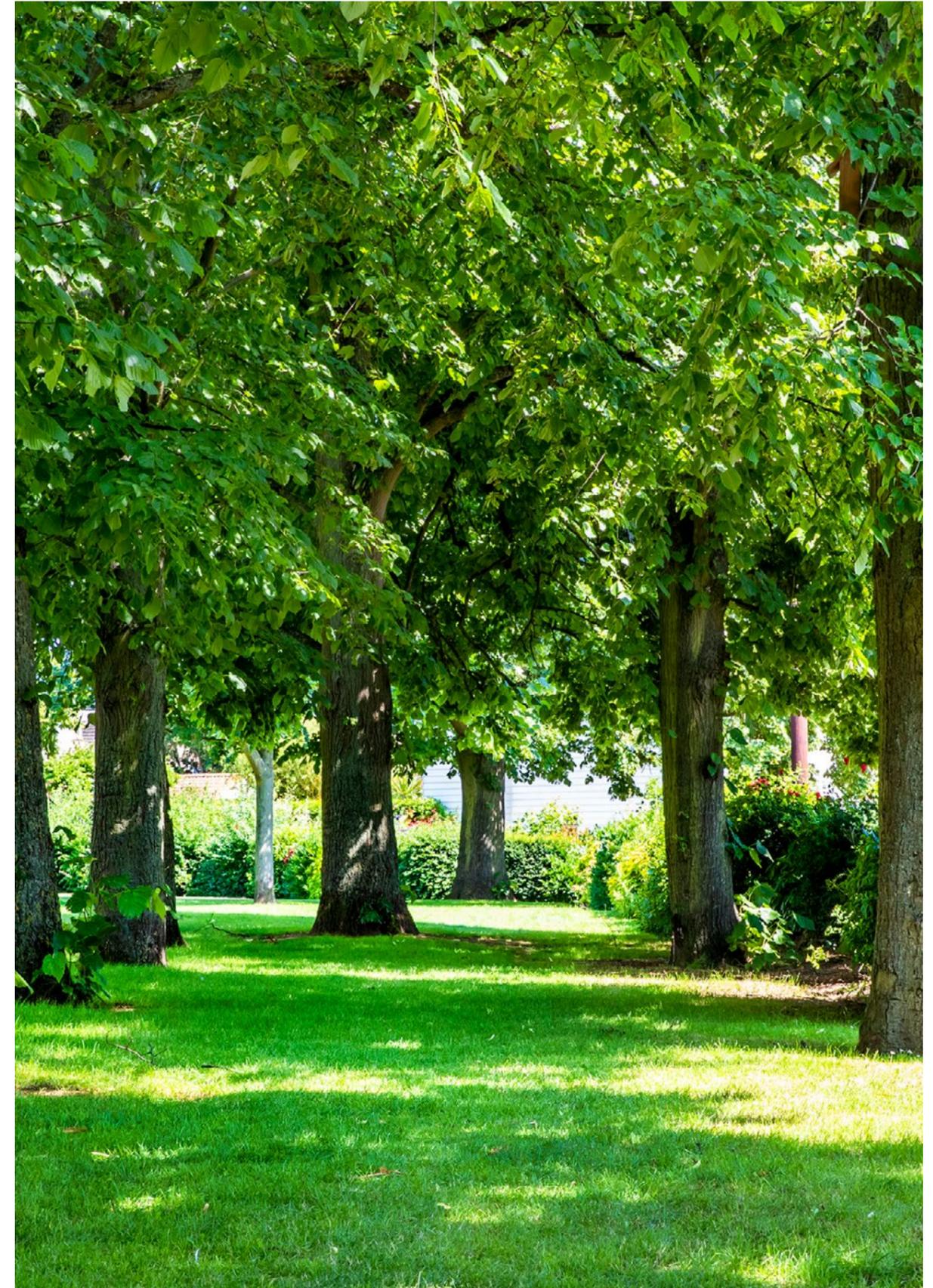
This segment use green space to entertain their children or grandchildren or other children in their care. The Playground segment visualised green spaces with plentiful and clean facilities for their families, safe areas for the children to play in, educational elements and aspects that enable the introduction of real world risk to children in a risk-mitigated fashion.

Team Spirit

Of all the segments Team Spirit (15% of the population) were the most likely to actually seek the hustle and bustle of an actively attended green space. This social and people driven motivator was expressed in different ways however. For some, participation in team sports meant needs were fairly pragmatic and facilities driven. But for others it simply meant using green spaces in a uniquely social way. Namely for meeting friends, social groups, extended family outings and so on. Most in this segment were looking for an active and 'buzzing' atmosphere.

Resistors

This segment represented the 1% of the population who choose not to visit green space. Resistors are most likely to cite fear of crime, litter and potential for boredom as reasons for not using green spaces in their area.



The segments can be seen to be 'value sets' or visitor motivators. This refreshingly challenges the prevalent tendency to classify parks as active and passive, formal and informal. Use of segments help land managers to design and develop facilities and services to better meet the needs of the community helping them to predict behaviour and needs.

2013 The Authority hosted a Peer Challenge Team visit. During that time the team Managed to interview over 150 people - they met groups of staff, elected members, members of the business community, our voluntary sector partners and spoke to neighbouring authorities. The team focused attention on Parks, Leisure and economic growth and reviewed our leadership, service delivery, financial management. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive ranking us as a triple A authority.

High quality, well maintained, safe and easily accessible parks and green spaces are now widely recognised as a key asset to any community; important to the people who live, and work in the area, to those who visit, and to the businesses and organisations that invest in the area. They really do matter. The value of green space, for many different reasons, with many different benefits, for a diverse range of people, by helping to mitigate climate change cannot be over-estimated.

Chelmsford City Council uses external appraisal and validation of its parks green spaces through a number of schemes provided by external sector based organisations; Keep Britain Tidy's Green Flag scheme, Fields in Trust local quality inspections and the Association for Public Service Excellence [APSE] Performance Networks scheme as follows:-

Well managed and maintained

The principle quality assurance scheme for parks and green spaces in the UK; the Green Flag Award® scheme has been used proactively in Chelmsford to achieve independent quality accreditation in order to ensure that everybody has access to quality green space, irrespective of where they live and to ensure that these spaces are appropriately managed and maintained to meet the needs of the communities that they serve. Currently Chelmsford has 17 Green Flags – the most in the east of England – accredited under the Green Flag scheme

This scheme recognises and rewards well managed parks and green spaces, setting the benchmark standard for the management of recreational outdoor spaces across the United Kingdom and around the world. The purpose and aims of the scheme are:

- To ensure that everybody has access to quality green and other open spaces, irrespective of where they live
- To ensure that these spaces are appropriately managed and meet the needs of the communities that they serve
- To establish standards of good management
- To promote and share good practice amongst the green space sector
- To recognise and reward the hard work of managers, staff and volunteers

Currently Chelmsford has 17 Green Flags' the most in the east of England – accredited under the Green Flag scheme, three of which are also recognised as Green Heritage

sites. In addition, one site has a Green Flag Community Award recognising the efforts of the community group and volunteers who manage and maintain the green space at Marconi Ponds.

Chelmsford City Council also participates in the Keep Britain Tidy Group national 'service-wide' quality accreditation scheme for the management of parks and green spaces. This is gradually being rolled-out across the country. The most recent 'service-wide' inspection and accreditation was in 2018; the findings of which were very positive and encouraging.

How does performance compare?

The key benchmarking tool used is the Association of Public Service Excellence [APSE] performance network for parks and green spaces. This helps measure and compare levels of provision, service effectiveness, efficiency and cost. Chelmsford's performance is consistently better than average when compared to the national and family groups of local authorities who participate in the performance network for parks and green spaces

Over a number of years Chelmsford's performance has been consistently better than average when compared to the national and family groups of local authorities who participate in the performance network for parks and green spaces. The number of indicators where Chelmsford's performance is above average has steadily increased from 59% in 2004/05 to 90% in 2017/18.

2016 Open Space Audit

Amongst other things the survey identified Chelmsford's parks, gardens and recreation grounds are most commonly used by most respondent households on a regular monthly basis (81%); followed closely by rights of way – footpaths, bridleways and cycleways (79%)

The survey did identify the quantity of wildlife areas and teenager facilities were insufficient. Something we will seek to address going forward

2017 The Public Parks Report, published by communities and Local Government (CLG) gives a good insight into the state and quality of parks nationally and its findings have informed the City Council's new Parks and Green Space strategy published 2018.

Desktop analysis:

This considered the quality of written documentation within the authority relating to the management of parks. This includes Corporate Strategy and Policy Documents along with directives from Central Government and elements of English Law as it affects statutory duties.

The plan aims to consider all the aspects of management that contribute to a good user experience and will look at all of the following subjects as objectives:

1. A Welcoming Place
2. Healthy, Safe and Secure
3. A well maintained and clean Park
4. Environmental Management
5. Biodiversity, Landscape & Heritage
6. The Park Audit
7. Community Involvement
8. Marketing and Communication
9. Management Action Plan

Site analysis:

A performance monitoring checklist was completed to determine how conditions on the ground ascribed to the criteria set out in the Raising the Standard Green Flag Guidance Manual.

In addition to the checklist an analysis was carried out to look at the additional components, each having their own important contribution to make towards effective service delivery.

- Staff – Staffing levels and training
- Machinery (Type and use)
- Improvements to existing facilities
- Analysis of future needs
- Analysis of customer feedback and market research relating specifically to the site.

Budgetary analysis:

Cost of service provision for the parkland is regularly monitored and reviewed.

The 5 year site action plan (contained within this plan) is costed per item line and planned improvements are undertaken within budget constraint. Some items being delivered from external sources such as grants and S106 Contributions/Community Infrastructure Levy.

Outline changes will be included in the annual executive summary. Reference will be made to both internal and external funding opportunities as they arise throughout the life of this plan.

Methodology for driving change and improvement:

Management plans are the main statement of intent but it is recognised that there is always room for continual improvement.

One or all the following normally drives change:

Political will/legislation/public perceptions/best practice/new technologies. Additionally, developing trends / fashion and expectations heavily influence design related to sports facilities and children's play. With regards to the later many children have access to bikes and want to use them in safe but challenging terrain.

To ensure we achieve continuous improvement, five basic questions relating to the Service we provide to customers are proposed.

1. Assess where we are now.
2. Define our Service priorities
3. Identify what needs improving
4. Identify how to improve
5. Set up a series of actions that will drive continuous improvement.

New actions are added to the Action/improvement plan in the same manor annually.

It is hoped that through reading the plan, the reader will glimpse how the staff team have to balance the priorities, policies and pressures that apply at Lionmede Park and will see the rationale for establishing time scales for putting the objectives into practice. The production of such a document allows the contribution that the site makes to the local community to be measured and progress against published key objectives monitored.

The structure of the Plan is as follows:

Section 1: A Welcoming Place

This section covers the park in its setting as an asset managed by Chelmsford City Council. The maps and drawings in the section help the reader to envisage the parks setting and location.

Through the visual appearance of the park, range of facilities, standards of maintenance and ease of access we strive to make the park a place where people feel that that are in a cared for environment.

Section 2: Healthy, Safe and Secure

This covers the corporate policy and strategic framework that guides park management practices and outlook within the Authority. It deals with the Authorities vision and planning along with giving an overview to the 'why & how' behind the management practices in place.

Chelmsford City Council are continually reviewing and updating their strategic documents to ensure they are responding to changing needs and complying with the latest legislation.

The section advises managers and staff as to their duty of care and to give them an understanding of their users' needs, encouraging them to enjoy healthy activities using appropriate, safe-to-use facilities and activities, and to feel personally safe and secure.



Section 3: Well maintained and Clean

For aesthetic as well as health and safety reasons, issues of cleanliness and maintenance must be addressed, in particular:

Litter and other waste management issues must be adequately dealt with.

Grounds, buildings, equipment and other features must be well maintained.

Policies on litter, vandalism and maintenance should be in place, in practice, and regularly reviewed.

Section 4: Environmental Management

This section seeks to ensure that the way the site is managed has a positive impact on the environment, locally and globally, both now and in the future. Where choices can be made for future procurement, landscaping or buildings, they should aim to minimise energy and resource consumption and waste, and design in benefits to the local and global environment. Policies should seek to eliminate the use of peat and chemicals to control pests and as fertilizers. Horticultural and arboricultural decisions should reflect an understanding of the impacts of climate change.

Section 5: Biodiversity, Landscape and Heritage

Attention should be paid to the appropriate management and conservation of natural features, wildlife and flora; Landscape features; and buildings and structures. Their particular character and requirements should be identified and appropriate management strategies put in place to conserve and enhance them.

Section 6: The Park Audit

This section describes the different 'living' components that make up the essential character of the recreation ground – trees, grass, shrubberies and sports areas. It seeks to describe how these are important to the physical appearance of the park for visitors and to determine other contributions which these components make to the habitat value of the park and its wider environs.

Section 7: Community Involvement

This section examines the extent to which the managing organisation understands the community it serves. Also, how it actively involves members of the community in making decisions about the site development and seeks to provide opportunities for active participation. It will also ensure that there is appropriate provision of facilities for all sectors of the community.

Section 8: Marketing and Communication

This section seeks to examine the ways that managers understand the key benefits of the site and how they use this information to promote it appropriately. They should understand who the main user groups are, could be and should be, and use a fitting range of interpretation and engagement techniques to communicate with them. This basis ensures that appropriate facilities, events and activities can be offered and most effectively promoted, and forms a solid foundation for development now and in the future. It is important to provide good information and publicity so that people are aware of all the opportunities on offer.

Section 9: Management Action Plan

This section sets out the direction of travel over the next five-year period and maps out improvement and change deemed necessary by management to improve the character of the park and the opportunities it offers the community.



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Section 1: A Welcoming Place

A welcoming place is one that invites and draws people into it. This means creating space which, through its vital appearance, range of facilities, standards of maintenance and ease of access, makes people feel that they are in a cared for place

The City Council has undertaken a survey and created a Well Being Strategy for the borough of which parks are an important part.

Introduction & Brief History of the Site

Site information

Site Name	Lionmede Recreation Ground, Chelmsford
Site Status	Designated as public open space. The site being purchased in 1928
Total Area of Site	1.94 Ha (4.8 Acres)
Component areas	Tennis Courts, Bowls Club Sports pavilion, Car park, Children's Play areas, Public Toilets
Surrounding land	Built up residential.
Natural Geology	
Significant features / Key issues	Easements, Public right of way.
Tenure	Freehold. The Local Authority purchased the land 03/08/1928
Location	Accessed via Springfield Road and Sandford Road
Ward	Trinity Ward
District	Chelmsford
County	Essex
Post Code	CM2 6DD
OS grid reference	TL 719073
Byelaws	Section 164 of the Public Health Act 1875
Opening Hours	Park accessible 24/7
Use	Primarily a sports ground, with play facilities
Essex Police Support	Emergency 999 Non-emergency 101 Via text message 07624800101



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 Not to scale

Land use & function

The park will be managed to conserve and enhance its overall character. The key views and vistas to, from, and within the space will be protected and where appropriate, strengthened.

The site is predominantly a sports park and a play park, with appropriate provision of quality facilities and activities.

The visual character of the park is dependent upon the quality and nature of the views that are characterised by four main zones typified within the park.

- Sports activity zone
- Play zones
- Picnic zone
- Nature zones

Heritage Value & Significance

Lionmede Recreation Ground covers an area of 1.94 hectares and was acquired by the Local Authority in 1928.

Today's Park facilities include:

- Home of Lionmede Bowls Club
- Bowls pavilion and green
- Car parking (Springfield Road)
- Children's play area

Sports Clubs in residence: -

Lionmede Bowls Club www.lionmedebowlsclub.co.uk

In 2004 the club celebrated its 50th anniversary and a small booklet was produced about the history of the club. Here is the story.

Following informal discussions between Alderman Holder, Deputy Lieutenant of Essex, his son John, Alderman Wright, Councilor Goodwin, Irving Hyslop and friends, a public meeting was convened for Sunday 11 October 1953 in the pavilion at Lionmede Park.

In the presence of 20 prospective members the meeting resolved to form Lionmede Bowls Club, with a membership fee of 7/6d, to play on the 3 rink green in the park. Of those attending 12 immediately signed and the appointed Secretary was requested to arrange fixtures. Within 2 weeks the inaugural membership became 27 and by June 1954 this had increased to 44. As with other bowls clubs at the time membership was men's only

Some of the founding members were Ken Lewis, Arthur Rolfe, Stan Hoy (joined May 1954) who was the first club champion and Bernard Webb.

As few members had a car, coaches were used for away fixtures at Colchester, Dunmow, Ongar and Southminster.

Some Milestones in the Club's history:-

1955 Council give permission for teas to be served in pavilion and club purchases tea urn and crockery.

1956 Founder member Councilor Phil Goodwin dies. He had been instrumental in having a 3 rink bowling green laid in the park and a memorial clock was erected by the council on the gable end of the pavilion.

1957 Club Badge designed

1958 Club enters a team in C&D league. Honors board presented to club by members of Springfield B.C. in memory of their president Percy Gray (Gray & Sons Brewery). The club had played on Percy's lawn in Springfield Road until his death and several members belonged to both clubs

1959 Flag pole erected with its position taking account of the proposed extension of the green.

1960 Green extended to six rinks. The council require two rinks to be left for public use.

1960 Club finals played in white for first time

1961 Friendlies played in whites for first time

1964 B team entered in C&D Division 2

1966 New pavilion investigated. Council advise covenants prevent one in the park but if club purchase adjacent land access would be granted.

1968 Council grant a license for new pavilion at club cost

1969 Preliminary plans obtained from architect to extend existing pavilion towards entrance gate. Council Parks and Recreation Committee approve the scheme and invite formal planning application. members pledge interest free loans to cover approximately 60% of the minimum build cost.

C&D Finals played at Lionmede

Visitor experience

The Park is advertised on the City Councils Website. Pictorial signage is found at the two main site entrances announcing the site and what it has to offer the visitor. Those arriving by car will find adequate parking. The majority of people using the park arrive by foot from the surrounding areas. Public transport allows people to travel to and from the site into the City Centre.

The park bowls club promote club activities to the public through posters and banners advising of upcoming events.

Visitors will find a small oasis within the City's were they can enjoy both passive and active leisure pursuits. The site is managed to ensure equal access to all and in recent years has benefited in the addition of new horticultural features and seating allowing the visitor to relax and unwind in whatever season they choose to use the park.

Getting to the park

(1) By foot

The access points for the park are marked on the location drawings.

(2) By road

The site is bordered by both Springfield Road and by Sandford Road

(3) By private transport

The site has two car parking areas providing parking for up to 30 cars.

(4) By public transport

Buses

The park is on two main bus routes

(5) Trains

The park is some 1.5km/1 mile from Chelmsford Station



Section 2: Healthy Safe and Secure

Health and Safety Obligations

Corporate Health and Safety Policy

Health and Safety Policy as it applies to Lionmede Recreation Ground emanates from Chelmsford City Council's general policies. Site specific safety issues are covered by Health and Safety documentation compiled by Grounds Management Services.

Chelmsford City Council Corporate Health and Safety Policy commit the Council to ensuring that it carries out its undertakings in such a way that it is not harmful to the health and safety of its employees, contractors, or the members of the public.

The Corporate policy gives an umbrella framework for identification and assessment of health and safety issues and procedures to minimise risk. This policy and the accompanying health and safety plan are subject to regular review.

The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for all core health, safety and welfare policies and procedures. All Service Directors are responsible for producing policy regarding the Health, Safety and Welfare in their Groups, along with the implementation of a 'Code of Safe Working Practices', i.e. arrangements for the provision of safe systems of work, safe places of work, environmental control, hazard reporting, risk assessment, first aid and emergency procedures. Workplace hazards are identified and risks assessed in accordance with the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992; risk assessments and safe working procedures are reviewed annually.

Emphasis is placed on individual responsibility for personal safety and the safety of others affected by what they do or fail to do. Employees also have a statutory duty to report hazards.

All contractors and suppliers of goods and services are to comply with current statutory and corporate health and safety standards and requirements.

The Corporate Health and Safety Plan sets out performance standards, targets and goals (including those for training) and responsibilities. Its purpose is defined as:

- To set out the standard of health and safety management
- To identify the health and safety training needs of its workforce
- To control the risks to the Council's assets
- To ensure the control of contractors
- To safeguard the health and safety of the public

Parks Services Group policy: Health, Safety and Welfare. This is a specific document held in a suite of policies relating to specific Directorates.

The Group policy includes information on the following topics.

- Parks Services Child Protection Guidelines
- Manual Staff Health and Safety Guidance and instruction
- Health and Safety statements incorporated into the grounds maintenance operations
- Grounds Management Services Health and Safety Handbook
- Health and Safety Training
- Health and Safety File
- The Risk Assessment File
- Accidents
- Contractors working in parks premises for events
- Safety of play equipment and sports facilities

Staff training, learning and development

Staff training, learning and development is an investment Chelmsford City Council takes very seriously. Core training revolves around health & safety, IT and the operation of machinery and equipment.

Health and Safety Training all employees receive a standard Health and Safety induction as well as manual handling training. Safety training is provided for users of specialist equipment. e.g. chainsaws, mowers, strimmers, spray equipment etc. All but specialist training is undertaken in house.

As part of the policy a separate Health and Safety file is produced for the Parks staff, and a Risk Assessment File is produced for each contract site. All employees receive a personal copy of the Employee Safety Guide that details Council policy.

All staff who work with children are Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checked and each employee is informed of the **Parks Services Child Protection Guidelines** and are provided with their own individual copy of the guidelines.

The document is intended as a guide for all employees (including volunteers) of Chelmsford City Council's Parks Services. It introduces the concept of child abuse in all its forms and gives good practice guidelines through which to provide a safe environment for children at council facilities. The booklet is distributed in conjunction with training provided at child protection awareness sessions that deal with the policy and procedures necessary if an incident arises.

Safety orientated objectives

A Parks Safety Handbook has been produced in a format allowing the document to be updated as the need arises. The policy document received a ROSPA Level 1 Award.

The handbook contains all the relevant health and safety information for staff and volunteers. It sets out health and safety procedures, organisation, arrangements and safe working practices. It identifies the need for key staff to undertake: site audits/inspections, risk assessments for hazardous activities, COSHH assessments for hazardous substances, First Aid checks, Accident/Incident Reports and training.

The service has a good safety record and the handbook is aimed at maintaining this, through ensuring compliance with the law, and by looking after the people who work with the service and are temporarily in their care through use of Council facilities.

The 'Handbook' includes a generic risk assessment for all parks and recreational functions and activities. This covers: general activities, the use of power tools and machinery, hand tools, COSHH substances, vehicles and plant. Also covered are tree felling, scrub cutting & hedge laying, managing & running events and activities, management of buildings, employment of contractors and commissioning work and the management of playgrounds.

Parks management treat Health, Safety and looking after the environment equally with other management issues, and always operate within the law, acting in a safe, responsible and environmentally conscious manner and taking account of special risks to our customers; the public, children the elderly and disabled groups.

The Health and Safety policy document details the strategies covering a number of areas, including, for example, accident procedures, Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH), buried services detection, Construction Design and Management (CDM) Regulations 1994, electrical equipment, fire and emergency procedures, first aid, gases, refecton control, manual handling, noise, personal protective equipment (PPE), Reporting of Injuries Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR), safety management, risk assessments and safety audits, training.

All principal activities and products used are assessed for risk and collated centrally by the Health and Safety representative. Risk assessment methods are used to set priorities and objectives for hazard elimination and thus risk reduction. Proactive management of the Health & Safety Policy is achieved by encouraging participation and ownership of health and safety at all levels.

Local responsibility for Health and Safety lies with those staff nominated and recorded in the handbook. Details of these are recorded in the Health and Safety policy. Each manned location has an appointed Safety Representative. Health and Safety Committees that have equal representation of both management and employees exist at each level of the organisation and meet quarterly. Health & Safety forms part of the agenda on Parks Meetings, chaired fortnightly by the Director of Service.

Monitoring of policy is undertaken through systematic reviews of performance based on data from both monitoring activities and independent audits. The information produced is then used to revise the safety policy, implementation methods and techniques of risk control. A regular review of policy is undertaken annually in accordance with legislation, changes in circumstances or services.

Site safety initiatives

To ensure visitors to parks feel safe and secure built into every park management plan are the 'secured by design' principles.

- Natural surveillance, transparency and views in and out of the park are maintained.
- Responsible dog ownership is enforced
- Hiding places and blind spots are minimised.
- Planting does not crowd footpaths.
- Shrubs and hedges are maintained below eye level where practical.
- Lighting is maintained to prevent dark spots.
- Responsible dog walkers are encouraged as they offer natural surveillance in early mornings and in the evenings.
- Fear of crime is reduced.
- Anti-social behaviour is eliminated.
- Contact with Essex Constabulary and Safer Neighbourhood Teams is maintained.

Health & Safety obligations

Grounds Management Services are fully compliant with all aspects of the Health & Safety legislation. Management keep various files on the subject to ensure compliance and to encourage good working practices.

The Health and Safety File includes:

- The Safety Bulletin Register- internal memos on safety related issues.
- The Risk Assessment Register- assessment of TASK (under the Management of Health and Safety at Work regulations), e.g. grass cutting, use of hand tools and other parks equipment, etc
- The COSHH assessment register -assessment of SUBSTANCE used (under the Control of Substances (Hazardous to Health) Regulations), e.g. weed killer, fertiliser, cleaning products etc.
- The Safe Working Practice Register -assessment of Application, i.e. equipment pre-use checks, starting and operating procedures, repairs and adjustments etc.
- Statutory Test Certificates
- Depot audits
- Accident reports



The Risk Assessment File includes:

- Generic risk assessments, e.g. grass maintenance, tree pruning,
- Site specific risk assessments, e.g., water, traffic, sharps/needles.
- Relevant Codes of Practice, e.g. grass cutting on steep banks
- Sample Immunisation sheet
- Leptospirosis card

Use of tools and machinery

The Health and Safety implications for the maintenance of tools and machinery are taken very seriously. All tools and machinery are inspected and maintained according to manufacturers guidelines. Machinery is serviced mid-season and a further full service takes place during the winter months.

Training for the safe use of tools and machinery

All staff are properly trained in the use of specific equipment and attend courses at appropriate training centres, particularly Writtle University. Refresher courses are also utilized when necessary. When new equipment is purchased, manufacturers are required to give training demonstrations to operatives.

Maintenance of Equipment/machinery

All plant is maintained by our workshop staff and every item of machinery or equipment that goes into the workshop receives a service record. These records are kept electronically.

Portable Appliance testing is undertaken by an external company.

PAT testing and portable appliance testing

Any item of electrical equipment over 12 months old is tested on an annual basis as required by the regulations.

Use of chemicals/COSHH Assessments

The following general precautions are followed, in conjunction with those detailed in the individual COSHH assessment sheets:

- Follow safe working practices, avoiding skin and eye contact with chemicals and avoiding breathing fumes, vapours or dusts
- Read and follow all instructions, safety precautions and emergency procedures detailed on the containers and in the assessment sheets
- Wear all PPE as recommended in the assessments

- Do not smoke, drink or consume food whilst using, or in the vicinity of, the products listed in the assessment
- Observe good hygiene -thoroughly wash all parts of the body and remove any clothing which may be contaminated with chemicals before eating, drinking or smoking
- Follow all relevant codes of practice when using pesticides
- Keep all chemicals sealed in their original, labelled containers and store in a secure place: when not actually in use, dispose of used containers in a safe and proper manner
- Clean all application equipment after use

Accident recording

Accident records for the Park are kept by Parks Services who have an appointed person to manage first aid on site to cover fixtures 7 days per week. Standard CCC accident forms are completed wherever possible.

Parks Service procedures. Grounds Management Services are required to fill out standard accident forms for each incident whether involving staff or members of the public. These are passed to the teams Line Manager and to the Health and Safety Advisor in Personnel Services. They also keep their own First Aid / Accident book in which details of incidents are recorded.

The Parks & Green Spaces Manager is required to report immediately any incidents involving health and safety to the Council's Safety Advisor.

All accidents must be reported to the relevant manager and entered into the Accident book. An accident/incident report form must also be completed. A weekly summary of accidents is sent to the Health and Safety Advisor for monitoring purposes.

If, following an accident at work, an employee is unable to perform normal duties for more than 3 days, the HSE area office must be notified using the RIDDOR form F2508 and the Health and Safety Advisor informed.

A 'First Aid and Accident Reporting Safety Code' is issued to all Grounds Management staff.

Safe Equipment and Facilities

The equipment and facilities provided on site are safe to use. Each item of equipment is issued with an identification code and records are kept as to the date issued and the servicing requirements needed. Staff are instructed on the correct way to use equipment. Staff report and defects directly to the Grounds Maintenance Operations Manager.

The built facilities are maintained by Building Services and are checked for defects on a regular basis. The sporting clubs operating from the site also monitor premises they use and there is a reporting system they can use which provides additional feedback.

The play equipment on site is inspected regularly as part of the grounds maintenance operation when routine duties such as litter picking is taking place. Additionally, the City Council employ play inspectors who have a schedule of inspections to undertake and record to ensure defects are picked up quickly and are attended to.

Personal Security

Personal security is paramount and staff are easily identifiable by their uniforms and identification badges.

Park users need to feel safe whilst in the park and to that effect the Service have a regular team maintaining this site along with the nearby Lionmede Park.

High standards of upkeep and cleanliness, and the presence of permanent park staff and sports club members, are contributory factors to the creation of a sense of security. In addition to ground staff on site there is a frequent presence of members of the bowls club.

All staff working within the park wear a uniform carrying the Parks Services logo.

Parks staff are able to report anti-social behaviour to the local Police, and pass on any relevant details e.g. a person's description and car registration numbers.

Details of how to contact Parks & Green Spaces in an emergency are displayed at all park entrances. (Park Watch and service telephone numbers being displayed).

Park & Green Spaces operates a lost property procedure, including items found or lost in the park.

Strong links have been forged with the Community Police and Traffic police who visit the park frequently, both Police Officers and Police Community Support Officers – PCSO's.

We operate a secure by design principle and look to keep sight lines clear where possible. Additionally, if the public have any concerns there is a 24hr Parkwatch system in operation and notices are displayed within the park giving members of the public details of a contact number to be rung if a problem does arise.

ParkWatch Report Line

As with all the Council's parks the recreation ground is covered by the ParkWatch Scheme. ParkWatch is an initiative run by the City Council with Police support and operates 24 hours/day for all parks. People can talk direct to the duty officer or send a text to the phone number. Each call is logged, with the information/contact details remaining confidential. The service is aimed at reducing vandalism and anti-social behaviour in any Park or Public Open Space owned by Chelmsford City Council.

Calls may relate to security, vandalism, fire, misuse of council property, traveler encroachment, weather related damage, defective or unsafe play equipment in CCC managed areas or persons locked in CCC parks after gates have been closed.

Calls relating to illicit or inappropriate behavior, serious offences or acts of violence should be directed to the police in the first instance.

The contact number for ParkWatch is 07831 189918

For all other general queries notices advise contact with the Park's Central Depot at Waterhouse Lane Depot on 01245 605566 during normal office hours.

The findings of visitor surveys suggest that the City Council area is perceived as a safe place to live and visit.

The Council's Safeguarding Officer meets regularly with Essex Police and other local authorities, health specialists, emergency services and various voluntary and statutory organisations to pool information and to problem solve.

Control of Dogs and Dog Fouling

Dog walkers are welcome in the parks providing they act in a responsible manner by keeping their animals under control and that they clean up in the proper manner. Dog walkers are not permitted to take their dogs into the play area or onto the sports facilities.

Since the introduction of Clean Neighbourhoods & Environment Act 2005 it has become an offence not to clean up after a dog if it has fouled on footpaths, bridle paths, parks, grass verges or amenity areas. The provisions of the act are enforced by the Council and breaches may be subject to a fixed penalty ticket or prosecution for failure to pay.

Dog-bins are located throughout the park to encourage owners to clean up after their dogs. They are emptied on a regular basis. In an instance where a member of the public wishes to report an overflowing dog bin they can telephone 01245 615800.

Refuse and Recycling are responsible for emptying and cleaning the bins on a weekly basis. The park staff can request more frequent servicing as and when necessary. The bins are inspected daily by park staff.

Dog fouling is not seen as a major problem as dog owners who use the site generally do so responsibly, recognising that the area is first and foremost dedicated to sports use.

Chelmsford's Dog Wardens aim to respond to reports of stray dogs within one hour.

Various information leaflets are available at the Environmental Services reception, obtained through various external agencies i.e. RSPCA, Dog Trust.

Chelmsford Dog Wardens regularly liaise over the installation of dog bins in public places and erect signage informing the public of the current legislation.

Failure to clear up after your dog in a public place or an area designated by the council is an offence and could lead to a £50.00 fixed penalty being issued by the Dog Warden, or even court prosecution.

Dog Wardens are fully trained for the Micro Chipping of dogs, and offer this service to the public at a small cost. Other services are also available and wardens are happy to act in an advisory capacity to talk to schools and interested groups.

Control of drug use

Incidents of drug abuse in the recreation ground are low with very few needles being found within the Park. Currently the Park staff responds to disposal of needles using equipment supplied by NEEDAS.

Appropriate Provision of Quality Facilities and Activities

The offers on site are appropriate to the community the site serves. The 2016 Open Space Survey findings indicated across the City there was a shortfall in wildlife areas and teenage facilities. Over the course of this plan attention will be given to upgrading play equipment ensuring there is provision on site for older children. Fitness equipment is under consideration. We will also seek to improve the setting by further additions to the horticultural areas paying attention to the choice of material to attract wildlife.

Management of park events ensuring public safety

The following health and safety procedures are in place regarding Events held at Lionmede Recreation Ground. Events are arranged through Parks & Heritage Services, where officers are responsible for monitoring Health and Safety requirements of an event.

Special event organisers and helpers are required to:

- Submit to the Council a completed application form detailing the proposed event
- Comply with the conditions in the Schedule of Conditions for Special Events' form issued to all Applicants
- Have public liability insurance cover of at least £5 million and provide a copy of the policy document at least one month before the date of the event
- Submit to the Council copies of all licenses, together with event programme and the event layout plan
- Submit to the Council a written risk assessment for the event if required

All schools events and activities have to be booked. The schools are sent a pre-visit guidance note that ensures adequate adult/child supervision ratios, explains staff responsibilities and clothing requirements.

The Parks Service has a screening policy concerning staff involved in leading activities for children.

Qualified first aiders are available at staged events and carry first aid kits at all times during those events. The St John's Ambulance Service attends larger events.

Section 3: Well Maintained and Clean

Service Standards: Clean and Well Maintained

This section outlines both management objectives and operational arrangements set in place to ensure visitors experience a high level of satisfaction in Service and in the facilities provided.

Management objectives

The core objectives of Parks & Green Spaces can be described in broad terms as helping to make Chelmsford City an attractive and enjoyable place in which to live, work and visit, by;

Developing, supporting and enabling a wide range of sporting, recreational, cultural, social, educational and tourism opportunities which enhance the quality of life, promote healthy, active lifestyles for people within the City Council area and, by stimulating attraction for visitors and by helping to create a positive business environment, bring jobs and investment to the local economy.

Managing Chelmsford's rich and diverse landscapes, parks and green spaces and promoting policies and activities that enhance and protect Chelmsford's built and natural features plus the surrounding countryside and unique heritage.

General Objectives

- Maintain the quality, appearance and facilities at Lionmede Recreation Ground to provide a safe and attractive environment for visitors.
- Maintain structures in a safe, clean condition at all times.
- Maintain sports facilities in a sustainable manner.
- Maintain equipment to a high standard
- Monitor plant establishment and replace plantings as necessary to maintain amenity and ecological objectives.

Litter and Waste Management

Grounds Management Services are responsible for all litter/rubbish collection and general cleansing in the park. Under the current specification they are bound to collect and clear litter the same day as it is generated and remove off site to their tip (or alternatively to a litter collection point), 7 days a week, and within 3 hours of the clients written instruction. Category A litter, i.e. that greater than 100mm in any direction on any area of amenity or fine grass, is removed within 24 hours. Litter on any other area (Category B) is removed once a day. All permanent litterbins are emptied regularly in accordance with the Standards specified.

Standard	Frequency of Emptying	Period
A	Once a day	Summer (Easter to August) Bank Holiday Remainder of year - except Winter Bank Holidays
B	Once a day	Except Winter Bank Holidays
C	Once a day	Summer
	Twice a week	Winter
D	Once a week	Winter

Litter is an item on the daily inspection schedule.

The dog wardens employed by Operational Services are empowered to issue fixed penalty notices to anyone dropping litter in the park. The wardens patrol the Council's parks on a regular basis targeting known hot spots.

Horticultural Maintenance

Maintenance Regimes – Lionmede Recreation Ground is managed by Chelmsford City Council (CCC) Parks Services. Specifically it is the responsibility of the Parks & Green Spaces Manager, who is supported by the Parks Management Team. This team is responsible for the day-to-day management of the Park including all aspects of customer services within the park, to visitor information and welfare, public relations, marketing, promotion, and special event planning.

The Grounds Management Service undertakes grounds maintenance work under the terms laid down in the works specification.

Grounds Management Services employ 70 staff who are trained to the appropriate horticultural skills levels. Staff are encouraged to partake in internal and external training to gain recognised qualifications.

The Grounds staff who undertake works in the park have the necessary skills set to undertake a range of horticultural work.

The work includes:

- All grass maintenance (mowing, feeding, spiking)
- Sports ground maintenance
- Planting and maintenance of young trees (to establishment), shrub beds, herbaceous borders, Spring and Summer bedding
- Litter clearance
- Road & Path Sweeping

- Leaf clearance
- Daily play area inspections (daily tick sheets, reported weekly)
- Salting/gritting and special duties in icy weather
- Landscape works (to instruction)
- Assistance at specific events

Grounds Maintenance Standards and obligations

The Grounds Management Service undertakes grounds maintenance. The specification is based on performance level requirements. It is wide ranging and embraces the comprehensive and continuous routine maintenance of all soft landscape areas (grass, seasonal and permanent planting beds, trees, hedges), grass sports pitches, tennis courts and hard landscape including furniture, litter collection and cleaning duties, and locking/unlocking duties. The performance level requirements are borne out of the departure from CCT contracts and Parks reorganisation.

The Grounds Maintenance standard controls the standards of health and safety management expected of Grounds Management Services. Grounds Management Services are bound to adopt safe systems of work, to ensure that all health, safety and welfare measures required by enactments and/or regulations are strictly complied with, and ensure that all employees observe all the provisions to ensure health and safety at work.

Grounds Management Services maintain copies of all risk assessments and produce method statements on elimination/control of said risks. Health & Safety issues are an agenda item at the fortnightly Parks meetings held between the Head of Service and Senior Managers.

The relevant clauses within the document are listed under the following headings.

- Performance of Service
- Standards of Service
- Contractors staff
- Health and Safety
- Part One Health and Safety Statement, Part Two Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 Certificate of Safety Policy
- Safety, Health and Welfare Measures

Health and Safety clauses are contained within the contract preambles covering the general items listed below:

- Statutory Obligations
- Traffic and Pedestrian Safety Management
- Noise control
- Storage -Special Provisions

- Fires
- Access to the Public
- Protection of Existing Structures, Surfaces and Vegetation
- Damage Arising
- Methods, Materials, Machinery, Vehicles and Mechanical Plant
- Vehicles
- Notification
- Inspection Procedures and Contract Monitoring
- Pesticides and Fertilisers: (legislation), (practice/ guidance notes), (storage and transportation; client/contractor liaison and notification), (operative certification), (application/contamination), (machinery and equipment), (disposal), (cleaning of equipment).

The daily inspection of the park by the on-site parks staff incorporates an element of general health and safety review. Damage and faults are recorded and remedial work actioned. The public can report faults to Park Services by contact numbers advertised in the Park. The health and safety of visitors is reviewed via the inspection regime in operation in the Park.

Generally, in accordance with principles of the Council's Our Chelmsford Our Plan the use of herbicides and pesticides are kept to a minimum. Contractors use only those herbicides pesticides or cleaning agents, which are approved for use and as specified in the contract.

All buildings within the park are subject to an annual Building Safety Audit undertaken by Building Services This audit covers building maintenance, security as well as general safety, fire safety, legionella and mobility access.

Staff, both grounds maintenance staff and caretakers can offer assistance to members of the public and can summon emergency services as necessary. There is always an appointed person on site to manage first aid as appropriate whilst fixtures are being played.

The park play areas are subject to daily safety inspections by park staff and routinely scheduled inspections by the play staff. Annually an independent inspection is undertaken by a qualified insurance engineer.

The Parks Service employs two playground inspectors who are RPII qualified to the Operational Inspection level. The inspectors undertake an inspection of each play area once every 2 weeks and report the faults to the maintenance team for repair. All data collected is held on a spread sheet as an official record of defects/repairs. Linked to the database is a maintenance schedule that maps out routine maintenance operations to be carried out.



The landscape elements within the Park have been categorised as follows:

Landscape Type	Work Clause in Grounds Maintenance Specification	Minimum expected frequency of operations/year. (Guide only performance specification)
Grass		
Amenity	1.7	Min. 14 cuts
Fine		Min. 25 cuts
Natural		Min. 1 cuts
Sports turf		As per type
Shrub Beds	1.8	Min. 7 visits
Herbaceous Border	1.8	Min. 9 visits
Paving	11.4	Min 15 occasions
Miscellaneous Detail		
Hedges	11.11	Min 2 Occasions
Trees	1.9	Min 3 Occasions
Native species plantation		Min 9 visits
Site furniture	11.1	Min 10 Occasions
		Min 2 Occasions
Landscape Features	11.1	April-Sept. min 2 visits
		Oct-March min. 1visit

The specifics of each landscape type is further defined in the work schedules and related where relevant to work identification sheets that summarises specific operations, the details of which are contained within the specification.

Arboricultural Maintenance

Under the Occupiers Liability Act 1957 (1997) The Council has a duty of care to ensure wherever reasonable the trees under its management do not cause a threat to people or property. The Council fulfils this duty through regular inspection of the tree stock.

The Council only employs suitably qualified and experienced staff under its care.

The Arboricultural and Conservation officer is responsible for the Council's tree stock and issues instructions to private tree surgeons for any works required, be it tree maintenance works or safety work within the park.

The trees in the park are inspected on a regular basis by the Arboricultural and Conservation Officer. It is important that the trees are maintained in a safe condition and any safety works required are highlighted by inspection and dealt with effectively/efficiently.

Park staff undertake weekly visual inspections of trees and record any defects on the general site inspection sheets in turn information from these sheets is relayed to the Arboricultural and Conservation officer as is deemed appropriate.

The majority of the trees date from the post Second World War period and currently we are determining suitable species to plant to create some succession with the tree stock on the site.

All mature trees are plotted on the tree management data base. New plantings are selected in the main from native genera appropriate for the park setting.

Management of tree stock in parks in relation to the visiting public

The Parks Service will:

1. Carry out essential safety works to ensure that trees on the site do not pose an unreasonable threat to park users and others
2. Leave dead wood in natural state as possible were it is practicable to do so.
3. Where arboriculture operations must take place, take care with regard to the surrounding flora and fauna, and take into account all existing legislation and recommendations relating to their care.
4. Ensure that risk assessments carried out by the appointed contractor prior to undertaking tree work operations take account of protecting existing habitats and flora.

Building and Infrastructure Maintenance

The majority of buildings within Lionmede Park are subject to annual safety audit reports undertaken by Facilities Management. As well as assessing risk, key issues are identified and scores given within the following categories: security, general safety, fire safety, access, and legionella. A list of regular inspection and preventative maintenance is also provided. Any actions necessary are prioritised and acted on accordingly.

Building Maintenance

The maintenance of the park's ancillary buildings is undertaken by contractors employed by Facilities Management's Building Maintenance section who are responsible for the maintenance of the hard landscape areas of the park, services and all buildings maintenance.

The Building Maintenance team carry out regular inspections of the facilities and prepares an annual planned preventative maintenance report to enable an effectively costed planned maintenance regime to be in place. Work recorded on the database generates a monthly instruction for routine maintenance tasks for hard works/infrastructure, including surface inspections.

Funding comes from Central Government and Council tax receipts. Income is derived from sports bookings, and some public open space hires.

A Repair and Renewals Provision account is in operation. This covers works such as re-roofing, refurbishment of gates/railings/walls/fencing, resurfacing paths, refurbishment of toilets etc. Annual contributions are made from the service revenue account in order to build sufficient funds for later use. This enables asset managers to plan for future work rather than to bid for funds as part of the annual budget process for the year in which the work is to be carried out, and provides certainty that the monies will be available when required. Schemes are reviewed on a regular basis to enable annual contributions to be adjusted to ensure costs of the work are covered. The rules governing the use of the Provision are that work is to be on a cycle of no less than 3 years and at a cost of no less than £5,000.00. Its use is at the discretion of the Service Manager.

A Repair and Maintenance Budget is also in operation. This is for minor items such as repairing vandal damage, and general maintenance items not covered by other provision. The Park team draw on this budget in order to action repair of faults/damage found on their daily inspection of the Park.

An independent D.D.A. Audit has been undertaken and certain works have been determined as

being required as a result of that audit. Phased works to comply with the recommendations have been scheduled.

Inspections and monitoring

All services carried out are subject to regular quality inspections by the Parks Quality Performance Officer. Table 1 illustrates the current inspection regime in operation in the Park. Copies of all inspection sheets are attached at Appendices, including the daily inspection sheet.

Table 1 Park Inspection regime

	Play Area	Buildings/ Structures	Litter	Dog Bins
CCC Parks Management staff	*	*	*	*
Grounds Maintenance Services	*	*	*	
GMC – Quality and Performance Officer	*	*	*	*
Playground Inspector and Maintenance Contractors	*			
CCC Operational Services				*
CCC Architectural Design		*		

Grounds

Area supervisors inspect their sites on a weekly basis. Park staff inspect the grounds daily. Grounds Management Services are responsible for monitoring their own performance and keeping up to date records of their own monitoring and Inspections, which includes work records relating to their maintenance and work programmes. Routine contract performance meetings are held on a weekly basis where issues relating to work programmes, quality, performance, health and safety, staffing levels and additional work are discussed.

Buildings

The inspection regime is undertaken by the Parks team and consists of daily visual inspections. Any defects are reported to building maintenance inspectors who implement necessary repairs within set performance agreements.

Building Services undertake formal inspections of facilities and features at the intervals recorded in the boxes below. The and/or options relate to inspections that are sometimes increased due to seasonal activities.

Building maintenance inspections	6 monthly
Security inspections	Daily and/or bi-monthly
Safety inspections	Monthly and/ or 6 monthly
Hygiene patrol	Daily – summer/ school holidays weekends – all year

Table 2 Park Building Inspection regime

	Staff Welfare Building	Public Changing facilities
Risk assessment	Yearly	Yearly
Building maintenance	6 monthly	6 monthly
Security	2 monthly	2 monthly
General safety	6 monthly	6 monthly
Fire safety	monthly	monthly
Mobility access	4 monthly	4 monthly
Legionella	Annually	Annually
DDA - monitoring	Annually	Annually

Play area

The play areas on site are inspected daily by the Grounds Maintenance staff and any defects are recorded on inspection forms and passed to the Quality & Performance Officer who logs the defect and deals with and actions any repairs.

Inspections by the playground inspector are on each weekday (excluding Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, Boxing Day, New Years Eve, New Years Day). The Park staff inspects the areas as part of their daily duties. An external consultant undertakes an annual safety audit of the play equipment.

In addition the play sites at the Park have an insurance engineer inspection carried out annually; the Council’s insurers arrange their own independent inspection.

Equipment Maintenance

Accident and Vandalism reporting at Lionmede Recreation Ground

Accidents occurring on site are reported by either site staff or members of the public. Full details are recorded centrally.



Control of Vandalism

The national trend of rising anti-social behaviour affects all parks, including Liommede Recreation Ground.

Park policy on vandalism has evolved in accordance with Our Chelmsford Our Plan; the Council's objective being to achieve sustainable crime and disorder reduction by identifying and tackling the causes of crime within the Borough.

Chelmsford City Council has a very efficient Community Safety Strategy and Annual Action Plan. We have also successfully gained a Charter Mark for the service.

The current approach consists of:

- On site presence of staff during the working day
- Security patrols
- Public co-operation through Parkwatch
- Regular liaison with local police.
- Daily inspections seeking to stop damage through actual intervention, education, and as a visual deterrence.
- Banning individuals and groups from the Park for criminal damage
- All new park furniture is assessed for vandal-resistance before purchase
- Spares kept on site for a range of potentially vulnerable features, i.e. benches, locks, bins, signs, etc., for quick replacement
- Toilets are fitted with anti-vandal features
- Graffiti is removed as soon as possible. Site staff are supplied with graffiti wipes. Major problems are referred to a specialist company.
- Where sustained vandalism occurs, extra engineering solutions are used.
- The daily checklist ensures swift identification of damaged features which are dealt with on a rolling list of maintenance repairs

Vandalism and other criminal damage is noted daily through the inspection regime and by staff working on site. The Parks staff are required to report any theft, vandalism or other damage caused to any plant, horticultural feature or location immediately to the Grounds Maintenance Operations Manager. Reinstatement works are carried out under instruction. All incidents reported on the Park Watch telephone number are recorded by the duty officer and a report is forwarded to the Police as and when the situation dictates.

Graffiti is reported immediately to the Grounds Maintenance Operations Manager the parks staff and once an instruction for removal is issued it is dealt with immediately in accordance with the specification. In areas known to be graffiti hot spots a programme of removal and surface treatments are put in place to deter repetitions of damage.

Section 4: Environmental Management

Managing Environmental Impact

Promoting Sustainable Management and Awareness

Parks & Green Spaces will strive for the highest standards of environmentally sustainable management throughout parks and green spaces and will support wider sustainability objectives and agendas, including maintaining urban quality of life.

This management plan and grounds maintenance specifications referred to herein reflect the Council's policies listed in the section entitled Strategic & Policy Framework. The policies, strategies and specifications listed are important as they empower decision making, and are a real aid when securing adequate budgets – ensuring council policy is implemented.

Parks, Green Spaces and Waterways Strategy

The policy undertakes the protection, creation and the effective management of a network of high quality green spaces and associated waterways serving all people who choose to live, work or visit Chelmsford and the surrounding areas.

Environmental awareness education

The key to success in this area rests with increasing awareness of environmental responsibilities among staff and facility users. Chelmsford City Council aims to reduce its costs wherever possible including related costs of energy, water, other natural resources, and waste.

Any initiative in this sphere has both political and corporate support. Monitoring energy use and carbon dioxide emissions is actively encouraged. Indeed the organisation is bound by targets set in the Local Area Agreement.

The Service compiles and analyses data available relating to the consumption of consumables.

Examples of sustainability indicators available to us are listed below with an example of a typical unit of measure included in [brackets]

- Water consumption/footprint [cu.m]
- Fertiliser usage [kg]
- Bulky top-dressing usage [kg/tonne]
- Pesticide usage [kg a.i.]
- Carbon footprint [kg/tonne CO2]



- Fuel – petrol/diesel- consumption [gallons/litres]
- Gas consumption [KWh]
- Electric consumption [KWh]
- Waste generation [Kg/tonne of total waste]
- Recycled/reused waste [Kg/tonne of total waste]
- Machinery use [hours of use and/or miles/km]
- Machinery noise pollution complaints [reported occurrences]

Sustainable Procurement

The management plan and grounds maintenance specifications reflect the Council's policies listed in the section: Corporate Strategy and Policy/Management. The specifications and strategies listed in section 2 are important as they empower decision making and are a real aid when securing adequate budgets – ensuring council policy is implemented.

Use of materials

In accordance with the principles set out in the Our Chelmsford Our Plan the park employs the following policy on materials.

The avoidance of products containing peat and use of peat-free growing mediums where practicable.

The use of in-house compost where practicable.

The avoidance of using tropical hardwoods where possible; substitution with timber from sustainable forests (FSC certified). Park benches being manufactured from sustainable products.

The avoidance of excessively packaged items, in particular where the packaging components cannot be re-used or recycled (e.g. plastics).

The use of recycled products in preference to non-renewable sources.

Preference is given to local suppliers and locally grown plant stock. Note: at present many bedding plants are supplied as plugs and grown on at the Council's own nurseries; shrubs and trees primarily come from East Anglian suppliers.

Resource Conservation

Vision and strategic approach to sustainable energy use is high on the corporate agenda and covers all the Council Services. The approach to resource conservation includes the management of the Council's estate, its buildings and transport fleet, and its procurement of equipment and services.

Parks & Green Spaces will strive for the highest standards of environmentally sustainable management throughout the parkland and will support the wider sustainability objectives and agendas, including maintaining urban quality of life.

Utility Management: Energy efficiency

The Council's goal is to use less energy, promote use of more renewable energy sources and strive to achieve best energy practices within its operation. A 'turn-off' strategy is in operation within Council buildings whereby lighting, heating and machinery are turned off when not in use. This applies to the buildings at Lionmede Park. Low energy appliances are used where possible. Energy efficiency is considered in purchase of new machinery.

Utility Management: Water and drainage

The use of water for irrigation will be kept to the minimum possible within the constraints of maintaining high horticultural standards. Whenever possible, SUDS (sustainable urban drainage systems) will be considered in any new built development or hard surfacing. Within existing buildings wash basins and showers are fitted with push button taps and toilets have water wise flushing devices, as do urinals.

The water environment shall be managed to ensure it meets appropriate standards of water clarity and pollution control and contributes to the character and biodiversity of the parkland landscape.

The use of water for irrigation will be kept to the minimum possible within the constraints of maintaining high horticultural standards. Whenever possible, SUDS (sustainable urban drainage systems) will be considered in any new built development or hard surfacing. Within existing buildings wash basins and showers are fitted with push button taps and toilets have water wise flushing devices, as do urinals.

The water environment shall be managed to ensure it meets appropriate standards of water clarity and pollution control and contributes to the character and biodiversity of the parkland landscape.

Park and Green Spaces monitor water bills and water efficiency issues within the park. Leaks in toilet fixtures are noted and/or monitored by parks staff on daily inspection and by the contract cleaners at time of visit. These are dealt with within a 24-hour period, where practicable.

Utility Management: Water management

The grounds maintenance specification covers several water management issues in the Park. These include:

- Spraying equipment to be fitted with guards to prevent spray drift
- The method of application and disposal of surplus pesticides and/or fertilisers does not lead to the pollution of any water course or supply
- Water supply for irrigation etc.
- Use of mulches.
- Watering restricted to early morning, and late in the day within the areas outside of the range of the automatic watering system.

Landscape improvement aims over the 5 years are listed at Section 5.3

Utility Management: Transport. 'The Green Fleet'

The Council's goal is to promote energy transport options, reduce Council's impact on emission through vehicle fleet improvements, and promote the wider use of alternative fuels and hybrid technology vehicles. Grounds Maintenance Services' vehicles run on unleaded petrol or green diesel (low sulphur diesel) (85% vehicles run on green diesel). Fuel usage and mileage are monitored to check fuel efficiency. All plant, machinery and vehicles are subject to regular preventative maintenance and servicing.

The fleet is managed to ensure that vehicles are serviced regularly, when emissions are also checked. Drivers are reminded of ways to reduce fuel consumption – for example, the information produced by the Energy Saving Trust on Ten Tips for safer, Greener, Stress-Free driving was communicated to all staff.

Energy source (gas, petrol, diesel and electric) is considered when purchasing any new item of motorised equipment.

Carbon management programme: – The Council has participated in the Carbon Trust's Local Authority Carbon Management Programme (LACM) and has received technical and change-management support and guidance to help make carbon emission savings.

Pollution reduction measures

The Council's goal is to limit hazard to the community and the environment from pollution sources by identification, assessment and management in an ecologically sustainable manner pollution sources and minimisation of pollution generation.

Storage and pollution minimisation measures for fuels and chemicals within the Park are covered by the Grounds Maintenance Specification and within the Park Services Health and Safety Policy: Control of Substances Hazardous to Health and relevant task risk assessment sheets.

There is a minimal amount of fuel-stored onsite and this is kept in a metal lock-up. Containers are checked for leaks on a regular basis and refuelling machinery is undertaken in accordance with the relevant Park Services risk assessment summaries and safe working practice sheets. There are no chemicals stored onsite.

Bonfires are not permitted within the Park.

Regulations and specification regarding maintenance of equipment and noise control are covered by the Grounds Maintenance specification and within the Park Services Health and Safety Policy at the section covering noise. All machinery used within the Park is relatively new and has noise reduction measures such as mufflers fitted as standard.

Rock salt-free zones to all plants are specified for snow clearance operations. This consists of 300mm clearance to all grass and plantings, and 500mm to trees.

Waste Minimisation

Waste management and recycling

The Council's goals are to minimise waste generation at source, maximise resource recovery through effective re-use and recycling practices, and develop best practice procedures in disposal and handling hazardous substances. Strategies for handling and processing the town's green waste are considered high priority.

In accordance with both the Council's Waste Management Strategy and Our Chelmsford Our Plan, green waste from grounds maintenance operations is treated in the following way:

- Organic matter (clippings, ex-bedding and other green waste) is recycled via composting at a central re-cycling point, with the resultant compost being re-used in maintenance operations.
- Aluminium cans and bottles are sorted offsite and recycled.
- Residual waste to traditional landfill disposal

Recycling green waste

Last year the borough recycled over 3500m³ of green waste from their parks and green spaces. The introduction of a green waste recycling machine at Sandford Mill, has meant that we can shred bedding, leaves, grass cuttings and prunings. Either an organic soil conditioner or mulch is created from the green waste. It takes eight months to a year to develop the soil conditioner and only three to four months to create the mulch. Both are used in Chelmsford's parks and open spaces in areas such as shrub beds, and this recycling initiative is diverting materials that would otherwise have to be sent to landfill.

There are off-site recycling facilities within Park Services.

Energy and recycling

Both onsite and offsite energy consumption and emissions will be minimised to the greatest extent possible through encouraging sustainable forms of transportation within the park, and minimising the need for transport of goods and waste to/from the site, for example through onsite recycling.

Regarding the Our Chelmsford Our Plan: Promoting a more sustainable environment the Council's goals are to minimise waste generation at source, maximise resource recovery through effective re-use and recycling practices, and develop best practice procedures in disposal and handing of hazardous substances. Strategies for handling and processing the town's green waste are considered high priority.

Use of local mulch

During the course of tree surgery work throughout the Council's landholdings, large quantities of wood chippings are produced. Wherever possible this material is used in a park as surface mulch over shrub beds and young tree bases. Where appropriate footpaths through woodland areas in parks are dressed with chippings.



Composting & green waste recycling

There is frequent production of green waste during the normal day-to-day park management operations. All green waste is disposed of into green waste skips. These are deposited at Sandford Mill where the material is shredded and composted for use as a soil improver or mulch material.

Occasionally additional sources of compost are required when ornamental shrub beds or other horticultural features are renewed or renovated.

Recycled materials

Trade waste is collected from the sports clubs operating on the site and facilitates the collection of cardboard, glass and general materials.

Litter bins are emptied by parks staff, with bottles and cans being separated out in the collection process.

Chemical Usage

The use of Pesticides and other chemicals

The Council now uses the SYPOL database for all pesticides and other substances hazardous to health. A Service COSHH assessment has been submitted to SYPOL. There are currently 43 products registered for Public Places. SYPOL use a traffic light system with red being considered hazardous to health. Any that flag up red will be investigated and where possible we will introduce less harmful products. As a direct result of the SYPOL procedure we have started looking at natural products rather than chemical based ones.

Management Guidelines: Use of chemicals

The use of chemicals – insecticides, molluscicides, herbicides, etc. will continue to be kept to the minimum necessary, in compliance with good horticultural standards and requirements for public health and safety. Where possible use will be made of biopesticides.

Fuel, chemicals and other substances are stored in designated areas under the 'Control of Substances Harmful to Health Regulations 1992'. Relevant information relating to COSHH is displayed in the designated work area.

The Council is proactive in its attitude towards the environmental and safety implications of the pesticides it uses. Further studies are undertaken annually to keep this policy updated. The Pest Control review has enabled the chemical use within the Park to be reduced without affecting the quality of the pest-control regime. Further studies are undertaken annually to keep this policy updated.

The current Service Policy on the Use of Pesticides is as follows:

- That any operation that requires the use of a pesticide be carried out only if no alternative method is reasonably practicable.
- That any pesticide, which has carcinogenic, mutagenic or teratogenic properties, should not be applied unless no acceptable alternative substance is available for the task in question.

- That, where a choice of acceptable pesticides is available for a task, the least hazardous substance be selected in every case.
- That all users be advised of the Council's views on the matter and instructed to follow adopted guidelines.
- That any new substance be permitted to be used until evidence is obtained to indicate that it has unacceptable qualities.
- That the list of pesticides currently in use be submitted for re-consideration at intervals determined by the Grounds Maintenance Services Manager.

In accordance with the principles set out in the Our Chelmsford Our Plan the use of herbicides and pesticides within the Park is limited to the absolute minimum. The Rugby pitches and Cricket wickets still receives some chemical input in order to maintain the correct standard of playing surface.

Parks Services follow the COSHH regulations when specifying pesticides. All specifiers are experienced members of staff and liaison with contractors over chemical use are encouraged. The Contractors only use those herbicides; pesticides or cleaning agents specified in the contract and these are all subject to COSHH risk assessments.

Under the terms of the grounds maintenance specification, pest and disease control is not carried out as a routine operation. An instruction is required for any pesticide application and only used when a pest or disease infestation exceeds the maximum acceptable percentage specified. The use, application, storage and disposal of pesticides and fertilisers are covered by the Grounds Maintenance specification and to the 'Code of Practice' reproduced in the Health and Safety Policy Section Control of substances hazardous to health.

Parks Services undertake training in the use of chemicals. In-house training is geared to the yearly assessment of the current needs and contract requirements and areas where training may be lacking. Grounds Services operate a dedicated team servicing all areas. One person is also trained in first aid. Team members are trained to PA1/PA6 level.

Peat Use

Parks & Green Spaces seek to avoid purchasing any products containing peat and have been successful in reducing dependency on its use. Peat is no longer used in the top dressings, mulching products or in soil improvers used by the City Council.

Peat free products are being trialled for use in our bedding plant production. It is accepted that container grown plants will invariably contain an amount of peat as the industry does not purport to be totally peat free. Where possible consideration is given to contract grow and to stipulate they are grown in a peat free medium. Peat is not used in day to day operations at Lionmede Recreation Ground.

Reducing the use of peat is a long-term objective of Parks & Green Spaces.

Compost for soil enrichment is made in-house from shredded compostable material. The operation is undertaken at Sandford Mill. The appendices to this document contain results of an independent analysis of the medium produced.

Climate Change Adoption Strategies

Chelmsford City Council has declared a [Climate and Ecological Emergency](#) (16 July 2019) and there has been an ongoing commitment to make the Council's activities net-zero carbon by 2030, as well as an ambition to engage residents, community organisations and businesses in contributing to a more sustainable future for Chelmsford and the surrounding areas.

This led on to the creation of a [Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan](#) (agreed by the Council on 28 January 2020) which outlined fifteen key areas of activity, principally aimed at reducing carbon emissions, lowering energy consumption, reducing waste and pollution, improving air quality, greening Chelmsford, increasing biodiversity and encouraging more sustainable travel choices.

The implementation of these actions is monitored through periodic reports to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee of the City Council.

What the impact of Climate Change means to Chelmsford Parks & Green Spaces

As the climate changes our local climate will start to resemble the current climate of the Loire Valley within 25 years and southern France within 50 years. This means that outdoors spaces and their use will become more important for people and it is likely that the pressure on existing spaces will increase as numbers using the spaces as well the duration and frequency of use will increase. This increased pressure can only be mitigated by making more space available and/or by changing/increasing maintenance regimes and the frequency of refurbishment. This is likely to put pressure on resources and will require longer term financial planning, whilst in the shorter term consideration should be given to the design and make up of these spaces. To mitigate these effects we will evaluate our green spaces to establish which are most likely to be affected most and plan for any changes needed.

The rising temperature usually causes a deterioration of air quality in the urban environment. Green spaces and especially urban trees have significant roles to play. Trees which are currently common place such as ornamental fruiting trees may not be able to survive in the longer term and could possibly need to be replaced with more suitable species. Additional tree stock will also be required. Due to the time lag for these trees to mature and to become effective pollution filters and providers of shade, 25-50 years of growing time is needed. This suggests that additional tree planting, etc. will be required in the shorter term. This is somewhat in contrast with the approach being taken by insurers where trees maturing on some of our smaller open spaces and highway verges are under pressure to be removed because of claims relating to subsidence. We will therefore seek to link parks and tree strategies to the climate change strategy and to have actions relating to preserving existing tree stocks and replacing/expanding them where possible.

Green spaces are vital in the absorption and retention of precipitation and flood water and therefore the loss of such capacity to urban development seems incompatible. Retention of water, which could be used to provide irrigation for example, to mitigate the effects of hotter drier summers are worthy of consideration. Retro fitting such systems within existing facilities should be considered and linked to the intended use of facilities now and in the longer term. An evaluation of existing facilities to explore the feasibility could be a useful action.

Many of our existing buildings and structures will be affected by changes to the behaviour of the sub strata with incidents of heave and subsidence becoming more frequent. This is likely to have a significant effect on resources and the reliability of buildings and structures. Our strategy will be to highlight this in the strategy and its impact on financial planning.

As an organisation generally the Council is actively seeking to reduce emissions from Council assets and to make them more energy efficient.

The Council currently employs an Energy Manager who collates energy use across the Council and devises strategies to produce efficiencies.



Section 5: Biodiversity, Landscape and Heritage

Management of Natural Features, Wild Flora and Fauna

Everyone recognises the value of open space, but what about the benefits that wildlife, trees and water courses contribute? We believe in proper investment in green infrastructure. It is heartening to see that this idea is moving to the forefront of strategies and planning across regional and local government.

“[Biological diversity](#)” is the variability among living organisms from all sources including, inter alia, terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are part; this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems.

Biodiversity Duty

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act came into force on 1st Oct 2006. Section 40 of the Act requires all public bodies to have regard to biodiversity conservation when carrying out their functions. This is commonly referred to as the ‘biodiversity duty’.

This duty extends to all public bodies the biodiversity duty of section 74 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW), which placed a duty on Government and Ministers.

The aim of the biodiversity duty is to raise the profile of biodiversity in England and Wales, so that the conservation of biodiversity becomes properly embedded in all relevant policies and decisions made by public authorities.

With reference to Our Chelmsford Our Plan: promoting higher quality public places the Councils objectives cover

- The protection and enhancement of important natural resources.
- The protection and enhancement of important green links within the town and green wedges between settlements.

In all, as part of the Council’s strategy with regards to the environment and biodiversity the goal is to protect native plants, animal species and their habitats by the promoting and implementation of sustainable conservation management practices and ensuring that pollution levels do not exceed the capacity of the natural systems to recover.

The green infrastructure plan; adopted by the Council commits it to positive action.

The Council will arrange for surveys of and the monitoring of parks, green spaces and corridors and their species

The Parks and Green Space Strategy supports the protection and enhancement of biodiversity in parks and green spaces in accordance with NERC 2006.

The Council will prepare a programme for the adoption of management plans for every significant park and green space that includes measures to enhance biodiversity.

The Council will continue the Local Nature Reserve Designation Programme.

The Council will support the development of effective partnerships and funding arrangements to enhance biodiversity in parks and green spaces.

The Council will raise awareness and support education for all sectors of the community relating to habitats and species within parks and green spaces.

Biodiversity in Parks

With reference to the Our Chelmsford Our Plan: Nurturing the Environment the Council’s goal is to protect native plants, animal species and their habitats by promoting and implementing sustainable conservation management practices and ensuring that pollution levels do not exceed the capacity of natural systems to recover.

The state of the environment cannot be left to chance. Protecting or creating natural habitats is essential for the biodiversity of the Chelmsford area. Increasingly areas are being developed for residential or commercial use and mean that, more than ever a network of green corridors which provide continuous habitats for wildlife are essential for the movement of flora and fauna. Managing for biodiversity in parks and green spaces is not optional. In managing sites for the benefit of native plants and wildlife we are able to maximize the opportunities for people to experience nature close to hand.

Planning policy

The natural environment is protected through a range of planning policies.

- [Planning Policy Statement 9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation \(PG1\)](#), sets out planning policies on protection of biodiversity conservation through the planning system.
- Chelmsford Biodiversity Plan

At a county level Chelmsford City Council is an active member of the Essex Biodiversity Partnership; a group of more than 40 partners working together for the biodiversity of Essex. The EBP provides advice and support for specific projects including survey work.

Conservation of Landscape Features Buildings and Structures

With reference to the Our Chelmsford Our Plan: In this regard the Council’s objectives cover.

- The protection and enhancement of important cultural and historical resources.
- The protection of the character, environment and setting of Chelmsford City conservation area and the town generally.

- To protect and restore as far as is practicable the nature and habit of field boundary plantings: Trees & Hedges.
- To ensure that design improvements to the Park consider means to visually and physically link features to enhance visitor appreciation.
- To improve the presentation and interpretation of the landscape design of the park.
- To ensure that footpaths and design improvements to the park consider means to visually and physically link features to enhance visitor appreciation and understanding.
- To protect and manage important habitats associated with the site.
- To improve the presentation, setting and interpretation of important visible features.

Green Infrastructure - Conservation of nature features, wild flora & fauna, and heritage of the natural environment

Green infrastructure is the strategic integration of functional natural systems within and around urban areas. It enhances the quality of life of those who live and work there. It is critical to sustainable economic prosperity, and to create a positive sense of place and provide environmental protection for local communities.

For economic regeneration – to produce more attractive business locations; cut environmental risks such as flood damage; generate new commercial activity

For planning – to help deliver on sustainable development and housing targets and maximise return on investment in public space

For public health – to create better environments and healthier communities with less mental and physical illness such as respiratory problems, heart disease and obesity

For development – to reduce infrastructure costs, and to generate increased rental incomes and stronger marketability

For community cohesion – to increase social interaction and reduce aggressive behaviors.

The Council has a statutory duty to care for the environment and to encourage biodiversity. Within Parks management plans time is taken to consider the topography of the site and the use the land is put to. Wherever possible we look to enhance the wildlife value by the style of management land to promote that resource to the visiting public and to school groups who are encouraged to use parks as green class rooms.

Grasslands – Different mowing regimes are employed within the site to add interest and diversity to the landscape and were possible to encourage and support ecosystems to flourish and to create wildlife corridors through the site.

Landscape – Lionmede Recreation Ground is an important open space due to its location within the town centre envelope and its connection to the broader open space system in and around Chelmsford. The then Borough Council purchased the site in 1928.

A full landscape appraisal of Lionmede Recreation Ground was carried out.

- To ensure that the correct balance of landscape design, horticultural, leisure and development interests are addressed.
- To ensure that developments accord with the Strategic Context of the park.
- To provide for better footpath links to, through and around the park.
- To preserve and enhance existing appropriate leisure facilities.
- To develop further children's play facilities.
- To develop interpretation of the Park.
- To protect, enhance and develop horticulture.
- To protect, enhance and interpret ecology and wildlife.
- To provide quality playing surfaces and horticultural features.

Management of the tree stock in relationship to wildlife

There is a policy for maintaining and improving wildlife habitats as part of arboricultural operations so as to ensure the following will result.

1. Maintain and improve wildlife habitats
2. To ensure, where it is safe to do so, that no wildlife habitat is damaged or lost due to arboricultural operations

An overall policy of non-intervention will be applied if at all possible.



Section 6: The Park Audit: Physical description and use of the space

Natural Fabric

This section describes the different 'living' components that make up the essential character of the recreation ground – trees, grass, shrubberies and sports areas. It seeks to describe how these are important to the physical appearance of the Park for visitors and to determine other contributions which these components make to the habitat value of the park.

Biodiversity

The existing natural assets of the parkland will be conserved and enhanced. The Park will be managed to realise its biodiversity potential within the constraints of public use. The aim will be to maintain and, where possible to enhance an appropriate mosaic of habitats (grassland, trees and shrubbed areas) and within these to encourage as much structural and species diversity as possible and to maintain the balance of succession.

Policies regarding issues regarding biodiversity are drafted with the help of an independent environmental consultant.

Ecology & Wildlife

Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act October 2006, puts a duty of care onto local authorities to responsibly manage sites for the enrichment of biodiversity for sites that they are responsible for.

With reference to Our Chelmsford Our Plan, the Council's goal is to protect native plants, animals species and their habitats by promoting and implementing sustainable conservation management practices and ensuring that pollution levels do not exceed the capability of natural systems to recover.

With reference to Our Chelmsford Our Plan: land use management, the Council's objectives cover:

The protection and enhancement of important natural resources.

The protection and enhancement of important green links within the town and green wedges between settlements.

Habitat creation and management

Trees

The overall structure of the tree planting with succession of trees, informal groups and open assemblies of parkland trees will be maintained through an ongoing planting and tree renewal programme with purposeful sighting, selection and enhanced range of species.

Lionmede Recreation Ground has a number of mature trees within the site boundaries which are important to the general ambience of the site and lend themselves to being host to many eco-systems.

The relationship between good air quality and tree cover is well-known and whilst air quality across the City is generally improving, tree and vegetation cover more generally is also an important aspect of climate change mitigation, helping to slow run-off and provide shade.

Grasslands

The extent of the grassland shall be maintained generally in its current regimes with the majority held as sports grass. Different mowing regimes including meadow will be implemented to ensure that the character of the sward remains appropriate to the nature of each area and its use and to, where possible, contribute to biodiversity targets.

We have recently adopted a range of different cutting regimes across the site as per our Grass Cutting Policy 2022 to encourage natural flora to re-colonise areas of the recreation ground.

Landscape & Design Considerations

A landscape appraisal of Lionmede Recreation Ground was carried out and the plan identified contemporary design issues and opportunities for development. The key issues that emerged were:

- To ensure that the correct balance of landscape design, horticultural, leisure and development interests are addressed.
- To ensure that developments accord with the Strategic Context of the Park
- To provide for better way-marked footpath links to, through and around the Park
- To preserve and enhance existing appropriate leisure facilities
- To develop interpretation of the Park.
- To protect, enhance and develop horticulture
- To protect, enhance and interpret ecology and wildlife
- To provide quality playing surfaces

The horticultural performance skills of the ground staff are of the highest standard. The performance and standards of service are monitored under the terms of the contract.

Buildings and Hard Landscape Fabric

Buildings and Structures

The park has a number of buildings and structures that the Service is required to maintain. Parks & Green Spaces are the key Service for managing the majority of the infrastructure on site.

Sports Pavilion & Changing Rooms

Play area
Car parking area

Boundary Treatments and Entrances

There are several pedestrian access points from the two open site boundaries.

Road and Path Network

There is a hard-surfaced footpath running through the recreation ground along with stone dressed car parking facilities within the recreation ground's site boundaries.

Park furniture & Signage

The recreation ground has a variety of park furniture and structures specifically designated and located for the use, safety and comfort of visitors. The main elements and associated issues are set out below.

Bench seats

There are a number of benches in the park mainly supplied by Orchard Seating's – Packham bench design. New benches are now installed with armrests to be DDA compliant and are also set onto enlarged concrete plinths to enable a wheelchair to draw up beside the bench.

Litterbins and dog bins

Litterbins on the site are supplied by Orchard Seating Ltd. from their Cardiff range. Dog bins are supplied by: Earth Anchors, Unicorn and Glasdon. Over time Dog bins will be standardised to that of Unicorn bins.

The management team considers that there are enough bins to suit visitor needs, although this will be monitored to ensure the level of adequacy is maintained.

Signage & site interpretation

Quality signage is provided at the main park entrances to help orientate the visitor, although there are plans for a further upgrade of signage in the form of interpretive panels, finger posts and signs.

Access Target Groups

Chelmsford's Parks are open to all and we encourage community use of the parks and green spaces throughout the City.

Parks and green spaces footfall

Identify footfall patterns and visitor behaviour data by introducing and using "Place Informatics" to aid site management, maintenance, recovery and growth by; -.

- Understanding the postcode catchment area including population conversion including dwell time, travel pattern to and from Park and Green Spaces destinations
- Targeting visitor home locations for digital marketing targeting
- Measuring visitor and user footfall and site visitor behaviour patterns
- Accessing detailed socio demographic profiles including age, education and income.

Four main groups have been highlighted with regard to accessibility within the park over and above the sports user. The needs of these groups are under continual reassessment.

Older People

Older people are an important user group of the park. This group of people use the park for informal exercise and relaxation. Organised 'Healthy Walks' from the park are also being undertaken.

Heart & Sole is an initiative set up in partnership with Health Providers to address issues raised in the Community Strategy and aims to encourage residents to start taking more exercise. The project uses volunteers to lead the walks on a regular basis for short, pleasant exercise for anyone interested in participating. Doctors can refer patients to this programme through the local GP referral scheme.

Parents and Toddlers

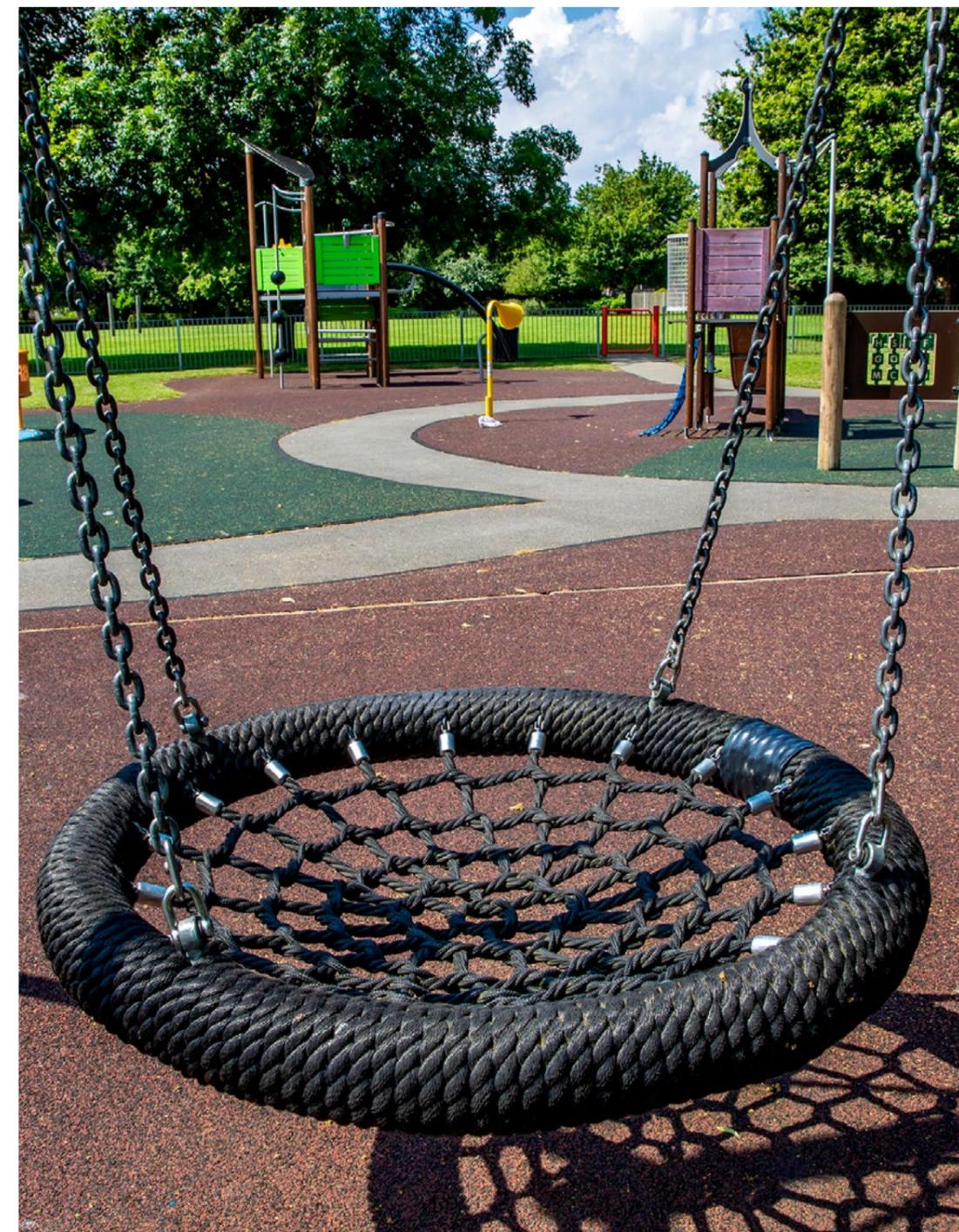
Many Park visitors are parents with young children. Children below a certain age are limited in their capabilities: they are citizens of tomorrow and they should be catered for. It is considered essential for the long-term benefit of the park to foster a sense of pride and affection for the site in the very young. For this reason we have a well-equipped play area on site.

Children and young people

To further enhance access to culture and sport for children both play and sports programmes are run from many of the parks over holiday periods including Lionmede. The programmes enable children to develop their talents and enjoy the benefits of participation. In addition as recognised drivers we look to increase the take up of cultural and sporting opportunities for people in this age group. We seek to tackle the increase in obesity among children under 11 years and similarly we seek to focus people aged 16 and above on the sporting opportunities available to them.

People with Disabilities

The term 'disabled' covers a wide range of specific needs including ambulant disabled, wheelchair users, hearing impaired, visually impaired and people with learning difficulties. All people with specific needs should be able to enjoy the park to its full potential in a safe environment.



Section 7: Community Involvement

We run a parks volunteer programme throughout the borough on parks land, with some 2,800 volunteers registered and approximately 200-250 volunteering with us on each week. Volunteers support our work and the environment in many different ways: from helping us to manage habitats, surveying wildlife, volunteering in our formal gardens, planting trees, and helping look after them, to the construction of new features on site such as culvert bridges. Details can be found on our website <https://loveyourchelmsford.co.uk/volunteer/>

We offer volunteering opportunities to all ages and abilities with a programme available for local schools, colleges, and businesses to engage in their local green space. At Lionmede Park we offer local schools/colleges the chance every year to come out and plant bulbs and wildflower plugs and undertake nature spotting. As part of these sessions the Parks and Conservation Volunteer Leader talks about the site, its management and what we are seeking to achieve. We ask for feedback from these sessions and look to improve in any areas that are raised. Through our parks volunteer scheme, we also engage with volunteers on the management of sites and explain at the start of each session why we are undertaking a task.

Using the short, medium and long term objectives, we seek opportunities for external funding for additional facilities. This is achieved through consultation processes with local residents and Ward members and aims to include all sectors of the community.



Section 8: Marketing and Communication

Marketing and Promotion

Marketing information

Marketing has a key role to play in service development and is key to ensuring the customer's viewpoint is understood and taken into account.

Marketing of the park as a place for people is undertaken through managers liaising with relevant staff through marketing meetings to ensure that a joined-up marketing strategy is in place, that is appropriate to 'place and space'. Marketing involves all of our internal partners and includes Arts, Special Events, Sports and Museum Services. For our parks, it is also a case for better promotion of what we already do to develop brand recognition.

Lionmede Park in addition to providing obvious sporting opportunities also offers the important provision of public open space to the resident community.

Communication regarding events and activities at Lionmede Park is usually publicised by the sports clubs operating from the park. City Parks also publicises the park on its web pages and where the City Council promotes specific activities at the park these tend to be advertised on site, for example banners and posters in the notice boards.

Marketing to sport organisations is usually direct via the Grounds Operations Team who manage sports pitch bookings and maintenance of the parks. Information is then disseminated through the clubs.

News concerning the park is distributed in a number of ways to ensure information is in the public realm, at off site venues. This is done in a number of ways.

- Chelmsford City web pages
- Love Your Chelmsford web pages
- Events diary
- Publicity leaflets

Promotion

Printed material

Our Brand image is important and is translated on all the printed material the Service produces so that the information is easily identifiable to the general public. This includes banners, posters, leaflets, park notice boards, vehicle livery, uniforms etc.

Public Relations

The Service works in association with Corporate Communications and uses various mediums to promote the Service from word of mouth through to local press and media. Press releases are issued regularly. This ensures Parks & Heritage Services is a Service readily identifiable and understood by the general public.

Green Flag

The Green Flag Award Scheme providing a 'national standard' for Parks is seen and used as a vehicle to convey the fact of Chelmsford having a number of stunning parks. Media coverage of this award brings both regional and national recognition to Chelmsford in a very positive way.

Fields in Trust

Fields in Trust make annual awards for the best kept playing fields in the country. Within Essex Chelmsford have achieved major successes when submitting playing fields for annual inspection.

Appropriate information channels

Press releases to local and national media are managed through Chelmsford City Council News and Media Centre.

The Corporate Communications team responds to all media and press enquiries including consent requests for filming and photography.

Radio interviews: The Service uses all mediums available to it including local radio.

BBC Essex: The Service uses all mediums available to it including TV Broadcasts and use of the BBC Essex Website.

Web site information www.chelmsford.gov.uk and www.loveyourchelmsford.co.uk

Council publications in the main are organised through Corporate Communications although Park Guides and Events in Parks brochures are arranged by Parks & Green Space marketing.

People are also engaged via the City Council's email and twitter accounts which are regularly monitored.

Appropriate Education and Interpretational Information

There is enormous opportunity for green spaces for learning about and experiencing ways of enjoying and understanding built heritage and nature, its diversity and its fragility; healthy living, diet and exercise.

Local schools are encouraged to use the park for green classroom events. It is hoped also that the visiting public will also appreciate the site for its tranquillity and links to nature through its natural landscape setting.

Section 9: Management Action Plan

Landscape improvements: (2023-2028) Implementation of the five year action plan

The five-year Action Plan is set out in tables shown in the following pages. The plan sets out a series of targets, which respond to park issues and reflect the vision and key objectives. It is not possible to achieve everything at one time so the management plan contains a five year action plan, reviewed annually to check on the progress with the agreed actions, to reprioritise against budgets as necessary and to pencil in new actions over the period of the plan.

The action plan is subject to annual review and update by the Parks and Green Spaces Manager to ensure a continued programme of park improvement is achieved. In the current period of shrinking budgets improvements have to be prioritised to ensure improvement is continuous and meaningful, any realigning of time frames will be explained at the time of annual summaries marking improvements made in service delivery.

Long term Objectives (within the life of the plan)

No	Objective	Time frame	Cost implication
Objective 1	To engender a strong sense of place through distinctive landscape design appropriate to supporting flora and fauna.	1-5	£10k
Objective 2	To promote the use of the site by local schools to encourage children to consider the park theirs and to feel respect for it	1-5	£2k
Objective 3	To increase the perception of safety amongst users of the green space.	1-5	Current revenue budget
Objective 4	To increase length of time spent on site by visitors through the provision of attractive additional facilities/features	1-5	£6k
Objective 5	To make biodiversity a key element of the green space, carrying out regular monitoring and ensuring that the maintenance is supportive of biodiversity within site constraints.	1-5	£3k
Objective 6	Encourage more use by the community by creating activities and interests that deliberately draw an audience through the space.	1-5	£2k
Objective 7	To engender feeling of ownership by establishing volunteer groups.	4-5	Current revenue budget

Notwithstanding the longer-term development proposals there are a number of minor improvements and maintenance related strategies (separate to the rolling maintenance programme) that are potentially achievable within current budgets and undertaken in the short to medium term, i.e. within the life of this Plan.

Medium term objectives (2-3 years)

No	Objective	Time frame	Cost implication
Objective 1	To promote the space to a wider audience by bringing in new demographics creating facilities for teenagers.	2-3	Current revenue budget
Objective 2	Undertake wildlife survey	2	£5k
Objective 3	Create new treescape within the grounds	2-3	£2k

Short term objectives (annually)

No	Objective	Time frame	Cost implication
Objective 1	To engage with local schools/community and undertake small scale projects such as bulb planting in the park	Annually	Current revenue budget
Objective 2	To review and refurbish shrub planted areas	Annually	£1k
Objective 3	To review potential for wildlife biodiversity rich areas working with local community schools	Annually	£1k

The overall aims and objectives of the development plan are to:

- Develop a range of facilities that will improve access for all park users and increase usage.
- Visually enhance the site.
- Conserve water consumption.
- Protect the wildlife interest and value of the site and interpret it where possible.
- Ensure the full and continued involvement of local community and stakeholder groups.
- Establish a programme of surveys and consultation.
- Provide opportunities for hands on volunteering through regular working parties.
- Maintain and foster continued partnership working.
- Ensure that fear of crime does not deter local community from using the space.
- Work with the sports clubs on site to establish a programme of events particularly targeting young people.
- Seek to ensure the best possible service by continuously reviewing policy and procedures.

Management issues; Objectives and Actions.

The Council is working in a financially challenging environment – this brings problems, but it also presents a clear opportunity for reviewing and transforming the way we approach things when deciding on priorities in further investment and delivering improvements. Focus has to be now on actions that are likely to make a tangible difference without incurring significant financial commitment (both capital and revenue).

The following section highlights current key issues relating to the management and maintenance of the park. The key issues are grouped using the same key criteria as used by Green Flag.

In order to support the objective of providing a well managed Park, the following projects are proposed during the life of this Plan:

Objectives	Actions / Targets
Maintain quality improvement through management planning for each park	Develop a common framework/ checklist for management plans that can be adopted across a range of site types.
Retain Green Flag Status	
Maintain a Geographical Information System for the Park	Record site details on GIS system
Maintain a customer care compliments and complaints database	Record and monitor performance and problem resolution and opportunities to improve.
Maintain a staff presence	Dedicated staff working on site during each working day, promoting sense of security in the visiting public
Draw up an action plan for improvements	Publish and monitor an action plan
Provide a range of practical education and skills training initiatives – in relation to conservation, horticulture, environmental education etc.	
Maintain long term training policy for all staff	Determine training needs at individual performance review interviews
Continue to facilitate user group meetings at regular intervals	Share information and ideas across the groups. Keep minutes of meetings
Achieve Fields in Trust Award	Secure award annually as a mark of performance recognition

In order to support the objective of providing a welcoming Park, the following projects are proposed during the life of this Plan:

The park is managed to provide a peaceful and tranquil landscape with a varied ambience of formal and informal settings. Facilities and infrastructure are managed to promote access for all and an enjoyable experience for the public at large.

Objectives	Actions / Targets
Consolidate style of seats and bins	Bin and seat styles recorded in management plan for future replacements of the same type
Maintain Park Information Boards at the two park entrances.	Check and clean twice a year
Implement actions identified in the conservation plan	Report on progress annually
Introduce more soft landscaping into the park setting	Monitor and review progress annually
Promote outdoor recreation and play opportunities across all age groups – toddlers, juniors, teenagers and adults	Play area refurbishment planned together with new equipment. New tarmac access path also planned
Involve children and young people as partners in the design and development of play spaces.	On-going
Continue to provide open, free access to the public	On-going

In order to support the objective of providing a healthy, safe and secure Park, the following projects are proposed during the life of this Plan:

The park is managed to provide a healthy, safe and secure environment for the visiting public and for staff working in the park.

Objectives	Actions / Targets
Carry out risk assessments for all new park tasks	On-going
Supply all staff with new or replacement uniforms and individual tools as necessary	On-going
Operate Park Watch and Volunteer Warden Schemes	On-going
Maintaining a system to document all incidents that take place in the Park	On-going
Maintaining a site defect and incident reporting system. Ensure priority removal of visible signs of vandalism – breakages/ graffiti approach is taken	On-going

Park Team to promote sense of security in visiting public through on site presence of Park staff and security patrols

On-going

To promote healthy living and well-being initiatives in the Park

On-going

In order to support the objective of providing a well maintained and clean Park, the following projects are proposed during the life of this Plan:

The Park is managed to ensure the built fabric, hard and soft landscape are the maintained in line with best practice and to a high standard.

Objectives	Actions / Targets
Progressing actions in the 5 year plan	On-going
Support a grounds maintenance management system to schedule and record all maintenance tasks	On-going
Progressing building maintenance schedule agreed with Facilities Management	On-going
Maintain high standards of horticulture	On-going
Maintain hard surfaces and infrastructure in accordance with best works management practice	On-going
Ensure that the standard of presentation remains high and responds to/adapts to changing visitor pressures	On-going

In order to support the objective of providing a Sustainable Park, the following projects are proposed during the life of this Plan:

The Park is managed to maintain sustainable development through effective protection of the environment, prudent use of resources, social progress which recognises the needs of everyone and maintaining stable levels of economic growth.

Objectives	Actions / Targets
Introduce facilities to allow the composting of green waste generated in the Park in order to produce mulch / soil improver / reduce park waste going to landfill.	Holding area set aside as a transfer station – green waste is processed at Sandford Mill. End product is returned to parks as soil improver / mulch
Maintain the system for recording all energy and fuel consumption in the Park	Liaison with Energy Manager
Record monthly water returns related to the automated watering systems; this aims to reduce consumption of resources including mains water to a minimum	Records kept at Parks Depot Waterhouse Lane

Restrict the use of residual herbicides within the Park and eliminate all unnecessary chemical usage including pesticide usage.	On-going
Eliminate peat usage within the Park and reduce demand in nursery production of plants. Respond to results of the non-peat trials and assess the potential to become peat free.	On-going
Adopt a tree management strategy within the site	On-going

In order to support the objective of providing a Park that addresses conservation of heritage and nature, the following projects are proposed during the life of this Plan:

The Park is managed to protect, and enhance, the historic and natural environment.

Objectives	Actions / Targets
Further develop actions to promote biodiversity	On-going
Create areas of natural habitat within the park were appropriate to protect, conserve and enhance the natural environments within the park	On-going
Undertake wildlife surveys as a method to determining how maintenance specifications are impacting on biodiversity	Biannual reports
To maintain heritage pattern (trees) and features giving the park an ordered and developing character.	On-going
Initiate projects with selected schools to develop opportunities to benefit nature and the environment or to widen benefits to the community	On-going
Protect and enhance key features – of landscape, natural and heritage character, views and vistas – which are particularly valued by local people.	On-going

In order to support the objective of providing a Park where community involvement is encouraged, the following projects are proposed during the life of this Plan:

The Park is managed to improve the quality and range of services for visitors to and users of the Park whilst encouraging wider access by priority groups and non-users

Objectives	Actions / Targets
Establish links with local schools, colleges and clubs. Increase numbers participating in educational activities	On-going
Promote Park Watch	On-going
Provide a range of appropriate events / activities to engage people of all ages and abilities with the diversity of the park	On-going

In order to support the objective of providing a well marketed and promoted Park, the following projects are proposed during the life of this Plan:

The Park is marketed corporately to raise the profile and increase understanding of the role and value of Parks to visitors and residents alike.

Objectives	Actions / Targets
Update and review Parks web pages relating to the Park	On-going
Establish links from the Parks and Green Spaces web site to club websites and vice versa	On-going
Promote Community and Club events within the Park	On-going
Widen the opportunity for visiting the Park and to raise understanding and awareness of the Park's resources and qualities	On-going
Work in partnership with health and activity sectors to deliver initiatives which promote physical, mental and social well-being in the park	Develop a joint strategic approach with key partners in health and activity sectors, maximising the opportunities presented by the UK government's Change4 Life initiative.
Work in partnership with leisure and sports providers to promote and deliver outdoor recreation and sports initiatives in the park	

Work in partnership with the Education sector to support delivery of elements of the curriculum within the park	Sustain in the long term a continuous programme of initiatives supporting a full range of health needs and enhancing facilities as appropriate. Health Walks, recreational walking, cycling, jogging, outdoor gyms.
Promote the use of Parks and Green Spaces to those groups who are currently not using them.	Coordinate initiatives with partners to engage clubs, communities and volunteers in outdoor sports and recreational events.

Parks and Green Spaces provide benefits across the spectrum; improving physical and mental health, supporting biodiversity, flood and water absorption, improving air quality, mitigating the urban heat island effect, boosting property prices, facilitating business staff retention, encouraging local identity and many other things that local and national governments are trying to achieve.



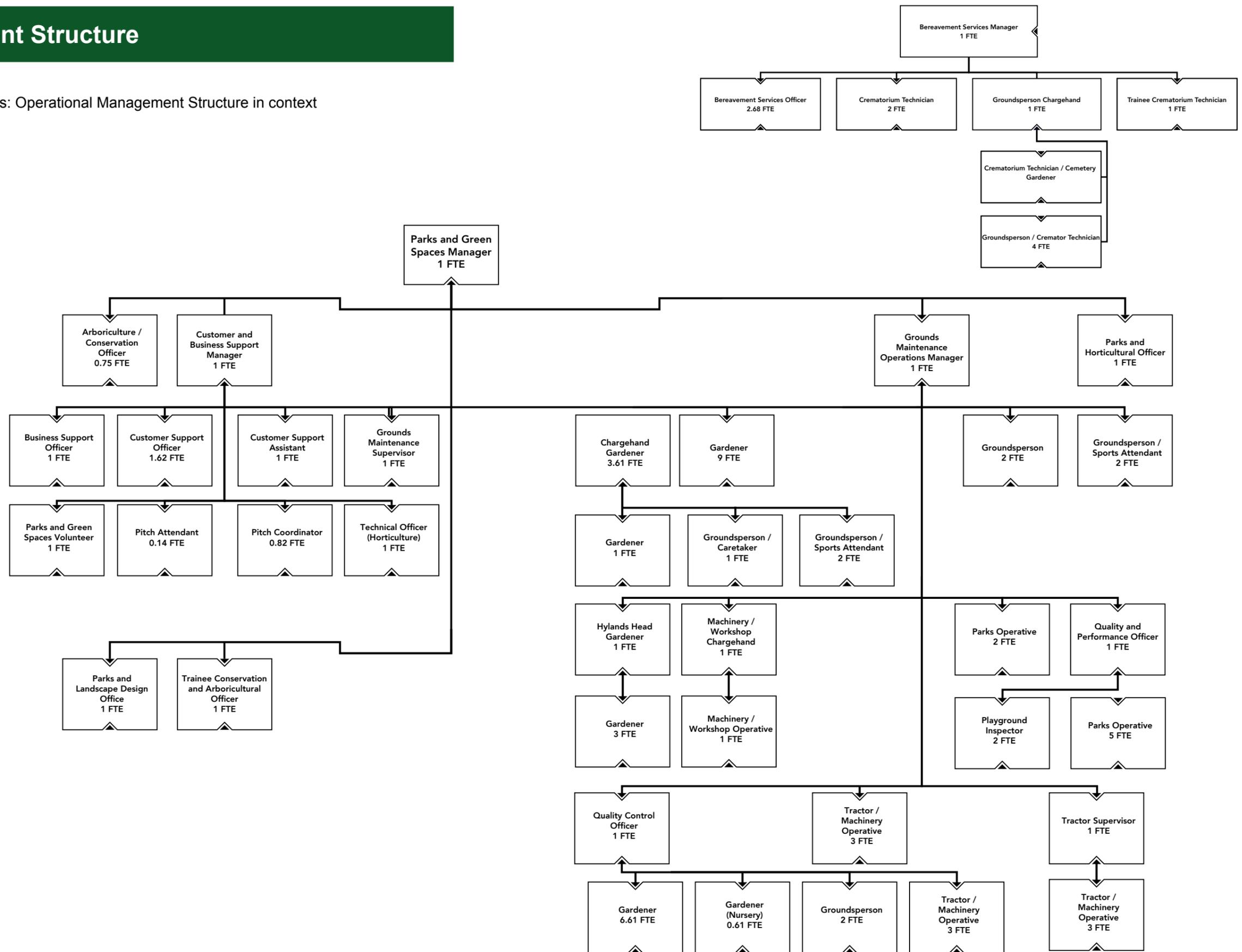
Appendices

The list of documents below informs the Management Plan

- Our Chelmsford Our Plan
- Green Flag plus Partnership research report: People, Places and their Green Spaces
- Chelmsford Local Plan - adapted 27 May 2020
- Chelmsford Green Infrastructure Strategic Plan
- Chelmsford Biodiversity Action Plan
- Procurement Strategy
- Chelmsford City Council (2016) Open Space Audit
- Community Safety Strategy
- Parks, Green Spaces and Waterways Strategy
- Chelmsford Fixed Equipment Playground Strategy 2022
- Tree Management Policy 2021
- Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services and its outcomes and actions
- Chelmsford Health and Wellbeing Plan
- General Parks Volunteer Policy
- Grassland Management Policy
- Policy on the use of Pesticides
- Parks Outdoor Event Policy 2020
- Drone Policy
- Drugs and Alcohol Policy
- Policy for metal detecting, excavating, foraging and collecting items

Management Structure

Parks & Green Spaces: Operational Management Structure in context





Management structure at Lionmede Recreation Ground.

The two divisions of Parks Strategy and Development and Grounds Management both have an input into the management of Lionmede Recreation Ground.

The Parks Strategy Team provides a design service, management direction, a tree management service, community engagement & involvement along with Service promotion and marketing.

Grounds Management oversee the maintenance activities undertaken at the parks. The parks are staffed through the working day by two full time members of staff who undertake a broad range of maintenance operations. Their work is complemented by mobile gangs who undertake tractor grass cutting, and playground inspections. Private tree contractors undertake tree works as directed by the Arboricultural & Conservation officer.

In addition to the Parks Team several business partners have an active interest in the site.

Leisure and Heritage Services: Sports and Recreational Development

Sports in Parks

The Sports Development Unit at Chelmsford City Council work with a wide range of local organisations to help deliver many sporting events around the Borough. The Unit is committed to increasing the awareness, inclusion and activity level of people in general from the very young to the not so young.

The Unit run many exciting sports courses throughout the year for children, adults, older people and people with special needs in addition to sports courses run for children during Essex County Council term time periods.

Forever Active is Chelmsford City Council's new brand of activities specifically tailored to those over fifty who want to become and remain fit, active and healthy. The new brochure of activities will include intensity ratings for all sessions, making it easy to find the sessions right for you.

Chelmsford City Council, with support from "Chelmsford Sport", has produced a Sports Directory that publicise details of most sports clubs in Chelmsford.

Sports Development Unit have a major input to services provided in the Park. The latter, amongst other things provide term time and holiday sports courses, including activities for children with disabilities.

The Sports Development Unit run courses for children during Essex County Council term time periods. In addition, the Unit provide a variety of courses during Essex County Council school holidays, excluding the Christmas holiday. These sports courses provide the opportunity for children to participate in a fun setting.

Work is also ongoing to encourage adult participation in sport with adults being invited to take up a new activity, make friends and stay fit and healthy. Additionally, the Sports Development Unit is committed to increasing the awareness, inclusion and activity level of people with disabilities.

There are a variety of activities available for children of all ages which run during the school summer holidays. Activities include Play in the Park, an activity that is ran during the summer holidays. At each venue, there are always a variety of activities running. The activities are free and no pre-booking is required.

Healthy living/Healthy walks

The parks are promoted as safe places for walking, exercise and physical activity.

Leisure Services run a healthy walks scheme in conjunction with the local PCT and key parks are being used by the scheme to promote healthy living concepts to the community at large. There are plans to include Lionmede Recreation Ground within the programme over the course of this plan. The project uses volunteers to lead the walks on a regular basis for short, pleasant walks for patients who have been referred by their doctor to the scheme.

Leisure and Heritage Services: Arts and Entertainment

The Arts Development team at Chelmsford City Council offer advice and encouragement to individuals, arts groups, schools, youth groups and other agencies within the borough. It also provides an ongoing programme of community based arts and education workshops.

Community Safety – Public Health & Protection Services

Staff from the above Service have a positive input to make to the effective and efficient day to day management of the park with the following officers having an input to the day to day operation.

- Public Health Enforcement Officers (dog and litter related)
- Antisocial behaviour coordinator
- Community Safety Partnership
- Safe guarding officer

Dog warden service

Dog wardens assist Parks staff with regards to enforcement of legislation relating to dog fouling and collection of strays,

Noise abatement

Environmental Protection Staff monitor noise levels at the large planned events held in parks.

For additional copies of this document or to have it made available in large print or recorded onto audio tape please contact:

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Parks and Green Spaces

Chelmsford City Council



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