

Community Safety and Environment Policy and Accountability Committee

Agenda

Monday 8 November 2021 at 6.30 pm

This is being held as an informal remote meeting

You can watch live on YouTube: https://youtu.be/ICX35_4R3rl

MEMBERSHIP

Administration	Opposition
Councillor Frances Umeh (Chair) Councillor Iain Cassidy Councillor Ann Rosenberg Councillor Fiona Smith	Councillor Victoria Brocklebank-Fowler

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Date Issued: 28th October 2021

Community Safety and Environment Policy and Accountability Committee Agenda

8 November 2021

<u>Item</u>		<u>Pages</u>
1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE		
2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	<p>If a Councillor has a disclosable pecuniary interest in a particular item, whether or not it is entered in the Authority's register of interests, or any other significant interest which they consider should be declared in the public interest, they should declare the existence and, unless it is a sensitive interest as defined in the Member Code of Conduct, the nature of the interest at the commencement of the consideration of that item or as soon as it becomes apparent.</p> <p>At meetings where members of the public are allowed to be in attendance and speak, any Councillor with a disclosable pecuniary interest or other significant interest may also make representations, give evidence or answer questions about the matter. The Councillor must then withdraw immediately from the meeting before the matter is discussed and any vote taken.</p> <p>Where Members of the public are not allowed to be in attendance and speak, then the Councillor with a disclosable pecuniary interest should withdraw from the meeting whilst the matter is under consideration. Councillors who have declared other significant interests should also withdraw from the meeting if they consider their continued participation in the matter would not be reasonable in the circumstances and may give rise to a perception of a conflict of interest.</p> <p>Councillors are not obliged to withdraw from the meeting where a dispensation to that effect has been obtained from the Audit, Pensions and Standards Committee.</p>	
3. MINUTES	<p>To note the minutes of the previous meeting and any outstanding actions.</p>	4 - 10
4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION	<p>This meeting is being held remotely on Zoom and will be live streamed to YouTube https://youtu.be/lCX35_4R3rl</p> <p>If you would like to ask a question at the meeting about any of the items on the agenda please complete the following form by 12pm on Thursday 4th November 2021: https://tinyurl.com/cse-questions</p>	

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|-----------|--|----------|
| 5. | SAFER CYCLE PATHWAY UPDATE | 11 - 14 |
| | <p>The report aims to give a brief update on progress to deliver the Safer Cycle Pathway by sharing information with regards to the different stages of implementation and programme delivery times.</p> | |
| 6. | 3-YEAR HIGHWAYS PLANNED MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME 2021-2024 | 15 - 26 |
| | <p>The report aims to give an insight on the planned maintenance programme currently being delivered and how we chose the roads and footways to go on the schemes.</p> | |
| 7. | PARKS COMMISSION REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS | 27 - 183 |
| | <p>This is a covering report accompanying the final report and recommendations of Hammersmith & Fulham's (H&F) resident-led Parks Commission (Appendix A). The commission launched in January 2020, and their recommendations follow a year of extensive research and engagement with council officers, residents, and other park users and stakeholders. Interim recommendations were made in June 2020 to support the re-procurement of the grounds' maintenance contract.</p> | |
| 8. | FUTURE MEETINGS | |
| | <p>Future meeting dates are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- 24th January 2022- 21st March 202 | |

Community Safety and Environment Policy and Accountability Committee Minutes

Monday 19 July 2021

NOTE: This meeting was held remotely. A recording of the meeting can be found at:
<https://youtu.be/mbfVOeTcJws>

PRESENT

Committee members: Councillors Bora Kwon (Chair), Iain Cassidy, Fiona Smith, Ann Rosenberg and Victoria Brocklebank-Fowler

Other Councillors: Councillors Sue Fennimore (Deputy Leader) and Wesley Harcourt (Cabinet Member for the Environment), Sharon Holder (Cabinet Member for Strategy)

Officers: Sharon Lea (Strategic Director of Environment), Matthew Hooper (Chief Officer - Safer Neighbourhood), Ed Shaylor (Private Sector Housing Manager), Adrian Overton (Licensing Policy and Enforcement Manager)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence received.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

Councillor Fiona Smith declared that she was appointed as the Vice-Chair for the Licensing Sub-Committee for this municipal year.

3. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on the 16th March 2021 were noted. As this was an informal meeting, minutes will be formally agreed at the next meeting.

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no questions received from the public.

5. LAW ENFORCEMENT TEAM UPDATE

Matt Hooper (Chief Officer - Safer Neighbourhoods & Regulatory Services), gave a presentation on the role of the Law Enforcement Team (LET) and provided a summary of the following key points.

- The Council approved the creation of the LET on the 7th December 2020.
- This was the largest community safety investment in the history of Hammersmith and Fulham.
- The reasons why the Team was put in place were outlined.
- The objectives and core duties of the Team were summarised.
- The Team carried out high visibility patrols and provide 24-hour coverage Wednesday – Sunday.
- The Team had legislative tools and powers to undertake their duties.
- The Team would provide long term solutions to local issues and would work with all Council services to find lasting resolution.
- An overview was provided of the Team's early successes and performance to date.
- An extensive training programme would be offered to all staff (new and existing).
- Training would be ongoing to ensure that the Council had the most professional and well qualified officers in London.

The Chair queried whether the LET replaced Parks Police and Estate Wardens. In response Matt Hooper (Chief Officer - Safer Neighbourhood & Regulatory Services), explained that the functions of these Teams had been combined into the LET. In total 14 existing members of staff were transferred to the LET.

Councillor Victoria Brocklebank-Fowler asked for clarification to be provided on the types of powers that were available to the Team. Matt Hooper (Chief Officer - Safer Neighbourhoods & Regulatory Services), explained that the Team had powers under the Environmental Protection Act 1990. This included powers to issue fines and fixed penalty notices for fly tipping, littering, abandoned vehicles and highway obstruction. They also had powers under the ASB, Crime & Policing Act 2014 to issue community protection notices and warnings. It was noted that a full list would be emailed to Councillor Victoria Brocklebank-Fowler following the meeting.

Action: Matthew Hooper

Councillor Victoria Brocklebank-Fowler noted that some residents felt that the uniform of the LET was intimidating and made officers appear less approachable. In response Matt Hooper (Chief Officer - Safer Neighbourhoods & Regulatory Services), noted that the Council explored uniform trends across other Local Authorities and discussed the colour

scheme in great detail. Currently staff were wearing a temporary uniform and by the end of July all staff members would be provided with their new corporate uniform.

Councillor Victoria Brocklebank-Fowler queried if other boroughs in London had combined all their community safety services, similar to the LET. In response Matt Hooper (Chief Officer - Safer Neighbourhoods & Regulatory Services), explained that the London Borough of Newham and Croydon had taken very similar approaches to .

Councillor Ann Rosenberg queried how quickly was the LET able to respond once an incident was reported. Matt Hooper (Chief Officer - Safer Neighbourhoods & Regulatory Services), explained that the Team was not designed to be a response service. However, the Team had the ability and resources to respond to issues immediately.

Councillor Iain Cassidy asked for further clarification to be provided on the timescales for clearing abandoned bicycles from places where they were stored across the borough. He also asked how the Team would proactively manage and tackle this issue going forward. In response Matt Hooper (Chief Officer - Safer Neighbourhoods & Regulatory Services), noted that the Council was currently working on putting together a detailed response to these types of issues. Officers were working towards resolving these issues within 48 hours after a call was received. Officers were also trained and equipped to remove the bicycles and act early on if any bicycles clearly looked in an unusable state as part of their day to day duties.

The Chair asked if a communications plan would be executed for the launch of the LET so that residents were able to identify officers within the Borough. In response Matt Hooper (Chief Officer - Safer Neighbourhood), noted that a communications plan had already been written on the identity, role and the legislative powers of the Team. The official launch would take place once the Team was provided with their full uniform by the end of the month.

Councillor Ann Rosenberg asked how the Council anticipated to communicate this with the residents of the Borough. Matt Hooper (Chief Officer - Safer Neighbourhoods & Regulatory Services), explained that the communications plan would be delivered via the channels available to the Council, including social media. Staff would also approach local residents and provide face to face engagement, whilst on duty. Over time the staff would also attend residents' meetings. In addition, the LET's roles and responsibilities would be clearly set out on the Council's website, emphasising that this was a separate service to the Metropolitan Police.

Councillor Victoria Brocklebank-Fowler asked if residents in the Borough were given priority to joining the LET during the recruitment process. In response Matt Hooper (Chief Officer - Safer Neighbourhoods & Regulatory Services), explained that the Council attempted to recruit local residents. The total number of residents that applied during the recruitment process was lower than anticipated. However, this was something that would be addressed by the Council over time.

Members noted this report.

6. IMPROVING PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING THROUGH DISCRETIONARY PROPERTY LICENSING

Ed Shaylor (Private Sector Housing Manager), presented the report and noted that the private rented sector in Hammersmith and Fulham was the sixth highest in London and eight highest in the country and accounts for 30% of all households in the Borough according to the 2011 census.

To help improve the private rented sector, the Council had two discretionary property licensing schemes which expired in June 2022. These schemes required landlords of privately rented houses and flats which meet the criteria to apply to the Council for a licence for each property.

The proposal was from June 2022 to June 2027 to:

- continue additional Licensing for Houses and Flats in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) for all HMOs not covered by mandatory HMO Licensing, and
- substantially reduce the number of streets in the Selective Licensing scheme from 128 to 23, to focus on busy roads, flats above shops, and roads with a significant private rented sector. The proposed 23 streets were in a range of the borough's districts so would provide wide coverage of the rental sector – 4 streets were in W6; 4 in W14; 9 in W12; 5 in SW6; and 1 in NW10.

HMO licensing being Borough wide would also ensure that all areas of the Borough were properly supported by the private sector housing team. There was also a proposal to prohibit multiple occupation use of leasehold flats where the Council was the freeholder, due to pressure on block infrastructure and nuisance to neighbours.

Councillor Victoria Brocklebank-Fowler asked for further clarification to be provided on the policy for HMO's in leasehold flats. In response Ed Shaylor (Private Sector Housing Manager), noted that where there was a leasehold agreement prohibiting use of a flat for multiple occupation, a policy had been implemented to limit the duration of the licence to two years during which time the licence holder was expected to either cease using the flat as an HMO when the tenants moved out or obtain a waiver from the freeholder. The same approach had been adopted where the Council was the freeholder, as the Council had a policy not to allow its leasehold flats to be used as HMOs.

Councillor Iain Cassidy commented that a very small number of private tenants had responded to the public consultation and asked what measures had been put into place by the Council to expand the engagement strategy with the public. Ed Shaylor (Private Sector Housing Manager), noted it was apparent at the beginning of the consultation that Officers were receiving a higher number of replies from landlords in comparison to the tenants. Officers were working closely with tenant representative organisations and the Council's Environmental Health Officers also reached out to tenants to encourage participation in the consultation. In addition, 13000 leaflets were

delivered within the Selective Licensing streets to the occupiers as part of the consultation.

Referring to Appendix 5 (Survey of privately renting tenants December 2020 to February 2021), Councillor Iain Cassidy raised concerns in relation to the safety responses. He highlighted there were a significant number of tenants which had not been issued with mandatory gas safety certificates. He asked whether there was any data on the number of private landlords which were unaware of their duty of care under current legislation and regulations. In response, Ed Shaylor (Private Sector Housing Manager), explained that in his experience, landlords came in many guises, with differing levels of compliance. The Committee noted that of all the properties that had been licenced under the current scheme (approximately 6000), a very substantial number of landlords were unaware of minimum safety requirements. Ed Shaylor explained the advantages of the licensing scheme, which would provide landlords with clear information and guidance on their obligations and responsibilities, and in turn, improve the overall standards within the Private Rented Sector. The Council also offered advice to landlords via the Council's website and telephone.

The Chair felt that the criteria applied for the selection of the proposed streets for the licensing scheme was reasonable and clear. She queried whether the commercial properties that had been converted into residential flats and properties that were not on the Council's radar would also benefit from being included as part of the Selective Licensing scheme. Ed Shaylor (Private Sector Housing Manager), outlined the reasons why the Council had opted for the selected streets and noted that it would also be useful to consider defining the type of property rather than the street or location as long as the Council was clear on what was included in the scheme.

Members noted this report.

7. LICENSING POLICY CONSULTATIONS

Removal of Cumulative Impact Policies in Fulham and Shepherd's Bush

Adrian Overton (Licensing Policy and Enforcement Manager) gave a presentation on the future of the Cumulative Impact Policies (CIP's) and noted the following key points:

- The Council currently had two CIP's in Fulham and Shepherd's Bush.
- The supporting evidence for both of these policies had expired.
- The Licensing Authority must carry out a public consultation on the removal of the policies from the Statement of Licensing Policy.
- The steps required to implement a CIP area were outlined.
- The evidence gathering process for both of the policies showed different types of problems in both areas.
- Both policies were last reviewed in 2015 and data from the police, ambulance service and noise complaints were assessed.
- Any evidence gathering exercise to support any new CIP's would now be carried out in the summer of 2021 or 2022.

- A consultation was now live with residents and other stakeholder online via the Council's Space system.

Councillor Victoria Brocklebank-Fowler commented that she was the Chair of the Licensing Committee between 2008-2012 when these two CIP zones came into place. She felt that it was essential for the Borough to continue to include both Fulham and Shepherds Bush Town Centres under the CIPs, noting that she was in favour of renewing the existing policies. She asked for further clarification to be provided on the Council's intention of the public consultation. In response Councillor Wesley Harcourt (Cabinet Member for the Environment) noted that the policies had expired, therefore a public consultation on the removal of the policies must be carried out. The Council needed to gather new evidence and would support the outcome of the consultation. The responses received from residents would be taken into consideration to help minimise any significant adverse impact on their enjoyment of their homes and local amenities

Review of the Statement of Gambling Policy

Adrian Overton (Licensing Policy and Enforcement Manager) gave a presentation on the review of the statement of Gambling Policy and noted the following key points:

- It was now time for the Council to review its Statement of Gambling Policy (SGP) and undergo a public consultation exercise.
- The latest version would be agreed by Full Council in October 2021 and published in January 2022.
- A SGP may last for a maximum of three years and can be reviewed and revised by the authority at any time during that period.
- The review process for the SGP was outlined in detail.
- A proposal had also been made to support the removal of the Council's long standing 'No Casino' resolution from the policy.
- The consultation began on the 12th July 2021 and would close on the 19th September 2021.

Councillor Victoria Brocklebank-Fowler commented that she was supportive of a 'No Casino' resolution as she felt it was not suitable for this borough.

The Chair requested that details of the consultation be circulated to Committee Members and gambling charities within the borough.

Action: Adrian Overton

Members noted this report.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on 8 November 2021.

Meeting started: 18:30pm
Meeting ended: 20:15pm

Chair

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Report to: Community Safety and Environment Policy and Accountability Committee

Date: 08/11/2021

Subject: Safer Cycle Pathway update

Report of: Councillor Wesley Harcourt – Cabinet Member for Environment

Report author: Abi Oluwande Senior Service Manager Project Delivery/
Richard Duffill, Borough Cycling officer

Responsible Director: Sharon Lea. Strategic Director of Environment

SUMMARY

The report aims to give a brief update on progress to deliver the Safer Cycle Pathway by sharing information with regards to the different stages of implementation and programme delivery times.

The report also explains why and what we are doing under the Experimental Traffic order and what monitoring we intend to incorporate.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. For the Committee to note and comment on the report.
-

Wards Affected: All.

Our Values	Summary of how this report aligns to the H&F Values
Building shared prosperity	The interim semi-permanent Safer Cycle Pathway (SCP) will add to the cycling infrastructure in the borough and bring new opportunities for green business to the area. The scheme will support the economy after lockdown restrictions are eased and encourage people to cycle and walk in Hammersmith Town Centre
Creating a compassionate council	The SCP will add much needed cycling infrastructure for wellbeing and health

	as well as improve the environment for all.
Doing things with local residents, not to them	Residents' forums and associations have been kept informed of the proposed scheme for the route and will continue to be engaged to assess the scheme as it progresses
Being ruthlessly financially efficient	The council's contractor won a competitive tender in 2017 across a range of highway works and will implement or construct the temporary cycle scheme
Taking pride in H&F	Dedicated cycling infrastructure is a central part of community life in the borough.
Rising to the challenge of the climate and ecological emergency	The Safer Cycle Pathway is a key enabler for more cycling and walking activity and reducing car journeys

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Background Papers Used in Preparing This Report

[CMB - Interim Safer Cycle Pathway Scheme 15.06.21_Final.pdf \(lbhf.gov.uk\)](#)

DETAILED ANALYSIS

1. Work Programme for King Street

The interim scheme design work was approved in July 2021. A list of works being undertaken for the interim scheme:

- Resurfacing of road surface in key areas.
- Kerb realignment and drainage work
- Installation of road markings, traffic signs and wands.
- Bridge Avenue junction traffic islands

- Cross over junction outside 145 King Street
- Floating bus stop island west of Holcombe Street
- New tactile paving on zebra crossing west of Studland Street.
- Upgraded pedestrian crossing east of Beavor Lane
- Floating bus stop island west of Beavor Lane
- Pedestrian refuge east of Hamlet Gardens
- Upgraded pedestrian crossing (new islands) east of Black Iron Lane
- Floating bus stop island at the Goldhawk junction tie in at St Peters Square (major works here)
- Floating bus stop island east of Rivercourt Road
- Upgraded pedestrian crossing east of Ravenscourt Road
- New tactile pavings east of Ravenscourt Avenue,
- New tactile on Ravenscourt Road
- Lamp column relocations
- Resurfacing
- Road marking and traffic signs
- New bus shelters

Works programme for Hammersmith Road

Red and White barriers have been removed and been replaced by wands.

2. Traffic Management

The works are being delivered under a series of weekend road closures. Road closure dates are:

- 20th - 21st September 2021
- 15th - 18th October 2021
- 23th - 25th October 2021
- 6th - 8th November 2021
- 13th - 15th November 2021 (Reserve dates not expected to be used)
- The traffic management is monitored by FM Conway and the LBHF site supervisor.

3. Monitoring

The interim scheme is being delivered under an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order which will be in place for 18 months. During this period the scheme will be monitored, and the feedback used to influence the permanent scheme.

LBHF engineers are monitoring the works on site and working with TfL on delivery of their assets.

4. Build Programme

- **Work commenced on site on August 2021**

- **Carriageway resurfacing between Leamore St and Macbeth St - completed**
- **Kerb realignment and drainage works - ongoing**
- **Paving works from Lyric Square up to Metro Bank - completed**
- **Traffic lights decommissioned w/e 15 October 2021**
- **Temporary lights installed w/e 15 October 2021**
- Bridge Avenue island – ongoing / partly completed
- Cycleway crossover - November 2021
- Floating bus islands - November 2021
- Goldhawk Rd / King St junction tie in – November 2021
- Hammersmith Gyratory works by TfL – November 2021
- Goldhawk Road junction works by TfL – November 2021
- Original programme was scheduled to be completed in early December 2021. The programme is currently being reworked to finish by end of November 2021.

LIST OF APPENDICES

London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham

Report to: Community Safety and Environment Policy & Accountability Committee (CSEPAC)

Date: 8/11/ 2021

Subject: 3-year Highways Planned Maintenance Programme 2021-2024

Report of: Cllr Wesley Harcourt – Cabinet Member for the Environment

Report author: Donna Kelly – Highway Maintenance Team Manager

Responsible Director: Sharon Lea – Strategic Director Environment

Summary

The report aims to give an insight on the planned maintenance programme currently being delivered and how we chose the roads and footways to go on the schemes

We aim to improve efficiency and provide maximum value for money by co-ordinating maintenance works with the implementation of Local Implementation Plan (LIP) projects.

We are also coordinating our planned maintenance on footways to increase opportunities for planting additional trees, greening infrastructure and improving existing tree pits. By forming a 3-year programme we can plan more effectively with other teams to ensure minimal disruption, but maximum results for residents and businesses.

Recommendations

1. For the Committee to note and comment on the report.
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Wards Affected: All

Our Values	Summary of how this report aligns to
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	the H&F Values
Building shared prosperity	Improved highways access for businesses.
Creating a compassionate council	The works will improve the public realm and create a healthy street environment. The programme is developed using resident feedback on problem areas in the borough.
Doing things with local residents, not to them	All works will be notified to residents two weeks in advance with any comments or issues factored into how we deliver the works. We always maintain access to resident's properties.
Being ruthlessly financially efficient	All works are checked by engineers before payment is made and the programme is aligned with LiP Traffic Schemes to make sure we are maximising the use of contractor on site to reduce costs.
Taking pride in H&F	New roads and footways increase the usability and appearance of a street.
Rising to the challenge of the climate and ecological emergency	Where possible, adding greening infrastructure during our planned maintenance works to improve the living environment for residents and businesses and to reduce the Council's carbon footprint where possible.

Financial Impact

- 1.1 Planned maintenance qualifies as capital expenditure and is funded by the capital programme. The capital budget for the next financial year is £1,880,000. The Councils priorities are to spend more money on the footways than the carriageways, thus a 60:40 ratio respectively has been used for the budget split.
- 1.2 A further breakdown of the finances per scheme is shown in Appendix 1 and 2,
which lists the carriageways and footways included in the 2021/2022 programme, along with the estimates for the work. The estimated costs include approximately 15% contingency for footways and 10% for carriageways. The final costs are monitored throughout the year as the work progresses, if the contingency is not required then additional schemes will be included in the programme.
- 1.3 A standard fee of 10% has been deducted from the budget, along with £200,000 being set aside for minor planned maintenance work which will entail patch resurfacing and repaving and ad-hoc requests by councillors and

residents. With Transport for London (TfL) funding for principal roads still unavailable, the A roads will be maintained through minor planned and general maintenance. This will leave a capital budget of £1,492,000 for the 2021/2022 highways planned maintenance programme.

- 1.4 The draft estimates for 2021/22 for Planned and Reactive highway maintenance works are shown below (considering the removal of £200,000 for Minor Planned maintenance):

Budget	Budget Source	2019/20	2020/21
Carriageways - Reactive	Revenue Budget	£342,000	£434,000
Carriageways - Planned	Capital Budget	£829,000	£672,000
Carriageway - Total		£1,171,000	£1,106,000
Footways – Reactive	Revenue Budget	£974,000	£1,010,000
Footways - Planned	Capital Budget	£1,051,000	£1,008,000
Footway - Total		£2,025,000	£2,008,000

The aspiration of the Highways team is to gradually spend more on planned works rather than general works. However, to make this shift quickly, a large investment would be needed to ensure that the standard of the highway does not drop

In the meantime, we intend to reduce Revenue expenditure by £100k per annum and increase Capital expenditure by the same amount. This means that more roads can be repaved / resurfaced over the 3-year period which will reduce the number of reactive defects which need to be repaired.

Greening – 20/25% of our footway schemes, S106 is a potential option

Background Papers Used in Preparing This Report

None

DETAILED ANALYSIS

Proposals and Analysis of Options

1. The Council's highway planned maintenance programme identifies the carriageways and footways in most need of planned repair. It is formulated based on annual condition surveys undertaken by the Highway Engineers and the routine inspection condition ratings. These factors are weighted by an 80:20 ratio respectively, producing an overall condition score. The roads are then prioritised based on their scores and if a Highway Inspector and/or a Councillor or Resident requests planned maintenance.

2. The annual condition survey undertaken by the Highway Engineers is a visual inspection which produces a condition score for each road based on the severity of defects in footways (i.e. broken paving slabs, undulations, trips, ponding) and in carriageways (i.e. reflective cracking, loss of chipping and rutting).
3. The routine inspections are carried out monthly on all principal roads and other busy routes, with the remaining roads on a three-monthly or six-monthly basis. Upon each routine inspection of a carriageway and footway, a score is given to indicate the condition of the asset.
4. Once the programme is formed, the roads are further validated taking account of programmed major utility road works, the LiP programme and other departmental schemes. Coordination of our works is a constant challenge we have tried to address with our programme, however by forming a 3-year programme we can swap roads around to ensure work is undertaken. Our programme will remain 'live'.
5. Our programme will remain flexible and is considered a live working list. An annual condition survey will be undertaken each financial year, to ensure we remain open to roads which quickly deteriorate. There will inevitably be instances when the maintenance work in some roads will have to be deferred. In these circumstances alternate roads will be substituted. The number of sites falling below our acceptable standard always exceeds our maintenance budget but are kept on our system as a reserve list if a substitution is required.
6. Through these systematic inspections, condition surveys and prioritisation criteria, together with the appropriate choice of materials the Council can maximise the road life at an optimum cost in a structured and systematic way. Continued improvements are sought through working with the Council's specialist term contractors to search for new technology and new materials to ensure value for money is achieved whilst obtaining long term durability.
7. To further this the Highways Team are amending their approach to planned maintenance in the Borough, whereby we will be tackling smaller sections of roads rather than whole roads that has been the approach to date. We believe this will target the Council's limited resources on the areas which require repaving / resurfacing, allowing Residents to see wider improvements in the Borough and ensuring we become more ruthlessly financially efficient.

Reasons for Decision

8. The Council in its capacity as Highway Authority has a statutory duty to maintain the highways that are maintainable at the public expense under Section 41 of the Highways Act 1980.

9. The highway network is the largest, most visible and valuable asset of the Borough, helping to shape the character and quality of the local area. The Council recognises the contribution of highways towards the Council's visions:
- To protect and enhance the Borough's residential and historic character and promoting pride in the borough.
 - To seek to continuously improve the Borough's streetscape by undertaking major improvement projects, promoting good design, using high quality materials and workmanship, and removing street clutter.
 - Creating and maintaining well-designed, well-managed, clean, green and safe streets and open spaces.
 - Maintaining streets to a high standard, so that all highway users can move safely.
10. The performance of the highway network affects the lives of everyone who live in or visit our Borough. Being at the heart of London, the highway network and associated infrastructure is of local and national importance. The Council has a duty to ensure that its highway network is in a safe and serviceable condition and is committed to complying with the applicable legal and regulatory requirements and adopting national standards and best practice.
11. A 3-year programme will ensure forward-planning which will enable the highway maintenance team to be ruthlessly financially efficient and to do things with residents and businesses rather than to them by ensuring we collaborate with other departments and teams to minimise disruption.

Equality Implications

12. Any Council has had due regard to its Public Sector Equality Duty contained in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.
13. There is a requirement on contractors to ensure that access to thoroughfares and services is maintained during any highway maintenance works. It is not anticipated, therefore, that there will be any negative impact on protected groups as a result of this highways maintenance programme.

Risk Management Implications

14. Local authorities have a duty to keep Highways well-maintained as recognised in the Council's risk register, risk number 8, Managing Statutory Duties. Well-managed highways play a central role in the lives of the communities they serve and are essential for economic growth. The Well-Managed Highways Infrastructure Code of Practice 2016 advocates a risk-based approach to all aspects of highway maintenance. The Annual Local Authority Road Maintenance Survey (ALARM) aims to take a snapshot of the condition of the local road network, providing a means of tracking any improvement or deterioration. At the same time, questions are asked related to funding, the type of maintenance carried out and the issue affecting maintenance service levels, to help provide context to the results. Contract payments are made on

completion of the work, no advance payment is made, mitigating financial risk exposure to the Council.

15. Highways have confirmed that there is a robust governance process in place as underlined the previous EY report on contract management. Part of the governance process means FM Conway's are required to meet us every month at performance meeting. No FM Conway's invoice is paid until we have checked and agreed the measurements and what is used on site. If we don't agree the materials used, we don't pay for them. We also hold an innovation board where FM Conway's are challenged on their costs and required to discuss efficiencies.

The framework we used was entered into a competitive procurement with FM Conway winning the contract on costs.

Other Implications

Procurement

16. Existing highway maintenance contracts will be used to carry out the proposed works explain in the report. However, the contracts must be periodically reviewed and managed to ensure they provide best value for the Council.
17. There should be a clear and consistent view of what the contract is producing, the type of commercial relationship desired, the basic contract structure and how it will be continuously managed.
18. A commercial strategy should be in place; the commercial strategy must be based upon the assessment of strategic drivers and the internal and external environment.
19. Services must be provided in accordance to the KPIs set up in the contracts and these should be continuously monitored.

Business

20. The contractors are required to notify by letter drop all the frontages including businesses affected by the work and wherever possible accommodate their needs during the works.

Social Value

21. The Contractor is required to place emphasis on social values. The Council's current term contractor (FM Conway) runs apprenticeship schemes and has annual company targets to fulfil for recruiting apprentices. Apprenticeships are advertised widely, potentially to reach applicants who are not in education, employment or training, or who are ex-offenders looking for an opportunity to gain training. Staff development is promoted through the FM Conway Highway

Academy, where staff can access a range of training. Conway's have recruited apprentices from the White City estate for their academy.

22. Contractor also supports Women into construction initiative through engagement with schools and Job Centre, running female only work experience weeks. Working with schools to help break gender stereotyping when it comes to career choices.

Health and wellbeing

23. The Council requires the contractors to comply with all the relevant Health and Safety legislation, including signing and guarding of works. Conway's have an extensive health and wellbeing being programme and are one of the first in the industry to incorporate Mental Health First Aiders within their teams. They run several workshops throughout the year on health and safety which is under constant review. They present a health and safety dashboard to each monthly meeting. The workshop includes one on disability appreciation for work sites and designs

Environment

24. The contractors are required by the Council to observe good environmental practice and comply with the relevant statutes, codes of practice and industry guidance. Following a successful trial of an electric 3.5 tonne pickup trucks in the Borough, our highway works contractor, F M Conway started using this vehicle in the Borough and are gradually replacing the existing diesel trucks with the electric versions. They have increased the recycling rate of materials they take out of the highway to 96% and are due to report an improvement on that recycling rate.

Consultation

25. The Council sends out notification letters to residents and stakeholders prior to commencement of work and uses the Council's website to publicise the work programme. They also display the notification letter on site.

List of Appendices:

Appendix 1

2021/2022 Highway planned maintenance carriageway programme

Street Name	Section	Ward	Estimated Scheme Cost
Aldensley Road	Brackenbury Road to Iffley Road	Hammersmith Broadway	£14,392.30
Ashcombe Street	Whole Road	Sands End	£18,382.75

Askew Road	Becklow Road to Hadyn Park Road	Askew	£8,791.75
Bloemfontein Road	Australia Road (southern arm) to Uxbridge Road	Wormholt and White City	£65,778.28
Bovingdon Road	Whole Road	Parsons Green and Walham	£20,375.36
Brook Green	Shepherd's Bush Road to end of green (southern arm)	Avonmore and Brook Green	£57,546.00
Chalkhill Road	Hotel Entrance to Bechtel House	Hammersmith Broadway	£35,167.00
Cranbury Road	Whole Road	Sands End	£34,959.20
Gonville Street	Whole Road	Palace Riverside	£12,595.95
Gunterstone Road	Whole Road	Avonmore and Brook Green	£55,947.50
Landridge Road	Whole Road	Town	£23,178.25
Margravine Road	Whole Road	Fulham Reach	£65,218.80
Moore Park Road	Waterford Road to Fulham Road	Parsons Green and Walham	£33,088.95
North End Road	Talgarth Road to Charleville Road	North End	£30,051.80
Parthenia Road	Basuto Road to Crondace Road	Parsons Green and Walham	£18,702.45
St Maur Road	Whole Road	Town	£27,973.75
Sullivan Road	Whole Road	Sands End	£30,004.65
Valliere Road	Whole Road	College Park and Old Oak	£15,985.00
Yew Tree Road	Whole Road	Wormholt and White City	£28,516.32
Total Estimated Cost =			£596,656.04

Appendix 2

2021/2022 Highway planned maintenance footway programme

Street Name	Section	Ward	Estimated scheme cost
Addison Gardens	Sinclair Gardens to Borough boundary	Addison	£13,137.05

Britannia Road	Moore Park Road to King's Road	Parsons Green and Walham	£33,562.82
Crondace Road	Whole Road	Parsons Green and Walham	£68,516.63
Du Cane Road	Patching along Artillery Lane to Wood Lane	College Park and Old Oak	£115,000.00
Du Cane Road	Wulfstan Street to Artillery Lane (South footway)	College Park and Old Oak	£47,117.80
Kinnear Road	Whole Road	Askew	£45,659.05
Munden Street	Whole Road	Avonmore and Brook Green	£21,102.19
Ormiston Grove	Whole Road	Wormholt and White City	£94,064.25
Perham Road	Queens Club Tennis entrance to Vereker Road	North End	£43,010.00
Ravenscourt Park	Whole Road	Ravenscourt Park	£143,106.00
Sedgeford Road	Whole Road	Wormholt and White City	£126,500.00
Shortlands	Whole Road	Hammersmith Broadway	£58,962.00
South Africa Road	North footway from Bloemfontein Road to zebra crossing	College Park and Old Oak	£33,375.10
St Peter's Villas	Whole Road	Ravenscourt Park	£31,849.37
Vernon Street	Whole Road	Avonmore and Brook Green	£25,626.28
Total Estimated Cost =			£900,588.53

Appendix 3

2022-2024 Highway planned maintenance carriageway priority list

Street Name	Section	Ward
Addison Gardens	Sinclair Gardens to Railway	Addison
Adie Road	Whole Road	Hammersmith Broadway
Alderville Road	Junction Bettridge Road	Parsons Green and Walham

Atwood Road	Whole Road	Ravenscourt Park
Beauclerc Road	Whole Road	Hammersmith Broadway
Bishop's Avenue	Whole Road	Palace Riverside
Brackenbury Road	Whole Road	Ravenscourt Park
Bronsart Road	Allestree Road to Kingswood	Munster
Campana Road	Whole Road	Parsons Green and Walham
Castletown Road	Challoner Street to North End Road	North End
Challoner Street	Whole Road	North End
Clancarty Road	Settrington Road to Peterborough Road	Parsons Green and Walham
Crondace Road	Whole Road	Parsons Green and Walham
Dolby Road	Whole Road	Parsons Green and Walham
Du Cane Road	Artillery Lane to Wood Lane	College Park and Old Oak
Emlyn Road	Stamford Brook Road to Palgrave Road	Ravenscourt Park
Filmer Road	Bishop's Road to Bloom Park Road	Munster
Fulham Park Gardens	Whole Road	Town
Greyhound Road	Kinnoul Road to Fulham Palace Road	Fulham Reach
Grimston Road	Junction Linver Road	Parsons Green and Walham
Harbord Street	Whole Road	Palace Riverside
Harbour Avenue	Whole Road	Sands End
Mirabel Road	Whole Road	Fulham Broadway
Munden Street	Whole Road	Avonmore and Brook Green
Perham Road	Whole Road	North End
Peterborough Road	Sullivan Road to Carnwath Road	Sands End
Ravenscourt Road	Whole Road	Ravenscourt Park

Richford Street	Whole Road	Hammersmith Broadway
South Africa Road	Whole Road	College Park and Old Oak
St Dionis Road	Whole Road	Town
St Peter's Villas	Whole Road	Ravenscourt Park
Stephendale Road	Wandsworth Bridge Road to Byam Street	Sands End
Whittingstall Road	Whole Road	Town
Wingate Road	Whole Road	Ravenscourt Park

Appendix 4

2022-2024 Highway planned maintenance footway priority list

Street Name	Section	Ward
Aldbourne Road	Whole Road	Wormholt and White City
Aycliffe Road	Whole Road	Wormholt and White City
Beaconsfield Walk	Whole Road	Town
Bentworth Road	Whole Road	College Park and Old Oak
Beryl Road	Whole Road	Fulham Reach
Bradbourne Street	Whole Road	Parsons Green and Walham
Chiswick Mall	Whole Road	Ravenscourt Park
Colet Gardens	Whole Road	Avonmore and Brook Green
Coverdale Road	Whole Road	Shepherd's Bush Green
Cristowe Road	Whole Road	Parsons Green and Walham
Curwen Road	Whole Road	Askew
Eynham Road	Shinfield Street to 1A	College Park and Old Oak
Eyot Gardens	Whole Road	Ravenscourt Park

Faroe Road	Whole Road	Avonmore and Brook Green
Fernhurst Road	Whole Road	Munster
Foxglove Street	Whole Road	Wormholt and White City
Godolphin Road	Thornfield Road to Uxbridge Road	Shepherd's Bush Green
Greyhound Road	Kinnoul Road to Star Road	Fulham Reach
Haldane Road	Whole Road	Fulham Broadway
Hamlet Gardens	Whole Road	Ravenscourt Park
Hammersmith Grove	Glenthorne Road to Goldhawk Road	Hammersmith Broadway
Hemlock Road	Old Oak Road to End (A40)	Wormholt and White City
Kinnoul Road	Whole Road	Fulham Reach
Larden Road	East footway - Valetta Road to Cobbold Rd	Askew
Maclise Road	Hazlitt Road to Beaconsfield Terrace Road	Avonmore and Brook Green
Mornington Avenue	Whole Road	Avonmore and Brook Green
Nascot Street	Whole Road	College Park and Old Oak
St Dionis Road	Whole Road	Town
Stephendale Road	Byam Street to End	Sands End
Trussley Road	Whole Road	Hammersmith Broadway
Warbeck Road	Whole Road	Shepherd's Bush Green
Weltje Road	Northern Arm	Ravenscourt Park

LONDON BOROUGH OF HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM

Report to: Community Safety and Environment Policy & Accountability Committee (CSEPAC)

Date: 08/11/2021

Subject: Parks Commission report and recommendations

Report of: Cllr Holder, Cabinet Member for Strategy

Report authors: Steve Hollingworth – Assistant Director Leisure, Sport & Culture
Jim Cunningham – Climate Policy & Strategy Lead

Responsible Director: Sharon Lea, Strategic Director of Environment

SUMMARY

This is a covering report accompanying the final report and recommendations of Hammersmith & Fulham's (H&F) resident-led Parks Commission (Appendix A). The commission launched in January 2020, and their recommendations follow a year of extensive research and engagement with council officers, residents, and other park users and stakeholders. Interim recommendations were made in June 2020 to support the re-procurement of the grounds' maintenance contract.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the committee note, and comment, on the final report and recommendations of H&F's resident-led Parks Commission (Appendix A)

Wards Affected: All

Our Values	Summary of how this report aligns to the H&F Values
Building shared prosperity	The commission has examined the role of park charges, commercial enterprises, entrepreneurship and volunteering opportunities in providing prosperity, equitable access and opportunities for park users, and made recommendations that aim to maximise the benefit to all residents.
Creating a compassionate council	The report seeks to widen access to

	park use and decision-making through more equitable representation and addressing barriers to access and encourages greater attention to disabilities and the full range of user needs in considering employment opportunities and facilities.
Doing things with local residents, not to them	The recommendations have been produced by a resident-led commission, and map out how parks can achieve the greatest possible engagement and representation from their communities.
Being ruthlessly financially efficient	Proposals for the review of commercial arrangements in parks seek to ensure H&F and residents obtain the greatest possible financial returns and benefit from park space.
Taking pride in H&F	The report aims to see all parks reach a standard that reflects the preferences of their local communities, and to widen access to decision-making, ensuring all residents can take pride in their local open spaces.
Rising to the challenge of the climate and ecological emergency	A number of recommendations support H&F's climate and ecology strategy, including management practices and monitoring that benefit biodiversity, and the exploration of open spaces as sites for low-carbon heat generation to decarbonise the borough. They align with and reinforce recommendations from previous resident-led commissions including those on air quality, biodiversity, and the climate and ecological emergency.

Financial Impact

This report recommends that the committee note and comment on the Commission's recommendations and findings. As such, there are no direct financial implications arising from this recommendation. Further decision reports will be required as the Council seeks to respond to the recommendations made. The financial impact of any future proposals will be the subject of separate decision reports for consideration.

Legal Implications

There are no legal implications in the noting and commenting on the findings report.

Contact Officers:

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Background Papers Used in Preparing This Report

[Hammersmith & Fulham Parks Commission – interim report, 1st June 2020](#)

Background

1. In January 2020, the council appointed ten local resident commissioners following an open call for expressions of interest, to review the borough's vision, strategy and management of parks and open spaces, answering three core questions:
 - i. What is the vision for our parks, green and open spaces?
 - ii. What is the best way to involve local people in the decisions made about our parks?
 - iii. What currently works, what could be better, and what doesn't work in the way our parks and open spaces are managed?
2. The commission researched and engaged widely in developing its recommendations, including:
 - i. An open call for evidence from residents during spring 2020
 - ii. Online resident survey
 - iii. Online consultation with 'friends of' parks groups, tenants' and residents' associations, and park sports and service providers

- iv. Examination of documentary evidence
 - v. Discussions with a wide range of residents, council officers, other stakeholders, and external experts.
3. In June 2020, the commission produced interim recommendations to support the development of the council's procurement strategy for the grounds maintenance of parks, public open spaces and housing estates (Appendix B.3). An update on the council's implementation of these is available at Appendix B.4. Further recommendations beyond the grounds maintenance procurement were held over for inclusion in the commission's final report, now being presented to Cabinet.
4. These final recommendations are the product of enormous dedication, time, diligent research and extensive discussion from each of the commissioners, and the council is greatly indebted to them for their efforts.

Recommendations of the Commission's report

5. The commission's report makes twenty-two practical headline recommendations concerning democracy and decision-making; how parks are maintained and used; how they are financed; and how green space and biodiversity are enhanced and protected.
6. Each headline recommendation is accompanied by more detail, and proposed outputs and timelines for implementation.
7. The findings and recommendations are attached as Appendix A.

Reasons for decision

8. The report represents a thorough analysis and insightful vision for the borough's open spaces. The independent commission's findings should be noted and received with thanks, and the council is very grateful to all members of the commission for their hard work, time and expertise in developing the report. Individual responses to the policy and project proposals contained within the report will always require Cabinet decisions and approval.

Equality Implications

9. One of the aims of the report is to better involve and represent residents equitably in decision-making, as well as providing opportunities such as apprenticeships for those currently less able to access them, and a minimum level of access to facilities for all. There are likely to be beneficial equality implications from this report when individual recommendations are progressed into policy and projects, and the equality impacts should be assessed at this point.

Risk Management Implications

10. The recommendations outlined in the Commission's report will need to be evaluated against a number of areas including ease of implementation, cost

and time, benefit and risk. For the Commission recommendations which are subsequently agreed to be progressed, ownership of actions needs to be clearly identified and appropriate programme governance arrangements put in place to monitor and track their implementation.

Implications completed by David Hughes, Director of Audit, Fraud, Risk and Insurance, tel: 07817 507 695

Climate and Ecological Emergency Implications

11. There are no direct climate and ecology implications from noting the recommendations. Several of the recommendations, including 'Powering parks' (12) and recommendations 15-22 concerning green space and biodiversity, complement the council's climate and ecology strategy, and if implemented would lead to a positive improvement on the borough's greenhouse gas and biodiversity baselines.

Implications verified by: Jim Cunningham (Climate Policy & Strategy Lead – 07468 365829)

Procurement implications

12. There is no direct procurement resulting from this report as it is for information only. There may be procurement implications for individual decisions and initiatives in the future based on the recommendations in the report. Future procurements will need to ensure governance and compliance.

Implications verified by: Ian Hawthorn, Assistant Director Environment Special Projects and Highways - 07968857843

Consultation

13. The commission was formed to give resident-led proposals to the council on the vision and management of parks. The commission engaged extensively with the community in preparing this report, including through an online resident survey (a summary of responses is included as Appendix B.5) and survey of service providers (Appendix B.8), as well as discussions with individual and group stakeholders.

LIST OF APPENDICES

[Appendix A: Parks Commission final report](#)

[Appendix B: Parks Commission appendices](#)



The Report of the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham Independent Parks Commission





The Report of the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham Independent Parks Commission

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Introduction

The London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham's Independent Parks Commission, convened in January 2020, was asked to provide recommendations on how residents can get the most from the borough's parks and open spaces, improve and protect them and make them sustainable for future generations.

As an independent commission, we are reporting our findings to the borough's Community Safety and Environment Policy and Accountability Committee.

We have found that our aspirations for parks and open spaces are shared by the Council and its strategic leadership team. Our endeavour has been to examine how the Council might better achieve these aspirations, and how it might improve, protect and sustain these essential amenities so that they are available to all residents now and in the future.

In reaching our conclusions and making our recommendations, we have looked at existing policies and their application and consulted with residents, stakeholders, council staff, contractors and other UK based park and open space organisations.

Our report set out to address the [terms of reference](#) set out by the Council for the review. These include:

- What is the vision for our parks, green and open spaces?

- What is the best way to involve local people in the decisions made about our parks?
- What currently works, what could be better, and what doesn't work in the way our parks and open spaces are managed?

The work of the Commission

An open call for commissioners was advertised in the Council's newsletter, and a group of residents with mixed perspectives was appointed by the chair, the leader of the Council, and the chair of the Council's Community Safety and Environment Policy and Accountability Committee.

The Commission made a call for evidence from residents during spring 2020. We engaged widely with residents, park users and local communities, despite limitations presented by the Covid-19 pandemic. Submissions to the Commission were made through an online survey, detailed letters, and online consultation with 'Friends of' parks, and tenants' groups as well as park sports and service providers. The Commission spoke to a wide range of stakeholders and is extremely grateful for the wealth of input received.

From our early engagement a set of principles emerged which underpin our recommendations. These are:

- The parks belong to the residents of Hammersmith and Fulham; they are stakeholders and, in conjunction with the Council, the custodians of parks today and in the future.
- Use of Parks should be affordable for all residents.
- Decision-making should be transparent and inclusive.
- Parks can have an overwhelming positive impact on individual's health and well-being, providing significant indirect economic benefit.
- Funding for parks should be enhanced by efficient management of facilities.
- Parks should do their best to meet the diverse needs of residents.
- There should be explicit and obvious ways for residents to engage with their parks.
- Parks should showcase the Council's support for biodiversity and achieving net zero carbon.
- Park users should be expected to respect other users.

The Commission worked with Council Officers and others to gather documentary evidence and developed its recommendations, guided by the evidence base, the principles outlined above, and the Commission's terms of reference.

Vision

The parks, green and open spaces in the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham should be accessible and affordable for all. They should be funded in the same way as any essential service, so that all residents have access to space and facilities to maintain mental and physical health and wellbeing.



Headline recommendations

The headline recommendations of the Parks Commission are given below with links to a more detailed description of each recommendation, including proposals for implementation.

1. Parks Forum

In order to achieve greater resident participation in our parks' policies and planning and provide greater oversight of practices and maintenance, the Council should establish a permanent, borough-wide, resident led Parks Forum that will:

- Support local park stakeholder groups; represent the interests of parks without a resident park stakeholder group and provide a forum where those stakeholder groups can come together to share ideas and concerns.
- Consult with the Council on borough-wide strategic park plans, park improvements, maintenance and expenditure.
- Ensure wide public engagement in decisions about parks.
- Assist the Council in providing oversight of the park stakeholder groups and the refreshed memorandum of understanding to which they subscribe.
- Provide independent oversight for the implementation of the adopted recommendations from this report.

The Parks Forum will act as an umbrella body to work collaboratively with the Council, park stakeholder groups and residents to ensure inclusivity, enhance transparency, and build consistency in the decision making around parks.

[Detailed recommendation](#)

2. Park Stakeholder Groups

Parks should be encouraged and supported by the Council to have an inclusive and active volunteer-led stakeholder or Friends group to represent users and residents given the positive impact such groups can have on the surrounding community. The criteria used for recognition as a park stakeholder or Friends group should be clearly laid out through a refreshed “memorandum of understanding” and be applied consistently across the borough. Council Officers, with regular Council and Parks Forum oversight, should ensure the terms of the MOU are being met. In return, these park stakeholder or Friends groups should be supported by Council officers, and actively be consulted about maintenance, plans for use and priorities for investment in their respective parks.

[Detailed recommendation](#)

3. Park affordability and pricing policies

The Council should immediately review its charging and pricing policies for park land use to ensure that residents, in particular schools and young people, are not prevented from using park facilities because of prohibitive costs. Pricing should be simple, transparent, and consistent and offer good value for money, with some means of access for those who cannot pay.

[Detailed recommendation](#)

4. Digital Park Hub and information boards

The LBHF should create a centralised digital platform (Digital Parks Hub) that brings all information and activities around parks into one easy to access location. It should include basic information on all the borough's parks, enable users to book and pay for all facilities, provide up-to-date information on forthcoming events, help residents get involved, and allow users to report concerns and suggest ideas. This will also provide improved data on park usage for the Council and generate meaningful cost efficiencies. Large up to date notice boards at the main gates of parks should supplement the Digital Hub so everyone can access basic information.

[Detailed recommendation](#)

5. Park Wardens

Each park should have a designated and named park warden. The park warden should be the direct contact for all residents regarding all issues pertaining to their park, and provide oversight for the activities, facilities bookings and maintenance in their park ensuring any issues or disputes that arise are resolved quickly.

[Detailed recommendation](#)

6. Park Officer Team

The LBHF Park Officer team should be reviewed to ensure it contains the right capability and expertise to enable effective and efficient management of the park estate.

[Detailed recommendation](#)

7. Transparent park funding

The Council should provide transparent information on how parks are funded to all residents. This should include all sources of funding, including: money generated from the parks directly and through the annual council budget; available Section 106 (S106) and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding; approved grants.

[Detailed recommendation](#)

8. Ongoing commitment to basic park funding

Regardless of total income and funding generated by and for parks in any given year, the Council should provide basic park maintenance and repairs from its annual budget on a continual, long-term basis. The Commission suggests the Council should acknowledge the many benefits of parks for residents and users and make a clear commitment to support park funding over the long term.

[Detailed recommendation](#)

9. Park strategic plans

All major parks (i.e. those that are large in size and/or have high footfall) should have a dedicated strategic plan which includes focus areas for maintenance and priorities for investment for the next several years. These plans should be written in collaboration with the local recognised park stakeholder group and the Parks Forum, and reviewed and refreshed annually. Their facilities should be reviewed and basic amenities, for example toilets; their maintenance and cleaning, should be included in strategic plans. Smaller and lower footfall parks should have a combined plan, which outlines focus areas and priorities amongst them. Decisions about investment allocation across parks should be based on these plans, transparent, and balanced.

[Detailed recommendation](#)

10. Contracts for leasing park land

Contracts for use of park land or long-term delivery of services on park land should benefit residents and the community. In particular, contracts that exclusively lease land to privately run businesses should be commercially competitive, appropriately account for the value of the land, not be linked solely to operator profit, be subject to rent review clauses and offer provisions for access to those who cannot pay (where appropriate).

[Detailed recommendation](#)

11. Policies to encourage entrepreneurship and innovation

Park and Council policies should encourage new partnership structures that support the local community and generate income for reinvestment.

[Detailed recommendation](#)

12. Powering parks

The Commissioners believe there is scope to investigate the feasibility of installing Ground Source Heat Pumps (GSHPs) under land and/or buildings in some of the borough's parks and open spaces to generate carbon-free energy. We recommend the

Council consults with independent engineering consultancies and draws up a borough-wide open space green energy strategy. The installation of GSHPs should be considered whenever refurbishment projects in LBHF parks are under discussion and must be included in the Council's green energy strategy.

[Detailed recommendation](#)

13. Park activities and involvement – including apprenticeships and volunteering

In the interim report the Commission proposed that the creation of a park maintenance apprenticeship scheme as well as work placements for young people and people with disabilities should be rewarded and written into the new maintenance contract. There are also broader opportunities for developing skills, interests and social relationships in the parks. Where possible, parks should have an activities plan, addressing community needs and aspirations to help support this.

[Detailed recommendation](#)

14. Park land use

The Council should seek to better understand the range of park needs from our specific resident demographic, as well as schools and other community groups within LBHF who rely on parks. This understanding should be updated at a reasonable interval (e.g. every 5 years) to reflect changes. The resulting information should be used to make informed decisions about the fair allocation of park space. Residents and park stakeholder groups should be consulted on proposed changes to this balance.

[Detailed recommendation](#)

15. Ensure existing open space is protected

The Council should ensure that existing open space is strongly protected from encroachment and inappropriate development. The guiding principle should be that no publicly owned open space – including allotments, cemeteries and open space on school land - be lost without providing equivalent new open space in the borough.

[Detailed recommendation](#)

16. New open space creation

The Council should use planning policy to create more publicly accessible usable open space. As part of this, the Council should rewrite its planning guidelines requiring new developments to provide more usable public and public/private open space. New open

space should be environmentally friendly (in terms of layout, type of landscaping materials and planting) and provide public connectivity with other open spaces and green corridors.

[Detailed recommendation](#)

17. Biodiversity statistics

The Council should monitor and report biodiversity enhancements carried out in the Borough. The Council should use the information from the biodiversity survey it is currently conducting to inform strategy, while the Commission recommends that annual biodiversity statistics should be published.

[Detailed recommendation](#)

18. Meadow and wild habitat creation

To improve biodiversity in parks and open spaces, the Council should introduce a rolling programme of new wildflower meadows, mown twice annually with specialised machinery. This should be part of an initiative to increase and enhance wildlife habitats and support biodiversity in parks and open spaces carried out following consultation with users and local stakeholders.

[Detailed recommendation](#)

19. Tree planting

The Council should greatly accelerate its rolling programme of tree-planting to improve biodiversity and CO2 absorption. This proposal should not just include the parks but pavement and road closure sites and decommissioned car parking spaces. Usage of park land for this purpose should always be done in consultation with residents and users.

[Detailed recommendation](#)

20. Vegetative pollution barriers

With air pollution from vehicle emissions a serious problem in the borough on its six-lane highways (including Talgarth Road/Great West Road, the West Cross Route and the A40), the Council should undertake extensive tree planting to restrict the spread of pollutants and consider hedges for localised shielding of pedestrians and walkers.

[Detailed recommendation](#)

21. Best horticultural practice

The Council should aim to raise horticultural standards throughout its parks and open spaces. Good horticultural and ecological management must be specified and delivered by the maintenance contractor. The best horticultural practice notes should include soil care, best practice in tree and plant pruning, planting for pollinators, and use of integrated weed/pest management. It should also give up-to-date advice relating to the spread of newly introduced pests and diseases and new research on pollinators.

[Detailed recommendation](#)

22. Riverfront strategic concept

With completion of the Thames Riverside Walk and new developments increasing the popularity of the riverfront, the Council should seek to develop a unified plan for the area. It should be considered in its entirety to improve provision and biodiversity.

[Detailed recommendation](#)



Detailed Recommendations



1. Parks Forum

Headline recommendation

In order to achieve greater resident participation in the policies and planning and provide greater oversight of practices and maintenance, the Council should establish a permanent, borough-wide, resident led Parks Forum that will:

- Support local park stakeholder groups; represent the interests of parks without a resident park stakeholder group and provide a forum where those stakeholder groups can come together to share ideas and concerns.
- Consult with the Council on borough-wide strategic park plans, park improvements, maintenance and expenditure.
- Ensure wide public engagement in decisions about parks.
- Assist the Council in providing oversight of the park stakeholder groups and the refreshed memorandum of understanding to which they subscribe.
- Provide independent oversight for the implementation of the adopted recommendations from this report.

The Parks Forum will act as an umbrella body to work collaboratively with the Council, park stakeholder groups and residents to ensure inclusivity, enhance transparency, and build consistency in the decision making around parks.

Detailed recommendation

In order to facilitate better engagement, communication, and oversight of parks throughout the borough we recommend that the Council constitute a permanent, resident led “Parks Forum.” This committee of (we suggest nine to eleven) residents would be an umbrella body

collaborating with the Council and residents to achieve greater public involvement in the decisions about the parks and support better management of them.

Council staff have told us that they value the views of park stakeholder groups, park users and residents. Likewise, park stakeholder groups and residents indicate they would welcome the opportunity to work more closely with the Council, communicate more successfully with Officers and general maintenance contractors, and share ideas. Some issues and policies affect parks across the borough but presently there is no forum to discuss these wider park issues or to consult on strategic goals.

Setting up an independently chaired Parks Forum, with appropriate Council Officer support, will ensure that residents' requirements and priorities across the borough are reflected in the way in which the parks are run and in helping to shape long-term strategy. It will help ensure closer collaboration with officers and Councillors on both strategic and operational decisions about our parks in order to achieve the best outcome. Alongside an independent chair, there should be equal numbers of representative park stakeholder group chairs and diverse individuals with broad skills who have responded to an open advertisement.

The Parks Forum will:

- Support, encourage and work with local park stakeholder groups and provide a forum for the exchange of ideas and concerns.
- Consult with other relevant local groups.
- Consider the interests and requirements of parks without a park stakeholder group.
- Proactively seek to understand residents' and users' needs and concerns, and report these back to the Council and its maintenance contractors.
- Consult with the Council on:
 - Sources and use of income (allocations, grants, earned income)
 - Expenditure plans and priorities
 - Charging and pricing policies
- Support the council, local businesses and community groups with developing new and innovative ideas for parks, in line with resident and user needs
- Assist the Council in providing oversight of the park stakeholder groups and ensure the memorandum of understanding of and agreements between the park stakeholder groups and the Council are in good standing.

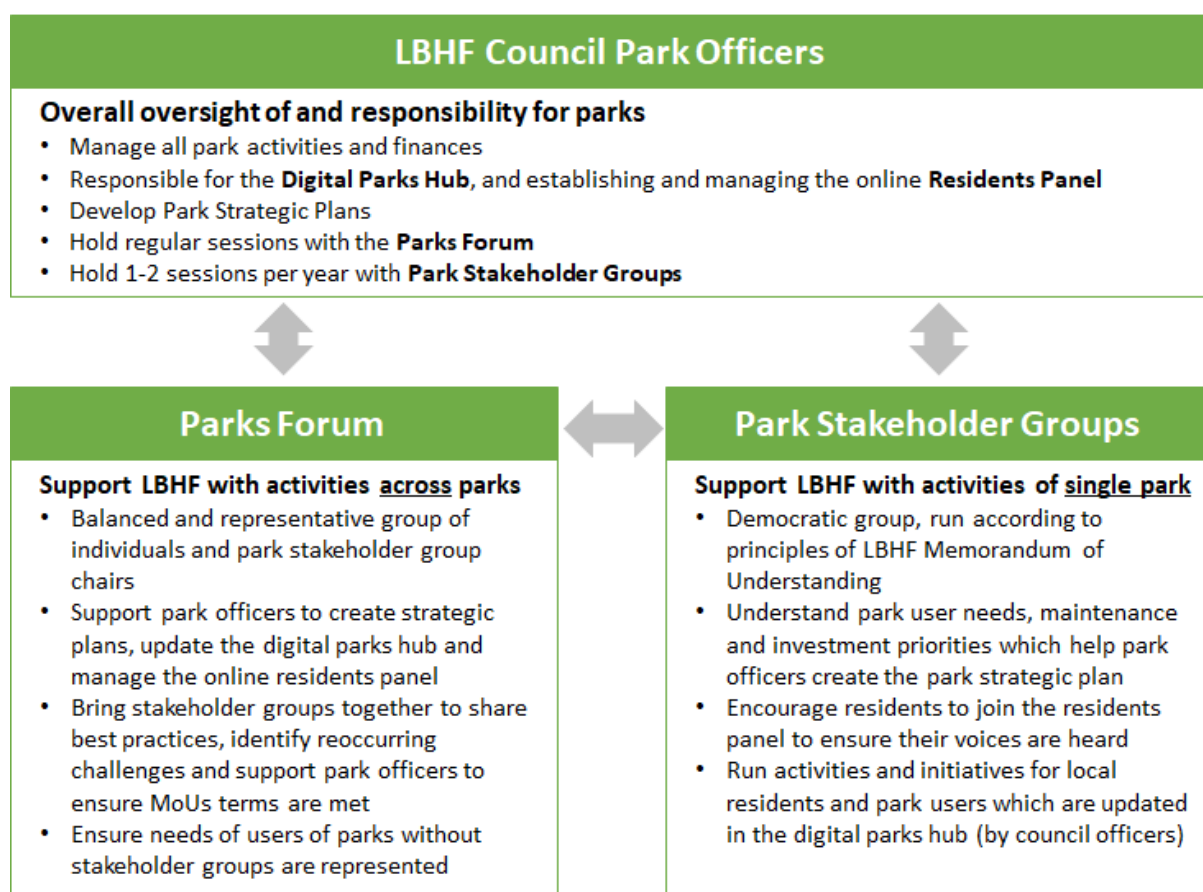
The Parks Forum On-Line Panel

Finally, in the survey we conducted, many residents requested future consultations be online; other residents expressed concern about the insularity of some of the park stakeholder groups. The Commission suggests that the Forum can help to ensure residents' views and concerns are more widely represented by setting up a residents' panel online, through which residents can feed back their thoughts to the Forum and Council.

This panel would be open to all residents of the borough. Residents would register via the new Digital Park Hub (see recommendation 4).

Implementation:

- The initial set-up of the Parks Forum, its memorandum of understanding and governance should be undertaken by Council Officers. Two members of the Parks Commission will help officers set up and establish the Parks Forum as required.
- Establishment of the Parks Forum within 2 to 3 months of the Parks Commission's report, to include appointment of an independent Chair and diverse members, including representatives of park stakeholder groups.
- Establish a minimum number of formal meetings of the Forum with the lead Council member, the Parks Department and maintenance contractor within 3 months.
- Support the Park Officer team with review of existing park stakeholder groups alongside a full refresh of MoUs within 4 months of report publication.
- Criteria for recognising park stakeholder groups agreed between Council and Parks Forum published within 6 months.





2. Park Stakeholder Groups

Headline recommendation

Parks should be encouraged and supported by the Council to have an inclusive and active volunteer-led stakeholder or Friends group to represent users and residents given the positive impact such groups can have on the surrounding community. The criteria used for recognition as a park stakeholder or Friends group should be clearly laid out through a refreshed “memorandum of understanding” and be applied consistently across the borough. Council Officers, with regular Council and Parks Forum oversight, should ensure the terms of the MOU are being met. In return, these park stakeholder or Friends groups should be supported by Council officers, and actively be consulted about maintenance, plans for use and priorities for investment in their respective parks.

Detailed recommendation

Park stakeholder or Friends groups can be an effective way to enhance public engagement in the way parks are run. Many parks in LBHF have benefitted from a group of local volunteers, made up of residents and users who support and care about their park, are inclusive and representative of local needs and have regular communication and support from the Council. Such groups have greatly contributed to the health and vibrancy of their park communities.

The Council has not always provided consistent and regular support and oversight of these groups, and our survey has shown that many residents in the borough are unaware of their existence and/or how to get involved with them.

To enable these volunteer-led groups to achieve their full potential, we recommend the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the council and the groups should be reviewed and refreshed, agreed with all recognised groups, and monitored on an ongoing basis. As part of this, a commitment should be made by Council Officers to regularly engage with recognised park stakeholder and Friends groups to encourage active involvement in decisions for their park.

Park stakeholder or Friends groups can be constituted as they prefer, for example as a voluntary committee, as a charity or as a social enterprise. Expectations of the groups should include things such as:

- Evidence that the group is able to consult and represent a wide range of residents and park users.
- Rotation of leadership with term limits.
- Easy to access contact details and ways to join (including, but not necessarily limited to the Digital Park Hub).
- Meetings open to the public with agendas advertised well in advance.

In return, the Council will make reasonable efforts to include the stakeholder group in planning for their park including (but not limited to):

- Decisions about land usage
- Maintenance focus areas
- Priorities for investment
- Creation and updates of the Park Strategic Plan
- Information and updates in the Digital Park Hub

We recognise that not all parks and open spaces in LBHF will have stakeholder representation. In these cases, the Parks Forum should ensure that the needs of their users are considered in all policy and funding discussions.

Implementation:

- A review and refresh of MoUs including criteria for recognising park stakeholder groups agreed between Council and Parks Forum within 12 months of report publication.
-

3. Park affordability and pricing policies

Headline recommendation

The Council should immediately review its charging and pricing policies for park land use to ensure that residents, in particular schools and young people, are not prevented from using park facilities because of prohibitive costs. Pricing should be simple, transparent, and consistent and offer good value for money, with some means of access for those who cannot pay.

Detailed Recommendation

Parks should be affordable for all residents, schools and community groups to use, with fair and accessible policies in place to encourage their use, in particular by young people in the borough.

Through the research we have done as a commission over the past 18 months we have found multiple examples of schools, groups and individuals being unable to use – or being put off using - LBHF park facilities because of its pricing policies. This was both because the price itself is too high and because the quality and nature of the facility being rented does not merit the fee.

Comparing the LBHF's current fees against other neighbouring boroughs has made clear our facilities are too highly priced (with like-for-like prices from 30% to 300% higher); offer poor value for money, particularly when it comes to LBHF's unmarked "sport areas" in open grassy spaces; and that our pricing grid is too complex with least 70 different prices depending on variables such as sport, pitch type, park, user type, booking duration and time of week.

We recommend that the Council immediately undertakes a review of pricing policies and fees to deliver a fresh approach to pricing that meets four key principles:

1. **Simple and Transparent:** Residents should be able to find and easily understand rental prices for facilities and land. Only exceptional events should need to be individually priced. Pricing should vary by as few dimensions as possible, such as facility category, time of day, number of bookings and user type.
2. **Consistent:** Prices for rental categories (as defined above) should be the same across all parks. For example, renting a tennis court for 1 hour should cost the same as rental of a 5-a-side astroturf and an 11-a-side football pitch (at equivalent times and by equivalent user groups).
3. **Good Value for Money:** Where fees are applicable, facilities should be good quality, well-maintained, and reflect the amount paid. For example, where groups pay to use unmarked, unspecific grassy areas in a park, fees should reflect this.
4. **Accessible:** No one should be unable to use park facilities. Concessions should apply to particular groups e.g. state schools, time of day and/or age.

Implementation:

- [Park Officers should draft new charging policies by Q4 2021](#)

- The Parks Forum and park stakeholder groups should be given 3 months to validate these policies and/or suggest changes
- Pricing policies should be reviewed periodically, at least once per annum

Fulham Palace: An Ancient Site

The earliest archaeological finds from Fulham Palace are from the Late Mesolithic to Early Neolithic, around 4,000 BC, and digs have found evidence of life until the Early Iron Age, around 300 BC.

Excavations have uncovered Roman coins, pottery, building materials and evidence of paths and roadways from the occupation of Britain from AD 43 to 410. A Viking settlement later stood on the site, and prior to the late 14th century, the Palace became the largest domestic moated site in England. The first manor house may have stood close to the Thames.

Records show bishops lived at the palace from 1141. Bishop Grindal (1559-1570) is credited with establishing a botanic garden while Bishop Compton (1675-1713) collected rare plants. The site was opened to the public in 1976.



4. Digital Park Hub and park information boards

Headline recommendation

The LBHF should create a centralised digital platform (Digital Parks Hub) that brings all information and activities around parks into one easy to access location. It should include basic information on all the borough's parks, enable users to book and pay for all facilities, provide up-to-date information on forthcoming events, help residents get involved, and allow users to report concerns and suggest ideas. This will also provide improved data on park usage for the Council and generate meaningful cost efficiencies. Large up to date notice boards at the main gates of parks should supplement the Digital Hub so everyone can access basic information.

Detailed recommendation

It should be easy to find out information about the parks and book activities within them. If residents are to fully engage with the activities available, they need to know what is happening, how to book facilities, and how to provide feedback that will be dealt with. Equally, if businesses and community groups are to be encouraged to run programmes in our parks it needs to be simple and efficient for them.

Currently there are multiple ways of communicating and interacting with the Council about park related matters. Information is not always easy to find, and many things are not digitally enabled, which goes against the expectations and habits of many users and residents today.

We recommend investment in a simple Digital Parks Hub which should help everyone to engage quickly and efficiently. The Hub should be the main go-to source for all park information, supplemented with appropriate physical information devices for those who need it, including large, regularly maintained, notice boards at the main entrances to parks.

The digital platform should provide:

- Basic information about all parks and facilities including opening hours and contact details (e.g. for the park warden)
- The ability for residents and users to book all sports and other facilities (including deep links to bookings run via other 3rd parties, such as ClubSpark for tennis and PlayFootball for Hammersmith Park)
- Similarly, the ability for businesses and community groups to book park facilities for their programmes, and then for their users to book and pay for these programmes
- Ways to engage with park activities and groups, including up-to-date information on upcoming events
- Ways for residents to 'have your say', contact Park Wardens, report problems, join consultations
- Links to other sources of information – e.g. the London Gardens trust

An example of the Digital Parks Hub and the type of information and functionality it could contain is below. Where possible, the Digital Hub and information boards should be updated and refreshed in consultation with park stakeholder groups and the Parks Forum.

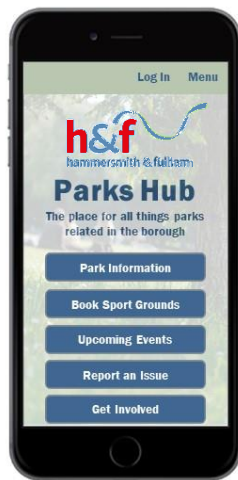
A further benefit of the Digital Parks Hub will be the extensive data that it will bring together, allowing the Council and businesses to better understand user demand (by location, time of day, etc) and pricing sensitivity. It should also make running the parks much more cost efficient for the Council, automating many processes that are heavily manual today.

It may also be possible for stakeholder groups to have their own dedicated pages within the Hub that they edit directly, replacing existing stakeholder websites. This could help overcome any perceived IT barriers for the groups.

Implementation:

- Park Officers (with Commissioner support if helpful) to draft key functionality requirements release an RFP (request for proposal) to potential partners
- Completion of a Digital Hub minimum viable product by Q4 2022
- New releases on a regular basis to continually improve functionality

We have proposed the creation of a H&F Digital Park Hub that joins together all things park-related



- 1 Provide basic information on all borough parks, including
 - Opening Hours
 - Facilities
 - Park warden contact
 - Stakeholder group details
 - 5 year park plan
- 2 Allow all sports grounds to be booked, including
 - Booking calendar & availability
 - Pricing
 - Payment
 - Cancellation
- 3 Provide up-to-date information on upcoming Events
- 4 Allow users and residents to report concerns about Parks
 - Maintenance & repair needs
 - Ideas for improvement
- 5 Help residents find ways to get involved, including:
 - Community group contacts
 - Volunteer projects
 - Crowdfunding projects

5. Park wardens

Headline recommendation

Each park should have a designated and named park warden. The park warden should be the direct contact for all residents regarding all issues pertaining to their park, and provide oversight for the activities, facilities bookings and maintenance in their park ensuring any issues or disputes that arise are resolved quickly.

Detailed recommendation

Both anecdotal evidence and the parks' Commonplace survey suggests a return to named park wardens and the oversight functions they perform would be welcomed by residents. Residents often struggle to engage with the Council on matters pertaining to their park. They feel helpless to report, repair, or improve their parks. They do not know whom to contact. A park warden for each park, or cluster of parks, would increase engagement and accessibility in parks and ensure any issues that arise are resolved quickly.

The park warden should be responsible for understanding and overseeing the full workings for each park (maintenance, facilities, usage) and become a single point of contact for residents. A warden would greatly improve park efficiency and responsiveness and give all residents a greater sense of ownership in their parks.

How Parks Help Health

The use of gardens and natural green space as a therapeutic or healing intervention in Europe is recorded as early as 11th Century monastery gardens, but recent evidence confirms humans have likely always known the benefits.

Exercise helps to develop strength, agility and aerobic fitness, and to prevent chronic illnesses often associated with stress and physical inactivity. Being outdoors in a natural setting enhances these benefits. Accessible, well-maintained, and good quality green spaces produce better health outcomes,² when enhanced with structural complexity, a natural environment and a high degree of biodiversity.

Humans have colour vision, which enhances our experience of the natural world, predominantly the green of plants and the blue of sky and water, restful colours. Exposure to sunlight, even on a dull winter day, produces vitamin D, boosts immunity, regulates sleep and improves mood. Molecules released by trees, soil fungi and bacteria can provoke immune responses to allergies, asthma and even illnesses such as cancer and diabetes.

The UK derives an estimated value of £34.2bn from visiting parks, according to Fields in Trust, calculated to save the NHS £111mn in visits to GPs.

The warden should also provide badly needed oversight for maintenance teams and service providers, such as sports groups and coaches, helping them resolve booking issues, disputes or safety concerns. They can address concerns and problems immediately.

Residents should be given a mobile phone number to call this named person to make enquiries, suggestions or report concerns.

A park warden who is a named and known figure in the local area creates a sense of safety for residents and fosters local community engagement and a sense of broader ownership of the residents' amenity. They should work with and help support and provide oversight to park stakeholder groups.

This recommendation was first made in the Parks Commission's Interim report and is amended. The Council's response and suggestions can be found [here](#).

Implementation:

- Named park wardens should be put in place by Q1 2022.
- A park warden can be assigned to a single park or a cluster of small parks depending on the size and demands of the park(s) in question.

6. Park Officer Team

Headline recommendation

The LBHF park officer team should be reviewed to ensure it contains the right capability and expertise to enable effective and efficient management of the park estate.

Detailed recommendation

The LBHF park officer team should be evaluated to ensure it contains the right capabilities and skills to efficiently and effectively manage the park estate. As part of this exercise, the team's responsibilities should be more clearly defined to include oversight of all park-related activities (including property and events) to allow for more joined up and optimised plans.

Skills on the team should include:

- The ability to work closely with and engage a diverse range of residents and users
- The ability to negotiate and manage commercially competitive contracts
- The ability to efficiently manage multiple park operators and performance criteria
- The ability to develop and update strategic plans
- The ability to set simple and transparent pricing policies based on relevant benchmarks.
- Fundraising experience and dedicated time to secure external grants

The Council's Park Officer team should have sufficient resources to work with the Parks Forum and park stakeholder groups to provide support and oversight.

The Council should also continue to employ a dedicated Ecology officer to ensure sufficient environmental focus.

Implementation:

- Refreshed park officer team responsibilities and capability requirements created within 12 months of publication
 - Revamped team fully in place within 24 months of publication
-

7. Transparent park funding

Headline recommendation

The Council should provide transparent information on how parks are funded to all residents. This should include all sources of funding, including: money generated from the parks directly and through the annual council budget; available Section 106 (S106) and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding; approved grants.

Detailed Recommendation

Trying to piece together a complete view of total funds available for our parks is a challenge, with the income generated by and raised for park land and properties highly fragmented across different council departments and decision-making bodies.

There are concerns that some parks do not always receive their 'fair share' of available funds and that some money intended for parks (e.g. via S106 grants) never gets invested. This is almost impossible for residents to validate given limited or no information made available. The Council's 2017 promise to regularly publish and update S106 funds has unfortunately gone unmet.

Furthermore, commendable national innovations aiming to improve park funding, such as Space Hive, are poorly promoted by the Council.

To address this lack of transparency, we recommend the Council produces a simple annual summary of funds generated and available for parks across 5 broad areas:

- **Income generated by parks** (into broad categories, for example this may be: private land leases, individual sport bookings, group sports bookings, events, etc.. that allows anonymity to be retained)
- **Investment funding available for parks and open spaces** via S106 and CIL funds, including where the money is from and any restrictions on its use; this should indicate spend to date against
- **Grant funds approved for LBHF parks** including details on usage and restrictions
- **Other funds made available**, including via SpaceHive, community initiatives and/or donations; the Parks Forum could potentially help with the collation of these sources given their disparate nature
- **Basic funding** made available to the parks department from the LBHF budget to run and maintain the parks, as outlined in recommendation 9

The Parks Forum could play a useful role in overseeing the fair and transparent allocation of these funds.

Implementation:

- Council to create and publish annual park funding summaries, starting in 2022, outlining funding available across the broad areas outlined.
- Quarterly publication of S106 and CIL funds for park-related uses within 12 months of publication.

Palingswick Manor and today's Ravenscourt Park

Palingswick (sometimes Paddenswick) Manor, a moated manor house, is first mentioned in the Domesday Book, and then in court records in the days of Henry IV, V and VI. Granted to royal favourite Alice Perrers in 1373 by the Plantagenet king Edward III, a 1377 survey 1377 described the estate as containing "forty acres of land, sixty of pasture and one and a half of meadow" while the manor house itself was said to be "well-built, as in halls, chapels, kitchens, bakehouses, stables, granges, gates."

In Georgian times, the house was renovated and extended. In 1887, the Metropolitan Board of Works bought it as a public park. By then the grounds had become a tangled wilderness that needed landscaping by the new London County Council, with the public allowed in 1888.

The house was opened as Hammersmith's first public library in 1890. It was destroyed by an incendiary bomb in January 1941 and subsequently demolished. This shows today as a small mound in the picnic area by the lake.



8. Ongoing commitment to basic park funding

Headline recommendation

Regardless of total income and funding generated by and for parks in any given year, the Council should provide basic park maintenance and repairs from its annual budget on a continual, long-term basis. The Commission suggests the Council should acknowledge the many benefits of parks for residents and users and make a clear commitment to support park funding over the long term.

Detailed Recommendation

Parks are an important amenity for residents and users and play an essential role in the LBHF community. Over the years, investments have been made in some remarkable spaces and facilities for residents, which provide immeasurable benefits.

LBHF parks also generate a significant source of direct revenue, ranging from land used for sports to events and car-parking. Whilst such commercial activity is not unique to our borough – and the commission believes it to be reasonable to charge appropriate prices and rates to land users and lessees (please refer to recommendations 3 and 10) – parks should not be regarded first and foremost as a profit centre for the borough. In other words, parks should not be managed as an asset that *must* provide funding to support wider LBHF activities, with revenue maximised as a primary objective.

To continue to provide the many benefits, all of our parks and open spaces require basic maintenance and cyclical improvements. As the commission outlined in its interim report, management of park-related costs and income should be joined-up, so priorities and incentives can be clearly aligned and the parks run as a whole and as efficiently as possible. However, regardless of the income that may or may not be generated, the basic funding requirements of parks should continue to be met.

We would like to see the Council directly acknowledge the many benefits of parks to residents and users and make a clear commitment to their funding.

Implementation:

- The Council to introduce a statement to its vision and annual budget strategy, reinforcing their commitment to local parks and funding them into the future.
-

9. Park Strategic Plans

Headline recommendation

All major parks (i.e. those that are large in size and/or have high footfall) should have a dedicated strategic plan which includes focus areas for maintenance and priorities for investment for the next several years. These plans should be written in collaboration with the local recognised park stakeholder group and the Parks Forum, and reviewed and refreshed annually. Their facilities should be reviewed and basic amenities, for example toilets; their maintenance and cleaning, should be included in strategic plans. Smaller and lower footfall parks should have a combined plan, which outlines focus areas and priorities amongst them. Decisions about investment allocation across parks should be based on these plans, transparent, and balanced.

Detailed Recommendation

Existing park management plans are largely centred around the Green Flag award process. Whilst necessary for maintaining or gaining award status (the merits of which this Commission has not evaluated in detail), these plans do not clearly lay out park maintenance plans and focus areas for the contractors, nor do they include investment needs and priorities.

Indeed, there is no single, consistent source of park financial information and spend priorities within and across parks. Park stakeholder groups, where they exist, typically have no access to information about funding available from the Council for their park. The stakeholder groups,

along with residents and users have shared a significant number of examples of a mismatch between the investment needs of a particular park and the expenditure decisions made.

In order to bridge this divide within single parks – i.e. to have one, aligned version of park needs informed by both Council Officers and users – and also to allow for improved balancing of investment priorities across parks, the Commission recommends the creation of a simple 'Park Strategic Plan' document for all major parks in the borough. These plans should be created by Park Officers, with input from the Parks Forum and local stakeholder group. We recommend they are reviewed and refreshed (as needed) 2x a year.

Green Flags in Hammersmith & Fulham

Launched in 1996, the international Green Flag award recognises parks whose horticulture, cleanliness and facilities have reached the highest standard.

Over 1000 judges visit applicants' sites across the world and assess them against strict criteria. Within Hammersmith and Fulham, 18 have been awarded a Green Flag, while Parsons Green has also applied for Green Flag status. These include larger parks like Bishop's Park and Fulham Palace, and smaller open spaces such as Marcus Garvey and Parnell (Pineapple) Parks.

The 2000 international winners include parks in the Netherlands, Germany, Australia, New Zealand, Republic of Ireland and United Arab Emirates.

<https://www.greenflagaward.org/award-winners/>

LBHF Green Flag Parks: Bishop's Park and Fulham Palace, Brook Green, Frank Banfield Park, Furnivall Gardens, Hammersmith Park, Hurlingham Park, Margravine Cemetery, Norland North Open Space, Normand Park, Ravenscourt Park, South Park, St Peter's Square, Wormholt Park, Marcus Garvey Park, William Parnell Park (Pineapple Park), St Paul's Gardens, Wendell Park and Cathnor Park.

The strategic plans should include:

- An annual assessment of all park facilities and grounds, including toilets.
- A park-specific maintenance plan, with criteria and focus areas (to be shared regularly with the maintenance contractor)
- A prioritised set of investment projects, for when funding becomes available; these projects should be clearly linked to an up-to-date understanding of resident and user needs (with supporting evidence)
- A summary of specific investments made in the park over the previous 5 years
- A summary of all grounds used for commercial purposes, with clarity on booking and usage criteria (including rules for the number and frequency of events)

Smaller parks should be covered by a single, joint plan, indicating priorities for investment.

Several areas calling out for investment were consistently mentioned in our parks' Commonplace survey and in discussions with users and residents. This list should not replace a full evaluation of investment needs and priorities but may be useful in the meantime. (More detail can be found in the appendix)

- Safe, clean facilities such as toilets, play and dog-free grass areas
- Well maintained and safe pathways
- Improved litter management so bins do not overflow
- Safe, easy-access seating in mixed locations, for different users

- Improved playground equipment
- A range of refreshment outlets where footfall is high
- Improved signage on ecology and biodiversity
- More imaginative design
- Increased number of water refill points

Funding, when available, should be balanced across parks and their priority needs; no funding should be allocated that does not match an identified need within one of these plans outside of exceptional circumstances.

Implementation:

- LBHF Parks Team to produce a draft understanding of current park needs across the borough and basic standards for facilities within 12 months. The Parks Forum and Stakeholder Groups should have up to 3 months to validate and/or suggest changes.
- Draft 5 year plans for all relevant parks should then be created within 18 months of report submission.
- Biannual review meetings to monitor and refresh strategic plans with Council officer, stakeholder group and Parks Forum for all relevant parks should be implemented



10. Contracts for leasing park land

Headline recommendation

Contracts for use of park land or long-term delivery of services on park land should benefit residents and the community. In particular, contracts that exclusively lease land to privately run businesses should be commercially competitive, appropriately account for the value of the land, not be linked solely to operator profit, be subject to rent review clauses and offer provisions for access to those who cannot pay (where appropriate).

Detailed Recommendation

There are several types of contract that the commission has identified in our parks. This specific recommendation covers long term leases for park land and property, though many of the principles should apply to all long-term contracts the Council enters into for park land.

The Commission found some contracts to lease park land in the Council have not always been in residents' best interests. In some instances, land has effectively been given away to private operators over long (10 years+) time periods under poor commercial terms with little-to-no benefit for residents. For example:

- Under one contract, payment is linked solely to operator profit. As the business is part of a bigger group, with multi-site operations, no profit is claimed at the site leased from LBHF and therefore no payment is made. The operator effectively leases the site for free.
- In another contract, there is no community right to access and the land is effectively privatised. "Non-members" who can't pay a membership fee are only given access to bookings a few days in advance, leaving little to no access at peak times.
- One lessee pays the Council an equivalent amount for year-round exclusive use of nearly half a hectare of land as a different community sport provider pays for non-exclusive access to various sites around the borough for limited hours each week.

The Commission believes that there needs to be a far more commercial approach to contracts involving park land, particularly when it comes to negotiations with larger, for-profit organisations. This requires staff who have the appropriate negotiation skills with experience of different structures of contracts, including within the private sector, to better evaluate the best options. We recommend all contracts follow 3 principles:

1. Contracts should be commercially competitive and subject to regular review
2. Contracts should reflect the value of the land and intent
3. Contracts should ensure provision for those who are not able to pay

Existing contracts should be brought in line with new requirements as soon as legally possible. The Council must also put in place policies that ensure that personal relationships do not override value for the park under discussion.

Implementation:

- Council Officers to draft a simple set of commercial park land lease requirements by Q3 2022 and review them with the Parks Forum
- The Council should look to approve and publish the guidelines within 12 months

11. Policies to encourage entrepreneurship and innovation

Headline recommendation

Park and Council policies should encourage new partnership structures that support the local community and generate income for reinvestment.

Detailed Recommendation

The Commission recognises there are a variety of ways to raise funds for parks to supplement what is available from direct council sources, ranging from crowdfunding to specific grants (e.g. Nesta, Sports England). Given the competing demands for limited council resources and the wider economic climate in the second year of the coronavirus pandemic, the commission believes the Council should seek to broaden its funding base and longer-term income generation for park improvements through a greater focus on existing and new innovative funding mechanisms. Parks offer ample opportunities for such ventures.

Of particular interest are public-private partnerships and social enterprises that allow new expertise to be brought in and funds to be raised to create facilities, programmes and opportunities for parks and residents

Indeed, several public-private initiatives have already demonstrated success within the borough and the commission believes that by setting policies to encourage new partnership structures, LBHF can become a national leader in this space.

For example:

- **In Ravenscourt Park**, the local community group (HCGA) ran a successful campaign to raise £100,000 and refurbish two unused glasshouses. It now uses these spaces to run community programmes.
- **Fulham Reach Boat Club** was built with S106 funding from the Fulham Reach scheme and set up as a charity with a vision of “Rowing for All” to unlock the potential of young people through the sport. The initial objective was to create a sustainable and successful rowing club in all 12 LBHF state schools by 2021; it has now exceeded this expectation and opened access to neighbouring boroughs.

Yet there are likely to be further opportunities and looking further afield, there are numerous examples of innovative approaches that offer different perspectives and fresh ideas through which we can view our own park management. For instance,

- Is there a middle ground between fully privatised and fully public schemes for our many tennis facilities that could better benefit residents and finances, in a similar way to Hackney Tennis, a non-for-profit whose focus is “*Making tennis accessible and affordable for all members of the community*”? <https://www.hackneytennis.co.uk/>
- Greenspace Scotland and local councils have helped local authorities install heat pumps under larger tracts of parkland and park buildings; is there a similar opportunity in LBHF parks? [Please see separate recommendation].
- Green Estate Management Solutions (GEMS), Plymouth’s Future Parks Accelerator programme, works with several partners including Active Neighbourhoods, Poole Farm, Plymouth Tree Plan, Climate Emergency Action Plan and Green Minds as well as capital investment programmes for sports, outdoor play, and natural infrastructure. Can we do more in partnership with other bodies?

With the support of the Parks Forum and park stakeholder groups, the Council has an opportunity to champion an innovative approach to fundraising and community involvement in the running of the borough’s parks. The Parks Forum should take a leading role in supporting the Council to do this.

Implementation:

- By 12 months following the establishment of the Parks Forum, the Council and Parks Forum should outline an approach to encourage more innovation and community involvement in our parks
- The Parks Forum should support stakeholder groups in engaging with potential partners, particularly where there is scope for programmes to be multi-site

12. Powering parks

Headline recommendation

The Commissioners believe there is scope to investigate the feasibility of installing Ground Source Heat Pumps (GSHPs) under land and/or buildings in some of the borough’s parks and open spaces to generate carbon-free energy. We recommend the Council consults with independent engineering consultancies and draws up a borough-wide open space green energy strategy. The installation of GSHPs should be considered whenever refurbishment projects in LBHF parks are under discussion and must be included in the Council’s green energy strategy.

Detailed recommendation

In 2019 LBHF declared a climate and ecological emergency and set a target of net zero carbon emissions by 2030. This is an ambitious target. However, the borough's parks and open spaces could play an important role in helping to bring this about.

Green spaces and parks can be prime spaces for green energy infrastructure for two primary reasons. Most parks enjoy land, water and wind resources, all potential sources of renewable energy. Moreover, many parks and open spaces are close to other public spaces consuming large amounts of heat and electricity.

Greenspace Scotland and Powering Parks, pilot projects backed by the Rethinking Parks programme, have explored the potential of public parks to become widely used sources of renewable energy. In 2019, as part of a project led by the climate change charity Possible, Hackney Council and Scene, a local enterprise showed that [30GW of heat](#)¹ could potentially be supplied from parks and other green spaces - enough to heat 5 million British homes.

Nesta's [Harnessing Renewable Energy in Parks](#) report estimated that there are potentially 88 hectares available across the parks and open spaces in London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham which could generate a renewable heat supply of 20 MW.

While certain sites, such as cemeteries or woodland are unsuitable, other opportunities are present. The resurfacing of a tennis court, for instance, provides an ideal opportunity to install a heat pump under the new surface. The refurbishment of park cafes, halls and toilets may present others.

The most practical way to do this is through the installation of Ground Source Heat Pumps (GSHP)s. Already GSHPs have been in parks to create renewable energy, as at [Saughton Park in Edinburgh](#). Closer to home, at [Abney Park in Hackney](#), ground source heat pumps are being installed as part of a multi-million pound National Lottery award, which is funding the construction of a new building featuring a café and community space.

The Commission accepts that installing similar schemes will require substantial amounts of capital. A coherent energy strategy will require long-term vision and buy-in from Council Officers in many different fields; the importance of parks and open spaces as potential sources of green energy should be considered in all borough planning and redevelopment schemes - for instance, it could be included in schemes such as the development of [White City](#).

Implementation:

- Council to consult independent engineers with the view to delivering low-carbon energy where practicable from the borough's parks and open spaces and buildings and facilities within six months of this report.

¹ <https://media.nesta.org.uk/documents/Renewables-FINAL.pdf>

- The possibility to generate low carbon energy from open spaces should be considered in all LBHF redevelopment and development plans and in all park building refurbishment from Q4 in 2021.

13. Park activities and involvement – including apprenticeships and volunteering

Headline recommendation

In the interim report the Commission proposed that the creation of a park maintenance apprenticeship scheme as well as work placements for young people and people with disabilities should be rewarded and written into the new maintenance contract. There are also broader opportunities for developing skills, interests and social relationships in the parks. Where possible, parks should have an activities plan, addressing community needs and aspirations to help support this.

Detailed recommendation

Residents told the Commission about their different expectations and wishes for park activities. For some, just a quiet walk in the park will restore well-being, while for others it means play or physical or artistic activity. Parks also offer the chance to contribute to society by volunteering, gardening, clearing up litter, or helping to combat climate change. There is an opportunity here to develop vital local skills and knowledge to deal with the latter and to help develop a green economy. We recommend that where possible, parks should have activities plans addressing a wide range of needs and aspirations, enhancing opportunities for apprenticeships and volunteering.

Many activities are volunteer led, but still need support and facilities. Community social enterprises and park vendors can help create opportunities to engage and learn. The ecology officer can lead parks' volunteers' programmes relating to biodiversity. Young people should be encouraged to join park stakeholder and volunteer groups so that those groups can better represent a more accurate cross section of their communities.

Not all parks can have all facilities and all activities, but the Parks Forum should work with the Council parks department and local park stakeholder groups to get a balance across the borough. This should be about facilitating relationships between nearby parks, not rigidly controlling from the centre.

Urban architecture and children at play

Urban landscape architects are increasingly recognising that many children today have become divorced from the natural environment. Parks can help counter this, especially where there is the chance to collect and explore.

Studies have shown where there are trees, children will tend to move towards shady areas, which helps protect their skin from cancer. Play helps children to learn about taking turns and interaction with others. Many motor problems in young children can be helped by physical play, which also provides a counter to time spent in buggies or inside or over computer screens. All children are most mobile while they are young, even those with neurological or motor-skill impairing conditions and need tasks to solve and things to climb over to develop.

Implementation:

- Parks encouraged to have an activities plan enhancing opportunities for apprenticeships and volunteering, or a review summarising the reasons where this isn't achievable.
- Park stakeholder groups should work with the Council to create a plan of activities by Q3 2022, liaising with the ecology officer on schemes to help deal with climate change.

14. Park land use

Headline recommendation

The Council should seek to better understand the range of park needs from our specific resident demographic, as well as schools and other community groups within LBHF who rely on parks. This understanding should be updated at a reasonable interval (e.g. every 5 years) to reflect changes. The resulting information should be used to make informed decisions about the fair allocation of park space. Residents and park stakeholder groups should be consulted on proposed changes to this balance.

Detailed Recommendation

Research done by the Commission has indicated a clear tension across residents, schools and community groups over the use of open spaces for sports and for instance, skate parks or outdoor gyms as well as quiet areas, wild meadows and trees.

Whilst the Commission undertook qualitative research with residents and user groups, limited detailed data was available on which recommendations could be made about land use and priorities.

In some instances, the use of park land has been changed without a full, transparent consultation process. For example, a consultation in Hammersmith park offered 4 options for the future of a dedicated sports ground where the bowling green was but none involved sport and the list of options appears to have been generated without consultation. Since this consultation, the LBHF has since reneged on its original commitment and given away a portion of the land for a Corporate tiny forest initiative, without consultation.

The commission recommends the following three steps to manage and involve residents better in critical decisions:

1. **The Council needs to understand usage needs:** The Council, supported by the Parks Forum, should conduct representative, quantitative study on the needs for open spaces in the borough, covering the balance of demographics and school / community groups in LBHF. This study should be repeated on a regular basis (for example every 5 years) to account for changing needs and demographics.

2. **Data should inform the allocation of space for different uses:** The results of this study should be used to inform park plans and land use allocation at a total level across the borough.
3. **Consult with residents & users on substantial changes:** Any proposed changes that result in a significant change to park land usage (such as the removal of a dedicated sports ground, or the change of land from open meadow to a forest) should be done in open consultation, with residents and the park stakeholder groups generating options for change of use with the Council. There must be clear information about the impact of such decisions

Implementation:

- Council Officers should seek to understand the broad range of LBHF park user needs by Q1 2023.
- The process for consulting regarding park land use changes should be revised by Q3 2022, with clear indications as to how park stakeholder groups and the Parks Forum will be involved.

15. Ensure existing open space is protected

Headline recommendation

The Council should ensure that existing open space is strongly protected from encroachment and inappropriate development. The guiding principle should be that no publicly owned open space – including allotments, cemeteries and open space on school land - be lost without providing equivalent new open space in the borough.

Detailed recommendation

In 2014 the administration made a commitment in their ‘The Change We Need Manifesto’ that if elected they would seek to afford the Borough’s parks and open spaces with better protection. ‘The Council should be a trusted custodian of our parks, put our parks in a residents’ trust to prevent them being sold off.’

From 2014, Council Officers looked at the various options to deliver this commitment, such as Individual Parks Trusts and a Borough-Wide Parks Trust. A number of local authorities have set up Arm’s Length Management Organisations (ALMOS), some of which include parks and open spaces. However, following Council Officers recommendations, the Council decided not to proceed with these options.

'In order for such a trust to operate successfully it needs a certain amount of autonomy as well as a board of trustees....Potential objectivity, including political neutrality could be lost and the works of the trust could be subject to individual and political influence.'

The History of Bishops Park

From the late 13th century until 1973, Fulham Palace was a residence of the Bishop of London.

In 1884 Bishop Jackson persuaded the Ecclesiastical Commissioners to donate Bishop's Meadow, a two-hectare strip of land between the moat, the south-west boundary of the grounds of Fulham Palace, and the River Thames. The meadow was to be laid out as a recreation ground and maintained in perpetuity.

By the late 19th century, the formerly picturesque osier and grazing ground had become a refuse tip. The low-lying land was marshy, flooded regularly by the river. On the proviso that an embankment was added, the bishop offered additional land. There was space for exercise, paths and seats and a tree-lined river walk. The park's name was changed to Fulham Park in 1902 and then back to Bishops Park four years later. The remainder of the meadow was used, as now, for sport. In 1902 a nursery and greenhouses were built next to the lodge, and the Pryor's Bank pavilion opened in 1900.

As London County Council sought to create more space for sport, the Ecclesiastical Commissioners donated the meadow between the park and Craven Cottage in 1899. The western section was turfed for a cricket pitch. In the 1920s, the bishop of London filled in the moat, and offered the land between the King's Head pub and Bishops Avenue, while a children's playground was added. Part of the garden became school in 1954 and in 1971 an adventure playground was opened.

There is a hierarchy of protection relating to parks. Metropolitan Open Spaces (eg Wormwood Scrubs) are defined by Acts of Parliament, Common Land, (eg. Eel Brook Common, Brook Green, Parson's Green) have a certain level of protection as do Historic Parks and Gardens (eg. Bishop's Park, Fulham Palace and St Peter's Square). Others have no such protection.

In 2017 the Council set up a Parks Commission, and subsequently approved the Commission's recommendation to enter Deeds of Dedication with Fields in Trust (FIT). These act like covenants to protect public open space in perpetuity without impinging on the Council's ability to carry out day-to-day management, continue investment and provide a range of recreational facilities and activities.

Since 2017, three Borough parks and open spaces have received FIT

protection. These are Wendell Park, Lillie Road Recreation Ground and Shepherd's Bush Green. In 2019, the Council made the decision to first concentrate on the largest unprotected parks (Ravenscourt Park, Hammersmith Park, South Park, Wormholt Park and Normand Park).

The view of this Commission is that progress has been too slow, and a target should be set for each year.

Reference: In 2011, Glasgow City Council took the decision to safeguard its 27 parks and open spaces with FIT protection and completed the process within five years.

Implementation:

- Four Fields in Trust to be completed each year, including Ravenscourt Park in 2022.

16. New open space creation

Headline recommendation

The Council should use planning policy to create more publicly accessible usable open space. As part of this, the Council should rewrite its planning guidelines requiring new developments to provide more usable public and public/private open space. New open space should be environmentally friendly (in terms of layout, type of landscaping materials and planting) and provide public connectivity with other open spaces and green corridors.

Detailed recommendation

Research has found that the distance residents have to travel to parks and open spaces is a major consideration in how much they use them. The Borough has a high population density, particularly in the north of the borough where it is rapidly growing. The provision of parks and open spaces throughout the Borough is comparatively low, except close to Wormwood Scrubs.

New public provision within the Borough can be provided by:

1. Community access to private land (e.g. rooftop gardens, private sports facilities).
2. Housing estate land repurposed for community use ((possibly Bayonne Road Estate).
3. Parklets (tiny open spaces created from former car parking bays – e.g. Hammersmith Grove)
4. Road closures (creating small open spaces – e.g. Bridget Joyce Square)
5. New public open space created over railway lines (e.g. Olympia and Beadon Road)
6. Linear Open Space.
7. The development of large brownfield sites and the creation of public/private open spaces (e.g. Westfield and St. James's developments on Wood Lane).

Items 1-4. These are within the direct control of the Council, and some have proved to be successful initiatives. They are, by nature, comparatively small in scale.

Item 5. Olympia. This could be a public/private initiative using Section 106 and Community Infrastructure levy funds from the redevelopment of Olympia, and contribution from the developer, to create a new park over the adjacent railway lines. A major development costing £30 million+

Item 5. Beadon Road. The Hammersmith Business Innovation District sponsored a competition in 2019 to create a Hammersmith Hi-Line with public/private funding. The winning entry proposed building over the railway lines between King's Mall and the Glenthorne Road car parking and residential development. A major development costing £10m+

Item 6. Linear Open Space. See 23. Riverfront Strategic Concept.

Item 7. Brownfield Sites and the creation of public/private open space.

The quality and standard of provision of these spaces vary considerably. Some, such as 245 Hammersmith Grove and the Helios Courtyard at the Television Centre provide high quality environments that meet the needs of those who use them, and are environmentally friendly in terms of layout, materials and planting. Other developments are disappointing, particularly those where public access appears to be discouraged and there is little provision of park facilities.

It is the considered view of the Commission that insufficient guidance is given to developers, and that the planning guidelines need to be strengthened, particularly in view of the increased concerns relating to biodiversity and ecological sustainability. Planning decisions should be evidence-based.

In addition, developers should be held to account. In some cases, design proposals put forward at public exhibition have been substantially diluted, and in others the planned provision of trees has not been carried out and the Council has taken no action against the developer.

Implementation:

- [Planning guidelines to be rewritten by Q1 2023, referencing LBHF Parks and Open Spaces Strategy 2008-2018, the Local Plan 2018 and Supplementary Planning Documents.](#)



17. Biodiversity statistics

Headline recommendation

The Council should monitor and report biodiversity enhancements carried out in the Borough. The Council should use the information from the biodiversity survey it is currently conducting to inform strategy, while the Commission recommends that annual biodiversity statistics should be published.

Detailed recommendation

In 2020, the Council accepted the recommendations of its [Biodiversity Commission](#)'s report. The Commission's main findings relating to parks and open spaces can be summarised as:

1. Improving horticultural practice for wildlife, minimising harm from pesticides and incorporating biodiversity as a key deliverable with clear targets as part of ongoing maintenance contracts.
2. The appointment of an ecology officer and establishment of an Ecology Centre.
3. Promotion of volunteering initiatives led by the Ecology Officer.
4. Promotion of good biodiversity practice in parks, open spaces and cemeteries including the provision of 'wild areas.'
5. Replacement of unused areas of asphalt with planting.
6. Avoidance of artificial turf.
7. Incorporation of biodiversity recommendations in the new parks maintenance contract.

Recommendations 2-4 are specifically addressed in another section of this report – 19. Meadow and wild habitat creation.

Recommendations 5-6 are good practice, and recommendation 6 has already been implemented.

This is an issue that has generated considerable public interest, and the Commission considered that there was a need for the annual publication of biodiversity statistics that include the number of new trees planted, replacement trees planted, new areas of meadow, new orchards, 'grey to green projects', hedgerows, bulbs, bird and bat boxes and swales in parks with drainage issues. The Council is currently conducting an audit which will enable it to put together the appropriate statistics.

What is biodiversity?

Biodiversity refers to the variety of life on earth from mammals, birds and reptiles to plants, fungi and micro-organisms. The term is broader than wildlife since it also encompasses the variety and complexity of communities of organisms or *ecosystems*, the specialised habitats or *niches* in which they live, and even genetic diversity within species.

A thriving, biodiverse site will be beneficial to human health and social wellbeing, resilient to environmental stresses like flooding and heatwaves, cost effective to maintain, contribute to the local character of a place and support familiar well-loved wildlife like blackbirds, foxes, mallards, frogs and bats, as well as thousands of species of invertebrates, plants, fungi and bacteria.

Dynamic, changing landscapes tend to improve biodiversity, such as trees of different ages, including dead or decaying wood, as well as indigenous plants, and humble species such as weeds which provide forage for butterflies and pollinators.

Reference: London Borough of Ealing, the winner of London in Bloom's 2017 Biodiversity Award (best practice example) publishes such biodiversity statistics.

Implementation:

- Biodiversity statistics published annually by the end of 2022.

18. Meadow and wild habitat creation

Headline recommendation

To improve biodiversity in parks and open spaces, the Council should introduce a rolling programme of new wildflower meadows, mown twice annually with specialised machinery. This should be part of an initiative to increase and enhance wildlife habitats and support biodiversity in parks and open spaces carried out following consultation with users and local stakeholders.

Detailed recommendation

There is a popular movement towards more natural planting in parks and open spaces which is perceived as increasing biodiversity and reducing CO2 emissions in response to the climate and ecological emergency.

A radical approach to park management is proposed that would see:

- The introduction of wildflower meadows and natural habitat areas wherever there is scope in parks and open spaces, based on areas of lesser usage and the aesthetics of each park. In addition, other wild habitats such as hedgerows around fenced areas and rain gardens, swales and ponds to help manage heavy rainfall in parks should be introduced where possible.
- These are to be balanced by continued careful mowing of perimeters, grass lawn areas and pathways. Mowing machines should be updated to ensure minimal damage to wildlife.
- Conversion of areas of annual bedding to perennial planting, leading to reduced levels of maintenance.
- Creation of a 'Volunteers in Parks' programme under the supervision of the Ecology Officer.
- Support for bee and other pollinator populations in parks.

It is important to note that unmown grass areas in parks are not meadow. Removal of the hay crop is required twice in summer by specialised small-scale mowers. This allows wild flowers to seed and proliferate, greatly increasing both the flowering season and the biodiversity.

This approach to park maintenance has been shown to reduce park maintenance costs, encourage greater community involvement and allow limited staff resources to maintain high horticultural standards.

Public response has been very positive, and few complaints have been made about the aesthetic changes in the parks, moving over from areas of formal grass to wildflower meadow. It is the next logical step up from 'No-Mow May.'

Reference: www.burnley.gov.uk 'Go to the Park' and various conversations with Simon Goff, Head of Green Spaces and Amenities, Burnley Borough Council.

Implementation:

- The Council should identify appropriate areas, following consultation with residents and local park stakeholder groups, by the end of 2022 and make necessary arrangements for implementation.



19. Tree planting

Headline recommendation

The Council should greatly accelerate its rolling programme of tree-planting to improve biodiversity and CO2 absorption. This proposal should not just include the parks but pavement

and road closure sites and decommissioned car parking spaces. Usage of park land for this purpose should always be done in consultation with residents and users.

Detailed recommendation

The Council's vision is to be the greenest borough by 2035. The most effective way to meet this target is by greatly accelerating the rolling programme of tree planting including pavement and road closure sites and decommissioned car parking spaces.

Planting trees has many benefits including:

- storing carbon.
- soaking up carbon dioxide,
- cleaning the air of other pollutants and toxins,
- keeping cities cool,
- providing a habitat for wildlife,
- benefits for mental health and well-being of residents and visitors.

The Borough has approximately 16,000 trees, of which 20% are in parks and open spaces, and 80% roadside within residential and commercial areas. The principal varieties are plane, lime, ornamental cherry, rowan, birch, whitebeam and ornamental pear.

Counters Creek flows north-south through a low-lying water catchment area in the Borough, where the presence of underlying impermeable London clay causes the combined sewer network to be overwhelmed at times of peak flow.

Trees draw moisture from the water table and can help protect against flooding, therefore contributing to surface water management objectives. Some locations already have comprehensive schemes combining permeable paving, planted basins, rain gardens, tree planting and downpipe disconnection. In street locations, permeable paving to street parking bays, combined with water retention systems and rain gardens can make a significant difference.

Wormwood Scrubs – a habitat for wildlife

Wormwood Scrubs is the largest open space in the Borough and is designated Common Land and Metropolitan Open Space. It is protected by the Metropolitan Commons Act of 1866 and several later Acts of Parliament.

The western portion is part of Old Oak Common, much of which was taken over by the railways prior to 1866 Act. Stamford Brook ran between the two Commons, marking the old boundary between Acton and Hammersmith. The combined area is 42 Hectares. The east of the Scrubs is mostly sports field. Along the southern edge are a variety of sports facilities, including the Linford Christie stadium, a BMX cycling arena, street workout and children's play equipment. Further play equipment stands on the western edge. Wormwood Scrubs has an area to fly model aircraft with its own runway.

Wormwood Scrubs provides a valuable nature reserve. Half of the Scrubs, to the west and north and along Scrubs Lane is managed as woodland and rough natural grass land. The wooded areas are designated Local Nature Reserves. Over 100 species of bird have been spotted on the Scrubs. There are 250 species of native plants and about 20 species of butterfly.

There are also many species of other insects. Common Lizards are found on the Scrubs, originally near the railway embankment but have since spread south. The Scrubs are a winter roosting site for Red Necked Parakeet whose arrival at dusk in winter is a remarkable sight.

New sites for pavement and street trees can be identified by electronic trackers for telephone and broadband in pavements, and gas, electricity, and water utility plans in roads. Residents can request a street tree to be planted by going to treesenquiries@lbhf.gov.uk.

However, the Commission recommends that high density planting should be only carried out in parkland following full consultation with local residents and weighed against other potential uses of the land.

In many cities, 22-27% of the total urban area is private gardens, representing half of urban green space, and although the Borough's average garden size is only 30 sq.m – one of the smallest in London - residents should be encouraged to plant trees of an appropriate size. Next year marks the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. The Commission recommends that the Council marks a new era of tree planting by playing a proactive part in The Queen's Green Canopy, the scheme inviting people across the UK to plant trees in Autumn 2022. It would be fitting to plant 70 across the borough to mark this perhaps with a signposted trail between each tree.

Implementation:

- Details of new tree planting and their sites published annually by end of 2022.
 - The Council should mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in 2022 by planting an initial 70 trees across the borough to mark each year of Her Majesty's reign during Q4 2022.
-



20. Vegetative pollution barriers

Headline recommendation

With air pollution from vehicle emissions a serious problem in the borough on its six-lane highways (including Talgarth Road/Great West Road, the West Cross Route and the A40), the Council should undertake extensive tree planting to restrict the spread of pollutants and consider hedges for localised shielding of pedestrians and walkers

Detailed recommendation

Unlike greenhouse gases which are principally carbon dioxide and methane, pollution from motor vehicles is nitrogen dioxide and particulates from brakes and tyres. Children who attend schools or live close to roads with high pollution levels are particularly at risk of developing asthma, and in one landmark case a child's death has been attributed to this cause. Some 80% of traffic on the main six-lane arterial roads in the borough is through traffic – not locally generated.

The introduction and proposed extension of the Central London Ultra Low Emission Zone has the potential to reduce overall volumes of traffic. Electric cars do not reduce levels of particulates.

Vegetative pollution barriers are of three types – green hedges, green walls and trees, or a combination of all three. Green roofs have little effect on dispersal of pollutants and a minor effect on deposition.

Deposition: When pollutants land on leaves they are removed from the air. Certain leaves are more effective than others, such as hairy leaves, large leaves, and ivies. However, compared to the benefits of dispersion, deposition is of minor benefit, and deposition of nitrogen oxide on leaves is partially cancelled out by subsequent NO₂ emissions from soil.

Dispersal: This is of primary importance, and the most important way of dispersing pollutants is to keep traffic moving. Sequencing of lights can play a part, but at peak times traffic is reduced to a crawl, and pollution levels soar.

Urban vegetation can be used to contain traffic pollutants reducing transmission to adjacent areas. For example, a 10m high barrier can protect up to 27m downwind, and a 2m high one 3m downwind. Densely planted avenues of trees and localised hedges are recommended.

The Commission proposes a report by environmental consultants advising on the location of trees and hedges, resistance of species to salt spray, drought, high wind turbulence, and that soil conditions ensure successful long-term growth.

Implementation:

- The Council should commission environmental consultants to produce and publish proposals to combat air pollution from traffic fumes by the end of 2022.



21. Best horticultural practices

Headline recommendation

The Council should aim to raise horticultural standards throughout its parks and open spaces. Good horticultural and ecological management must be specified and delivered by the maintenance contractor. The best horticultural practice notes should include soil care, best practice in tree and plant pruning, planting for pollinators, and use of integrated weed/pest management. It should also give up-to-date advice relating to the spread of newly introduced pests and diseases and new research on pollinators.

Detailed recommendation

The appearance and biodiversity value of planting in parks is a high priority for many residents. Good design and maintenance are crucial for many of the social benefits of parks: creating a comfortable, relaxing environment and a sense of connection with nature. Volunteer involvement benefits participants and the wider community.

Threats and risks include climate change, plant pathogens and incompetent maintenance. Unavoidable damage caused by heavy use, anti-social behaviour and dogs has an impact which must be managed.

Most horticultural work is carried out by the grounds maintenance contractor, therefore contract monitoring is essential for raising standards and ensuring value for money.

Park users and stakeholder groups have detailed knowledge of the changing situation on the ground and are an important resource for monitoring, planning, fundraising, and co-ordinating and carrying out volunteer work.

The objectives of good horticultural practice in parks should include:

- aesthetics
- serving the needs of park users
- good value for money
- planting that is resilient and sustainable in itself,
- and contributes to wider environmental resilience and sustainability in the context of climate and ecological crisis.

The contemporary movement towards naturalistic and ecological horticulture provides examples, evidence, advice and inspiration.

Park managers must keep abreast of the latest information, particularly relating to developing threats like climate change and new plant pathogens, and ensure that contractors and volunteers are aware of current best practice.

We recommend the Council sets out a series of evidence-based guidance notes. These can also be used to promote sustainable wildlife-friendly gardening to residents and commercial landowners.

These notes should cover:

Planting - species selection, planting methods and aftercare

Soil care - conserving soil carbon, composting, mulch and no-dig

Integrated pest and weed management

Pruning of shrubs, trees and perennials

Pollinator conservation - key points are planting a diverse range of flowering plants across all seasons, understanding the value of self-seeded and wild plants, pruning flowering shrubs and trees at the correct time.

Implementation:

- New good practice notes to be published by the Council by the end of 2022.

22. Riverside strategic concept

Headline recommendation

With completion of the Thames Riverside Walk and new developments increasing the popularity of the riverfront, the Council should seek to develop a unified plan for the area. It should be considered in its entirety to improve provision and biodiversity.

Detailed recommendation

It is noted in the LBHF [Parks and Open Spaces Strategy 2008-2018](#) that the Council 'shall, in partnership with Thames Strategy (Kew to Chelsea), coordinate a programme of open space and green corridor improvements to improve Stevenage Park, Rowberry Mead, Furnival Gardens and Upper Mall.....and with a large proportion of the borough 10 minutes from the Thames establishing a network of green links to this space is very important to increase use and enjoyment of this space. Removing barriers to access will also address identified deficiency areas as described in "Parks and Open Spaces Strategy 2008-2018", item 6.4g.

In 2017 the remaining section of the Riverside Walk was completed, and this has since become one of the most vibrant open spaces in the Borough. Public use has greatly increased by dog walkers, runners, cyclists, public access to the soft landscape areas of Fulham Reach, customers to riverside pubs and restaurants, small local shops, the Riverside Studios and usage of the Fulham Rowing Club. Heritage credentials have been enhanced by the statue to Lancelot 'Capability' Brown.

We recommend that the Council, working with the Parks Forum, should appoint landscape architects to envision and produce proposals that might include:

- Upper Mall (repaving, planters, possible summer sand beach in the promontory)
- Furnival Gardens (improved pollution screening to the Great West Road)
- Hammersmith Bridge/Queen Caroline Estate (improvements to raised area, possibly summer beach).
- Draw Dock (improved levels of clearance of river debris)
- Fulham Reach (tree planting)
- Betfair site (LBHF lease arrangement for the sloping grass bank)
- Rowberry Mead (improved access from the Riverside Walk)
- Stevenage Park (improved access and redesign)
- Improvements to hard landscaping, seating and planting to the connecting sections of the Riverside Walk, with particular emphasis on encouraging green corridor biodiversity.

Implementation:

- [The Council should appoint landscape architects to envision and produce proposals by the end of 2022.](#)



London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham Independent Parks Commission

Commissioners and acknowledgements

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Photos courtesy of Richard Jackson; the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham, and the Friends of the Walled Garden in Ravenscourt Park.

Implementation Chart - Suggested schedule

For action by:
Council
Planning/Environment/other
LBHF Parks
GM Contractor
Park Stakeholder Groups
Park Forum

LBHF Parks Commission

		2021		2022		2023				2024				
Recommendation	Implementation	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Report approval by Council														
Publication of Report														
1. Parks Forum	Establish the Parks Forum and appointment Chair and members													
2. Park Stakeholder Groups	Review existing park stakeholder groups, memoranda of understanding and criteria for recognition													

		2021		2022		2023				2024				
Recommendation	Implementation	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
	Complete the recognition process for new and current park stakeholder groups.													
3. Park Strategic Plans	Audit park facilities and areas of need across the borough, validate findings with forum and stakeholder groups													
	Draft 5-year plans for all relevant parks, meet biannually to review													
4. Digital Hub	Create a digital hub for sports bookings and to provide centralised accessible information about parks													
5. Park Wardens	Deploy named park wardens													
6. Parks Officer Team	Refresh park officer team responsibilities and competencies, revamp team by Q4 2023													
7. Park funding	Publish annual park investment summaries covering operational and maintenance expenditure, priorities for capital funding, and allocations from S106 and CIL funds.													
8. Ongoing commitment to basic park funding	Reinforce the commitment to parks and their funding in the Council's vision statement and annual budget strategy													

		2021		2022				2023				2024			
Recommendation	Implementation	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
9 Park Affordability and Pricing	Draft new charging policies, validated by the Parks Forum and stakeholders														
10 Contract for leasing park land	Draft a simple set of commercial park land lease requirements, reviewed by the Parks Forum.														
11 Policies to encourage entrepreneurship and innovation	Outline an approach to encourage innovation in fundraising, partnerships and community involvement and provide ongoing support to stakeholders														
12 Powering Parks	Consult independent low-carbon energy engineers to appraise feasibility and incorporate this option for consideration in all future development plans														
13. Park activities - apprenticeships and volunteering	Prepare volunteer action plans including projects to tackle climate change														
14. Park land use	Revise the process for consulting stakeholder groups and the Parks Forum on changes to use of land.														
15. Existing open space protection	Complete four Fields in Trust deeds each year, including Ravenscourt Park in 2022.														

		2021		2022		2023				2024				
Recommendation	Implementation	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
16. New open space creation	Rewrite Planning guidelines to strengthen requirements for new public open space.													
17. Biodiversity statistics	Publish annual statistics on biodiversity enhancements.													
18. Meadow and habitat creation	Identify appropriate areas for establishing meadows and purchase the required machinery													
19. Tree Planting	Publish details of new tree planting and their sites annually. Plant 70 trees in 2022 to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee													
20. Vegetative pollution barriers	Commission environmental consultants to produce plans to combat air pollution with suitable planting													
21. Best horticultural practice	Publish best practice guidelines to improve horticultural standards													
22.Riverside strategic concept	Appoint landscape architects to generate proposals for a unified Thames Riverside Walk													

Glossary of terms and abbreviations

Biodiversity	The variety of plant, animal, and other species present within a particular location. The Council has declared a climate and ecological emergency, and aims to increase the biodiversity of the borough.
CIL / Community Infrastructure Levy	Funding obtained from developers through planning agreements, to be spent on specified local improvements – see also Section 106 .
Facilities	The range of physical furniture and services offered to residents in parks, such as benches, toilets, play areas, water fountains, and sports facilities. These include free and charged facilities, including those run by private operators .
Fields in Trust	A charity and scheme to protect green spaces for people to enjoy in perpetuity.
‘Friends of’ groups	Voluntary organisations involved with particular parks and open spaces.
GM / Grounds Maintenance	Works to maintain and improve green spaces. The main contractor currently responsible for this work in LBHF is idverde.
Green Flag	An award scheme that recognises well managed, publicly accessible green spaces.
GSHP / Ground source heat pump	A low-carbon, electric heat source used to heat buildings as an alternative to gas boilers or other fossil fuel heat source.
Horticulture	The cultivation and management of plants in parks and open spaces.
MOU / Memorandum of Understanding	An outline agreement between two or more parties, such as those currently in place between the Council and ‘Friends of’ groups.
Net zero carbon	This refers to the Council’s ambition to reduce the borough’s greenhouse gas emissions to as close to zero as possible, and emit no more than it removes.

Open spaces	See Parks and open spaces .
Operators	Businesses and organisations with commercial contracts to provide revenue-generating services in council parks, such as the hiring of sports facilities.
Parks and open spaces	In this report either term refers to any publicly accessible open green space for which the Council is responsible, including cemeteries. The Council does not in practice distinguish between parks and other green open spaces that it manages.
Parks Commission	An independent, temporary body of Hammersmith & Fulham residents, tasked with making recommendations to the Council for how to improve, protect and sustain our open spaces; the authors of this report.
Parks Forum	A proposed body to enhance transparency and support the Council and park stakeholder groups to set priorities and make decisions about parks – see recommendation 1 .
Park Officers	Council Officers responsible for the strategic management of parks, and park projects and improvements.
Park Stakeholder Groups	The proposed generic term for the single lead voluntary organisations involved with particular parks and open spaces – see recommendation 2 .
Park strategic plans	Proposed plans for each park which set out focus areas for maintenance and priorities for investment over several years – see recommendation 3 .
Park users	All individuals and organisations who make use of parks and park facilities, including residents and schools.
Park wardens	A proposed role to be a direct contact for all residents regarding particular parks, and providing oversight of activities, bookings and maintenance – see recommendation 5 .
Public-private partnership	A collaboration between a public body such as the Council, and a private company, to deliver facilities or services.

S106 / Section 106	Funding obtained from developers through planning agreements, to be spent on specified local improvements – see also Community Infrastructure Levy.
Social enterprise	A business with specific social objectives as its primary purpose, whose profits mainly fund initiatives to achieve these.
Stakeholders	Any individuals or organisations with an interest in a park or parks, such as residents, schools, other park users, contractors and operators.
ToR / Terms of reference	An agreed purpose and approach to be taken by a group. The Parks Commission's terms of reference is at appendix 1 .

London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham

Parks Commission Appendices

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Appendix 1.

H&F Parks Commission terms of reference

Introduction

Hammersmith & Fulham is blessed with a patchwork of ornate parks, green and open spaces.

Starting at the ancient common land of Wormwood Scrubs in the north, one could meander south through pockets of life-affirming nature travelling through a stunning collection of over 40 borough parks, public gardens and green spaces, ending up on the riverfront with all its wildlife and colour.

Our open spaces offer our residents a chance to play, exercise and breath easier and provide opportunity for the borough to facilitate good physical and mental health, civic renewal and a strengthening of our community life.

The Independent Parks Commission will consider all of the above focusing on how our residents get the most from our open spaces, what we do to improve them, while protecting them and making them sustainable for future generations and for the enhanced biodiversity of the borough.

It will report its independent findings to the borough's Community Safety and Environment Policy and Accountability Committee.

Review scope

What is the vision for our parks, green and open spaces?

How can they facilitate the achievement of the council's stated public policy objectives of: improving physical and mental health, enhanced biodiversity, civic renewal and strengthening community life?

What is the best way to involve local people in the decisions made about our parks?

- How do we ensure the council engages a full and wide diversity of people in the decisions we make about our parks?
- How can we devolve powers to residents, so decisions are made expediently, with probity and in the interests of all the parks current and potential users?

- How should the management of: sports bookings, parks buildings, and rental of public areas operate in a way that ensures good value to both the council and the users; probity, and affordability?

What currently works, what could be better, and what doesn't work in the way our parks and open spaces are managed?

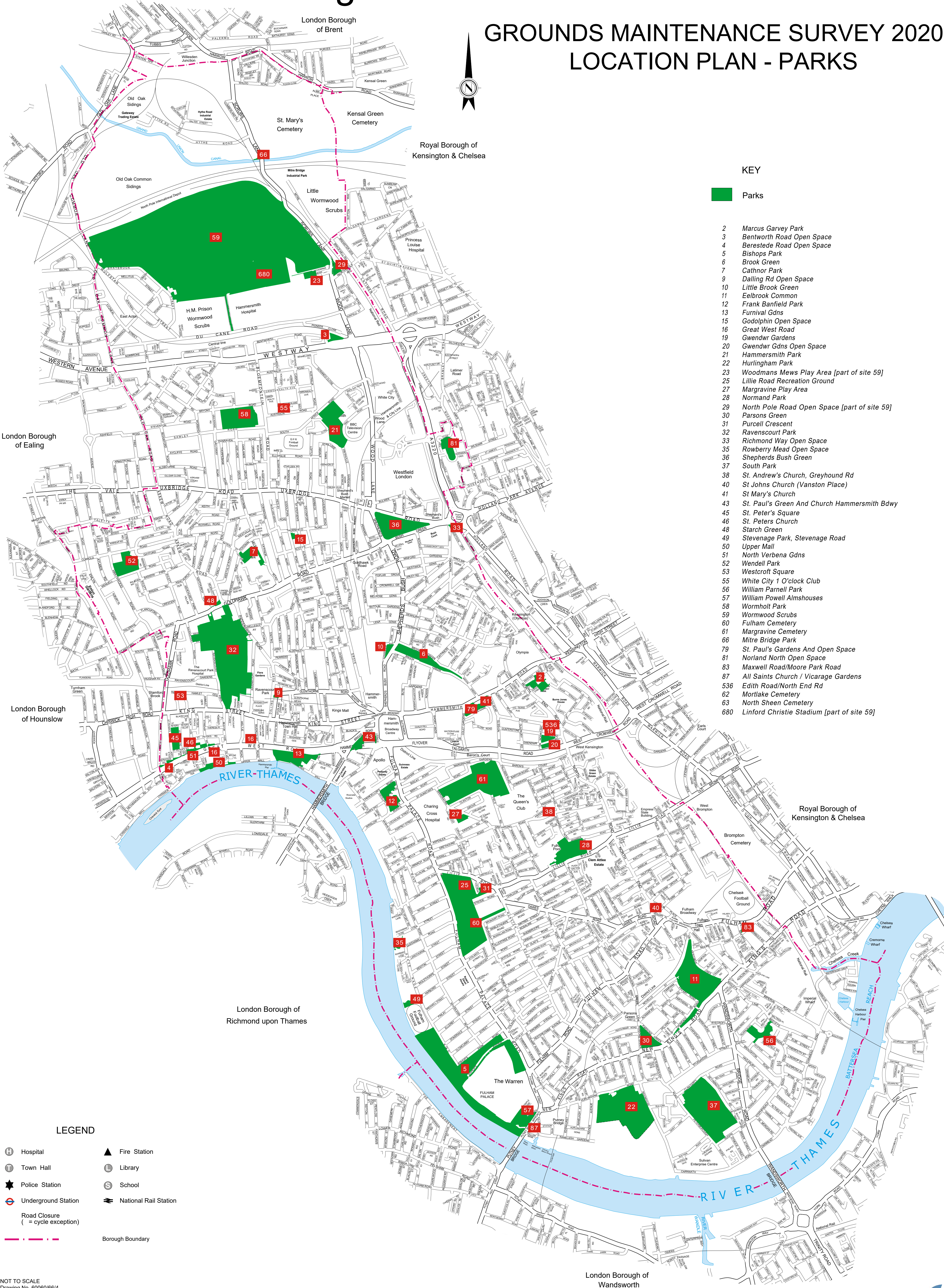
- What's the best way to manage our parks?
- What's the best way of ensuring our parks are financially sustainable and have the resources to deliver the improvements our residents want?
- What's the best way to ensure that residents feel safe in our parks?
- What's the best way of keeping our parks safe and open for use during the maximum number of hours?
- How can increased use of technology be employed to encourage greater residents use of our parks?
- How can we enhance the biodiversity and environmental sustainability of our parks?

Composition of the independent Parks Commission

The membership size and membership recruitment criteria of the independent Parks Commission will be agreed between the commission Chair, the executive of the council, and the chair of its Community Safety and Environment Policy and Accountability Committee.

Appendix 2. London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham

GROUNDS MAINTENANCE SURVEY 2020
 LOCATION PLAN - PARKS



London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham Independent Parks Commission

Interim Report and Recommendations
12 May 2020

The Independent Parks Commission, convened in January 2020, was asked to provide recommendations to the Cabinet Member for the Environment and Cabinet as they consider their procurement strategy for the Ground Maintenance of Parks, Public Open Spaces and Housing Estates. Further recommendations, that may not directly impact this procurement, will be developed as the Independent Parks Commission continues its work.

We have found that many of our aspirations in terms of quality thresholds, biodiversity and social value are shared with the Council and the new strategic Council Officers. We have considered concerns raised by Hammersmith and Fulham residents, inconsistencies in the application of policy and inefficiencies in the way that the parks have previously been managed which led us to believe that during the length of the existing contract, variations have occurred which have resulted in unexpected and undesirable outcomes. We believe many of these can be remedied in the next procurement of Grounds Maintenance, which we understand is commencing shortly.

1. General Principles

The contract for general maintenance, and indeed other contracts for parks related activity, should be structured to ensure that the behaviours incentivised are in keeping with the overall objectives of the Council and are in the interests of residents. In particular, income earning targets should not conflict with encouraging and enabling local residents to easily access health and wellbeing promoting facilities and activities in their parks.

In order to advance the Council's already established policy objectives of improving physical and mental health, enhanced biodiversity, civic renewal and strengthening community life, we recommend that parks are accessible to all, affordable for all, and funded as a basic amenity so that all residents have access to space and facilities to maintain mental and physical health and wellbeing.

2. Summary of Recommendations

◆ Improving Parks Environmental Impact

- **Biodiversity:** The General Maintenance Contract should incentivise biodiversity through planting and maintenance. We recommend that a Biodiversity Survey be carried out throughout H&F's parks and Open Spaces in order to identify areas that can be set aside for biodiversity planting

- **Onsite Composting:** The General Maintenance Contract should encourage the Council, contractors and other stakeholders to review whether on-site composting and recycling is feasible and advantageous, and set up composting areas in some or all parks

◆ **Improving Parks Maintenance and Management**

- **Tree Maintenance:** The General Maintenance Contract should include tree work in parks and open spaces.
- ***Trial Extended Opening of Parks:*** The Council should consider the feasibility of extending the opening hours of parks and look to introduce automatic locking and unlocking of park gates.
- **Reimagining the Park Warden:** Each park should have a designated and named contact provided by the Council or Grounds Maintenance Contractor - a “ Park Warden”. This person should be the direct contact for residents regarding issues and matters pertaining to their park and provide oversight for the maintenance and activities that occur in the park. The Council should consider repurposing the Parks Police and their budget.

◆ **Improving Community Involvement:**

- **Delivering Social Value through Engagement with Residents and Volunteers:** The Grounds Maintenance Contractor should be incentivised to actively engage with residents and volunteers within each park.
- **Delivering Social Value through Apprentices:** We recommend that the procurement strategy for the Grounds Maintenance Contract actively rewards the creation of an apprenticeship scheme as well as work placements for young people and people with disabilities.

◆ **Rethinking the Parks Commercial Strategy**

- Bookings for all sports facilities and land should be brought in-house and run through a single, centralised digital platform, owned and controlled by LBHF.
- It is understood that private enterprises can often do a better and more efficient job of running sports programmes than the Council directly. We should encourage entrepreneurial persons to run market-leading, community-centred activities for the benefit of our residents. However, management and usage of park land for commercial purposes by any non-Council owned body (including all leases) should only be done on a set of very clear terms which include appropriate reflection of land value, some degree of free community access, clear Council sight on all income and costs, and regular contractual reviews.

- Management of park-related costs and income should be joined-up, so priorities and incentives can be clearly aligned and the parks run as a whole and as efficiently as possible.
- Parks should be affordable to all schools and all residents to use. The use of parks by young people both in and out of school should be encouraged. Engaging young people in outdoor activity is an essential part of education.

3. Detailed Recommendations

◆ Improving Parks Environmental Impact

3.1 Biodiversity in our Parks¹

The General Maintenance Contract should incentivise biodiversity through planting and maintenance.

We recommend that a Biodiversity Survey be carried out throughout H&F's parks and open spaces in order to identify areas that can be set aside for biodiversity planting that would not affect the other uses, or existing planting maintained by the Maintenance Contractor. This would allow Officers to identify sites for habitat creation projects or 're-wilding' with relaxed maintenance.²

In larger parks and open spaces areas of grass should be set aside and cut twice-yearly, returning to meadow, particular under large trees. Planting of early daffodils (for bees) and wildflower plugs to be carried out.³

Replacement and additional tree and shrub planting should take into account native wildlife requirements in terms of nectar, pollen, berries, support of invertebrates, and in some instances, carbon capture.

A clear distinction should be drawn between the replacement of dead and dying plants by the Maintenance Contractor, and new planting schemes based on biodiversity carried out under the supervision of H&F's parks horticultural team.

3.2 On-site Composting

The General Maintenance Contract should encourage the Council, contractors and other stakeholders to review current practice in managing green waste and evaluate whether on-site composting and recycling is feasible and advantageous. Practically this would involve setting up a composting area in some or all parks.

The Commission expects that this would:

¹ Parks Commissioners Richard Jackson, John Goodier and Jen Riley are happy to provide further detailed

² Many of these sites have already been identified in the Parks Commission Data Base. Some are large (eg. Fulham Cemetery), some medium sized (eg. One of the three dog-walking areas in Ravenscourt Park), and some small (eg. New hedging between Furnival Gardens and the Great West Road).

³ Planting could be carried out by Maintenance contractors or volunteers

- a. Improve quality control - (the currently used composted mulch is heavily contaminated with litter and sometimes apparent industrial waste). There is no control over herbicide contamination or other toxins which can be an issue if the feedstock is uncontrolled.
- b. Reduce emissions and labour for transport to and from depot.
- c. Compost heaps and fresh woodchip mulch are excellent biodiversity habitat and benefit the soil with improved structure, fungal life, water retention etc. Many of these benefits are lost if its done at an 'industrial' facility. Composting also emits methane, which needs to be offset by optimising the advantages.
- d. All types of natural organic waste are best processed as close to natural decomposition cycles as possible while maintaining horticultural standards. Woodchip, leaf mould, grass clippings and mixed compost all have value. Surplus could be made available to residents and community gardeners.
- e. A good composting system provides re-enforcement/ public education on sustainability, particularly since home composting is the policy for residential green waste.

◆ Improving Parks Maintenance and Management

3.3 Tree Maintenance

The General Maintenance Contract should consider including all tree work in parks and open spaces.⁴

The existing maintenance contract covers tree work up to two metres. Anything above this height requires an outside contractor at additional expense to the Council. A single contractor overseeing the maintenance of trees in parks is desirable.

3.4 Trial Extended Opening of Parks

Many if not most parks throughout London are either not locked or not lockable.⁵ Nineteen of LBHF Parks (and 2 cemeteries) are opened at sunrise and locked at sunset, with attendant costs to the Maintenance Contract and/or Parks Police.

We recommend that the Council consult with stakeholders and the Police with a view toward a trial of extending summer opening hours to midnight from June 1 – 31 August 2021. (subject to covid-19 restrictions) This would benefit residents by allowing more time for picnics, running, dog-walking and sports. The Council can then assess any increased anti-social behaviour and revenue from sports facilities.

If successful, the Council could evaluate further park opening extensions as supported by local residents and the Metropolitan police.

⁴ The Parks Department propose to do this in their GMC strategy.

⁵ Precise data is still being gathered by Steve Hollingworth.

As part of this move to extended opening hours we suggest that LBHF trial the automatic unlocking and locking of parks in areas where it is feasible.

3.5 Re-imagining the Park Warden

We encourage the Council to reimagine the “Park Warden” through an oversight provision in the Grounds Maintenance Contract and a redeployment of resources that presently fund the Parks Police⁶.

Each park should have a designated and named contact provided by the Council or Grounds Maintenance Contractor - a “Park Warden”. This person should be the direct contact for residents regarding issues and matters pertaining to their park and provide oversight for the maintenance and activities that occur in the park. This would increase engagement and accessibility in parks and ensure any issues that arise are resolved quickly.

- a. Residents often struggle to engage with the Council on matters pertaining to their park. They feel helpless to report, repair, or improve their parks. They do not know whom to contact.
- b. The Maintenance Contractor is not empowered to engage with residents. Park Officers are not present – possibly because they are overstretched.
- c. While there are examples of excellent Friends Groups within our parks, some have become small clubs or cliques and proprietorial over the park, which places another barrier between a resident and the question they may have or the outcome they hope to achieve.

A “Park Warden” who is responsible for the workings of each park: maintenance, facilities, usage, becomes a single point of contact for residents and will improve efficiency and responsiveness and give all residents a greater sense of ownership in their parks. A “Park Warden” will also provide much needed oversight for maintenance teams and for client businesses who provide services to residents in the park and can ensure higher standards of maintenance are achieved. This named figure will have a mobile phone number which residents can call to make enquiries, suggestions or report concerns.

Replacing the Parks Police, who have no powers of arrest, with a Park Warden who is a named and known figure in the respective local area maintains a sense of safety for residents but replaces a negative anonymous and punitive policing function with a positive local community engagement function.

There is precedent for this: The London County Council invented the concept of the Parks Police in 1889. They had a rethink 16 years later and, in 1905, The Parks

⁶ The Parks Police budget is £625k per year and is entirely funded by the Council out of the general fund. The budget sits in the Community Safety & Regulatory Services cost centre.

Police were replaced by... “Park Keepers” - or “Wardens”.⁷

3.6 Delivering Social Value through engagement with Residents and Volunteers

The Grounds Maintenance Contractor should be incentivised to actively engage with residents and volunteers within each park in order to develop a greater sense of ownership among members of the community.

3.7 Delivering Social Value through Apprentices and Work Placement

We recommend that the procurement strategy for the Grounds Maintenance Contract actively rewards the creation of an apprenticeship scheme as well as work placements for young people and people with disabilities. We would look for the procurement strategy to reward commitment to local recruitment and skills development with quantifiable targets for apprenticeships, in-service training, minimum qualification and skills requirements at all staff levels

3.8 Rethinking the Parks Commercial Strategy

Whilst Hammersmith and Fulham benefits from numerous parks and open spaces, given the density of its urban population, the actual space offered per resident (1.35ha per 1000 residents) sits below the London average. Despite this limitation, the park space in the borough is ‘worked’ very hard to generate income for the Council, which by all measurements it does very successfully. According to financial information available, park land generates between £1.5 to £2m every year, when income from all sports bookings, events, property lettings and profit from private enterprises is accounted for. *(This includes c. £750k p.a. in sports bookings collected by IdVerde, £110k collected from Linford Christie, £450k from parks property and events, £100k of income in the parks budget from markets, park lodges, community rooms and donations, as well as an estimated £300k to £500k in profit generated by private tennis enterprises, the majority of which sits with TFC Leisure (Rocks Lane)).*

However, the majority of this income is unlikely to be visible (or available) to the Council – and therefore challenging to optimise directly – given a number of factors which include:

- a. Separation of income lines across multiple Council budgets (and therefore may make it challenging to align incentives across all parks-related cost and profit centres).
- b. At least two commercial agreements account for approximately half of this income, which do not necessarily reflect the best interest of Council residents or the value of the land (and therefore limit the benefit the council receives from its park land).

⁷ There are several other Parks Police in London: Hampstead Heath, Epping Forest, Kew Gardens, Royal Parks but the only London boroughs still with a Parks Police force are RBKC, LBHF and Wandsworth, Islington, Ealing and Richmond are using “Park Guard” a private security firm. (Information provided by Council Officer Steve Hollingworth)

- c. A cost allocation to oversee this income, which is highly fragmented and inefficient (and therefore reduces actual income to the Council to use for services back to residents).

Furthermore, despite this level of income generation, a number of issues and inconsistencies have been identified, which lead us to believe that usage of the park land is not always on an equitable basis, and not always serving the best interests of our residents.

3.8.1 There are significant inconsistencies in land usage and monetisation.

TFC Leisure makes >£1m in profit over its 3 sites p.a. (based on its Companies House filings and declared tax amounts). With 1 of these sites in H&F, a simple assumption would imply the land generates this for-profit business **c. £350k of profit** every year. In return for this exclusive year-round land access (to a large piece of highly valuable land in Bishops Park), the Council signed an agreement in 2012 to receive only £30k per annum for these privileges.

In contrast, H&F collects £33k from Little Foxes - a children's football club - for non exclusive use of Ravenscourt Park land (approx.. 10 – 20 hours per week during term time.)

3.8.2 Rather than offering equal access to all, park land exacerbates inequality in our borough. We have created a situation where publicly owned parkland is generating substantial profits for companies, whilst many schools in the borough cannot afford to use the parks⁸ – and offer simple recreational activities to their students – because the cost of access is too prohibitive.

- a. In addition to the TFC leisure example mentioned above, IdVerde retains c. 35% - or nearly £250k per annum in sports booking income park land has generated, as a result of a contract signed in 2018. It is unclear how these IdVerde 'cost's are allocated, and whether there is sufficient oversight to be certain they are efficiently allocated and improving residents' park usage.
- b. In contrast, state schools-in borough, pay c. £30k to the Council per year for usage of park land, which for many is a struggle – and as such many schools have had to reduce usage of the land.

3.8.3 Finally, despite the substantial costs being removed by private bodies for management and oversight of commercial activities, there is no indication that the service being offered our residents is efficient, easily accessible (both financially and physically), and 'the best' we can do.

⁸ The Independent Parks Commission made an appeal for evidence to schools in the Borough on the quality and affordability of Parks. The responses we've received are available to review. Four of the five Secondary Schools that responded were concerned about price and/or access.

- a. Indeed, surveys and feedback (of IdVerde overseen facilities) indicate the service is often poor – with long lead times to responses to bookings, difficulty accessing grounds even when booked and paid for, and pricing that proves a barrier to a large portion of our residents, public and charitable bodies. It appears, in many cases, that historic contracts were hugely opportunistic, (See Appendix One) and agreed based on the offer on the table being better than what was currently in place.

3.8.4 *Given the above we have four broad Commercial Strategy recommendations for the Council which may affect the Procurement Strategy of the Grounds Maintenance of Parks, Public Open Spaces and Housing Estates:*

➤ **Commercial Strategy Recommendation 1:**

Bookings for all sports facilities and land should be brought in-house and run through a single, centralised digital platform, owned and controlled by LBHF. This platform should be able to accommodate:

- a. Online bookings of all chargeable and non-chargeable park facilities used by residents, businesses, public services and not-for-profits.
- b. Communications to engage residents, businesses, public services and not-for-profits in all matters pertaining to the delivery of objectives for parks and open spaces and the rationale for the management of each park.
- c. Feedback by residents and park users to the Council and land management bodies on areas requiring maintenance and suggestions for areas of improvement including horticultural and biodiversity improvements.

The data and insights generated from the above platform will enable the council to continuously improve the facilities it offers to park users and ensure costs and capital investments are allocated as efficiently as possible. We believe the efficiencies gained from implementation of this platform, both from current booking management and pricing optimization, will rapidly pay back the cost of platform development. (*assuming a return to normal park activity following the Covid-19 crisis).

We believe that this technological solution could resolve current Issues identified with sports bookings and management in H&F.
(See Appendix Two)

Overall it is our believe that a more efficient, comprehensive and agile solution will encourage resident engagement with parks, bookings of facilities and income generated from parks as well as enable the Council to manage decisions to optimize park land for community benefit.

Benefits/Objectives:

- a. Transparent central platform for all key stakeholders to communicate with park's management and make bookings of facilities.
- b. Self-serve marketplace functionality – like an Airbnb for parks facilities – which outlines availability, pricing, conditions specific to each stakeholder.
- c. Data analytics on usage for council to optimise availability/pricing with demand with commercial and community objectives in real time.
- d. Streamline distributed costs across different H&F departments and contractors and build-in true visibility and accountability of cost centres to facilities.
- e. Enables the Council to take cost out of the Sports Bookings component of the General Maintenance contract, whilst being able to receive the full financial benefit of bookings.
- f. Centralized communications point with aim of increasing engagement with residents and responding to issues quickly. Residents and stakeholders engaged in self-regulating our parks conditions.

A centralized platform could help with creating opportunities in parks and open spaces for all residents to improve their physical and mental well-being and improving access for more vulnerable residents by making it easier to get information on what is happening in the parks, facilitate booking and one platform for dealing with issues/concerns.

Additionally it would help improve access to recreational facilities for residents, whilst enabling the Council to promote its activities in biodiversity and carbon capture, and working with local business to improve access and facilities.

Feasibility and Cost estimate

The Commission believes that the creation of an online system is completely feasible at a very manageable cost and light investment. Information can be held in the cloud making the system scalable and allowing for an inexpensive trial should that be required. Software exists or a bespoke application can be developed at a low cost. The pace we believe it would pay back is less than the present single year cost of the Sports Booking System.

We acknowledge that this significant change in approach will have implementation considerations and challenges which we have identified. (See Appendix Three)

➤ **Commercial Strategy Recommendation 2:**

It is understood that private enterprises can often do a better and more efficient job of running sports programmes than the Council directly. And we should encourage entrepreneurial persons to run market-leading, community-centred activities for the benefit of our residents. However, management and usage of park land for commercial purposes by any non-council owned body (including all leases) should only be done on very clear terms, which include the following:

- a. The value of the land is appropriately reflected in the terms of the lease, exactly how any commercial property or land lease with a private body would be construed.
- b. The Council has clear sight on all charging policy and income collection.
- c. Land is never managed under 'exclusive' contracts, ie. There should always be some amount of free, public access.
- d. Applications for leasing park buildings and facilities should be evaluated with a holistic view of public benefit.

➤ **Commercial Strategy Recommendation 3:**

Management of park-related costs and income should be joined-up, so priorities and incentives can be clearly aligned and the parks run as a whole and as efficiently as possible.

- a. Park income and expenditure is presently spread across four independently functioning departmental groups: Sports Booking (IdVerde), Events Team, Property Services, Parks. This creates duplication, inefficiency, a failure of oversight, and a propensity to pass responsibility from one department to another.
- b. By centralising control one can more readily track income and expenditure and allow for more efficient management of the Council's park resources and facilities.
- c. Income earned from activities in the parks should go to the parks department enabling them to run high quality parks with regular improvements and enhancements in facilities and properties to increase use by local residents.

➤ **Commercial Strategy Recommendation 4:**

Parks should be affordable to all schools and all residents to use.

The use of parks by young people both in and out of school should be encouraged. The Council should work with schools to find an equitable way to provide green, open space for children's sporting activities as part of their essential education.

- a. The Council should work with local state schools to ensure they have sufficient free access to parks.⁹ This needs to be managed and shared between schools and residents fairly.
- b. Concessions to enable affordable sport should be employed. Children from low income families are reported to struggle with affordability. Youth sports coaching have to charge higher fees to accommodate the high charges they have to pay. The very cohort of people we are trying to encourage to use our parks are often the ones who are being denied access. Inhibiting access foments a lack of cohesion in communities.
- c. There should be a coherent charging policy, with clear underpinning principles for charging that reinforce the adopted objectives of the Council of improving physical and mental health, and strengthening community life. No one should be unable to afford to use the borough's parks.



The Independent Parks Commission would like to express its enormous gratitude to Council Officer Stephen Hollingworth, Assistant Director Leisure, Sport & Culture, for his assistance, insight, and clarity in providing information to the Commission and explaining the challenges that he has inherited, and Council Officer Peter Smith, Head of Policy and Strategy, Public Services Reform for his guidance and help in facilitating the work of the Commission.



⁹ Where Schools cause additional costs, there should be some means for covering these costs.

Appendix One

Analysis of the opportunistic outcome of the variation to the Sports Bookings component of the present Grounds Maintenance Contract.

This information was provided by Council Officers at the request of the Commission. We believe this to be an accurate description of the situation based on the information provided. Figures are from when the sport income guarantee began in January 2018. For the first year and up to March 2019, the guarantee was £450k. However, this was renegotiated to £520k from April 2019.

The first income guarantee period started from January 2018 to March 2019 accounts. It was agreed that the first year of the contract would run for 15 months. For the first 15 months of the contract the guaranteed minimum payment was set at £450K and the profit share threshold was at £561K.

Total income for the period: £896.5k.

The attached accounts show £562k returned under the guaranteed minimum payment for 5 periods i.e. (£450k/12x15) and £14.5K still owing to LBHF, after the Contractor's costs. (Please note that the profit share threshold had not been reached. (i.e. $561/12 \times 15 = £712k$. £712k had to be reached to trigger the profit share.) A total repayment for the 15 months is £562.5k, plus the balance of £14.5k = a total of £577k.

In May 2019, LBHF confirmed that they required the guaranteed minimum payment to increase to £520k per annum from the 1st of January 2019 rather than the 1st April 19. A provision in the May 2019 accounts was made to allow for this.

The agreement for year two and subsequent years is that the guaranteed minimum payment increase to £520k and the profit share threshold was matched to this.

Contractor Costs and 6.5% margin

Agreed costs including the guaranteed minimum payment are deducted from revenue. If there is a balance, then the Contractor deducts a 6.5% margin on income. The margin on this contract is not guaranteed. If there is any surplus following this then it is shared on a 50/50 basis.

- there is approximately £54k management and Administration costs taken by the Contractor.
- £190.5k staff costs (3 staff plus on costs: i.e. pension contributions)
- £11.5k over heads
- £5k vehicles and materials

£260k total costs taken

Plus an additional 6.5% on the gross sum of £896,500

- 6.5% x £896,500 gross income = £58,272

Total taken by the Contractor (IdVerde) in costs and 6.5% margin: £318.5k

Total revenue earned: 896,500
 Revenue to Council: 577,000 64.4% guarantee plus
 Revenue retained by IdVerde: 318,500 35.5% costs and fixed margin

LBHF Sports Bookings Summary January 2018 - March 2019

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total 2018	Q5	Total to 31/3/19
Income Received	£ 22,122	£ 192,944	£ 243,499	£ 163,192	£ 621,757	£ 137,000	£ 758,757
Debtors Movement	£ 59,099	£ 59,728	-£ 8,185	-£ 16,424	£ 94,218	-£ 30,804	£ 63,415
Accrual re sales not invoiced	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 25,000	£ 25,000	£ 54,000	£ 79,000
Stripe Fees paid	-£ 160	-£ 422	-£ 1,776	-£ 1,540	-£ 3,899	-£ 721	-£ 4,620
Total Income	£ 81,060	£ 252,250	£ 233,538	£ 170,228	£ 737,076	£ 159,475	£ 896,551
Costs							
Management & Admin	£ 10,502	£ 10,502	£ 10,502	£ 10,502	£ 42,007	£ 11,666	£ 53,674
Staffing costs	£ 30,522	£ 35,914	£ 42,636	£ 41,256	£ 150,328	£ 39,974	£ 190,302
Materials	£ -	£ -	£ 815	£ 37	£ 852	£ 324	£ 1,176
Vehicles & Plant	£ 780	£ 799	£ 837	£ 893	£ 3,309	£ 921	£ 4,230
Overheads	£ 1,652	£ 2,773	£ 267	£ 5,563	£ 10,253	£ 1,284	£ 11,537
Total Costs	£ 43,455	£ 49,987	£ 55,057	£ 58,250	£ 206,750	£ 54,169	£ 260,919
Profit Total in Period	£ 37,605	£ 202,263	£ 178,481	£ 111,978	£ 530,326	£ 105,305	£ 635,632
Less IDV 6.5%							-£ 58,576
Less: GMP already paid to LBHF							-£ 562,500
Balance - all owing to LBHF as threshold profit-share level of £561k in year (so £701k in 5 Quarters) was not achieved							£ 14,556

Appendix Two

We believe that this technological solution could resolve current Issues identified with sports bookings and management in LBHF.

1. **Fragmented & Confusing for Users:** Systems that run bookings and communications around parks facilities are fragmented across online platforms, call centers and email addresses under the control of multiple parties e.g. 4 different H&F council departments, IdVerde, LTA (for some tennis courts) and third party software services. This is confusing and prevents stakeholder (residents, businesses, public services and not-for-profits) engagement.
2. **Inefficient and Lacking Transparency:** Stakeholders (residents, businesses, public services and not-for-profits) are not aware of the general information and facilities they can lease or book for their usage of park facilities in any easy to access or easily bookable way. The current system is not consolidated or automated, and in some cases it is an inefficient process which adds staff costs for the council and its contractor, whilst creating a time-consuming and frustrating process for park users. Additionally, it does not facilitate competitive bidding for potentially high value leases of facilities.
3. **Misaligned Incentives and Outcomes:** Current terms with the contractor optimise for a flat fee returned to the council with a profit share above a certain threshold (once the contractor has allocated their costs). Given the complexity of the interests that the council needs to navigate and the varied considerations of stakeholders involved who should be given fair access to parks facilities, incentives under the current contract are not aligned to the council's objectives (e.g. gives rise to unfair/putative pricing to public services such as schools or small commercial enterprises or small residential gatherings, whilst not enabling efficient charging for commercial charges).
4. **Limited Optimisation of Public Land Use:** The council has no control to lever how parks' facilities are used for all stakeholders (residents, businesses, public services and not-for-profits) – be this optimizing availability for different stakeholders or optimizing pricing to ensure they monetise demand for services whilst balancing access for public services, not-for-profits or vulnerable residents. Whilst the council can request access to the booking data, it is currently not set up to do so (& the data is no longer transferred to the council), as such opportunities to improve and optimize commercial terms for residents and users (and balance their interests with that of the council) are not being explored.
5. **Income Leakage and Cost Inefficiency:** The nature of the contract with the Contractor means that c. 35% of income generated by sports bookings is 'lost' to the council, with the contractor spending c. £250k p.a. to manage the bookings. Given the inefficient nature of the bookings (which could be easily optimized through technology), and poor feedback from facility users about ease of access and availability, it is not clear that this "cost" is being efficiently allocated.

6. **No Direct Feedback System:** The fragmented nature of bookings and management means that any issues, challenges or suggestions for improvement by residents and users are challenging to collect by the council. Correspondingly, it is also challenging for residents to know who to contact to improve facilities and access – and it is likely many well-intended ideas do not end up with the right people.

Appendix Three

Bookings for all sports facilities and land should be brought in-house and run through a single, centralised digital platform, owned and controlled by LBHF.

Implementation Considerations

- a. Evaluate whether third party software currently used by the council can meet the objectives.
- b. Evaluate whether a bespoke platform should be built specifically for the council's objectives or whether a specialist white labelled software allows for enough customization and flexibility to meet the objectives.
- c. Determine the upfront investment required by the council to achieve these objectives.

Determine the cost savings and income optimization achievable through this new platform, and therefore how quickly the council would achieve a return on its investment.

Implementation Challenges and Mitigation

- A. **Viability:** Clear potential benefits of bringing this in-house highlighted above but an evaluation of cost of implementation vs. potential financial upside required.

Mitigation: High level opportunity cost analysis as a starting point.

- B. **Investment:** Upfront cost will need to be lump sum investment in this infrastructure (though if largely off-the-shelf solutions can be identified, this investment is likely to be limited)

Mitigation: Evaluate costs of implementation and how much of this is offset by cutting cost out of the Idverde contract.

- C. **Execution:** Consider whether this is best built as a bespoke platform for the council's needs or whether a white labelled booking platform provides adequate solution and enough flexibility to meet the goals.

Mitigation: Evaluate all potential technology options against a clear set of feature requirements and council priorities

- D. **Management:** Consider who should manage this for the best outcomes against the council's objectives.

Mitigation: Identify all possible on-going management options and assess their merits and disadvantages. Make an informed recommendation to the council, identifying challenges that might arise and a clear path for dealing with them.

- E. **Timings:** Unlikely this can be introduced prior to the new maintenance contract. Could be introduced at a later stage in which case determine what should be requested in the contract to facilitate the transition and allow switching mid contract.

Mitigation: Ensure the contract is constructed in a flexible enough way to allow bookings to be removed from it. Ensure this does not result in any detrimental impact on the GM contract (i.e. additional costs being added to it due to loss of commercial income)

- F. **Integration:** How a new centralised system will Interface with various stakeholder's IT systems i.e. contractor, council, suppliers.

Mitigation: This should be thoroughly evaluated and costed as part of the viability, implementation and execution workstreams above. The team will need to understand related council IT infrastructure, what CMS systems are used, and any back-end integrations that will be required. This will depend heavily on the agreed features and requirements for the platform, which will need to be specified at the outset.

- G. **Third party apps:** Consider whether in all cases this replaces use of third party applications used by the contractor to enable online booking (e.g. tennis courts via Booker).

Recommended Interim Next Steps

1. High level opportunity cost analysis as background analysis to support return on council's investment in the project. Understand total costs currently deployed to manage bookings across the council and third parties, and what they achieve in terms of income. Identify how much of this cost is redundant (e.g. generated because two bodies are doing the same task), and how much could be better optimised through a technology solution. Identify at a high level how much cost (from ongoing software fees, to headcount and equipment required) would be needed to manage bookings with a digital system.
2. Agree the full "must have" and "should have" set of requirements and features for the platform, including what must be within an MVP, and what its longer term objectives should be. This will then determine what software solutions are feasible.
3. Understand the current (relevant) council and 3rd party software infrastructure, and what systems require integration to enable a full end-to-end booking process. This should include how data records and user accounts need to be stored, managed and de-duplicated across existing systems, and what financial payment and processing system integrations are needed.

4. High level research into software solutions and fixed/variable costs that would enable the council to efficiently meet this objective.
5. Comparative research into best practices i.e. how other councils/parks/governments have tackled this issue (after all this is not new) – and possibly how private enterprise booking systems have delivered savings. Evaluate the opportunity to co-invest in this solution with other councils who have similar needs.

London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham Independent Parks Commissioners:

- Tim Prager (Chair)
- Paul Appleton
- Heather Farmbrough
- John Goodier
- Judy Hargadon
- Richard Jackson
- Kevin McIntosh
- Rosemary Mortimer
- Jennifer O'Riley
- Lindsay Tethal Wright
- Isabella Thomas

**The London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham
Independent Parks Commission
Terms of Reference**

Timothy Prager
Chair of the Independent Parks Commission

Introduction

Hammersmith & Fulham is blessed with a patchwork of ornate parks, green and open spaces.

Starting at the ancient common land of Wormwood Scrubs in the north, one could meander south through pockets of life-affirming nature travelling through a stunning collection of over 40 borough parks, public gardens and green spaces, ending up on the riverfront with all its wildlife and colour.

Our open spaces offer our residents a chance to play, exercise and breath easier and provide opportunity for the borough to facilitate good physical and mental health, civic renewal and a strengthening of our community life.

The Independent Parks Commission will consider all of the above focusing on how our residents get the most from our open spaces, what we do to improve them, while protecting them and making them sustainable for future generations and for the enhanced biodiversity of the borough.

It will report its independent findings to the Borough's Community Safety and Environment Policy and Accountability Committee.

Review scope

- What is the vision for our parks, green and open spaces?
 - How can they facilitate the achievement of the Council's stated public policy objectives of: improving physical and mental health, enhanced biodiversity, civic renewal and strengthening community life?
- What is the best way to involve local people in the decisions made about our parks?
 - How do we ensure the council engages a full and wide diversity of people in the decisions we make about our parks?

- How can we devolve powers to residents, so decisions are made expediently, with probity and in the interests of all the parks current and potential users?
- How should the management of: sports bookings, parks buildings, and rental of public areas operate in a way that ensures good value to both the council and the users; probity, and affordability?
- What currently works, what could be better, and what doesn't work in the way our parks and open spaces are managed?
 - What's the best way to manage our parks?
 - What's the best way of ensuring our parks are financially sustainable and have the resources to deliver the improvements our residents want?
 - What's the best way to ensure that residents feel safe in our parks?
 - What's the best way of keeping our parks safe and open for use during the maximum number of hours?
 - How can increased use of technology be employed to encourage greater residents use of our parks.
 - How can we enhance the biodiversity and environmental sustainability of our parks?

Appendix 4.

Parks Commission interim report recommendations: H&F Council officer responses and July 2021 update on progress.

Recommendation 1. Biodiversity: The General Maintenance Contract should incentivise biodiversity through planting and maintenance. We recommend that a Biodiversity Survey be carried out throughout H&F's Parks and Open Spaces in order to identify areas that can be set aside for biodiversity planting.

Response - Increasing biodiversity will be included in the Procurement Strategy Report.

July 2021 Update:-

Greater areas of biodiversity have been included in the specification and a baseline biodiversity survey is being commissioned by the Climate and Ecological Emergency Team across the borough, so we can, demonstrate year on year improvement.

Recommendation 2. Onsite Composting: The General Maintenance Contract should encourage the Council, contractors and other stakeholders to review whether on-site composting and recycling is feasible and advantageous, and set up composting areas in some or all parks.

Response - On site composting will be included as part of bidder proposals and included in the Procurement Strategy Report.

July 2021 Update:-

Composting was included in the specification and contractors have come up with proposals as part of their method statements are part of their bids.

Recommendation 3. Tree Maintenance: The General Maintenance Contract should include tree work in parks and open spaces.

Response - Tree Maintenance will be included in the Procurement Strategy Report.

July 2021 Update:-

A tree maintenance contract has been included in the procurement for all trees in the borough and tenders are being evaluated. General pruning is included within the grounds maintenance contract.

Recommendation 4. Trial Extended Opening of Parks: The Council should consider the feasibility of extending the opening hours of parks and look to introduce automatic locking and unlocking of park gates.

Response - The proposed trial of extended opening hours will be addressed by Cabinet, when considering the Parks Commission's final report.

Recommendation 5. Reimagining the Park Warden: Each park should have a designated and named contact provided by the Council or Grounds Maintenance Contractor - a "Park Warden". This person should be the direct contact for residents regarding issues and matters pertaining to their park and provide oversight for the maintenance and activities that occur in the park.

Response - Reimagining Park Wardens will be addressed by including a requirement within a new contract, that the contractor must have a named person responsible for each park as a point of contact. This will be included in the Procurement Strategy Report.

July 2021 Update:-

This is a requirement of the new specification and contractors have submitted their proposals for named contacts per park. These will be included on the website and on the parks notice boards.

Recommendation 6. The Council should consider repurposing the Parks Police and their budget.

Response - The Parks Police and their budget will be considered by Cabinet, when taking into account the Parks Commission's final report.

July 2021 Update:-

In April 2021 the council commenced employment of its new Law Enforcement Team (LET). The LET comprises of 72 staff creating one of the biggest environmental enforcement teams in the country. The team are responsible for providing high visibility presence in our parks and green spaces, housing estates, commercial areas, and residential roads.

Each ward will have an allocated officer who will ensure they know all the key partners in that ward.

Currently officers are undergoing an intense training period and transitioning onto their shift patterns. The LET service is a uniformed service with all officers easily identifiable to the public. More information on the team can be found via our webpage - [Law Enforcement Team | LBHF](#)

Residents are encouraged to share intelligence with the LET and you can do so via LET.HF@lbhf.gov.uk and, as you see the LET officers in parks, residents are encourage approach them and engage with them to share knowledge, passion and equally any concerns .

Recommendation 7. Delivering Social Value through Engagement with Residents and Volunteers: The Grounds Maintenance Contractor should be incentivised to actively engage with residents and volunteers within each park.

Response - The social value proposal, regarding incentivising engagement with volunteers and local people, will be included in the Procurement Strategy Report.

July 2021 Update:-

Volunteering is included as part of the social value of the contract and proposals have been submitted as part of the contractors submissions.

Recommendation 8. Delivering Social Value through Apprentices:

The procurement strategy for the Grounds Maintenance Contract should actively reward the creation of an apprenticeship scheme as well as work placements for young people and people with disabilities.

Response - The social value proposal, regarding apprenticeships and work placements for young people and disabled people will be included in the Procurement Strategy Report.

July 2021 Update:-

Apprenticeships are included as part of the social value of the contract and proposals have been submitted as part of the contractor's submissions.

Recommendation 9. Bookings for all sports facilities and land should be brought in-house and run through a single, centralised digital platform, owned and controlled by H&F.

Response - This will be included in the Procurement Strategy Report.

July 2021 Update:-

Sports bookings are not included in the contract and officers are currently investigating improved booking platforms to be in place by February next year.

Recommendation 10. The management and usage of parks land for commercial purposes by any non-council owned body (including all leases) should only be done on very clear terms which include appropriate reflection of land value, some degree of free community access, clear Council sight on all income and costs and regular contractual reviews.

Response – The management and usage of parks land for commercial purposes by any non-council owned body (including leases), will be addressed by Cabinet, when considering the Parks Commission's final report.

Recommendation 11. Management of park-related costs and income should be joined-up, so priorities and incentives can be clearly aligned, and the parks run as a whole and as efficiently as possible.

Response - The management of parks-related costs and income will be addressed by Cabinet, when considering the Parks Commission's final report.

July 2021 Update:-

Parks budgets for expenditure and income have been pulled together into one place to provide greater transparency and ease to access this information.

Recommendation 12. Parks should be affordable to all schools and all residents to use. The use of parks by young people both in and out of school

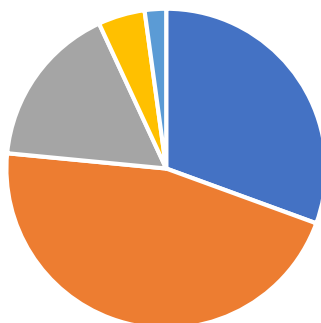
should be encouraged. Engaging young people in outdoor activity is an essential part of education.

Response - This will be addressed by Cabinet when considering the Parks Commission's final report.

Appendix 5. H&F Parks Commission resident consultation - summary of responses

Average respondent sentiment


Average respondent sentiment



■ positive ■ mostly positive ■ neutral ■ mostly negative ■ negative

Question	Issues categories	Detailed issues	Number of responses	Particular parks/areas	Additional info
How do you think we could improve parks and open spaces?	Maintenance	Better care of lawns / grass	17	Eel Brook Common, Frank Banfield, the cemeteries, Brook Green, Ravenscourt Park	
		Litter/recycling - more information / campaigns	19		
		Litter - more bins / litter collections	46	All	
		Path - improve maintenance	10	Ravenscourt Park, Wormwood Scrubs, South Park, Fulham Cemetery	Particular concern for those with mobility issues
		Enforcing responsible dog ownership	27		
	Facilities	More places to sit	9	Wormwood Scrubs, Brook Green, Bishops Park, Margravine Cemetery, Hammersmith Park, Bayonne Park	
		Toilets - improvements or new facilities	41	Wendell Park, Normand Park, Eel Brook Common, South Park, Hurlingham Park, Ravenscourt Park, wormwood Scrubs	South Park particularly highlighted as a health hazard. At Eel Brook Common, school kids are using bushes.
		Sports - would like outdoor gym	15	Frank Banfield, Furnivall Gardens, Hammersmith Park, Ravenscourt Park, Lillie Rd Rec	
		Sports - improvements to pitches / courts / changing facilities	21	Eel Brook Common tennis courts, Ravenscourt Park courts, South Park	
		New / better café facilities	18	Wendell Park, Normand Park, Ravenscourt Park, South Park, Wormwood Scrubs	Repeated concerns about the state of the pizza hut in South Park
		Playground equipment improvements	15	Normand Park, Ravenscourt Park, Wormholt Park, South Park, Wormwood Scrubs	
		Water fountains	4		
		Water play areas	6		
	Greening and biodiversity	Encourage more biodiversity	25		Install bug hotels
		Plant more flowers	11	Ravenscourt Park, Normand Park, Brook Green	
		Plant more trees	10	Shepherds Bush Green	
		Water young trees	4		
		Information boards about nature	4		
		Nature activities - walks, bird spotting etc	2		
		More community gardens / allotments	11		
		More hedge-planting	1	Along the A4 corridor	
	Safety and security	Cyclists need controlling / banning	18		
		Greater police presence	9		
		Better control of gangs and drug-dealers/takers	16	Hammersmith Park, Eel Brook Common, Margravine Cemetery, Wormholt Park, Marcus Garvey, Normand Park	
		Reinstate park wardens	10		
		Lock all parks at night	4		
	Dogs	Create dedicated dog play areas	2		
		Create dog-free zones	9		
		More water points for dogs	2		

What is the best way to involved local people in the decision made about our parks?	Friends groups	Friends groups being more proactive in engaging wider community	23		Often described as non-representative and insular
	Leaflets / flyers / newsletter		21	1	
	Notices and display boards		21		
	Online surveys like this one		96		
	Get local schools involved		20		
	Better use of council / other social media and e-news		40		
	Going out to parks to talk to users		39		
	Community forum		27		
	Involve more community organisations, eg. HCGA, Mutual Aid Groups, Fulham Good Neighbours, TRAs		18		
	Other ideas:				
		Provide guided walks around parks	3		
	Organise litter picks	1			
	Suggestion boxes in parks	2			
How do you think the council can ensure a diverse group of people make decisions about our parks?	Friends groups	Should represent local demographics	7		
	Council	Employ more diverse maintenance and decision-making staff	2		
	Direct engagement	Talk to park users themselves	30		
		Pro-active engagement of diverse groups	44		Via faith groups, community organisaaitons etc
		More direct engagement with neighbours around parks	19		
	Other ideas	Don't rely on people attending meetings - be more imaginative	1		
Council/public health/communitiy partnership campaign to promote use of parks		4			
Additional info/ideas	Create green corridors from main roads and parks and green spaces				
	Funfairs detract from parks and cause a lot of damage - need to pay		3		
	All new developments should include requirement for a sports pitch to				
	Council should focus resources on parks in less wealthy areas				
	Limit court bookings to 1 hour / once a week to allow more people to play. Many people don't turn up and the courts are left empty		14	Ravenscourt Park, South Park and others	
	Mixed equipment for kids and adults - eg. pull-up bars at different				
	Adult table tennis				
	Pet-free picnic areas				
	More bicycle parking at park entrances		3		
	Promote food markets or BBQs to encourage people to get out and		5		
	More skateboard facilities				
	More sculptures / art in parks		3		
	Encourage community fundraising for equipment and other				
	Give people options about how to spend the available funds				
	Allow schools to book sports facilities for free during school hours				
	Prohibit the use of amplified sound in smaller parks				
	Create diversity and inclusion playgrounds - get the community to				
	More safe crossing points to get to park gates				
	Create 'parks champions' for each park				

<p>London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham</p> <p>CABINET</p> <p>4 DECEMBER 2017</p>		
PROTECTING THE BOROUGH'S PARKS AND OPEN SPACES		
Report of the Cabinet Member for Environment, Transport and Residents Services: Councillor Wesley Harcourt		
Open Report		
<p>Classification - For Decision</p> <p>Key Decision - Yes</p>		
Wards Affected: All		
Accountable Director: Mahmood Siddiqi, Director for Transport and Highways		
<p>Report Author: Ullash Karia, Head of Leisure & Parks</p>		<p>Contact Details: Tel: 020 7938 8170 E-mail: Ullash.karia@rbkc.gov.uk</p>

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report seeks Cabinet approval for the Council to enter into individual site Deeds of Dedication (where appropriate) with Fields in Trust (FiT) to provide additional protection for the borough's parks and open spaces in perpetuity.
- 1.2 This proposal and the way forward was supported by the recent Parks Commission, chaired by Councillor Guy Vincent, and endorsed by the Community Safety, Environment and Residents Service Policy and Accountability Committee on 28 June 2017.
- 1.3 Cabinet fully understands that under the Deed of Dedication the ownership and management of the park firmly remains under the authority of the Council. To confirm FiT would have no jurisdiction or influence on how the Council operates or wish to run their parks. FiT would have no active management role or decision making powers in the operational running of the parks.
- 1.4 The protection of the borough's green spaces reflects the Council's determination to be the best in the country. It has strong links to our community sport and physical activity strategy (2017-21), and the health and

wellbeing strategy aiming to be a Healthy, Caring Place. Specifically, this will support a life course approach - “start well, stay well and age well” and will seek to reinforce ‘health prevention is better than cure’. This will enable the Council: -

- to build social, economic and physical environments that create the necessary conditions to protect, promote and support health and well-being.
- to ensure that all public policies contribute to protecting and improving people’s health and well-being.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To endorse the recommendation of the Parks Commission and the Community Safety, Environment and Residents Service Policy and Accountability Committee that the Council protect the borough’s parks and open spaces via entering into individual site Deeds of Dedication with Fields in Trust as appropriate.
- 2.2 To delegate authority to the Director for Transport and Highways, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment, Transport and Residents Services, the Cabinet Member for Finance and the Strategic Director of Finance to work with the Parks Commission and individual park groups to progress their specific deed of dedication with Fields in Trust.
- 2.3 To acknowledge the positive input from all those involved in the Parks Commission in reaching a common consensus.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In 2014 the administration made a commitment in their ‘The change we need’ manifesto that if elected they would seek to afford the borough’s parks and open spaces with better protection:

Protecting our parks

The council should be a trusted custodian of our parks, put our parks in a residents trust to prevent them being sold off

- *Maintain fair access that keeps our parks open to all and restricts their use for private events and by out-of-borough schools.*

- 3.2 Since Autumn 2014 officers have been looking at the various options available to deliver this commitment; namely .to identify a solution that will not impinge on the Council’s ability to carry out day-to-day management, but also provide protection in perpetuity for the future benefit of residents.
- 3.3 FiT maintains relationships with a network of trusts and foundations across the country and are continuously raising money to offer grants to other protected sites. FiT have also launched a new pilot programme with London Marathon Charitable Trust (LMCT) called ‘Active Spaces’. This programme combines increasing activity on green spaces with protection. Should Cabinet approve this proposal, one of the direct benefits would be that a nominated

park of Council's choice would be included in this programme and receive a guaranteed £5,000 revenue grant aimed at creating a project to get inactive community members more active.

- 3.4 FiT also sustain positive associations with a number of national organisations across the country. These formal partnerships include; The Lawn Tennis Association (LTA), Rugby Football Union (RFU), Football Association (FA), Sport England and the Heritage Lottery fund.

4. OPTIONS CONSIDERED, DELIBERATED AND THEN DISCOUNTED

4.1 Do nothing

- 4.2 This option maintains the current status quo.

- 4.3 With this option the governance and strategic vision of parks and open spaces is limited and remains the same. Therefore, it is not in line with the administration's aims and aspirations to further protect parks and open spaces.

- 4.4 This option also limits access to potential external funding available to the Council. With this option, any reduction in financial contribution from the Council is unlikely to be replaced by third party funding.

4.5 A borough-wide Parks Trust

- 4.6 A number of authorities have now set-up 'Arm's Length Management Organisations' (ALMOs) some of which include parks and open spaces. Some examples in London are the London Borough of Redbridge, who have created Vision Redbridge and the London Borough of Wandsworth, who have created Enable Leisure and Culture.

- 4.7 In order for such a trust to operate successfully it needs a certain amount of autonomy as well as a board of trustees. Ultimately the trustees will set the direction of any organisation and have a high degree of autonomy. It is entirely possible these trustees may come with distinct and individual views and wish to exercise their influence. Potential objectivity, including political neutrality, could be lost and the works of the trust could be subject to individual and political influence.

- 4.8 In addition while savings can be achieved through this option, it is likely such an organisation would want their own staff and therefore there would be costs and liabilities associated with this.

- 4.9 To date the only recognised independent area wide trust to exist is the Milton Keynes. The Milton Keynes Parks Trust was created in 1992 to care for most of the city's green space and was endowed with a substantial property and investment portfolio, giving the trust a net asset value of circa £85,000,000. The income from this portfolio pays for the vital work of nurturing and enhancing the landscape. It is entirely self-financing. The majority of land managed by the Parks Trust is covered by a 999-year lease; Milton Keynes Council retains the freehold.

4.10 Granting a lease like that of the Milton Keynes Parks Trust would give the Council almost no influence going forward. The Council is also not in a position to offer an endowment to that provided in Milton Keynes and therefore continued support from the Council would be required.

4.11 The advantage to such an organisation is that it is likely to be able to access external funding, which is not available to the Council.

4.12 Individual Parks Trusts

4.13 Individual park trusts are likely to put much more onus on the individual trustees because of the size of each organisation. They are unlikely to generate or guarantee enough income to cover staffing costs and therefore continued support from the Council will be required.

4.14 Having multiple parks trusts is also likely to make it difficult to find enough individuals to fill the required positions on multiple trusts.

4.15 Some sites by their very nature offer more commercial and income generation opportunities and therefore this would put some sites at an advantage against those where such opportunities are not available. These commercial and income generation opportunities may also be of the nature, which the administration is seeking to provide protection from.

4.16 The advantage to this option is that those directly involved are likely to be local residents and therefore the management and operation of sites would hopefully be more tailored to that of the local community and residents.

4.17 Conclusions

4.18 For the reasons outlined above and after detailed discussions at the public parks commission meetings noting the administration's commitment to provide additional protection to the borough's parks and open spaces, all of above options were discounted.

5. THE PARKS COMMISSION

5.1 The Parks Commission was formed by the administration with the purpose of considering how to provide additional protection to the borough's parks and open spaces.

5.2 The commission held its first meeting on the 17 January 2017 and then subsequently two further meetings on the 7 March 2017 and 23 May 2017. The commission was chaired by Cllr Vincent.

5.3 The meetings were well attended with representatives from over 15 of the borough's parks and open spaces. There were also attendees who have a general interest in the borough's parks and open spaces rather than specific sites.

- 5.4 David Sharman, Fields in Trust Development Manager, presented at the second meeting (the presentation is attached in *Appendix One*).
- 5.5 The Deed of Dedication offers protection to sites by acting as a covenant; the deed is registered with the Land Registry.
- 5.6 It is proposed each site has its own Deed of Dedication and therefore each one will be tailored to individual sites. Within the deed will be a list prohibited acts including the sale or grant of a long term lease of the green space and prohibited activities (these will be bespoke for each site but may for instance be a limit on the number or type of events held at a site each year). Any proposals in the future that fall within the prohibited acts or activities would require the consent of the independent body, FiT, to execute and would be considered by the Fields in Trust trustees.
- 5.7 The Fields in Trust committee would not unreasonably refuse permission for activity outside the Deed of Dedication but would seek to ensure the Council has adequately consulted and the proposed activity is broadly in line with their aims and objectives and beneficial to the individual site concerned.
- 5.8 A copy of Fields in Trust's Local Authority Draft Non-Charitable Deed of Dedication is attached in *Appendix Two*.

6. FIELDS IN TRUST (FiT)

- 6.1 FiT were founded by King George V in 1925 as the National Playing Fields Association (changing their name to Fields in Trust in 2007). Their mission is to ensure that everyone – young or old, able or disabled and wherever they live – has access to free, local outdoor space for sport, play and recreation. These spaces are vital to building happy and healthy communities and sadly continue to be threatened by all kinds of development.
- 6.2 FiT are a national charity and operate throughout the UK to safeguard recreational spaces and campaign for better statutory protection for all kinds of outdoor sites.
- 6.3 FiT are governed by an independent board of trustees who bring together a wide range of expertise and knowledge in relation to parks and open spaces.
- 6.4 Over 2,600 sites are now safeguarded by FiT. Glasgow City Council undertook a similar exercise to the one being done in Hammersmith & Fulham and are looking to provide protection/safeguard to 27 sites.
- 6.5 FiT run their own funding programmes, which are open to sites with a Deed of Dedication. Any borough sites that have a Deed of Dedication would therefore become eligible to bid for this funding.

7. DEED OF DEDICATION

- 7.1 A Deed of Dedication via FiT would permanently safeguard outdoor recreational spaces in perpetuity. FiT would act as a guarantor to ensure the sites are protected from future development. They would be independent of

the Council and as a charity, are governed by the Charities Commission. FIT will have no active management role or decision making powers in the running of the parks and open spaces.

- 7.2 Site specific covenants can be made on sites about what is acceptable and what is not acceptable e.g. who should be consulted. A degree of flexibility is offered and site specific individual user clauses can be implemented.
- 7.3 There will be positive public health implications as the sites will be guaranteed as exercise space for generations to come.
- 7.4 Deeds are separate from planning process. Any planning proposal that did not fall into the usage clause relating to recreation would need to seek FIT consent. This includes wayleaves and easements. The only exception being Compulsory Purchase Orders.

8. NEXT STEPS

- 8.1 Further work will be required to identify all the restrictions and covenants associated with individual sites.
- 8.2 Some sites already benefitting from 'enhanced' covenants may not need the Deed of Dedication but this judgement will be made on a case-by-case basis in consultation with Legal Services and both the Cabinet Members for Environment, Transport and Residents Services, plus Cabinet Member for Finance.
- 8.3 With the positive contribution of the Parks Commission in mind, it is intended that as part of the process individual meetings will be held with interested parties from specific sites to agree what should be included in the final deed.
- 8.4 Once the content of each Deed of Dedication has been agreed the legal documents will be agreed by each party and a short report presented to the Cabinet Member for Environment, Transport and Residents Services recommending adoption.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The registration of the Deed of Dedication on the relevant playing fields will restrict the land to the use outlined in the Deed for each selected site.
- 9.2 All day to day decisions will continue to be the responsibility of the Council. However, FIT would need to approve any change of uses, alterations, building works, construction, leases, wayleaves, transfers and sales etc.
- 9.3 Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 enables a local authority to do anything that an individual generally may do. Securing Fields in Trust status would ensure residents throughout the borough would be given the chance to use these facilities for physical activities and provide improvements to the local environment and link in the Councils community sport and physical activity

strategy (2017-21), and the health and wellbeing strategy aiming to be a Healthy, Caring Place.

- 9.4 Implications verified/completed by: *Dermot Rayner, Senior Property Solicitor, tel. 020 8753 2715*

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 There would be legal costs involved in setting up the proposed arrangement alongside minimal land registry fees. These total costs are currently estimated to be no more than £2,000 As the Parks and Open Spaces budget is currently fully committed, additional funding would need to be identified. No ongoing future costs are anticipated following the completion of each deed of dedication.
- 10.2 Implications verified/completed by: *Lucy Varenne, Finance Manager, tel. 020 7341 5777.*

BACKGROUND PAPERS USED IN PREPARING THIS REPORT

No.	Description of Background Papers	Name/Ext of holder of file/copy	Department/ Location
1	Minutes from the Community Safety, Environment and Residents Service Policy and Accountability Committee on 28 June 2017 - <i>published</i>	Ainsley Gilbert	Committee Services/ Hammersmith Town Hall

LIST OF APPENDICES:

APPENDIX ONE

Fields in Trust presentation:

APPENDIX TWO

An Example of Fields in Trust – Local Authority Draft Non-Charitable Deed of Dedication

This is the second slide of the presentation. It has a dark green header with the 'fit fields in trust' logo on the right. The background is a light green gradient with faint, stylized illustrations of fireworks at the top and silhouettes of a dog and a city skyline at the bottom. The text is centered in a dark green font.

fit
fields in trust

Fields in Trust

- Founded in 1925 by King George V
- Operating name of the National Playing Fields Association
- Patron: HM The Queen
- President: HRH The Duke of Cambridge

A small, rounded rectangular photograph showing three members of the British Royal Family seated together. From left to right: a woman in a blue outfit, a woman in a light blue outfit, and a man in a dark blue suit. They are all looking towards the camera.A dark green silhouette of a dog, possibly a Labrador, standing on a grassy field and looking up at a small dark green circle representing a ball in the air.

Our mission



To safeguard and improve outdoor
recreational spaces for sport and play
for future generations

The Fields in Trust Effect

1946



2010



King George V Field, Drayton, Norfolk – protected 1938

Total sites protected

**2,817
sites**



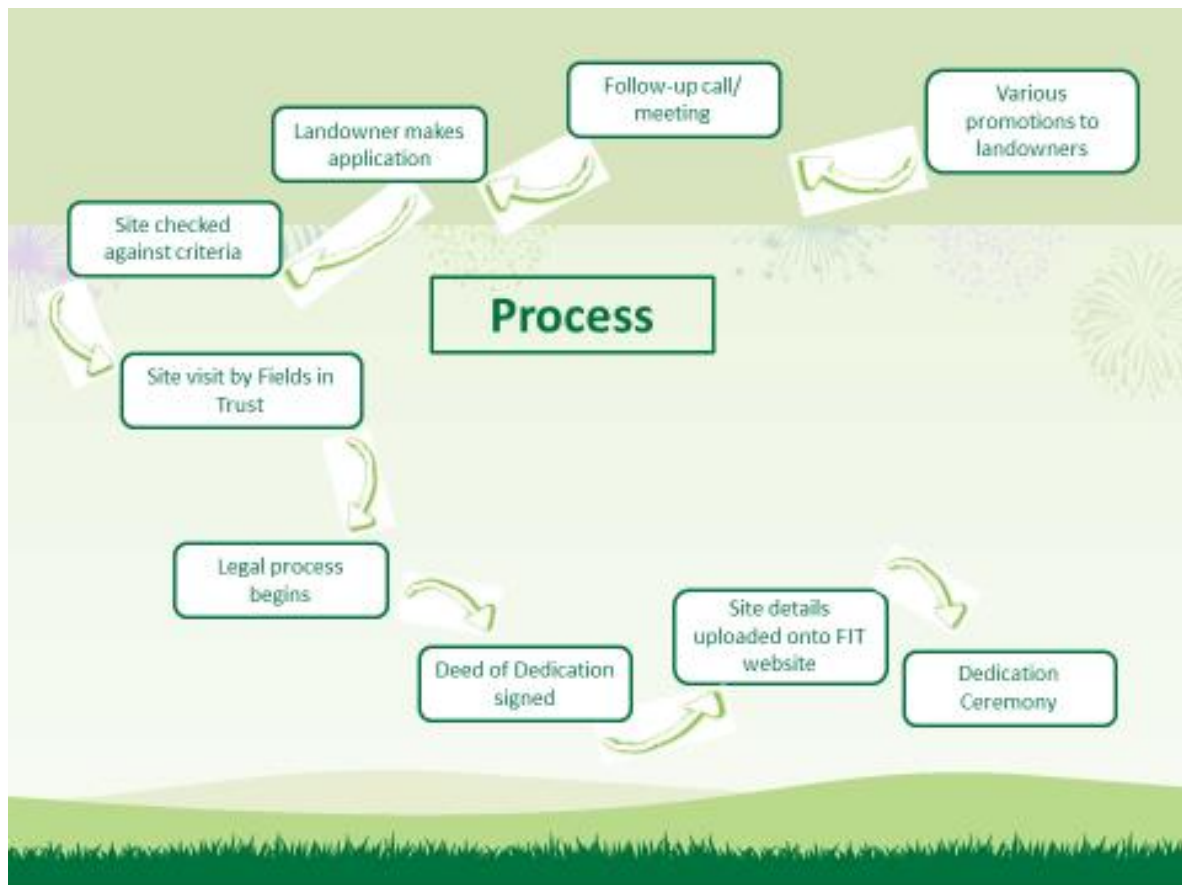
**31,000
acres**

Criteria for Applications

A site to be protected by Fields in Trust should be:

- Used principally for outdoor recreation, sport or play.
- Accessible to the public.
- Affordable for the local community.

FIT Fields can include facilities such as pavilions, village halls, indoor leisure or heritage facilities that are used for community recreation



London sites



Gillespie Park, Islington



Burgess Park, Southwark



King Edward VII Park, Brent



Mile End Park, Tower Hamlets

Fun and Activities – Have a Field Day



"The Park comes alive with laughter and fun," Cllr Reid, East Ayrshire



Policy and Guidance



Fields in Trust Awards



#LoveYourLocalPark



Summary of the benefits of FIT protection

- Flexible yet strong protection of green spaces, in perpetuity
- Straightforward and transparent process that won't put excessive strain on the council, or other stakeholders
- Access to FIT funding, and recognition with other funders
- Opportunity to utilise the FIT participation programme, our support and advice service and our Awards
- Protection seeks to receive buy-in and feedback from Friends groups and community members

Thank You

Any Questions?

www.fieldsintrust.org



@fieldsintrust



FieldsInTrust

#LoveYourLocalPark



APPENDIX TWO

An Example of Fields in Trust – Local Authority Draft Non-Charitable Deed of Dedication

**FIELDS IN TRUST – PROTECTED FIELDS
Draft Non-Charitable Deed of Dedication
Local Authority Protected**

[NAME OF LOCAL AUTHORITY] (1)

and

NATIONAL PLAYING FIELDS ASSOCIATION (2)

[NAME OF THE SITE]

Annotations in red

THIS DEED OF DEDICATION is made on the day of 20

BETWEEN

- (1) [] and its successors in title of [address] (the **Council**); and
- (2) **NATIONAL PLAYING FIELDS ASSOCIATION**, operating as Fields in Trust, of Unit 2D Woodstock Studios, 36 Woodstock Grove, London , W12 8LE a Royal Charter Organisation established for charitable purposes (registered charity number 306070) and its successors in title (**FIT**)

(the Council and FIT being together called the **Parties**)

WHEREAS:

The property more particularly specified in the Schedule (the Property) forms part of the corporate property of the Council.

The Parties hereby agree that the Property will be dedicated in perpetuity in the manner and for the purposes set out below (but without any intention to create any charitable trust), and in accordance with the mutual undertakings given by the Parties.

Clause 2 establishes the contract.

3. The Council gives the following undertakings:
- 3.1 Not to use the Property or permit the Property to be used for any purpose other than as a [public playing field and recreation ground];
- 3.2 Not to grant, allow, suffer or permit the Property to be used or is permitted to be used for any purpose outside clause 3.1 including for any occasional or specific period of time without the consent of FIT;

The user clause refers to the property being for “a public playing field and recreation ground”. Depending on the property’s current or future use, the user clause can be amended by mutual agreement. For example it could also reference buildings or facilities if the use is ancillary to the outdoor space.

- 3.3 Subject to clause 4 or clause 5, not (in so far as it has the power to do so) to dispose of the Property without the consent of FIT;

This clause establishes additional protection through FIT by requiring FIT’s prior consent to any proposed disposal.

- 3.4 Not to erect, allow, permit or suffer any buildings, structures or alterations on the Property, the use of which is outside the permitted uses as stated in Clause 3.1 without the consent of FIT;
- 3.5 Not to grant, allow, suffer or permit the erection of any buildings, structures or alterations on the Property that would result in the total structural and building footprint of such buildings or structures to exceed twenty per cent of the total square footage of the Property;

Decisions relating to new buildings and structures, or alterations of the same, which fall within the user clause are solely in the control of the landowner or its tenant(s).

- 3.6 To inform FIT without delay of any proposals, intentions or decisions to grant, allow, suffer or permit:
 - 3.6.1 Disposals of the whole or part of the Property;
 - 3.6.2 The erection of any buildings, structures or alterations on the whole or part of the Property whether inside or outside the user clause at clause 3.1;
 - 3.6.3 The temporary closures or uses of the whole or part of the Property;
- 3.7 To provide FIT with information in response to any reasonable request by FIT relating to the use at clause 3.1;

This clause supports the objective of protecting the site's recreational use. Please refer to our Field Change Request Procedure which is published on our website <http://www.fieldsintrust.org/>

- 3.8 To maintain the Property and so far as is consistent with its duties as a local authority to have regard to any advice given from time to time by FIT on the management and running of the Property;

This clause establishes an advisory role for FIT without interfering with the management rights and responsibilities of the authority.

- 3.9 To erect notices on the Property in the form of signage provided by FIT relating to the background of FIT and its protection of this field, giving recognition of financial support where required;
- 3.10 To apply within three months of the date of this Deed on form RX1 annexed hereto for the registration in the proprietorship register of the registered title of the Property at the Land Registry of a restriction to the following effect:

/ **Whole**

"No disposition of the registered estate by the proprietor of the registered estate is to be registered without a certificate signed by National Playing Fields Association of Unit 2D, Woodstock Studios, 36 Woodstock Grove, London, W12 8LE or by its conveyancer that the provisions of clause 4 of The Deed of Dedication dated [] between [] (1) and National Playing Fields Association (2) have been complied with"; and

/ **Part**

"No disposition of part of the registered estate identified on the plan outlined in red annexed to a Deed of Dedication dated [] between [] (1) and National Playing Fields Association (2) by the proprietor of the registered estate is to be registered without a certificate signed by National Playing Fields Association of Unit 2D, Woodstock Studios, 36 Woodstock Grove, London, W12 8LE or by its conveyancer that the provisions of paragraph 4 of The Deed of Dedication dated [] between [] (1) and National Playing Fields Association (2) have been complied with"; and

This is an essential part of the land registration and protection process.

- 3.11 To apply within three months of the date of this Deed on form AN1 annexed hereto for the registration in the charges register of the registered title of the Property at the Land Registry of a notice to the following effect:

“By a Deed of Dedication dated [] between [] (1) and National Playing Fields Association (2) /**Whole** [the land in this title] /**Part** [the part of registered estate identified on the plan outlined in red annexed to a Deed of Dedication dated [] was dedicated for use as a [].”

This is an essential part of the land registration and protection process.

- 3.12 To supply FIT with evidence that the registrations referred to in clauses 3.7 and 3.8 have been completed within a reasonable period of time after completion.
4. Pursuant to clause 3.2, FIT shall not unreasonably withhold consent to any disposal of the Property provided that the Council at the request of FIT:
- 4.1 Replaces or agrees to replace the Property with a piece of freehold land approved by FIT which is of equivalent or better quality than the Property, with equivalent or better facilities than the Property, of the same or greater dimensions than the Property, in the same catchment area as the Property, and as accessible to the public as the Property (the **Replacement Site**) and applies such of the proceeds of any sale of the Property as are necessary to do so; and
- 4.2 Enters into another deed of dedication on the same terms as this Deed in respect of the Replacement Site.

Clauses 4.1 and 4.2 take account of potential future change by guaranteeing flexibility in terms of specific location provided the specified criteria are met.

- 5 FIT undertakes that it will not unreasonably withhold consent to any disposal of the Property at nil cost to any local authority or non-profit making organisation which will hold the Property and ensure that its use is compatible with clause 3.1, provided that the new landowner enters into another Deed of Dedication with Fields in Trust on the same terms as this Deed in respect of the Property.

This allows for asset transfer.

6. FIT undertakes that it will:
- 6.1 Not unreasonably withhold consent to disposal of the Property or the erection of any structures upon it, subject to its duty to perform its charitable objects and provided that the provisions of clause 4 or clause 5 of this Deed have been complied with;
- 6.2 Respond without delay to any notifications of intended disposal or erection of structures, or to any requests for advice; and
- 6.3 Notify the Council without delay of any concerns or matters of advice to which it requires the Council to have regard.

7. The Council DEDICATES the Property as a public playing field and recreation ground for the benefit of the inhabitants of [] and thereabouts and the site will be titled Field in Trust Protected site, [].

This is the essential clause referring to the dedication of the site and confirming its name. The user definition (given as 'playing field and recreation ground here) can be varied according to the site.

IN WITNESS whereof this Deed of Dedication is executed the day and year first before written

SCHEDULE

/Registered

[All of] / [Part of] that freehold property known as land at [] which is identified on the plan outlined in red and annexed to this Deed being [all] / [part] of H M Land Registry Title Number [].

/Unregistered

[All of] / [Part of] that freehold property known as land at [description of the land in the document] described in the [enter type of document i.e. conveyance] dated [insert date] and made between [enter party] of the one part and [enter party] of the other part which is identified on the plan outlined in red and annexed to this Deed.

EXECUTED as a **DEED** by affixing the
The **COMMON SEAL** of
[]
in the presence of:

Councillor

Councillor

EXECUTED as a **DEED** by affixing

The **COMMON SEAL** of **NATIONAL PLAYING FIELDS ASSOCIATION**

under an authority conferred by s.260(2) Charities Act 2011 in the presence of:

Trustee

Trustee

Appendix 7.

Memorandum of Understanding Between The Friends of Gwendwr Gardens (“the Friends”) and The London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham (LBHF)

1. The Friends of Gwendwr Gardens has been established as an independent voluntary local user group with the purpose of being the principal forum for formulating users’ views about the Gardens, particularly in respect of its restoration and regeneration, and promoting more effective beneficial usage of the Gardens to the wider community.
2. LBHF recognises the Friends as the principal user group for Gwendwr Gardens.
3. The Friends and staff of LBHF will work together cooperatively and strive to achieve shared goals and objectives that are defined in a Park Management Plan (Where applicable) and the Parks and Open Strategy.
4. LBHF will keep the Friends fully briefed on all significant matters affecting the Park and will consult the Friends on all potential changes or improvements.
5. LBHF will take due notice of recommendations and concerns from the Friends and provide a written explanation of their view on these recommendations.
6. LBHF will appoint a Liaison Officer who will be the nominated single point of contact for all formal representation from the Friends.
7. LBHF will provide additional officer contacts and procedures for queries and complaints regarding
 - a. Maintenance problems
 - b. Urgent security issues
 - c. Arboriculture issues
 - d. Dogs, pest control and management
 - e. Graffiti, vandalism and noise
8. LBHF staff or their contractors will attend a minimum of one open (evening) meetings per year, and will attend a minimum of two park walkabouts during normal working hours with representatives of the Friends.
9. LBHF will provide technical advice and make available ‘in kind’ resources where feasible to support activities organised by the Friends that are beneficial to the Gardens, but will not provide any direct financial support.

10. The Friends will endeavor to be inclusive of the local community and all Gardens' users and fairly represent their views and concerns to LBHF.

11. LBHF and The Friends will work together to develop funding applications to third parties, as appropriate.

12. The Friends will produce an Annual Report to provide evidence of how inclusive, participatory and representative their activities are of Gwendwr Gardens users in order to retain the support of LBHF.

13. Any changes to the Friends' constitution will require prior approval from LBHF to ensure compliance to the principals set out above. Failure to comply with the Memorandum of Understanding may result in LBHF withdrawing support and recognition of the group as representing the best interests of the Park Users.

For the Friends of Gwendwr Gardens

Signed

Position

Date

For the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham

Signed

Position

Date

LBHF Park Users Survey

How can we improve parks and open spaces in Hammersmith & Fulham

172 Responses

2. There are sufficient pitches, courts or space to hire in the borough

Strongly agree	11
Agree	42
Neither or disagree	28
disagree	66
strongly disagree	25



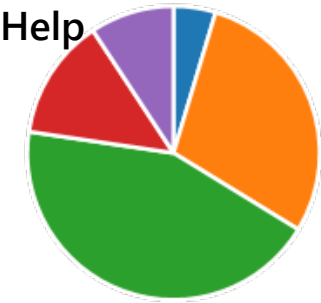
3. There is too much sport provision in parks across the borough

Strongly agree	2
Agree	5
Disagree	57
Strongly disagree	103
Neutral	5



4. The park and sports facilities fulfil my needs

Strongly agree	8
Agree	50
Disagree	75
Strongly disagree	23
Neutral	16



5. How efficient do you feel the booking system is for parks?

Very efficient	18
Somewhat efficient	61
Neither efficient nor inefficient	60
Somewhat inefficient	24
Very inefficient	8



6. How satisfied are you with the level of customer service when dealing with Parks staff and their contractors when making a booking?

Very satisfied	23
Somewhat satisfied	42
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	85
Somewhat dissatisfied	18
Very dissatisfied	1



7. How satisfied are you with the quality of the pitch, court or space?

Very satisfied	12
Somewhat satisfied	36
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	17
Somewhat dissatisfied	66
Very dissatisfied	41



8. The booking fees and charges for facilities are just right

Strongly agree	10
Agree	74
Disagree	27
Strongly disagree	5
Neutral	54



9. The fees and charges don't prevent me from booking further activities

Strongly agree	19
Agree	86
Disagree	18
Strongly disagree	3
Neutral	42



10. My potential customers are not being excluded because of cost

Strongly agree	13
Agree	48
Disagree	15
Strongly disagree	5
Neutral	86



11. What other facilities would you wish to hire in parks if made available?

78
Responses

Help ×
Latest Responses

12. Any other comments, especially if you have selected strongly disagree to any of the above.

100
Responses

Latest Responses
"Q3 There is too much sport provision in parks across the borough I str...

13. Would you be willing to be contacted by the Parks Commission to discuss your answers?

● Yes 73
● No 96



Appendix 9. Parks Fees and charges 2021/22

Fee Description	2021/22 Charge (£)
HIRE OF PARKS & OPEN SPACES FOR EVENTS - CHARGES PER DAY (based on 8 hours)	
Community events under 100 people	£149.10
Promotional activity - fixed per space	£1,473.00
Sports event e.g. Race for Life (per head)	£3.10
Damage deposit (reinstatement costs)	POA % based on risk
Events under 3000 people (new fee)	£1,472.68
Events under 3,000 people - Charity or Community Event (50% discount)	£736.34
Events over 3,000 people	
Ticketed events under 1000 people	£1,423.00
Ticketed events over 1000 people	POA
non-ticketed events (25% discount for charities)	£1,423.00
Circuses under 1,000 people	£1,000.00
Circus over 1,000 people	£2,142.45
Vintage funfairs/shows	£1,000.00
small children's funfairs	£300.00
add ons bars/ infrastructure community/charity events	£250.00
FILMING/PHOTOGRAPHY	
FILMING/PHOTOGRAPHY IN PARKS	
Full scale features all park locations (approval needed from Ward Councillors)	POA
PARKS - Professional Dog Walkers	
Professional Dog Walkers Resident	175.00
professional Dog Walkers Non Resident	300.00
PARKS - Leisure in Parks	
FOOTBALL (GRASS PITCHES) - LBHF	
<i>Inclusive of Changing Rooms & Nets/Flags</i>	
Full-Size Pitch Per Game	£99.60
Full-Size Pitch Per Day	£398.95
Junior-Size Pitch Per Game	£60.45
7-A-Side Size Pitch Per Game	£49.15
5-side pitch per hour	£40.95
Per Pitch Per Hour - In Borough State Schools	£45.10
Per Pitch Per Hour - Out of Borough & Private Schools	£69.45
11-A-SIDE ALL-WEATHER PITCHES (11AWP)	
<i>Inclusive of Pitch Hire Only</i>	
Per Pitch Per Hour	£99.60
Per Pitch (off-peak 9am-5pm Monday-Thursday, all day Friday and weekends)	£89.10
Per Pitch Per Hour - In Borough State Schools	£45.10
Per Pitch Per Hour - Out of Borough & Private Schools	£69.45
Per Pitch Per Hour - H&F Primary Schools Sports association (1pm-3.30pm) - Session	£45.15
Per Pitch Per Hour - H&F Primary Schools Sports association (9am-3.30pm) - 5 times a year	£141.55
5-A-SIDE ALL-WEATHER PITCHES (5AWP)	
<i>Inclusive of Pitch Hire Only</i>	
Per Pitch Per Hour	£49.15
Per Pitch (off-peak 9am-5pm Monday-Thursday, all day Friday and weekends)	£38.60
Per Pitch Per Hour - In Borough State Schools	£28.10
Per Pitch Per Hour - Out of Borough & Private Schools	£44.70
RUGBY / GAELIC FOOTBALL / LA CROSSE / HOCKEY / AUSTRALIAN RULES	
<i>Inclusive of Changing Rooms</i>	
Per Pitch Per game - In Borough State Schools	£99.65
Junior Size pitch - Game	£62.25
Per Pitch Per Hour - In Borough State Schools	£45.10
Per Pitch Per Hour - Out of Borough & Private Schools	£69.45
CRICKET PITCH - LBHF	
<i>Inclusive of Changing Rooms.</i>	
Per pitch (weekend and bank holiday)	£134.20
Per pitch (Group training/coaching everyday)	£51.75
Per pitch plus nets (weekend and bank holiday)	£145.45
Per pitch plus net (Group training/coaching everyday)	£62.10
Per pitch (weekday)	£110.85
Per pitch plus nets (weekday)	£122.20
Per pitch - In-Borough State School	£45.10
Per pitch - Out of Borough and Private School	£69.45
CRICKET (NETS)	
<i>Inclusive of Net Hire only, where requested without a pitch.</i>	
Per pair - Hour	£17.30
Per pair - In-Borough State School - Hour	£13.30
Per pair - Out of Borough and Private School - Hour	£16.90
Per pair (pre-booked for 5 bookings) - Hour	£62.25
ROUNDERS/BASEBALL/SOFTBALL	

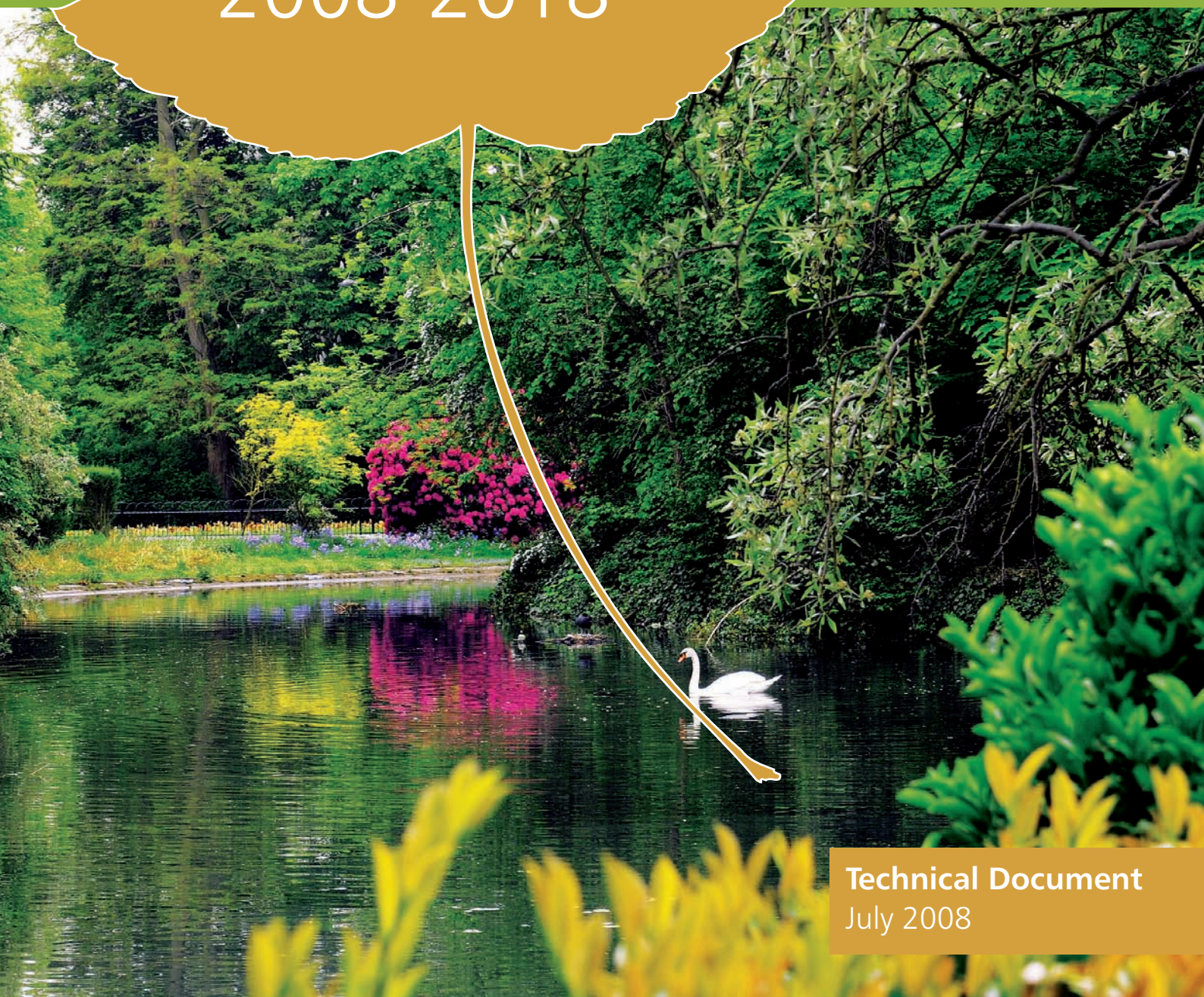
Fee Description	2021/22 Charge (£)
<i>Inclusive of Changing Rooms.</i>	
Per pitch - adult	£99.70
Per Pitch Per Hour - In Borough State Schools	£45.10
Per Pitch Per Hour - Out of Borough & Private Schools	£69.60
TOUCH/TAG RUGBY	
<i>Inclusive of Pitch Hire Only</i>	
Per Pitch Per Game	£52.65
Per Pitch Per Hour - In Borough State Schools	£45.10
Per Pitch Per Hour - Out of Borough & Private Schools	£69.60
ATHLETICS & SPORTS DAYS - HURLINGHAM PARK & SOUTH PARK	
<i>Inclusive of Line Markings (100m Track) & Changing Rooms</i>	
Per Space Per Hour	£69.80
Per Space Per Hour - In Borough State Schools	£45.10
Per Space Per Hour - Out of Borough & Private Schools	£69.60
ATHLETICS & SPORTS DAYS - All Other Sites	
<i>Inclusive of Pitch Hire Only</i>	
Per Space Per Hour	£32.65
Per Space Per Hour - In Borough State Schools	£28.15
Per Space Per Hour - Out of Borough & Private Schools	£46.35
PARKS - Leisure in Parks (continued)	
TENNIS - LBHF	
Pay and play - Hour	£11.00
Pay and play - Youth (under 18) - Hour	£3.85
Pre-booked - school - Hour	£3.85
Pre-booked (minimum of 5 bookings) - Hour	£40.55
Pre-booked (minimum of 10 bookings) - Hour	£81.30
Floodlights - Hour	£3.35
Coaches licence fee - Annual	£1,315.50
NETBALL - LBHF	
Per Court Per Hour - Daytime	£23.35
Per Court (Group training/coaching daytime)	£25.90
Per Court Per Hour - Floodlit	£35.05
Per Court (Group training/coaching floodlit)	£37.25
Per Court Per Hour - In Borough State Schools	£19.10
Per Court Per Hour - Out of Borough & Private Schools	£26.05
Netball - Per Court Per Hour - In Borough State Schools - Floodlit	£24.60
Netball - Per Court Per Hour - Out of Borough & Private Schools - Floodlit	£31.15
COMMUNITY ROOM - Hurlingham Park Only	
Room Hire	£36.25
Room Hire - Hammersmith And Fulham RFC (2 Hours)	£82.80
BOWLS	
<i>Operation of Bowling Greens is carried out by local Bowling Clubs</i>	
Adult - per person per round	£2.40
OAP/Youth - per person per round	£1.20
Adult season ticket	£50.25
OAP/Youth season ticket	£25.15
Locker rent	£11.30
TRAINING AREAS	
HURLINGHAM PARK	
<i>Inclusive of Changing Rooms & Floodlights (Where Available)</i>	
Training Area Per Hour	£46.35
Training Area Per Hour - In Borough State Schools	£44.80
Training Area Per Hour - Out of Borough & Private Schools	£58.85
Per area - Hammersmith & Fulham RFC (90 minutes) - Session	£92.80
Training Area Per Day - Fulham Football Club Foundation	£146.65
LILLIE ROAD, BISHOPS PARK, SOUTH PARK & EEL BROOK COMMON	
<i>Inclusive of Pitch Hire Only</i>	
Training Area Per Hour	£46.35
Training Area Per Hour - Fulham Football Club Foundation (School Holidays Only)	£105.30
PARKS - Leisure in Parks (continued)	
PITCHES & ANCILLARY HIRE SERVICES - LBHF	
11-A-SIDE ALL-WEATHER PITCH	
<i>Bookings for 10 or more games are exempt from VAT - Inclusive of changing rooms if desired</i>	
Per Pitch	£105.30
Per Pitch (off-peak 9am-5pm Monday-Thursday, all day Friday and weekends)	£66.05
Per Pitch - In-Borough State School	£54.10
Per Pitch - Out Of Borough And Private School	£70.80
Per Pitch - Adult (Special Price For QPR/ Chelsea FC/ Chiswick Hockey)	£60.45
Per Pitch - Junior (Special Price For QPR/ Chelsea FC/ Chiswick Hockey)	£35.25
5-A-SIDE ALL WEATHER PITCH	
<i>Inclusive of changing rooms if desired</i>	
Per Pitch (Peak from 5pm onwards Monday-Thursday)	£49.15
Per Pitch (off-peak 9am-5pm Monday-Thursday, all day Friday and weekends)	£32.50
Per Pitch - In-Borough State School	£28.00
Per Pitch - Out Of Borough And Private School	£37.35
Per Pitch - Adult (Special Price For QPR/ Chelsea FC/ Chiswick Hockey)	£32.80
Per Pitch - Junior (Special Price For QPR/ Chelsea FC/ Chiswick Hockey)	£29.35

Fee Description	2021/22 Charge (£)
Per Pitch - QPR FC (School Holidays Only)	£63.35
GRASS CENTRE PITCH	
<i>Bookings for 10 or more games are exempt from VAT - Inclusive of changing rooms if desired</i>	
Centre Pitch Per Game Without Floodlighting	£122.55
Centre Pitch Per Hour Without Floodlighting	£105.30
Centre Pitch Per Hour Without Floodlighting - In-Borough State School	£72.95
Centre Pitch Per Hour Without Floodlighting - Out-of-Borough & Private School	£105.30
Centre Pitch Per Hour With Floodlighting	£134.85
Centre Pitch Per Hour With Floodlighting - In-Borough State School	£84.95
Centre Pitch Per Hour With Floodlighting - Out-of-Borough & Private School	£134.85
Rugby Training Area - Top or Bottom	£44.45
Rugby Training Area - Top or Bottom - In-Borough State School	£42.95
Rugby Training Area - Top or Bottom - Out-of-Borough & Private School	£53.75
BASEBALL BATTING CAGES	
Per Cage	£16.90
Per Cage - In Borough State School	£13.65
Per Cage - Out Of Borough And Private School	£17.40
ROOMS / STORAGE HIRE	
Community room - Hour	£29.15
Announcers box - Hour	£29.15
Changing room per team - Game	£29.15
Storage container - Annual	£2,164.85
Community room - School - Hour	£23.25
Announcers box - School - Hour	£23.25
Changing room per team - School - Game	£23.25
Storage container - School - Annual	£1,518.95
DONATED BENCHES & TREES	
Donated Tree	POA + Admin
Donated Benches - New Earth Anchor 'Meridian' bench	POA + Admin
Donated Benches - Existing Earth Anchor 'Meridian' bench	POA + Admin
Donated Benches - New Furnitubes 'Palace' bench with base	POA + Admin
Donated Benches - New Furnitubes 'Palace' bench	POA + Admin
Donated Benches - Existing Furnitubes 'Palace' bench	POA + Admin
Donated Benches - New Lost Art 'Cartmel' bench with base	POA + Admin
Donated Benches - New Lost Art 'Cartmel' bench	POA + Admin
Donated Benches - Existing Lost Art 'Cartmel' bench	POA + Admin
<i>Or at cost plus admin. charge if larger than standard size</i>	

Appendix 10. Schedule of parks income (restricted)

**Appendix 11. Schedule of land leases to private operators
(restricted)**

Parks and open spaces strategy 2008-2018



Technical Document
July 2008

Parks and Open Spaces Strategy 2008-2018

London Borough of
Hammersmith and Fulham

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Parks & Open Spaces Strategy 2008-2018

1. Introduction

Hammersmith and Fulham is small, densely populated West London Borough where parks and open spaces are fundamental to residents' quality of life. People who live, work and play in Hammersmith and Fulham use the borough's parks and open spaces extensively to escape city life, enjoy peaceful relaxation, play with their children, spend time with each other, appreciate nature and enjoy games and physical activity.

It is a borough of contrasts: with some of the wealthiest households in the country and some of the poorest in significant pockets of deprivation, where reducing crime and improving the environment are key to improving residents' quality of life. According to the 1998 survey of residents regarding parks and open spaces, whilst 56% of people in the borough had access to a private garden, this accessibility to private open space decreases the further residents live from public open space. With high density living increasing, a commitment to improving the borough's parks and open spaces for all will make the most of what the borough has to offer.

Clean, green and award winning parks and open spaces where residents can relax and enjoy a variety of activities and events in an attractive and safe setting are key to delivering the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham's vision of a 'Borough of Opportunity' for all residents. In particular to delivering on the Community Plan priority of a cleaner, greener borough.

1.1 Strategic background

The Parks and Open Spaces Strategy is an informative document for the emerging Local Development Framework (which determines the borough's planning framework) and will form part of the evidence base for future development plans. The content and structure of the Strategy is based on guidance in the London Plan Best Practice Guidance for the preparation of Open Space Strategies.

The Strategy will also be important for delivering 'The Borough of Opportunity' envisaged in the Borough's Community Strategy (2007-14), in particular the following key objectives:

- *Tackling Crime and Antisocial Behaviour,*
- *Delivering a Cleaner Greener Borough,*
- *Setting the framework for a healthy borough,*
- *Delivering high quality, value for money public services and*
- *Regenerating the most deprived parts of the borough.*

The Parks and Open Spaces Strategy has links to other Council strategies, including those for the local environment, sport and recreation, culture and children's play. The document will be essential for attracting external funding to improve the open space network of the borough and for providing supporting evidence for the development of the Community Infrastructure Levy and negotiated planning (Section 106) contributions linked to open space.

1.2 Definition of Open Space

Though a wider definition of open space would encompass all accessible open space (such as town squares etc), the focus of this Strategy will be on green open spaces and will include the following:

- Parks;
- Playing Fields and Sports Pitches;
- Allotments;
- Nature Conservation Sites;
- Cemeteries and Churchyards;
- Ecological Corridors (River Thames, Grand Union Canal and Railway corridors);
- Public Squares and Streetscapes;
- Play areas;
- Housing Open Spaces.

1.3 Open Space Study 2006

A comprehensive study of the **supply** of open space in Hammersmith and Fulham was undertaken in 2006 by the Environment Services Department of the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham. This study concluded that all Hammersmith and Fulham's open spaces would benefit from improvements to the provision of facilities and management. Parks projects and regeneration schemes should address as a priority:

- Deficiencies in the amount of open space;
- Improvements to key parks within identified deficiency areas (including Furnivall Gardens, Frank Banfield Park, Cathnor Park and Wendell Park);
- Improving signage and landscaping along the Thames Path;
- Balancing conflicting community uses of open spaces;
- Improving accessibility of existing sites: through improvements to access for disabled people, provision of cycle parking and safer street crossings around open spaces.
- Improve the linkages between open spaces for people and wildlife;
- Raise awareness of open spaces and recreational opportunities through promotion and directional signage;
- Enabling community access to sports facilities at school sites
- Investigating alternative forms of provision – such as indoor facilities to supplement outdoor facilities.

1.4 Resident's Open Space Needs

The last major survey of borough residents' open space **needs** was undertaken in 1996 and a report published in 1998. The survey sought opinions and information from a cross section of residents and examined whether these varied across different sectors of the local community. The Parks and Open Spaces Strategy 2008 – 2018 outlines actions to undertake an update of the 1998 survey and to implement an extensive programme of user surveys to understand how open spaces are used, what people like and dislike about their parks, 10 years on from the original survey.

1.5 The Parks & Open Spaces Strategy 2008 - 2018

Hammersmith and Fulham's Parks & Open Spaces Strategy encompasses all public and private open spaces across the borough including parks, open spaces, housing open land and civic spaces. It is based on the results of audits, surveys and ongoing consultation and is aligned with key national and regional guidance on open space.

The purpose of the Strategy is to coordinate improvements in provision, quality, management, and accessibility and to promote the use and enjoyment of parks and open spaces to more individuals and groups in the community. Facilities will be improved in response to areas of deficiency identified in the 2006 Open Space Study (Supply) and the Residents Survey (2008).

The Parks and Open Spaces Strategy will provide a framework for the delivery of services and future improvement actions for the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham, and our community partners and stakeholders involved in providing, managing and enjoying open spaces across the borough. This will involve working in partnership both within the council and with external partners and stakeholders, including local residents' and friends' groups. The Strategy will be monitored and reviewed annually to ensure we are working towards the Parks and Open Spaces vision.

The Strategy will be essential in:

- Presenting a framework for protecting and improving Hammersmith and Fulham's parks and open spaces network;
- Raising standards of open space management and maintenance;
- Informing decision-making for the future of parks and open spaces;
- Supporting policy development for open space in the borough's Local Development Framework and when negotiating planning obligations;
- Determining capital expenditure on parks and open spaces;
- Linking into borough wide programmes such as Building Schools for the Future, the Play Builders project; Neighbourhood Renewal Areas and the Local Area Agreements;
- Working with partners such as Groundwork West London, and the Thames Strategy(Kew to Chelsea).

1.6 The Vision for Parks and Open Spaces in Hammersmith and Fulham

A vision and six key priorities have been developed from the results of consultation, the Open Space Study and the Council's wider priorities. These are outlined below:

To improve the quality of life for all people in Hammersmith and Fulham through the provision of award winning parks and open spaces that are clean, green, safe and sustainable, by:

- **Protecting existing open space.**
- **Providing open spaces, play spaces and access to local biodiversity.**
- **Creating safe, attractive and accessible spaces for all**
- **Improving the standard of management and maintenance.**
- **Actively involving the community in their local open spaces.**
- **Increasing participation in open spaces.**

2. Legislative and Policy Context for Parks and Open Spaces

Parks and open spaces are planned for, managed and maintained by a variety of agencies operating in a complex legislative and policy context. This section of the Strategy summarises the National, Greater London and local open space policies and guidance and how they relate to the development and implementation of the Strategy.

2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework

Planning Policy Guidance 17 – Planning for open space, sport and recreation

PPG17 states that local authorities should:

- Carry out assessments of existing and future needs of the community for open space, sports and recreational facilities. Local Authorities need to cover differing needs of the population for open space and sports and recreational facilities;
- Undertake audits of existing open space and facilities, use of existing facilities, access in terms of location and cost, and opportunities for new open space and facilities. Audits should consider quantitative and qualitative elements of open space, sports and recreational facilities;
- Standards should be set locally. Local authorities should use the information gained to set standards for the provision of open spaces and sports and recreational facilities in their areas. These standards should include quantitative elements, a qualitative component and accessibility. These will help redress deficiencies through the planning process, and should be included in the local authority's Development Plan;
- Adopt a strategic approach and plan positively for provision, enhancement and maintenance of open space.

Planning Policy Statement 3 – Housing

PPS 3 states that new residential environments should provide or enable good access to, community and green and open amenity and recreational space (including play space). The needs of children are given new emphasis: *Particularly where family housing is proposed, it will be important to ensure that the needs of children are taken into account and that there is good provision of recreational areas, including private gardens, play areas and informal play space. These should be well-designed safe, secure and stimulating areas with safe pedestrian access.*

2.2 The London Plan (Greater London Authority)

The London Plan sets out an integrated social, economic and environmental framework to develop London as a sustainable world city over the next 15-20 years. It provides a London wide context for boroughs to align their local planning policies.

The London Plan seeks to protect and promote open spaces and recognises that the value of these spaces will increase as London becomes more compact and intensive in its built form. The Plan encourages boroughs to prepare open spaces strategies and ensure everyone has equal access to facilities, supporting the creation of networks such as green chains.

The London Plan (with amendments since 2004) sets out an Open Space Hierarchy to ensure that a range of open spaces of different size, type and function are accessible to all.

Table 2.1 London Open Space Hierarchy

Open Space Categorisation	Size Guidelines	Distance from homes to open spaces
Regional Parks	400 hectares	3.2 to 8 km
Metropolitan Parks	60 hectares	3.2 km
District Parks	20 hectares	1.2 km
Local Parks and Open Spaces	2 hectares	400 m
Small Open Spaces	Under 2 hectares	Less than 400 m

Source: Table 3D1 from London Plan pg 146

2.3 The Mayor of London's Biodiversity Strategy

Connecting with London's Nature: The Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy (GLA, July 2002) is linked closely to the London Plan and aims to provide a London wide framework for maintaining London's diversity of wildlife. It has two overall targets; no overall loss of wildlife habitats in London, and secondly that more open spaces are created and made accessible, so that all Londoners are within walking distance of a quality natural space. The Mayor's Strategy has taken account of the local Biodiversity Action Plans, which have been published by local authorities in London. Guidance is provided by *Parks, People and Nature* (GLA March 2008).

2.4 London Plan Guidance – Providing for Children and Young People's Play SPG

This document sets out a recommended benchmark standard of a minimum of 10m² of dedicated play space per child as a basis for assessing existing provision. It also sets out how to assess deficiencies in play spaces.

2.5 Hammersmith and Fulham Community Strategy 2007 - 2014

The Hammersmith and Fulham Community Strategy focuses on making improvements that matter to the local community. Developed in partnership with residents, local businesses, voluntary and community groups and the public sector, the Community Strategy puts residents first and provides a vision and framework for the future of the borough: to work with the Borough Partnership to **create a borough of opportunity for all**.

The key priorities are to:

- Provide a top quality education for all;
- Tackle crime and antisocial behaviour;
- Deliver a cleaner, greener borough;
- Promote home ownership;
- Set the framework for a healthy borough;
- Deliver high quality value for money public services;
- Regenerate the most deprived part of the borough.

2.6 Unitary Development Plan (See Appendix 2 for more detail)

The Council's existing Unitary Development Plan outlines specific policies around the provision of parks and open spaces in the borough including:

Protection of open spaces.

Open spaces in the borough are protected from development and from competing land uses through specific UDP policies. The policies and proposals of the plan also promote the provision of additional, as well as the enhancement of existing, open space in all development proposals so as to meet borough needs;

Schedule of protected open spaces.

A schedule of protected open spaces of borough-wide importance is included in the UDP;

Increasing provision, access and improving existing open space.

The borough's UDP policies encourage the provision of new and enhanced open spaces in new developments with detailed standards on amenity and play space as well as addressing deficiencies and biodiversity protection.

2.8 Local Development Framework

The LDF will replace the UDP and will:

- Include policies that address the issues outlined in this Strategy, London Plan policies and government guidance on open spaces. In particular the LDF will identify a hierarchy of open spaces, including Metropolitan Open Land and open space of borough wide importance;
- Set out criteria for protecting existing open spaces and seek an increase in the provision of open space including children's play space;
- Include policy to implement the Government's proposed Community Infrastructure Levy and policy on S106 contributions which will include open space provision and enhancements and access arrangements;
- Seek new open space provision in site proposals;
- Seek improved accessibility to open spaces for all residents, together with improved linkages between open spaces;
- Protect, maintain and enhance biodiversity in all parks, including designation of nature conservation areas.

3. Parks and Open Spaces in Hammersmith and Fulham

3.1 Introduction

A comprehensive study of the **supply** of open space in Hammersmith and Fulham was undertaken in 2006 by the Environment Services Department of the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham and this identified provision, including quality and deficiency of space, is outlined below.

3.2 General open space provision and need

Hammersmith and Fulham has a total of 386 hectares of open space (excluding the area of the River Thames and the Grand Union Canal). 231 hectares (60% of the total) are publicly accessible open spaces (53 spaces in total). The remainder (155 ha) is within housing estates, sports clubs, school grounds or areas such as railway sidings. The National Playing Field Association standard for the provision of accessible open space is **1.6ha per 1000** population. For a residential population of 171,400 people (ONS Mid Year Estimate 2006), Hammersmith and Fulham has **1.35ha per 1000** head of population.

However, the amount of open space available to individuals will vary across the borough. Map 1 illustrates how provision varies across the borough.

The borough has a mix of open spaces with much of the area (159ha) within parks. However, only 34 sites are parks. By contrast 188 sites are amenity green spaces (including spaces around housing estates), totalling 60.5ha. A large proportion of open space is also within cemeteries and churchyards (52.5ha).

3.3 Hammersmith and Fulham Open Spaces by size

The London Plan presents an Open Space Hierarchy that forms the basis of estimates of open space deficiency. Additional categories of "Small Local Parks" and "Pocket Parks" have been added to create Hammersmith and Fulham's Open Space Hierarchy, reflecting the fact that many public open spaces in the borough are small.

Table 3.1 Hierarchy of Open Spaces in Hammersmith and Fulham

Public Open Space Category	No.	Size Guide	Examples
Regional	0	> 400	n/a
Metropolitan	1	60-400	Wormwood Scrubs
District	1	20-60	Ravenscourt, Bishops Parks
Local Parks	17	2-20	Normand Park
Small Local Parks	18	0.4-2	Frank Banfield Park
Pocket Parks	56	<0.4	Rowberry Mead
Linear Open Spaces	2	Variable	Thames Path

3.4 Hammersmith and Fulham Open Spaces by type

The borough's open spaces take on a variety of different forms. Table 3.2 gives a breakdown of the different open space typologies within the borough, based on those defined in PPG17, with refinements to take into account local circumstances, and grouped into 11 main categories. The distribution of the different types of open spaces within the borough is illustrated on Maps 1, 1A, 1B and 1C.

Table 3.2 Hammersmith and Fulham Open Space Typology

	Category	Type	No.	Area	
1	Parks	Public Park	27	70.1	
		Common Land	7	88.9	
		Total	34	159	
2	Gardens and Squares	Formal Garden	2	6.0	
		Garden Square	6	1.7	
		Community Garden	2	0.2	
		Total	10	7.9	
3	Amenity Greenspace	Greenspace Around Premises	144	45.0	
		Greenspace in educational grounds	23	11.4	
		Greenspace in hospitals	3	1.7	
		Back Garden Land	7	1.1	
		Mid-Block Greenspace	2	0.3	
		Pocket Greenspace	9	1.0	
		Total	188	60.5	
4	Cemeteries and Churchyards	Cemeteries	4	50.8	
		Churchyard	8	1.8	
		Total	12	52.6	
5	Outdoor Recreation Facilities	Outdoor Sports Facility (not in a park)	20	34.0	
		Children/Teenagers Space	22	2.4	
		Total	42	36.4	
6	Allotments	Allotments	Total	3	6.6
7	Nature Reserve	Nature Reserve	Total	2	1.0
	Green Links	Canalside Green Corridor	1	1.7	
		Railway Embankment	6	23.8	
		Riverside Green Corridor	0		
		Road Island/Verge	15	2.7	
		Walking/cycling Green Corridor	0		
		Total	22	29.2	
8	Waterspace	Waterspace	Total	4	
9	Civic Spaces	Civic Space / Square	3	0.4	
		Other hard surfaced Civic Space	33	6.1	
		Total	36	6.5	
10	School Yards	School Yards (hard surface)	Total	46	13.6
11	Vacant Land/Construction Sites	Vacant Land	12	9.6	
		Construction Site	5	3.8	
		Total	17	13.4	

Notes:

The new park at Imperial Wharf and public spaces within the BBC Media Village at White City have been included. The Thames Path is included within the "Other hard Surfaced Civic Space typology. Each section of path is recorded as a separate file.

School playing fields not within main school grounds are included within the "Outdoor Recreation Facilities" category.

Hammersmith and Fulham's 159ha of parks account for the largest area of open space in the borough. However, there are relatively few parks sites compared to other types of open space. Amenity green space accounts for more than half the open spaces in the borough. However, in terms of area this accounts less than 10% of all open land surveyed. Most sites in this category are green space in housing estates and schools which tend to be fragmented and smaller in size.

3.5 Specific Provision

3.5.1 Nature Conservation

There are 28 sites currently recognised (and designated within the UDP) as Nature Conservation Areas. Such areas are recognised as particularly valuable both as habitat and a community resource and need specific protection. Within the borough, there are 13 sites of Metropolitan or Borough importance that are accessible by the general public (excluding waterways). Map 5 shows the location of these sites and areas of the borough deficient in nature conservation areas.

3.5.2 Cultural Heritage

Most of the borough's parks are located within the 45 designated conservation areas in the borough which vary greatly in their nature and character. They range from centers of historic settlement, examples of industrial and commercial heritage, 18th- and 19th-century suburbs, model housing estates, and houses set in their historic grounds, to historic transport links and their environs, such as stretches of canal.

The special character of these areas does not just come from the quality of their buildings. The historic layout of roads, paths and boundaries; characteristic building and paving materials; a particular 'mix' of building uses; public and private spaces, such as gardens, parks and greens; and trees and street furniture, which contribute to particular views - all these and more make up the familiar local scene.

3.5.2 Play Areas

There are 114 children's play spaces in the borough, across 84 sites. These play spaces include equipped playgrounds, supervised facilities and unequipped / kick-about areas (usually on housing estates). Most parks in the borough have equipped playgrounds but most of the play spaces in the borough are unsupervised equipped playgrounds on housing estates. Housing estate playgrounds tend to be smaller in size than those in parks.

Most of the playgrounds in the borough cater for children under 8 years old. However a number provide equipment suitable for older children. Some playgrounds were assessed as catering for a mix of age groups; actual use by different age groups is currently unknown.

The majority of play spaces across the borough were assessed as being in satisfactory condition.

Maps 9, 10, 11 and 12 show the location of and access to play grounds across the borough.

3.5.3 Sports Facilities

Within the borough, there are more than 315 outdoor sport facilities across 69 sites:

20 Parks	20 school sites
4 playcentres/community centres	6 sports clubs
16 housing estates	3 stadia for professional football teams

There are two large private clubs in the borough providing outdoor sports facilities: the Queens Club and the Hurlingham Club.

Most sports are provided for across the borough. The most common facilities available are tennis courts, followed by sports pitches and basketball/netball courts and Multi-use games areas (MUGAs).

Residents have unrestricted access to approximately 40% of the outdoor sports facilities in the borough (sometimes a booking fee applies). Limited public access is provided to a further 49 facilities, including those within sports clubs or schools which allow public access at certain times. 16 facilities are located in housing estates, for use by estate residents.

The location of outdoor recreation facilities both inside and outside the borough are displayed on Map 13.

3.5.4 Facilities for Young People

Whilst play areas provide opportunities for young children, there are comparatively few facilities that cater specifically for older children and teenagers. Provision for sports activities is also important for these age groups. This can take the form of both formal (in the form of pitches and sports centres) and informal provision (kick about areas and Multi Use Games Areas (MUGAs)).

3.5.5 Housing Land

There are over 70 housing estates in the borough with substantial areas of open space within their grounds. This open space is often only accessible by residents, but provides an important communal resource, particularly in areas where there are few public spaces. The distribution of housing open space can be seen in Maps 1, 1A, 1B and 1C.

3.6 Assessment of Deficiency – Priority Areas

The London Plan sets out a hierarchy of public open spaces, largely based on size. Each of these is assigned a catchment – the likely distance a person would be willing to travel to an open space of that size. The Open Space Study 2006 shows that open space is present throughout Hammersmith and Fulham at all levels of the hierarchy, apart from regional parks.

A study by the Greater London Authority found that 68% of the population of the borough is not within the indicative catchment of a **District Park**. There is no deficiency of access to **Regional or Metropolitan** sized parks.

There are 17 **local parks** (2-20ha) and 18 **small local parks** (0.4-2ha) in the borough. Access to these spaces is very good. There are only small areas of the borough where residents are more than 400m from publicly accessible **Local Parks** (2-20ha) and **Small Local Parks** (0.4-2ha) when using the London Plan Hierarchy based on the size of an open space.

However, additional analysis reveals that many areas in the borough are more than 400m from local parks with a good range of facilities (play areas, pitches and court, seating etc). Maps 2, 3, 3A and 3B display priority areas for addressing open space deficiency through the provision of new open space and improving facilities across the network.

Pocket Parks, (spaces smaller than 2ha) could address some deficiency in the priority areas by increasing the provision of facilities in Furnivall Gardens, Frank Banfield Park, Cathnor Park, Wendell Park, William Parnell Park and Brompton Park as well as within housing estates in areas of deficiency.

The Thames Path is Hammersmith and Fulham's most important **Linear Open Space**. With a large proportion of the borough "10 minutes from the Thames" establishing a network of green links to this space is very important to increase use and enjoyment of this space. Removing barriers to access will also address identified deficiency areas.

There is a comparative lack of **play spaces** for children aged 0-12 in many areas of the borough. This is illustrated in Maps 10 and 11. Priority areas for improving access to children's playspace have been defined according to levels of deprivation and number of children. The main priority areas for children under 8 are around White City (north of Wormholt Park) and in Fulham (around Parsons Green). However, much of the borough between Wormwood Scrubs and the Great West Road is within a priority area. Deficiency areas for children over 8 are similar to under 8s but with greater concentrations in the Hammersmith / Shepherd's Bush and White City areas.

3.7 Future Needs

The demand for open space will rise as the borough population rises. The ONS Mid Year Estimate for 2018 predicts 190,000 residents in Hammersmith and Fulham. This would reduce the ratio of Public Open Space from an already low **1.35ha per 1000** people to **1.22ha per 1000**. It is considered important to continue to protect open spaces while creating more publicly accessible open spaces. The implication for play space will also be an issue that needs addressing as the number of children is likely to rise.

3.8 Addressing Deficiency and Future Needs

Map 4 shows priority areas for addressing deficiency in terms of access to local parks, small local parks and pocket parks. Priority areas have been identified along the Westway corridor, through central Hammersmith from Uxbridge Road to the Thames and along the boundary between Fulham and the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.

Hammersmith and Fulham residents also have access to public open spaces outside the borough (which they share with residents from neighbouring boroughs). If publicly accessible open spaces within 400m of the borough boundary are added to the total supply, the level of provision increases to approximately 1.7ha /1000 population.

3.8.1 Protecting existing open space

The Local Development Framework needs to set out criteria that will provide protection to open space at a level appropriate to its level of designation.

3.8.2 Securing new open space where possible

The Council should consider the possibility of providing new open space in the borough to meet the projected growth in population and improve the current ratio of public open space through planning policy frameworks and briefs, LDF site policies and Section 106 planning obligation agreements. This will be reflected within the Local Development Framework .

A formula for seeking S106 contributions should be developed which includes provision for negotiating open space provision, open space improvements, access improvements and studies. In addition open space needs should be included as part of the proposed Community Infrastructure Levy.

3.8.3 Improving access to existing open space

Where it is not possible to create new open space in the borough, improvements to existing open spaces or improvements to access will be the most effective way of improving Hammersmith and Fulham's open space network.

This will be addressed by the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy priorities and actions. It may also be possible to use Section 106 Agreements to gain public access to new developments' open spaces. Opportunities should be identified for designating and

extending green routes (chains and corridors) to create a more integrated and accessible network of open spaces.

Improvements to the riverside walk will be required in new riverside developments.

4. Public Consultation and Surveys

A comprehensive residents' survey of the use of parks and open spaces was conducted in 1998. The results of this study have been used to inform the development of this Strategy. This survey will be reviewed and re-commissioned in the summer of 2008 as a priority action for this Strategy to ensure that Hammersmith and Fulham's open space priorities are based on the current views and needs of residents and open space users.

4.1 Methodology

Resident Survey (1998)

A postal questionnaire was distributed to 17% of borough households and a 42% response was achieved. The objectives of the survey were to:

- Measure current levels of usage of parks and open space within the borough;
- Determine a profile of visitors using the open spaces;
- Identify current travel patterns
- Gauge current opinion of and level of satisfaction with, park provision and facilities;
- Identify needs and expectations of park-users and potential park users;
- Identify the reasons some residents don't use parks
- Identify potential changes or introductions that users feel could be made to improve the parks service.

Resident Satisfaction Survey (MORI)

This triennial survey measures residents' satisfaction with a range of council services including satisfaction with parks. In 2003, 61% of residents were satisfied with Hammersmith and Fulham's parks and open spaces. In 2006, this had improved to 67% - but the top quartile of London councils had 78% of residents satisfied with parks in 2006. Hammersmith and Fulham must improve significantly to meet those standards.

Stakeholder Consultation

In preparing this Parks and Open Space Strategy, a second round of consultation took place, inviting comment from partners and stakeholders on the Strategy document. A summary leaflet was distributed to community and volunteer groups, and stakeholders (including members of the Cleaner Greener and Local Neighbourhood Committees) were provided with a copy of the Strategy and offered the opportunity to participate in consultation events. Statutory and relevant consultees (for example the Greater London Authority, Port of London Authority, Ministry of Defence) were sent the full draft Strategy.

The purpose of the consultation was to:

- Confirm support for the open space vision for Hammersmith and Fulham;
- Find out priority open space issues important to community and volunteer Groups;
- Understand what residents and visitors like or dislike about Hammersmith and Fulham's parks and open spaces;
- Establish residents' priorities for expenditure on open space improvements.

4.2 Highlights from Consultation

Park Location, Catchment Area and Frequency of Visits

- There are approximately 5 million visits made to parks by around 120,000 residents
- 83% of respondents use a park at least once in the past year;
- The proportion of respondents not using parks increases significantly the further they live from certain parks and open spaces;
- Bishops Park and Ravenscourt are the most popular open spaces in the borough
- Smaller open spaces are very important with 30% of users visiting these most frequently;

Reasons for Visiting, Likes, Dislikes and Suggestions for New Facilities

- Most common reasons for visiting open space are to walk or sit quietly, to take the children and use the play area or to take a short cut;
- 20% of all trips to parks are by dog walkers;
- Close to home, peace and quiet, appearance and layout are the main reasons people like a particular space;
- Dog mess and behaviour, litter / glass and street drinking are the main dislikes;
- The highest rated facilities are bowling greens, tennis courts and children's play areas.
- Top suggestions for new or improved facilities are toilets, cafes, seating and children's play areas;
- Satisfaction with facilities varies considerably from park to park.
- Across the borough the maintenance and appearance of trees, shrubs, lawns and grassed areas are regarded as good or excellent by between 74% - 90% of respondents.

Getting to the park

- People who don't use parks state that it is difficulty reaching the park that make it inaccessible rather than the environment of the park itself.
- Most people (76%) walk to parks, taking 10 minutes to reach their main park;
- 9% drive, 8% regularly cycle and 5% take public transport.

The 1998 survey revealed that some spaces were used more than others. 24.3% of residents use Bishops Park as their main park whilst 23.8% use Ravenscourt Park, the boroughs two district parks. Residents also typically travel further to visit these parks.

Four other parks are used by more than 5% of Borough residents as their main park. These parks are termed **Flagship Parks** to reflect their importance and catchment, and consequently the need to develop a range of enhanced facilities and staffing.

5. Strategy Priorities for Hammersmith and Fulham

5.1 Priorities for Improvement

Aligning the needs and aspirations of residents and open space users with wider council, London and national policies and priorities is a major challenge when improving open space. Feedback from surveys, project development, consultation with partner agencies, Friends and Resident Groups and officers across the council has produced a variety of priorities for improving the open spaces in the borough.

Suggestions from the 1998 survey included:

- Provision of better facilities including toilets, cafés, bench seating, and drinking fountains;
- Better, more exciting play opportunities for younger and older children including adventure play, sandpits, water play etc;
- Providing imaginative facilities, equipment and activities for teenagers and young adults;
- Improving visitor safety in parks through increased staffing, better design and enforcement against anti-social behaviour;
- Developing new wildlife nature areas (including aquatic environments) while managing and promoting existing sites;
- Improving sporting facilities (cricket, tennis, football, basketball, artificial surfaces, floodlighting etc) and clarifying access and charging policies;
- Providing informal exercise opportunities with quality equipment and useful information;
- Improving horticultural standards and creating attractive spaces with imaginative flower beds, well maintained lawns, shrubs and tree planting;
- More organised entertainment and community events and providing the facilities (eg bandstands) to host them;
- Opportunities to get involved through Friends Groups and organised volunteering;
- Controlling dogs (educating their owners) and sustainably managing dog waste;
- Actively promoting parks and open spaces, their features, facilities and heritage;
- Understanding and addressing the needs of all ages and people living with illness and disabilities;
- Improving access to parks by providing directional signage, cycle racks, safe walking routes and developing green corridors;

Regional and national policies that affect open space are outlined in Section 2 of this Strategy. The major national and London priorities are:

- Protecting open space from inappropriate development;
- Overcoming deficiencies in open space, play space and biodiversity;
- Conserving and enhancing historic spaces;
- Increasing opportunities for access to the natural world;
- Enhancing opportunities for all to access open space including children and young people, older people, and people with disabilities.

The Council's Community Strategy and a number of other Strategies and Plans outline the wider priorities for the council for future years. Objectives relevant to Open Space include:

- Health, wellbeing and tackling obesity;
- Improving access for all;
- Creating a borough of opportunity;
- Listening to residents;
- Improving safety and proactively addressing anti-social behaviour.

5.2 Strategic Vision for Parks and Open Spaces

As a result, a vision for the future of Hammersmith and Fulham's Parks and Open Spaces and six key priorities have been developed:

To improve the quality of life for all people in Hammersmith and Fulham through the provision of award winning parks and open spaces that are clean, green, safe and sustainable, by:

- 1. Protecting Hammersmith and Fulham's existing parks and open spaces.**
 - Contributing to the social, environmental, health, recreation, and economic value of the borough.
 - Encouraging awareness of the borough's unique and rich natural and cultural heritage
- 2. Providing open spaces, play spaces and access to local biodiversity.**
 - Improving provision of open spaces where possible.
 - Enhancing existing parks and open spaces and the links between them.
 - Promoting awareness of local nature conservation sites.
- 3. Creating safe, attractive and accessible spaces for all.**
 - Creating inspirational spaces.
 - Reducing physical and other barriers to using parks and open spaces.
 - Reducing the incidence and perception of crime and anti-social behaviour in open spaces.
 - Improving local information about parks and open spaces.
 - Opening up private spaces.
- 4. Improving the standard of management and maintenance**
 - Creating award winning spaces that are safe and sustainable
 - Renewing soft landscaping.
 - Increasing diversity with species adaptable to climate change.
 - Reducing pesticide use and incorporating environmentally sustainable management.
- 5. Actively involving the community in their local open spaces.**
 - Supporting existing Friends groups to increase and diversify their membership.
 - Encouraging and support the establishment of new Friends of Parks groups
 - Promoting the sharing of ideas and experiences between community and amenity groups.
- 6. Increasing participation in open spaces.**
 - Encouraging active recreation, formal and informal sport
 - Opening up parks and open spaces for formal and informal education
 - Encouraging community and other events

6. Parks & Open Spaces Strategy Actions

This section describes how the Hammersmith and Fulham Council will address the open space priorities.

6.1 Protecting existing open space.

The London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham will:

- a. Protect all open spaces through policies included within the London Plan, the Unitary Development Plan and the Local Development Framework;
- b. Work with H&F Homes to improve the quality, management and use of housing open spaces.
- c. Develop an informative map of parks, open spaces and green corridors in the borough that links with the borough walking maps to provide information about the heritage, conservation value, features and facilities and proposals for enhancement across the network.

6.2 Providing open spaces, play spaces and access to local biodiversity.

The London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham will:

- a. Seek further provision and enhancement of, and increased accessibility to, open space and other facilities, such as children's play areas through the application of policies with development plans.
- b. Address identified areas of deficiencies (Map 4) by negotiating accessible public open space in, or near, new developments where possible.
- c. Where practical, negotiate public access to private open spaces in schools, housing estates etc.
- d. Improve the protection, management, and promotion of nature conservation sites throughout the borough.
- e. Improve the wildlife habitat of Margravine Cemetery with the assistance of the Friends of Margravine and promote the space to a wider audience.
- f. Work in partnership with the Hammersmith and Fulham Biodiversity Partnership to implement the Biodiversity Action Plan and maintain and enhance all Sites of Nature Conservation Importance.
- g. Ensure that parks development schemes include elements that protect, promote or enhance wildlife habitats.
- h. Establish priorities for refurbishing play areas across the borough's parks
- i. Redevelop at least two park play areas to be fully accessible for disabled children responding to the 3 year Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) Action Plan.

6.3 Creating safe, attractive, and accessible spaces for all.

The London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham will:

- a. Promote the Borough's parks and open spaces through a variety of media, including the internet, brochures, posters and signs, to make residents aware of opportunities for recreation in the borough.
- b. Survey access to open space across the borough and, where barriers to open spaces exist, develop an improvement programme to remove these barriers.

- c. Improve informational, interpretive and directional signage across the borough's parks and open spaces with an attractive and consistent format
- d. Investigate opportunities for public access to private open spaces.
- e. Identify potential green corridors and implement an improvement programme to improve accessibility between open spaces working closely with the Thames Strategy Kew to Chelsea and Street Scene enhancements.
- f. Ensure all open spaces, especially play areas are compliant in terms of access for those with disabilities (DDA compliance).
- g. Design parks and play improvements to take into account the needs of residents with disabilities and their carers.
- h. Establish a disabled user task group lead by disabled stakeholders (including young people, older people and carers) with staff support to co-ordinate meetings, visit exemplar sites and record and action group findings.
- i. Coordinate the provision of disabled parking facilities with the availability of accessible facilities including good paths, a mix of seating, play facilities, toilets and cafes.
- j. Review the quality of paving and the limited provision of seating through the 2008 Open Space Resident Survey and individual parks user surveys.
- k. Work with the Thames Strategy Kew to Chelsea to resolve pedestrian cyclist conflict along the Thames Path, providing safe bypasses especially at Upper Mall, Furnivall Gardens, Rowberry Mead, Stevenage Park and Bishops Park.
- l. Provide good quality, safe cycle parking at key sites.

6.4 Improving the standard of management and maintenance.

The London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham will:

- a. Establish an officer steering group (including Parks Operations, Parks Development, Sports Development, Parks Constabulary) to develop enhancement proposals, deliver improvements and share information.
- b. Work closely with Quadron (grounds maintenance contractor) to raise the standards of maintenance across the network.
- c. Enhance and improve open spaces across the network particularly where there is an identified deficiency of provision or quality.
- d. Attain Green Flag awards for 6 Flagship Parks including Normand Park, Bishops Parks, South Park, Ravenscourt Park, Wormholt Park and Hammersmith Park.
- e. Enhance the attractiveness of the borough's commons and key open spaces (Shepherds Bush Common, Brook Green, Eel Brook Common, Margravine Cemetery, Furnivall Gardens and Parsons Green) to create *Inspirational Spaces* that celebrate the borough's rich natural and cultural heritage.
- f. Collaborate with community partners to undertake open space improvement projects that will contribute to the regeneration of the borough.
- g. In partnership with the Thames Strategy (Kew to Chelsea), coordinate a programme of open space and green corridor improvements to improve Stevenage Park, Rowberry Mead, Furnivall Gardens and Upper Mall.

- h. Work with the Thames Strategy Kew to Chelsea, Ports of London Authority, Borough Highways, and the Environment Agency to enhance and promote the biodiversity, amenity, accessibility and safety of the River Thames.
- i. Review the provision and effectiveness of dog exercise areas in parks and open spaces
- j. Liaise with community groups, the Parks Constabulary, Neighbourhood Area Police Teams and Council officers to address safety and security issues.
- k. Develop a Service Level Agreement with Parks Constabulary for parks patrols and security.

6.5 Actively involving the community in their local open spaces.

The London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham will:

- a. Establish partnership agreements between the Council and new or existing Friends Groups to align priorities, attract funding, share information and resources and encourage volunteering.
- b. Hold a bi-annual Friends Forum where Friends Groups can share experiences, attract new members and promote their activities.
- c. Continue to develop involvement in community gardens at Ravenscourt Park, Godolphin Road Open Space, Loris Gardens and Normand Park and explore opportunities for additional community garden space.

6.6 Increasing participation in open spaces.

The London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham will:

- a. Increase participation in sports by improving the standards of sports pitches and facilities and streamline booking and charging procedures.
- b. Coordinate work with the PCT, Sports Development, and community health organisations to tackle childhood and adult obesity and other health problems through the provision of facilities and structured activities and events in Parks and Open Spaces.
- c. Investigate the provision of group fitness classes in parks.
- d. Provide outdoor exercise equipment, running surfaces and information about availability to promote a healthier borough.
- e. Develop policy and advice for residents wishing to hold community events in their local park.
- f. Identify (through the review of the Sports Strategy and School Sports Zones) required access to outdoor sports provision for the proposed Hammersmith Academy and develop a Memorandum of Understanding for capital improvement and ongoing maintenance.
- g. Work in partnership with the Building Schools for the Future team to improve PE and sports provision for all with structured access for schools at Ravenscourt, Hurlingham, South Park, Wormwood Scrubs and Linford Christie Stadium.
- h. Provide dedicated Playing Fields for a whole year group in the North and South of the Borough to help meet the PE and School Sport Public Service Agreement target and assist with the transformation required in secondary education.
- i. Where possible, allow structured community access to school sports facilities outside of hours.

7 Implementing the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy

Successful implementation of this Strategy is dependent both on adherence to the framework outlined in the document and the establishment of a dedicated team to administer the implementation plans and monitor progress against the priorities outlined above.

7.1 Work to date

Work has already begun on the process of implementing improvements across the borough:

- The Parks and Recreation Service unit has been established bringing together services in parks and other open spaces such as cemeteries alongside sports development and leisure centres to ensure coordination of provision across the borough and achieve efficiencies through joint contract monitoring, sports and pitch booking, etc;
- A new Grounds Maintenance Contract with Quadron Ltd commenced in mid 2008 and will deliver improved grounds maintenance across the borough;
- A design masterplan has been developed for Bishops Park and submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund outlining substantial improvement plans for the park and the grounds of Fulham Palace
- Normand Park has been completely redesigned and refurbished in partnership with the people of North Fulham and funded by the North Fulham New Deal for Communities;
- Responsibility for Little Wormwood Scrubs has been passed to the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea as it is very close to the borough boundaries and serves a high proportion of RBKC residents in that area. Kensington & Chelsea have undertaken to make improvements to the facilities and maintenance of the park
- Shepherds Bush Common is undergoing complete redesign and refurbishment in consultation with local communities and funded by development gain monies to provide an oasis of green and calm in the middle of this busy area, with enhanced play and café areas.

7.2 Key Actions 2008- 2009 (Year 1)

7.2.1 Establish a Parks & Open Spaces Steering Group

This group will be established in 2008 and will meet regularly to review, develop, implement and monitor actions against the priorities and actions in section 6. Where necessary, staff from other departments and agencies will be invited to join or report to this group.

7.2.2 Develop an Annual Implementation Plan

This will be the key tool for taking forward the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy actions and to allocate existing and future capital funding for improvement actions. The annual implementation plan will be in place by November 2008. All projects across the council that have an open space element will be included and progress against key actions monitored. The implementation plan will be updated annually to reflect completed projects and emerging priorities. Each project will outline specific timescales, milestones, resource implications and completion targets.

7.2.3 Ensure that two major parks are maintained and managed to Green Flag standards

Work will commence to ensure that two of Hammersmith & Fulham's major parks will be judged against Green Flag Award standards of maintenance and management in the first year of the strategy with a further four parks in years 2 to 4.

7.2.4 Ensure that the Bishops Park Master Plan reaches Stage 2 of the Heritage Lottery Fund process

Officers will work closely with the Heritage Lottery fund, designers and the community to maximise the opportunity to achieve significant grant funding for this major project. This will entail ensuring that the Master Plan application is approved at Stage 1 by the Heritage Lottery Fund in September 2008 (subject to HLF timescales) and is submitted for Stage 2 consideration within the following year.

7.2.5 Develop a Master Plan for South Park

Officers will develop a Master Plan for South Park in consultation with key stakeholders and residents by September 2008 to identify key improvements, action existing funds for the Park and prepare for external funding applications. A number of key improvements will be made to the park in 2008-09 including renovation of the tennis court area and further conservation works to the perimeter wall.

7.2.6 Resident Survey update.

The 1998 Parks and Open Spaces Resident Survey will be updated with a random survey of 10,000 households in 2008. The results of the survey will inform future improvements and the overall implementation of the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy.

7.2.7 Increase users satisfaction with parks

Improvements will be undertaken to ensure that users' and residents' satisfaction with parks increases within the first year of the strategy from the baseline figure of 67% in 2006 and this will be measured annually to achieve the target of the top London quartile (78% plus).

7.3 Further Work and Research

There are number of projects that need further work before they can be advanced into implementation plans for the future, such as background research, ongoing consultation and partnership working. These projects will be identified as a work programme by the Steering Group with designated responsibilities and resources.

7.4 Monitoring and Review

Ongoing monitoring of the implementation of the Strategy is key to its success as a focused and responsive tool for improving the borough's environment and the lives of local residents. The monitoring framework will identify Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) including those negotiated as part of the Grounds Maintenance contract (2008), national, regional and local targets; the results of surveys and consultations; and those identified as part of the implementation plans. These KPIs will be reported back to the Parks and Open Space Steering Group at regular intervals.

The Strategy Action Plan and Implementation plans will be reviewed annually.

- Completed projects and actions will be removed;
- New projects and actions costed and added as appropriate.

The Strategy will be fully reviewed every 10 years.

APPENDIX 1 Unitary Development Plan

Protection of Open spaces

Open spaces in the borough are protected from development through policies in the council's UDP. The policies seek to protect existing open space from the pressures of competing land uses. The policies and proposals of the plan also promote the provision of additional, as well as the enhancement of existing, open space in all development proposals so as to meet borough needs.

The Borough's UDP policy EN22 emphasizes the council's aims for open space. It seeks to protect open space by only permitting development, on identified public open space and other green space of borough-wide importance, where it can be shown that it would preserve or enhance open character, its function as a sport, leisure or recreation resource and for biodiversity and visual amenity.

In addition, policy EN22X seeks to protect public and private open space of local importance subject to the same criteria as EN22, but development proposals may be permitted where open space to the equivalent amount is provided elsewhere or where proposals would release a development site needed to realise a qualitative gain for the community.

Open spaces in the borough are further protected by specific UDP policies on Childrens' Play Areas (Policy EN23B), Metropolitan Open Land (Policy EN24), Nature Conservation Areas (Policy EN27), Green Corridors (Policy EN28), and Nature Conservation on Development Sites (Policy EN29).

List of protected open spaces

A schedule of protected open spaces of borough wide importance is included in the UDP. Also included are sites protected under the London Squares Preservation Act (1931) those included in English Heritage's Register of Historic Parks and Gardens. Nature conservation areas are listed separately.

Increasing provision, access and improving existing open space

The borough's UDP policies encourage the provision of new and enhanced open spaces in new developments.

Policy **EN23** requires all new development to make provision for open space to meet the needs of occupiers and users. This should be on site or where not practical contribution to a new open space or enhancement of nearby open space. Proposals should include open land provision beyond that that required to meet the needs of the development itself, particularly where:

- The locality is identified as an area of general open space deficiency;
- New open space would contribute to the improvement of town centres, employment zones and regeneration areas;
- There is potential to enhance nature features of strategic importance such as the riverside;
- The open space would create, or contribute to, provision of pedestrian links between existing open space, town centres, entertainment venues or other, established pedestrian routes;

- There is potential to enhance the biodiversity value of an area, including the creation of new habitats for wildlife.

Policy **EN23B** requires new development that provides family dwellings to provide, or contribute towards, new or enhanced children's play facilities in the neighbourhood. There are also detailed standards on amenity space and childrens play space which provide details of the amount of open space to be provided in new developments, namely:

- S5A Residential Amenity Space in New Developments
- S7.1 Children's Play Space Development on sites over 0.2 Hectares.