

# LONDON BOROUGH OF HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM

**Report to:** Cabinet

**Date:** 14 July 2025

**Subject:** Parks Improvement Programme

**Report of:** Cllr Florian Chevoppe-Verdier, Cabinet Member for Public Realm

**Report author:** Simon Ingyon, Head of Parks and Open Spaces

**Responsible Director:** Bram Kainth, Executive Director of Place

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## SUMMARY

The Council's award-winning parks are important for our residents, businesses and visitors and provide significant public open spaces that are intended to promote overall wellbeing. The Council has recently completed a multi-year investment programme with almost £3.6m invested in our public parks.

This investment will be further enhanced, and this report sets out a range of improvements to our parks and in turn the quality of the environment for residents. The improvements will create impactful planting in many parks and improve the standard of the infrastructure to create even more beautiful clean, green, and award-winning parks and open spaces where everyone can relax, enjoy a variety of activities, and connect with nature in a safe and attractive setting. For the planting to have an impact from Spring 2026 it will need to be planted this Autumn, therefore a timely decision is required.

The programme will invest a further £1.1m over 2025/26 and 2026/27.

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## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To approve a Parks Improvement Programme requiring investment of £1.1 million.

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**Wards Affected:** All

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Our Values	Summary of how this report aligns to the <a href="#">H&amp;F Corporate Plan</a> and the H&F Values
Building shared prosperity	The improvement of parks will enhance the local environment, making it more attractive for residents and businesses.

Creating a compassionate and inclusive council	Ensuring all parks are well-maintained and accessible to children, young people and their parents and carers, as well as the proven benefits of wellbeing for all ages.
Doing things with local residents, not to them	Engaging with the community to understand their needs and preferences for improving and maintaining parks.
Being ruthlessly financially efficient	Allocating resources effectively to maintain high standards without overspending.
Taking pride in H&F	Maintaining parks to a high standard reflects the pride we take in our borough.
Rising to the challenge of the climate and ecological emergency	Implementing sustainable practices in parks improvements and maintenance.

## Financial Impact

The proposed Parks Improvement Programme requires total investment of £1.1m (including £0.260m revenue and £0.840m capital) to be invested across 2025/26 and 2026/27. The investment will be used to improve the quality of all aspects the parks infrastructure and will include:

- Habitat improvements (planting flower bed schemes) – to provide attractive impactful bedding schemes.
- Signage - Entrance and wayfinding signage upgrades with priority for those parks applying for Green Flag status
- Footpaths and access improvements - Across several Parks each year
- Lighting column replacement – to maintain safety and security
- Statues, memorials, sculptures, gates and railings – improvements to some of the many assets in parks will be assessed and planned.
- Boundary walls and internal/external fencing - Condition surveys to be undertaken and required improvements prioritised.
- Bin replacement – introduce use recycling bins across parks/open spaces

It is expected that this investment will be funded primarily through a combination of existing useable s106 resources supported by any necessary additional revenue and capital resources (and minimising any additional external borrowing). The details will be included as appropriate in the standard financial reports that are reported to Cabinet (revenue and capital monitoring reports) and the annual budget report to Council in February 2026.

It should be noted that a long-term investment plan for continued investment in our parks playgrounds is being developed and will be reported separately in the future.

*Kellie Goch, Head of Finance (Place), 7 July 2025*

*Verified by Sukvinder Kalsi, Executive Director of Finance & Corporate Services, 7 July 2025*

## Legal Implications

The Council has the power to provide and incur expenditure on parks and open spaces under a range of legislation, in particular s10 of the Open Spaces Act 1906, s76 of the Public Health Acts Amendment Act 1907 and s19 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.

Any works required to carry out works of improvement will, depending on their value, need to be subject to a competitive tendering exercise pursuant to the Procurement Act 2023. The requirements of Contract Standing Orders, including the preparation of a procurement strategy will need to be complied with.

*John Sharland, Special Projects Lawyer, 21 May 2025*

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## Background Papers Used in Preparing This Report

None.

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## DETAILED ANALYSIS

1. The 51 public parks and 4 cemeteries in Hammersmith & Fulham are vital community assets that contribute to health, wellbeing, climate resilience, and civic pride. They make a significant difference to how people perceive the borough as a place to live, work and visit. This report requests £1.1m to deliver improvements that will enhance our parks and in turn the quality of the environment for residents. The improvements will create impactful planting in many parks and improve the standard of the infrastructure so that can be enjoyed by all.
2. In 2024, 21 parks received Green Flags which recognises quality green spaces that are welcoming, safe and clean. The Parks service submitted 25 Green Flag applications in January 2025 with the results due in National Parks Week in the last week of July 2025.
3. The Council has consistently made improvements to its parks over recent years. For instance, over £650,000 was invested in the borough's parks and open spaces in 2024/25 funded from developer contributions and other funding sources. This included H&F Green Investment funding for Purcell Crescent, Frank Banfield Park, Ravenscourt Park and Eel Brook Common amongst others.
4. The 2024 Parks Satisfaction Survey highlighted that the parks are very important to residents and that overall, there was an improvement in the satisfaction in the borough's parks and open spaces to 86% from 69% in 2023. The survey identified what residents felt were the most important elements of parks and open spaces and how they should be improved. This Improvement plan responds to many of those comments and suggestions from the satisfaction survey. This focused improvement programme will ensure the borough retains some of the best parks and open spaces in London.

5. The parks and open spaces are maintained by a Grounds Maintenance contractor (Idverde), who is responsible for grass cutting, horticulture and cleansing and general ground maintenance. The infrastructure within parks is managed by the Highways & Parks team and maintaining these to a high standard is just as important as the green spaces to maximise enjoyment and accessibility of the parks.
6. Out of the assessment of the Green Flag application process it has discovered that the most heavily used parks would be enhanced by more impactful horticultural displays, such as flower beds along footpaths. Park infrastructure has been flagged in need of a refresh. Such an investment would enhance the overall quality of the parks and open spaces and help improve its Green Flags status. It would be a key contributor to the climate emergency, health and wellbeing strategies, and Upstream London objective of making Hammersmith and Fulham one of the best places to live and work.

## **Proposals and Analysis of Options**

7. The following improvements are proposed:
8. Impactful Planting – The council's parks and open spaces are a chance to showcase high quality horticulture, a chance to provide nature education and support biodiversity and vital habitats for birds, bees and insects. Therefore, as well as improving the aesthetics of the parks for the residents and visitors we also want a wide variety of different plants, flowers and shrubs, for improving the nature conservation of the borough. Impactful planting will be used to uplift key pathways and often visited areas of parks.
9. Creating impactful planting schemes in key parks and open spaces will provide an aesthetic uplift, and valuable natural resources for bees and insects from spring 2026, therefore contributing to our overall environmental approach. The ongoing maintenance and preparation of these areas will need to be maintained as part of the retendering of the Grounds Maintenance contract in 2026/27 and subsequent years.
10. Infrastructure Enhancement – To provide an accessible and enjoyable experience for all our residents, improvements are proposed to the following key infrastructure:
11. Signage – a new enhanced welcoming information sign format for many parks and open space (with those applying for Green Flag status having priority) will give a better experience in each park; the design has already been tested in 8 parks with positive feedback including South Park, Wormholt Park, Hammersmith Park and Vicarage Gardens. In addition, additional wayfinding signposts are proposed in the larger parks and open spaces.
12. Footpaths and access improvements – Capital funding is proposed to improve many of the most important and high footfall parks and open spaces in the borough adding to the experience for visitors. Some black tarmac paths will be replaced with an aggregate that is more environmentally friendly as it

reduces the heat effect and is porous surface for improved drainage to support the natural environment in parks and it is cheaper to maintain in the future.

13. Lighting columns – Capital investment to replace or repair at least 10% of columns and lamps in parks to maintain safety and security for users. (A business case is being developed, as an invest to save programme, to upgrade all park lights to energy efficient LED lighting for an estimated capital cost of £2.5-3m. The same upgrade was implemented to all highway lighting columns, and it has substantially reduced electricity costs, lowered maintenance costs and provides brighter lighting).
14. Statues, memorials and sculptures – The borough has approximately 40 memorials, statues, sculptures and heritage listed infrastructure including gates and railings in parks and open spaces. A successful 'SpaceHive' fundraising campaign recently funded the refurbishment of the historic 'Leaning Lady' on the Great West Road. However, with cleaning and repairs required the service will need further funding to focus on those that need more work to reflect the parks improvement.
15. The capital funding will be used to refurbish and improve some of these important park features and compliment any external funding secured through crowd funding (such as SpaceHive funding from community CIL/developer contributions). Works have been identified for the fountain near Pryor's Bank Bishop's Park, gates and railings at Margravine Cemetery, and Ravenscourt Park, similarly gates and railings at St. Pauls Gardens and the war memorial plaques in Vicarage Gardens. Individual schemes will be developed with Friends of Park groups and residents.
16. Boundary walls, external and internal fencing - Many parks and open spaces have boundary fencing and walls as well as internal fencing and boundaries around park features. About 36 km of boundaries in the parks need assessing and condition surveys prepared. Individual schemes will be brought forward for repairs and replacements as necessary.
17. Bins – To continue the push to increase recycling in parks, it is proposed to replace bins with new dual use general and recycling waste bins in the most heavily used parks as a priority. The aim is to eventually replace all park bins with the new dual use recycling bins to encourage recycling, contribute to driving the borough's recycling rates up, and help keep the parks cleaner.
18. In addition to the above investment there is an existing plan for the improvement of Bishop's Park funded through compensation paid by Fulham FC for occupying part of Bishops Park to facilitate its stadium redevelopment, which is due to finish shortly. There is approximately £779,000 of funding available to contribute to improve this historic park in the south of the borough. Following a very successful Butterfly Conservation planting project in the Moat Garden in 2024 the Parks Service will use funding to enhance Bishop's Park with additional planting programmes that will bring the park to life and install new beds through the Climate Change Nature Champions programme. There is a programme planned to improve the balustrades around the formal lake area, two further aggregate paths are proposed and lighting improvements.

19. Similarly, in addition to this capital programme, there is a significant ecological masterplan improvement programme for Wormwood Scrubs funded by the adjacent HS2 development which will be delivered from 2026/27 onwards. Whilst it won't have quite the same aesthetics as the proposed more formal parks improvement plan as it needs to be appropriate for the Wormwood Scrubs setting, it will vastly improve the Wormwood Scrubs habitat for the next 10 years and beyond. There is also a similar proposal for infrastructure improvements to the Scrubs proposed for consideration by the Wormwood Scrubs Charitable Trust in 2026/27.
20. The current revenue budget for responding reactively to infrastructure maintenance requirements does not match the extent of all the infrastructure features and facilities identified in the parks. Following the results of all the condition surveys and the new Grounds Maintenance contract tender, the revenue requirements will be reassessed as part of the Council's annual budget setting process for 2026/27

### **Reasons for Decision**

21. The council has an aspiration to be the greenest borough, and parks are key part of this vision alongside the 'Upstream London' strategy. This report has set a programme to begin the transformation of the boroughs parks and showcase high quality Green Flag parks as an example of the boroughs ambitions whilst developing a Parks for the Future Strategy.

### **Risk Management Implications**

22. This initiative does not incur any significant risks.

*Jules Binney, Risk and Assurance Manager, 9<sup>th</sup> June 2025*

### **Climate and Ecological Emergency Implications**

23. These parks improvements are in line with the Climate and Ecology initiatives and creating an enhanced biodiversity offer in the borough.

*Simone Turner, Interim Ecology and Adaptation Lead, 12<sup>th</sup> June 2025*

### **Procurement implications**

24. If the parks improvement is approved to proceed, any associated procurement activity will require a procurement strategy to be agreed. The procuring officer must work with the Procurement and Commercial team to ensure any procurement activity is undertaken compliantly and in accordance with the relevant legislation and the Council's own [Contract Standing Orders \(CSOs\)](#).

*Chris Everett, Category Lead – Procurement and Commercial, 29<sup>th</sup> May 2025*