



The Ridgeway Local Park

Greenspace Action Plan
2015-2020



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Reader's Summary

The first management plan created for the site ran from 2009 to 2014, with an additional year added to the action matrices to show the works completed in 2014/15.

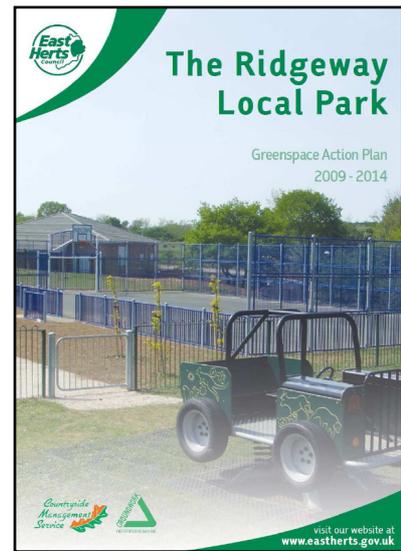
Further information on the previous management plan and related appendices is available on the Council's website - www.eastherts.gov.uk/theridgewaylocalpark

In partnership with Hertfordshire County Council's Countryside Management Service (CMS) the initial management plan has been reviewed and adapted to create this new management plan.

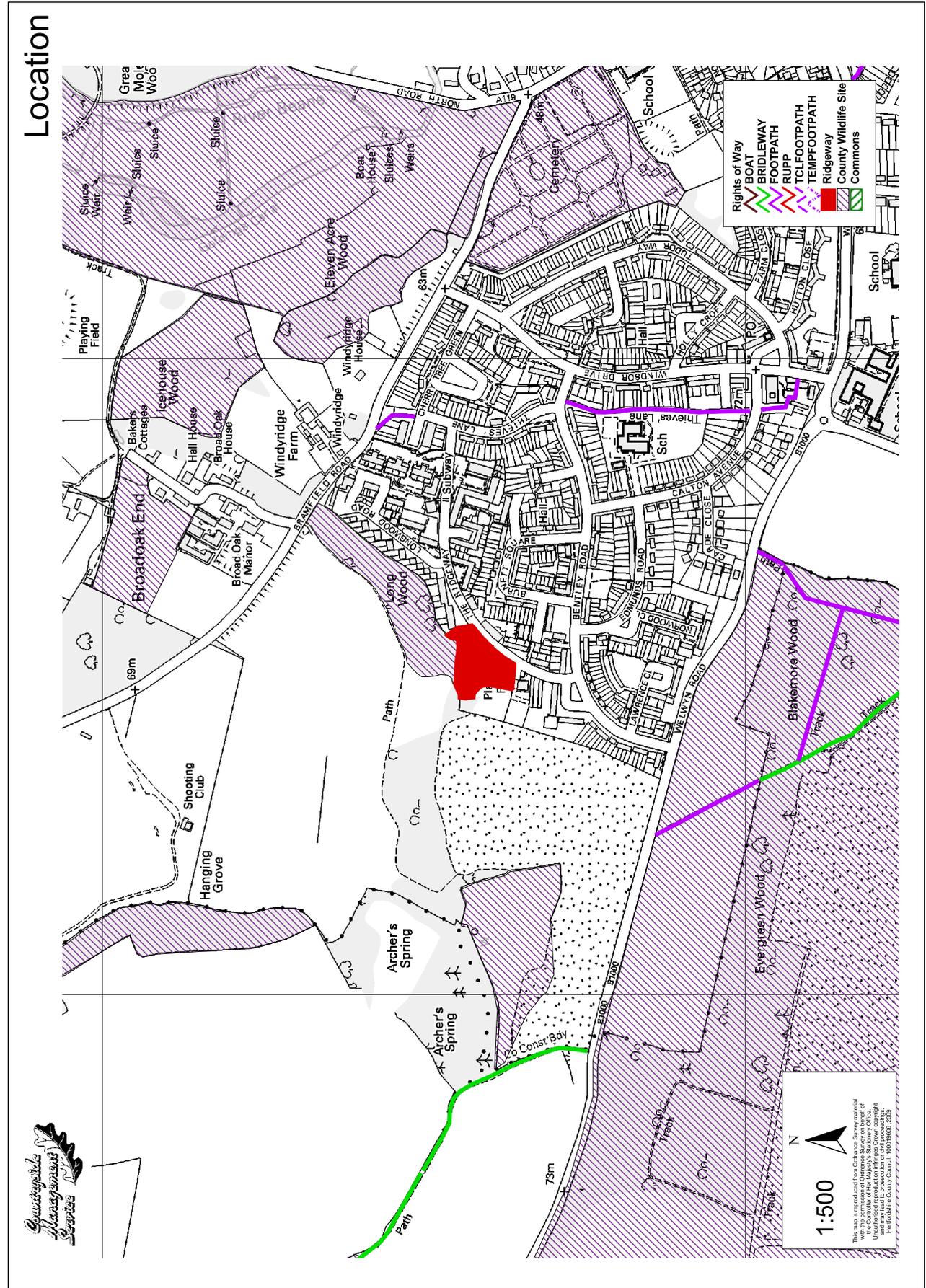
It will guide a new phase of development of the park for a further 5 years (2015 -2020) in line with the Council's aim to plan the management and improvement of parks in East Herts.

It has been informed by previous consultation and assessment to establish what is important to the park's users and to ensure that the chosen aims and objectives remain sustainable.

The park whilst being a focal open space for the estate and popular with local residents has undergone an extensive transformation and has been dramatically improved over the past 10 years. The initial concept started life as part of a wider project to deliver a new community centre and has expanded to become a Green Flag Award winning local park. The open space has been managed to a standard that provides a good user experience and one that protects its many natural features.



Location of The Ridgeway Local Park in Hertford



Improvements over the last five years

The previous management plan guided a number of high profile improvements. The resultant projects and development works achieved the main aims to improve access and make the park a more welcoming place. Significant improvements were made to ensure that the park provides an excellent habitat for wildlife and meets the needs of local people. This has only been made possible with external funding and the continued support, enthusiasm and cooperation of local residents.

The list of improvements and projects that have successfully been achieved includes:

- The awarding of Green Flag status, annually from 2009 to the present day
- Reclamation of a wilderness area adjacent to the park which now forms The Dell, an area for older children and wildlife
- A new and exciting play area designed for older children (funded by Play Builder)
- Resurfacing of the principal footpaths across the park to create a new “easy access” network for all visitors
- Redesign of the landscape across the park to create a more welcoming and enjoyable space
- The installation of a Multi Use Games area
- Refurbished of the main play area with new equipment and a colourful flowing shrub and herbaceous scheme
- Changing the way regular maintenance work such as grass and woodland management is undertaken to create new and better habitats for wildlife
- A health walk programme developed in 2013 and co-ordinated by CMS. With 9 volunteers being trained as volunteer leaders, leading 193 walks with 2435 participations across these walks
- Since 2009 we have held several community events at the park in conjunction with the local community, police and Sele School

Going forward.....

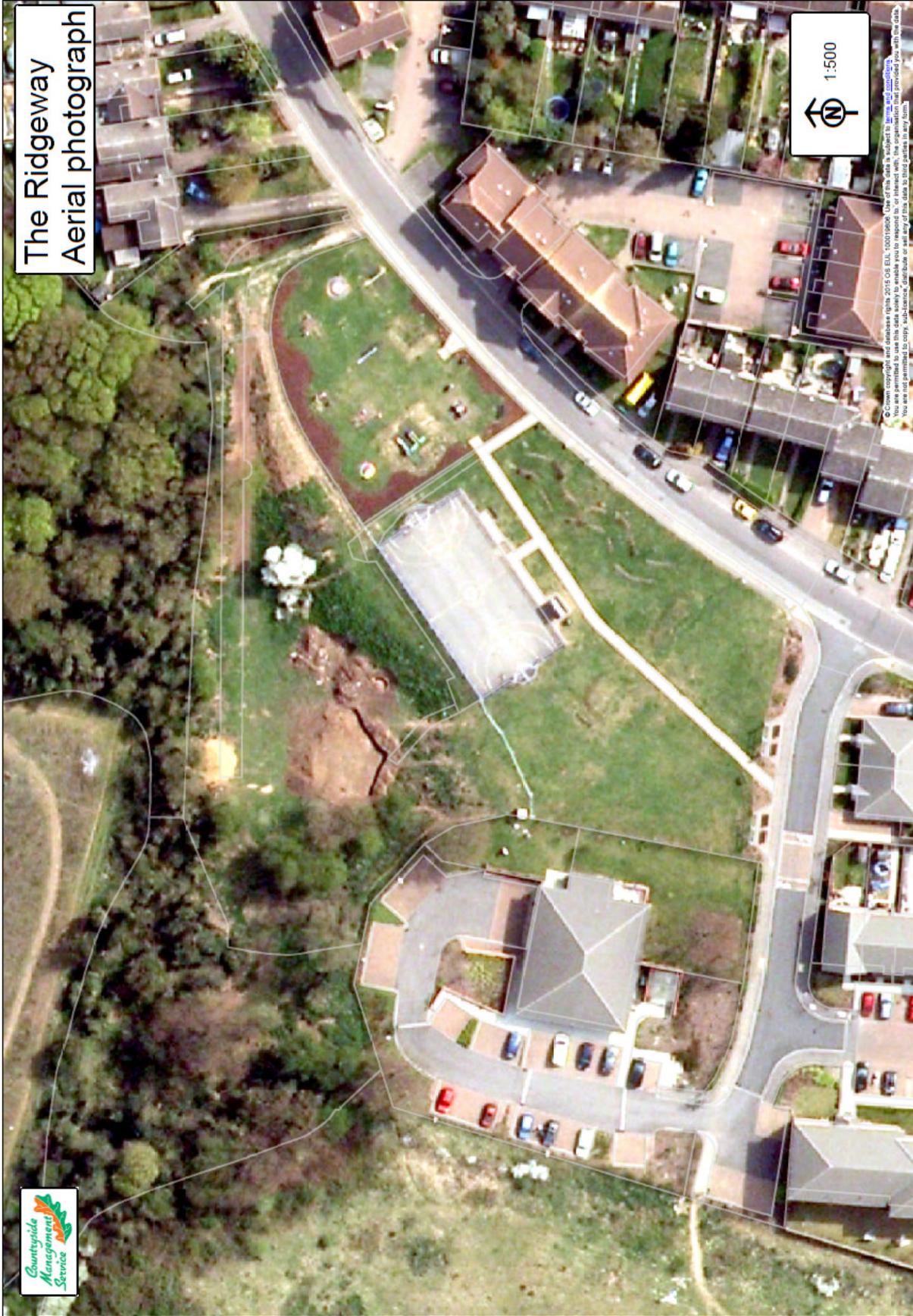
This management plan is designed to deliver a new phase of these improvements to maintain the high standard of the park over the next 5 years. All supporting documents and reference materials in this plan are included as web links in the appendix at the end of the document.

The key objectives to be addressed are to:

- Improve signage and information to visitors including the promotion of the site to a wider audience.
- Develop woodland management to secure the future of the natural areas.
- Further improve public interaction with the diversity of wildlife in the woodland.
- Review and further enhance the provision of play and leisure facilities for young and older people to ensure that the whole community can continue to enjoy aspects of the park.

Aerial photograph of The Ridgeway Local Park

This photograph was taken in 2011 and shows the new older children's play area being constructed in The Dell.



General Information

Introduction

East Hertfordshire is rich in green spaces and attractive, rolling countryside. The small towns and villages stand in an area of natural beauty with winding country lanes, nestling in shallow valleys of many rivers and streams that criss-cross the district. These natural green spaces, alongside parks and play areas, enrich peoples' lives and provide enjoyable and purposeful facilities for residents and visitors to the area.

Parks and green spaces represent one of the things that are best about East Herts. The Council's Parks and Open Spaces Strategy 2013 to 2018 provides a policy framework for the parks and open spaces owned and managed by East Herts Council. (see [Appendix 1](#) for a web link to the document). The Strategy was developed to set out the policy framework for the parks and open spaces owned and managed by East Herts Council.

The strategy ensures that parks and open spaces, as a valuable natural resource, are managed and developed in a responsible and effective way and that they provide good health and leisure outlets for our customers. It forms the policy framework under which Parks Management Plans for individual sites are developed and consulted upon.

East Herts Council has worked in partnership with Countryside Management Services (CMS) to produce this Greenspace Action Plan for the park and to carry out work on a range of our open spaces. CMS arrange most of the organisational work through managing groups of volunteers on our behalf. The Council pays CMS an annual contribution towards their costs as part of a larger District wide arrangement.

Greenspace Action Plans (GAPs) in their simplest form are easy to read map-based management plans. They are designed to be read and understood by a variety of people who might be interested in the management of a particular site. In this way a Greenspace Action Plan style management plan can allow more people to understand, contribute and have a say in how a site should be managed. Built into the plan is an action point for an annual review that allows the plan to be revisited and progress to be monitored.

This Greenspace Action Plan has web links to supporting documents and reference material as part of [Appendix 1](#). There is a dedicated web page at www.eastherts.gov.uk/theridgewaylocalpark with information about the park and the previous management plans, appendices and current documents. This ensures that specialist and detailed information is available for everyone to access but does not inhibit the 'day to day' use of the actual document.

This management plan has been prepared and organised primarily to facilitate the efficient management and development of the site. We have used the Green Flag criteria as an initial guide to exploring the range of issues that are important to a successful park. [Appendix 1](#) provides a web link to the Green Flag Criteria.

An Operational Action Matrix and Maps for the next five years of the management plan have been created to make it easier to deliver. It will also be used to record progress and revise actions over the course of the five years. These can be found at the end of this document.

Broad Aims of the Plan

- To guide further improvements and the maintenance of appropriate management in an open, organised and structured manner that will help develop partnerships and involve a broad range of input from stakeholders.
- To guide the investment of resources that will deliver benefits to people, wildlife, landscape and the historic environment.
- To involve and engage the local community
- To provide an area of open space that is welcoming, safe and well maintained for local people and visitors from the wider district to enjoy.
- To provide interpretative and educational material that will spread awareness of the wildlife, history, park management and the wider countryside.
- To ensure there is equality in access and usage of the park.
- To promote and develop the health and leisure benefits to the community that this park offers.
- To assess options for the creation of greater linkages, both physical and visual with the wider landscape and accessible non-motorised transport networks.

Background

The Ridgeway Local Park has been developed from an older more traditional open space that was originally created during the development of housing on the site in the 1950s. Some residents still remember the area as fields before this work commenced. It is approximately 0.4 Ha (1 acre) in size.

After the Second World War, land was being sought for residential development in the district. The farmland that the estate was developed on was purchased by the Borough Council from local landowners in 1950. A building programme was started in 1952 and continued through the 60s and 70s.

The Ridgeway itself was a road “along a narrow hilltop”. The first community centre on the estate was an old hut donated by a Scout Group in Hatfield in the mid-50s and erected in Hawthorn Close. The original Ridgeway Community Centre was built with a loan from the Borough Council in the early 70s. This was replaced in 2006 with a new building funded by Riversmead Housing Association and East Herts Council in 2006. The photo below shows the new Community Centre as viewed across the open space.



The area to the rear of the open space had always been seen as an area of land that due to its steep contours was not suitable to build on. While the more level area at the front has been a play area in some form or another for at least 30 years. The traditional chain-link fencing that often accompanied play areas of that era remained until the commencement of the project to transform the site into a more welcoming park.



The photos above show how the old play area looked before the major improvement works that started with the building of the new Community Centre commenced.

There is a great view from the formal area of The Ridgeway north across the lower part of the site. Views beyond the site boundary to arable fields and the rolling landscape beyond were limited by a band of scrub and trees which have grown from an old derelict field hedge – the photo below shows a view across this overgrown area in 2008 before any clearance work was undertaken.



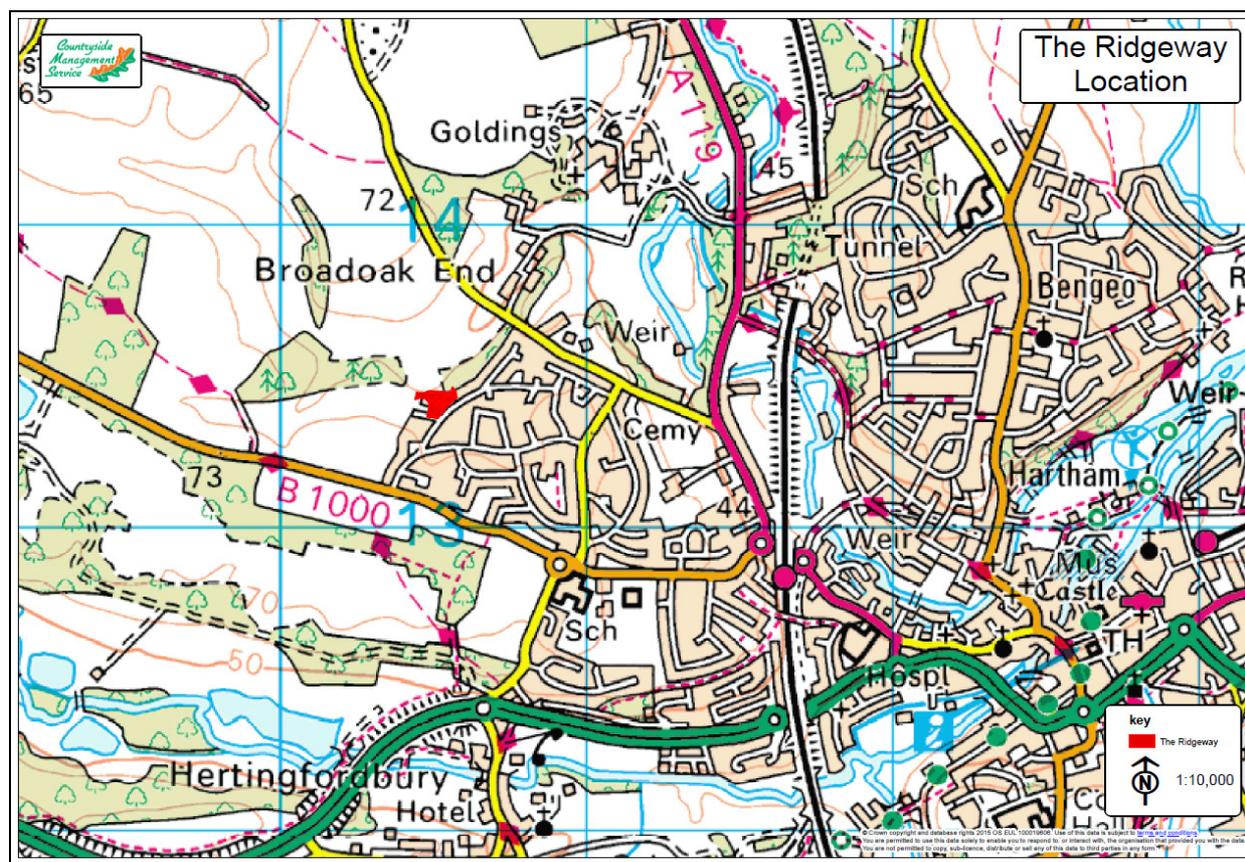
The adjacent land to the east is ancient semi natural woodland owned by Tarmac. Dialogue with Tarmac has been instigated to establish ways in which we can work together in a complementary and coordinated way. There is currently informal use of a route through Long Wood, but there is no definitive right of way.

The area to the North West of the site is privately owned and has been the subject of a planning application to develop it into a fitness and leisure centre. There are no indications at this stage as to whether this is likely to go ahead. Preliminary outline plans for the site though show the inclusion of open space areas that would link to this park. Our overall design and future plans for the open space have taken this into consideration in terms of any new access points into the park.

The park and open space itself had not changed greatly until the creation of the new community centre and production of the initial management plan in 2008/09; an aspirational Greenspace Action Plan that covered the period 2009-14 and guided the many improvements in the open space and the Green Flag Award bid.

Location of The Ridgeway Local Park

The map below shows the location of The Ridgeway Local Park in Hertford:



In addition to The Ridgeway Local Park, Hertford has a number of other open spaces within easy reach that provide a range of facilities and green spaces for both local residents and visitors to the town.

The most significant of these are:

- Hartham Common, a large destination park that serves the whole of Hertford and attracts visitors from outside the District.
- Hertford Castle, a picturesque town park that features a central lawn area and traditional ornamental gardens.
- Farm Close, a sizeable but undulating and somewhat hidden open space on the other side of Sele Farm.
- Millmead Way, a newly adopted small linear open space that follows the path of the River Beane between Sele Farm and the town centre and has two low key play areas.
- Bentley Road, Sele Farm, a small but well equipped play area only 200m from the Ridgeway.

Information on all these parks and open spaces can be found on the Council's website – see <http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/parksandopenspaces>

Character

The park's original character was captured by the initial consultation as being tired and unwelcoming. The park now creates a space that far better meets the needs of local residents. It has the feel of a much larger space than it actually is and could be described as "deceptively spacious"! The park provides a valuable opportunity to take visitors from the built up environment into a countryside space; it is that aspiration that drives the foundation of this plan without losing sight of the clear ideas presented by residents.

The park itself can be seen to divide into two distinct areas. The first, more formal open space now has an open, welcoming feel with a defined space for kicking a ball about alongside a space by the community centre for all to enjoy. This area has been designed with gentle contoured mounds and ornamental planting. It is an area that can be used equally well by younger children playing informally and older residents taking part in community events. At the top of this space a number of seats framed by a pergola have been positioned to provide a good view across the site for just sitting and relaxing. These are easily accessible from the footpath that runs across to the community centre.

This area is linked to the central space containing the Multi User Games Area (MUGA) with a hard surface footpath. The MUGA was chosen through consultation with the young residents of the estate to provide an attractive design, and is complimented by a sheltered seating area. Details of this consultation can be found in the Appendices of the previous management plan – see www.eastherts.gov.uk/theridgewaylocalpark



View of the M.U.G.A. and younger children's play area from The Ridgeway



An eye catching planting scheme softens the view from the front of the site and provides a break to prevent balls from rolling across into the road. To protect the planting from being eaten by local wildlife, weldmesh fencing encloses the shrubs – see adjacent photo of the shrub planting.

A variety of trees have been planted around the open space; overtime these will add to the ecological value of the park.



The lower half of the site slopes away to the north with views towards adjacent arable farmland. A largely derelict field hedge comprised predominantly of Elm forms an incoherent boundary with the farmed landscape beyond. It was previously used as an informal rubbish dump and over the years scrubbed up and became overgrown with nettles on the slope. The photo shows this area before any of the improvements were undertaken in 2009

More recently the scrub was removed from the bulk of the lower plateau to create The Dell Older Children's Play area which has challenging play equipment and an easy access route down into the new open space. The photos below show the new older children's play area as seen from the top of the grassed area next to the MUGA and from the top of easy access route.



The eastern edge has further Elms in varying states of health where it merges with the adjacent ancient semi natural woodland owned by Tarmac. It acts as woodland edge habitat, which means it is open and sunny promoting lots of growth of vegetation especially shrubby berry producing species important for feeding and nesting birds.

This larger Tarmac owned woodland known as Long Wood has good ecological value due to the age and size of the trees but lacks ground flora and understorey vegetation. The Ridgeway and this scrub area in the lower part of the site provides to some limited extent this understorey function with important feeding and nesting habitat for birds which is lacking in the adjacent woodland. This new phase considers improvements to develop this woodland edge.

The younger children's play area, grassed open space and the community centre, all shown in the adjacent photo, are a gathering point and leisure facility for the whole community.

The park and the community centre continue to be very well used by local residents and community groups. Further information is outlined below.



Community Involvement and Progress

The park is well used for a range of leisure activities. These include walking, bird spotting, informal kickabouts, children's play, dog walking and community barbecues. The management plan reflects this diversity and seeks to ensure that the infrastructure of the park can sustain this use. Footpaths have been upgraded and good access created. As with the initial management plan, activities will be monitored and reviewed each year.

Working with the local community was essential to achieving the goals set out in the first management plan and will be in continuing the aims of this plan. The Council started work in 2006 with Greenheart and CMS to carry out a programme of consultation leading up to the installation of the MUGA. Residents were given an exciting and innovative way to become engaged in the early stages of the park's development by way of a video diary created by a local artist. This was an innovative and effective way of capturing residents views with interviews recorded in the park and places like the local hair dressers!

Phase 2 of the consultation commenced in August 2008 when the Council commissioned Groundwork Hertfordshire; a local environmental charity with expertise in delivering green space improvements that are community lead from consultation through to design and implementation. Groundwork worked with the council and CMS to engage with the local residents to develop a plan for the dell that would benefit all of the community.

The results of Phase 1 of the consultation were used by Groundwork with input from the Council and CMS to develop an initial outline design to transform the dell and reconnect it with the rest of the park. These initial outline plans were presented to the local young people and residents who use the park, at an open consultation event in October Half term 2008. The consultation event was organised to coincide with a football match between the police and the local youngsters.

The overall response to the proposals was extremely positive. All those consulted were in favour of clearing up the hollow, improving the view into it and making it a nicer place for local residents and wildlife. As the majority felt that the Dell was currently unsafe and used for antisocial behaviour due to limited visibility into it.

Initial work was started on this more formal management plan in partnership with CMS in 2008, and by January 2009, and in line with the new Parks and Open Spaces Strategy, the first management plan was completed for local residents to comment on and made available on the East Herts Council web site.

The Council worked in partnership with Sele Youth and Community Forum to consult effectively, deliver meaningful improvements and optimise on the availability of external funding opportunities.

THE RIDGEWAY - HAVE YOUR SAY

Do you enjoy playing or just chilling out at The Ridgeway in Sele Farm? Or are there changes you'd really like to see at the Hertford green space to encourage you to go along and enjoy it?

Come along and tell East Herts Council your views. We're holding an open day during half term on Thursday, October 30 from 3pm-7pm in the space in front of the community centre.

You can find out more about the improvements we're planning. We're working with local environmental charity Groundwork Hertfordshire to help us with designs and we're hoping to clear up the hollow and make it easier to reach. We've got plans to install a raised viewing platform for wildlife spotting and we're thinking about ways of adding more places to play.

The police are also organising a football match in the MUGA (Multi Use Games Area) so why not come along and watch that too.

The event is the next stage in the consultation that began in 2006 with the DVD, "It's all about Sele," which featured residents' views about what they wanted in the area.

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Phase 2 culminated in a plan to the reclamation of this unused area of the park and the creation of a new space with the provision of facilities for older children. The initial plan for the development of the park is shown below; however, as the project progressed minor changes were made to the easy access route.



The new space created has been named The Dell Older Children’s Play Area to differentiate it from the original play area in the open space. It provides fun challenging play equipment mainly in timber to compliment the woodland backdrop – see adjacent photos looking down into The Dell.



Volunteer work

As part of Hertfordshire County Council's Environment Department, Countryside Management Services (CMS) are accredited to the nationally recognised Investing In Volunteer standard. Therefore, all volunteer activity or contract management undertaken by CMS is guided and governed by this standard.

CMS works with local volunteers and community groups to help them care for and enjoy their local environment. Volunteers are encouraged to adopt the Friends of Greenspaces approach (FoG) developed by CMS. This is a countywide structured programme of volunteer opportunities that is tailored to the needs of specific groups associated with their own local greenspace. Developing the skills and experience of volunteers in an organised programme will help us to deliver our vision for the site.

Whilst it is not always possible to establish a new Friends group on a small park such as this, CMS are able to organise work on site from already established groups in the area who have considerable enthusiasm to utilise their skills elsewhere. All groups are facilitated to the same high standards and encouraged to organise themselves under a well-tested model. This approach has been successful across a wide range of open spaces in Hertfordshire.

However, this new management plan aims to continue to foster local pride and increase community involvement in the park and the surrounding area. We are keen to provide more local people with the opportunity to participate in the design, management and care of their local green space and have been working with the Sele Youth & Community Forum to plant trees in the surrounding open spaces in the local area. In addition there are four site based groups and one activity based group that operate across the District.

Provision of Information to Users

Whilst the park itself is relatively small, the countryside and built environment beyond it has a wealth of opportunity in terms of walking. In order to capitalise on this, and in partnership with Public Health and the Council, CMS extended its successful Hertfordshire Health Walks scheme into the Hertford area in 2013.

Hertfordshire Health Walks are free, led, local, health-focused walks. The range of walks offered locally has steadily grown and the programme changed to best reflect where and when residents would like to walk. Now there are a total of 9 weekly walks in Sele Farm, Bengo, Hertford town centre, Ware and Stanstead Abbots. During the summer months a further walk is available on Wednesday evenings from Hartham Common. Between 1 November 2014-31 October 2015 there were 2546 attendances on 243 individual walks in the Hertford area, led by a team of 25 volunteer Walk Leaders. Further details of the scheme and current walks programme can be found at - <http://www.hertslink.org/cms/healthwalks/eastherts/>

New welcome signs at the entrances to the park will further help to provide visitors with useful information about the park and the plans to develop it further.

The current original signage for the park is shown opposite and will be replaced during the lifetime of this management plan as part of the aim to have a consistent corporate yet individual signage for each of East Herts parks and open spaces.



Community Resource

The development of the park provides an ideal opportunity for the Council to work with others to promote and improve the park as a valuable community resource. For example, the development of the woodland area and the improvements to access through the park will allow it to become a potentially interesting educational resource for local schools and wildlife groups.

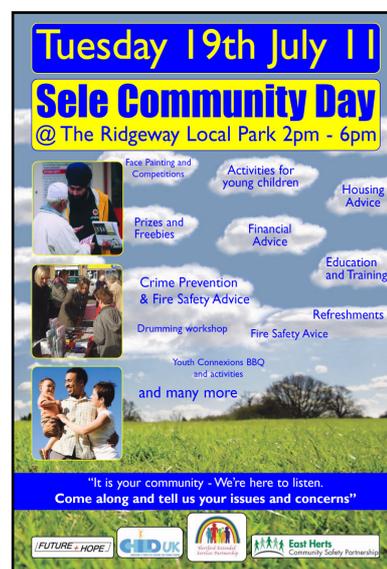


Local residents watching a community event at The Ridgeway Local Park

The park continues to be well used by local residents and has a programme of activities arranged by local community groups such as Child UK who run a regular summer football school. In addition to this, a youth engagement programme that centres on The Ridgeway Park has been developed by the Hertfordshire County Council's Youth Work Team Leader for East Herts.

We know from past experience how important the park is to the local community, as in 2011 The Sele Community Action Day relocated from its usual setting by the local shopping parade and held in the Ridgeway Park for the first time. A variety of local organisations worked in partnership to make this event a success.

Unfortunately, changes to the funding and the staffing of these groups made it difficult to continue this event and no Sele Community Action Day has taken place since then. However, we will continue to review the opportunities available to work more closely with the local community in the management of the park and the surrounding area as we progress with the next five-year management plan.



Organisational Management

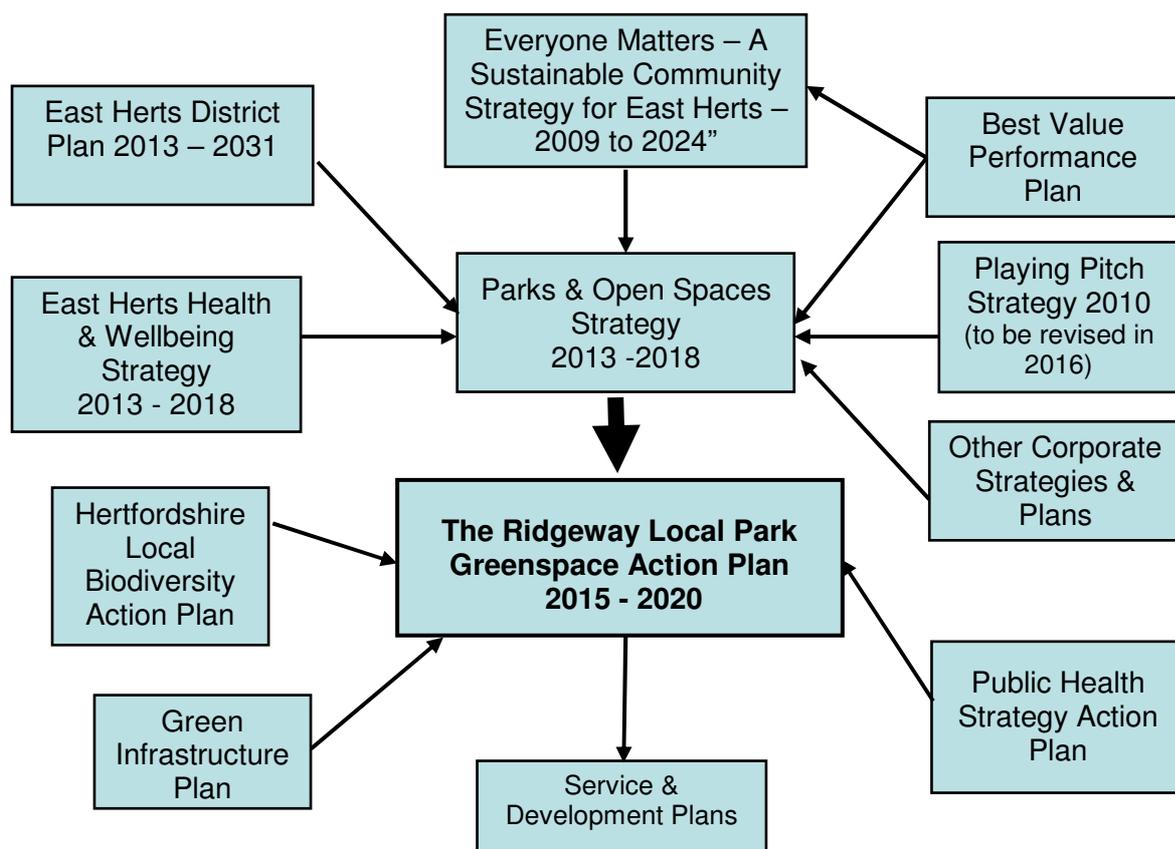
Policy Framework

The Council recognises that its parks and open spaces contribute to:

- the overall Vision and Priorities of the Council
- the quality of life of local people
- the physical, social and economic regeneration of the District
- the greening, attractiveness and biodiversity of the District

Accordingly this management plan and the people that deliver it are guided by and embrace the aims, objectives and principles of the following overarching plans and strategies. Further information on all East Herts Strategies and Policies can be found on the Council's website www.eastherts.gov.uk

The following diagram represents how The Ridgeway Local Park management plan fits within the overall strategic framework for Parks and Open Spaces within East Herts:



A brief summary of some of the plans and strategies shown above that feed into the management plan is given below:

Parks and Open Spaces Strategy 2013-2018

The Council adopted a Parks and Open Spaces Strategy in October 2007, created as part of the overarching East Herts Cultural Strategy “Culture for All”. The revised Parks and Open Spaces Strategy 2013 -2018 has been developed to set out the policy framework for the parks and open spaces owned and managed by the Council over a 5 year period.

The purpose of the strategy is to ensure that parks and open spaces, as a valuable natural resource, are managed and developed in a responsible and effective way and that they provide good health and leisure outlets for our customers. The strategy focuses primarily on how the Council will manage the public open spaces it owns, and forms the policy framework under which park Management Plans for individual sites are developed and consulted upon.

Everyone Matters 2009-2024

East Herts Council describes the strategic objectives and direction of its leisure, sport, art and cultural aims in Everyone Matters – A Sustainable Community Strategy for East Herts 2009 – 2024, which replaces the previous Cultural Strategy and includes reference to young people in place of the Children and Young People’s Strategy 2007-2012. Everyone Matters describes, in more detail, objectives for parks and open spaces within this framework. It also supports the objectives of the current East Herts Public Health Strategy and the new Public Health Strategy which is being developed and likely to come into effect in 2014.

Health & Well Being Strategy 2013-2018

With the Health & Wellbeing Strategy the Council aims to work with likeminded partners to provide pro-active health prevention enabling healthier places and sustainable communities, so that health inequalities which exist where we live and work can be addressed.

East Herts Public Health Strategy Action Plan

The Public Health Strategy Action Plan for East Herts aims to give a focus to the public health and health promotion work that different services within the Council are involved in on a day to day basis.

Hertfordshire Biodiversity Action Plan

The Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) ‘A 50 year vision for the wildlife and natural habitats of Hertfordshire’ contains a number of habitat and species action plans relevant to the park. Management of the site should take particular account of woodland and urban habitat actions.

East Herts Green Infrastructure Plan (2011)

The Green Infrastructure (GI) Plan for East Herts provides an overview of the existing GI assets within the District and considers opportunities for GI enhancement and creation through a series of potential projects to deliver multiple functions and benefits.

East Herts Playing Pitch Strategy & Outdoor Sports Assessment 2010

The purpose of the Sport and Active Recreation Facilities Strategy is to set out a plan for the development of sports facilities in the district and proposes local planning standards. It is due to be reviewed and revised in 2016.

Environmental Standards and Policy

The Ridgeway Local Park is part of the multifunctional suite of Green Infrastructure assets serving the communities of East Hertfordshire. As such the site is managed as part of a broad portfolio and in line with the key principles identified within the East Herts Green Infrastructure Plan 2011.

The Parks and Open Spaces Strategy summarises how we intend to manage our open spaces and our commitment to creating working management plans. In addition, the Council has produced a detailed 'Environmental Policy Statement' which outlines the council's commitment to sustainability and includes a specific section on 'Natural Habitats and Biodiversity' (sections EP26 to EP 31 refer to this). The 'Environmental Policy Statement' document is in Appendix 7 of the initial management plan – a web link to this document is in [Appendix 1](#).

The current Grounds Maintenance Contract contains an Environmental Protection Schedule by which the contractor must abide. (See Appendix 8 of the initial management plan – a web link to the document is in [Appendix 1](#)). The Council's main contractor John O'Conner (Ground Maintenance) Ltd, employed in the management of the park, is fully aware of and committed to energy conservation and the reduction of pollution in the service that they provide. Again, see [Appendix 1](#) for a link to the initial management plan Appendices that have details of John O'Conner's energy conservation and pollution reduction guidelines.

Environmental Considerations

The Council operates under an 'Environmental Policy Statement', which outlines the commitment to sustainability including a specific section on 'Natural habitats and biodiversity'. This statement is supported by the current grounds maintenance contract which contains an Environmental Protection Schedule. The following are key components of relevance to The Ridgeway Local Park.

Pesticide Use

The Council recognises that chemical control is sometimes necessary but has taken a conscious decision, in addition to its corporate aspirations to protect the environment, to limit the use of pesticide in the park only to problems that could not otherwise be dealt with adequately.

Under the current grounds maintenance contracts, shrub beds are managed by hand weeding and the area around trees trimmed rather than applying herbicide.

In addition shrub beds have been upgraded to Ornamental high performance status. and paths installed or upgraded using more substantial materials that would not be susceptible to weed infestation. This has proved successful in that trees have grown healthily without the need for chemical control and footpaths have remained sufficiently tidy.

The Council is committed within the boundaries of this local park to keep chemical use to an absolute minimum.

Peat Use

The Council no longer supports the use of plants grown in peat, instead utilising locally sourced alternatives, or using bare root shrubs and trees. The current grounds maintenance contractor uses a plant supplier that is a certified peat free grower.

However, previous planting of the site is likely to have been sourced from nurseries that used peat, but the Council has not planted any plants grown in peat in the park since the introduction of the new grounds maintenance contract in 2008. Careful planning of planting programmes at the appropriate time of year will ensure that this approach is sustainable.

Recycling

All horticultural waste on the site is processed in a sustainable way. Tree and shrub pruning arisings are chipped back onto site where possible and where this is inappropriate they are taken by our contractor to a local waste recycling plant. Materials removed from the site such as the play area bark are also recycled where possible. This has been used to mulch some areas and to improve some of the informal footpaths in the woodland area. All our standard benches are have recycled plastic slats in place of timber.

Green Flag Status

Hertfordshire's previous Local Area Agreement (LAA) included a number of targets aimed at improving the quality of life for Hertfordshire residents. One of the aims of the LAA was to ensure that more open spaces in the county boasted Green Flag status.

The first Green Flag Award in East Herts was won by Southern country Park in Bishop's Stortford in 2008.

The Ridgeway Local Park first achieved Green Flag status in 2009 and has continued to retain this prestigious award every year since.



The Council aspires to maintain Green Flag status at The Ridgeway Local Park to demonstrate its continuing commitment to providing successful and well managed parks and open spaces.

Measuring Success

Patterns of Usage

The parks and open spaces managed by East Herts Council always feature prominently in the Residents Survey that has been commissioned biannually since 1993. Opinion Research Services (ORS) was commissioned in 2015 to undertake a survey of residents' attitudes towards the Council and the services it provides. This survey was previously undertaken by ORS in 2013, 2011 and 2009. The residents' survey is useful to help inform decision making and planning in the Council by tracking changes in the attitudes and opinions of residents on a range of topics. Some pertinent results are as follows:

Factors most frequently identified as the most important in making somewhere a good place to live are the level of crime (65%); health services (63%); clean streets (44%); and parks and open spaces (38%), which remain broadly consistent with previous residents' surveys.

Over three quarters (77%) of residents (76% in 2013) said they were satisfied with parks and open spaces, with less than 1 in 10 (9%) indicating that they were dissatisfied. Around three fifths (63%; 66% in 2013) were satisfied with public land being kept clear of litter and refuse. Less than half were satisfied with sport/leisure facilities (48%; 50% in 2013) and theatres/concert halls (46%; 45% in 2013).

Residents' priorities for improvement in East Herts include the level of traffic congestion (57%); activities for teenagers (34%); public transport (33%); health services (33%); affordable housing (31%) and shopping facilities (30%). The recent development of play equipment and a space designed specifically for older children at The Ridgeway helps to address the call for more activities for teenagers.

A priority analysis of the data reveals that parks and open spaces are among the Council's key strengths whereby they rate as being "more important" and "least needs improving".

Monitoring Usage

In 2007 as part of the Parks and Open Spaces Development Programme, the Council undertook an audit of its main open spaces and play areas. The framework devised to undertake this audit assessed both the quality and quantity of the facilities and equipment of each individual site, and more specifically the provision for children and teenagers. Therefore each site was scored against its own individual attributes and the final score achieved shown as a percentage score. This enables individual sites to be assessed against each other whilst taking into account their own individual characters.

All information gathered from the audit was recorded in an Excel spreadsheet; with an individual score sheet and written statement for each site. The Ridgeway Local Park was audited in February 2007 as part of this district wide project. The results were included in the Appendices of the initial management plan – a link to these is given in [Appendix 1](#). The Council's new approach to monitoring usage within open spaces is to deploy electronic people counters, these counters record individual and group usage and provide the Council with accurate data.

We plan to expand the audit in the future by engaging with Youth Connexions to undertake snapshot surveys of the number of visitors to the park.

The PPG17 audit, originally undertaken as part of the Local Plan 2nd Review in July 2005, investigated use of the District's open spaces – it is due to be reviewed in 2016. Usage data about the park indicated that it had a 'High /Significant' level of use in that 'the area is used either everyday or almost everyday by either people or wildlife'. It was scored Good in terms of Bronze Quality and Average relating to the Bronze Site Access assessment criteria. Specific data about the number of visitors each year to the park was not undertaken as part of the survey but we aim to utilise people counters to gauge usage in the future. We estimate about 25,000 visitors per year.

Reviewing Progress

An intrinsic part of the management plan is to annually review the actions set out in the Action Matrix. As actions are carried out, they will be assessed and any issues recorded. The annual review will consider all of the issues recorded throughout the year. Key stakeholders will also be invited to walk the park with managers to discuss progress and note any new actions that might be considered for the next year.

The greenspace action plan maps at the end of this document show the development actions planned for each year of the management plan. They show the actions set out in the action matrix and are designed to form an easy read version of the plan.

A brief report will be prepared to summarise the findings and any new actions agreed will be added to the Action Matrix.

Health and Safety

Safety of Equipment and Facilities

A thorough and comprehensive system of safety and contract monitoring inspections is in place for the park. On a quarterly basis all our main open spaces are inspected by the Area Environmental Inspection team. Hazards and defects are recorded and any work required is actioned straight away. The Council has a robust system of monitoring the grounds maintenance contract comprising of 50 inspections of various operations each week across the district including random inspections, previous problem areas, and work completed the previous week. The contractor provides details of scheduled operations carried out on a weekly basis and reports any damaged or missing litter or dog bins.

The contractor inspects all play areas 5 times a week including Saturday, and any defects are noted and actioned. Monthly inspections of the play areas are also carried out by the Area Environmental Inspection team. The inspection of play areas is supported by an electronic system to improve consistency and ensure that actionable repairs are tracked effectively.

In addition to these routine inspections we aim to engage the local community in carrying out adhoc inspections of the park. Any issues of concern from voluntary groups will be reported back to the Council through the Customer Help Desk.

The Council operate a Tree Risk Management Programme to inspect all Council owned trees across the district. The principles of the inspection are to systematically plot all trees and woodlands onto its Geographical Information System (GIS) and to identify both the current and the potential risk of each tree or group of trees. The trees in the park have been captured in the system and undergo regular inspections based upon a zoned approach which categorises the potential risk to the public. The trees in the top

section of the park are young and do not pose any significant risk to the public. The ongoing inspection programme will ensure that each tree is inspected by an independent arboricultural consultant to identify the type of tree and its current condition. The consultant will make any necessary recommendations for work that may be required and will also review the risk category in relation to the next inspection. This prioritises inspection to those trees that present the greatest risk to the public and ensures that resources are not wasted by inspecting more frequently than is necessary.

The woodland section within the lower area of the open space has undergone various maintenance programmes concentrating on removing any dead, dying or dangerous trees including a number of Elms. The dead wood is retained on site providing valuable habitat for invertebrates. The area opened up by elm removal will be planted up with native tree and shrub species to form a more diverse and valuable woodland edge habitat.

Security to Visitors

East Herts Council has and will continue to work in close partnership with the local police in tackling anti-social behaviour in its parks and open spaces. The Community Safety Team at East Herts Council liaises with the local Police Constables (PCs) and Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) about any emerging issues in an area (e.g. vandalism, vehicle nuisance, graffiti) and looks at ways to tackle these issues. Problems or concerns about an area, when reported to the Council by residents, are passed to the local PC and PCSOs for them to be able to pay attention to whilst out on patrol. Similarly the local officers will also make East Herts Council aware when they may be able to assist in tackling a problem, for example by cutting back hedges or removing graffiti.

Dogs in the Park

Three dog bins are provided in the park to encourage dog owners to clear up after their pets. One of these is at the access point to the fields beyond the Community Centre. These are emptied twice a week in summer and once a week in winter. The Council's animal warden carries out a visual patrol of the area approximately once a month to ensure that park users are abiding by dog fouling legislation and hands out free poop scoop bags to encourage this. The Area Environment Inspectors, the Animal Warden and the PCSOs are all authorised to issue fixed penalty notice fines to dog walkers who fail to pick up after their pets.

The grounds maintenance contractor will also clear dog faeces around each bin when visited and where necessary as part of the weekly play maintenance operations.

Enforcement signs reminding visitors of the law in terms of dog fouling are installed at visible locations in the park.

Anti-Social Behaviour

The Council has recently employed new powers to control dog fouling and anti-social behaviour on its open spaces. Whilst there are no particular issues with either at The Ridgeway, this approach provides a means for dealing with issues at all Council owned parks. A Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) was introduced on 1st May 2016. The new powers replace and add to previous powers for dog control and antisocial behaviour in East Herts – for further information see www.eastherts.gov.uk/pspo

PSPOs are a new provision, created by the Antisocial Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 intended to deal with any particular nuisances or problems in a defined area that are detrimental to the local community's quality of life. They can help by giving local authorities and police additional powers to tackle anti-social behaviour. The aim is to stop individuals or groups committing anti-social behaviour in public spaces by introducing restrictions on the use of an area.

If anyone fails to meet the requirements of the PSPO or to comply with a request from a police officer, police community support officer (PCSO) or authorised council officer, they could be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) of up to £100 or prosecuted. However, these measures are designed to deal with extremes of anti-social behaviour and authorised officers will take a proportionate and common sense approach in their application.

The East Herts PSPO addresses the following anti-social behaviour issues:

- 1) Dog fouling - you must clear up after your dog on any land in the District
- 2) Dogs on leads when directed - you must put your dog on a lead when requested to do so by an authorised officer
- 3) Dogs on leads in specified areas - you must keep your dog on a lead at all times in all East Herts Council owned allotments
- 4) Dog exclusion in specified areas - it is an offence to allow a dog onto East Herts Council owned land which have been designated to exclude dogs:
 - All fenced children's playgrounds and areas which are designated and marked for children's play
 - All fenced games areas e.g. tennis, ball courts, skate parks
 - All bowling greens
 - Marked playing pitches - when in use for playing sports
- 5) Walking more than four (4) dogs - an individual must not walk more than four (4) dogs onto any East Herts Council owned land at any one time.
- 6) Failing to produce a receptacle for picking up dog faeces - you must produce a means to pick up your dog's waste when asked to do so by an authorised officer.
- 7) Using a mechanically propelled vehicle or device in a disorderly or anti-social manner on any land (public or private) within the District.
- 8) Failure to surrender possession when asked of any new psychoactive substances (commonly known as legal highs) or drug that is not alcohol or tobacco on any land within the district - where its use in a public place is likely to result in anti-social behaviour.
- 9) Prohibition of alcohol consumption in five (5) designated areas. - you must stop drinking and surrender possession of alcohol when asked to do so by an authorised officer.
- 10) Shouting, swearing, screaming or making unnecessary noise where alcohol restrictions are in place - you must stop this behaviour upon request of an authorised officer.

The PSPO will remain in place for three (3) years after which it can be renewed. The PSPO can also be varied at any time within this period.

Litter and Waste Management

The full details of the grounds contract litter regime are contained in the Appendices of the initial management plan – a link to the documents is given in [Appendix 1](#). The grounds maintenance contractor performs all litter requirements to Environmental Protection Agency standards. This park is programmed for a weekly cleansing visit to achieve a satisfactory standard. This is a relatively high level and has proved sufficient to date but is reviewed regularly through monitoring inspections. A higher frequency would be programmed if any regular increase in the level of litter were identified.

The Council has powers under The Clean Neighbourhoods Act (2005) to issue Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) to those found to be committing "Environmental Crime" (detailed later in the General Maintenance section). As part of this legislation it is an offence to drop litter such as food and packaging, cigarette filters or chewing gum in an open or public place and anyone caught doing so can be fined via a Fixed Penalty Notice. Area Environmental Inspectors monitor the park as part of their normal duties but have not found there to be any serious issues in this park. Both they and the PCSOs are now accredited to be able to issue fixed penalty notices (see the section on Environmental Crime)

Health & Safety Policies

As a Council owned and maintained site, The Ridgeway Local Park is covered by East Herts Council's general Health and Safety Policy. These policies, and all other health and safety policies, are available to view on the Council's website www.eastherts.gov.uk. These form part of a wider Risk Management initiative to ensure a consistent approach across the authority.

Members of the public using the park are afforded protection by both the Health & Safety at Work Act (1974) and the Occupiers Liability Act (1957, revised 1984).

Council employees and contractors working in the park have a responsibility to take all reasonable precautions for their own health and safety and for that of others who may be affected by their actions, including the general public. Such precautions include: making themselves familiar with and conforming to all applicable safety rules; correctly using safety equipment; following instructions and advice regarding the use of substances; and reporting all accidents, damage, hazards, violent incidents and/or shortcomings in the Council's health and safety arrangements.

Risk Assessments

The nature and use of The Ridgeway Local Park, and the operations that are carried out in it, present a variety of health and safety risks. These relate to both supervised and controlled activities and to the unsupervised use of the site by the general public.

A detailed risk assessment has been carried out for the park and will be reviewed on an annual basis. The hazards identified were numbered and marked on a map of the park and listed on an action sheet. A copy of this was included in the Appendices of the initial management plan – a link to the documents is given in [Appendix 1](#). All the hazards identified as part of this risk assessment were prioritised and actioned according to their level of risk. Work was undertaken immediately to rectify these as part of the ongoing maintenance of the park.

Any potential hazards and risks associated with the park for employees, contractors and the general public are also identified and evaluated as part of the quarterly Open

Spaces Inspections undertaken by the council's Area Environment Inspectors. This inspection is in addition to the many adhoc visits and visual inspections undertaken by Council officers and contractors.

The children's play area and MUGA are subject to an annual safety inspection carried out by our independent Register of Play Inspectors International (RPII) consultant. A copy of this was included in the Appendices of the initial management plan – a link to the documents is given in [Appendix 1](#).

Toilet Facilities

The Council has considered the potential need to install a toilet block on the site for visitors. Previous and current monitoring suggests that the majority of visitors walk to the park from nearby housing areas. This type of use would not justify the need for considerable investment in installing and maintaining a toilet facility. In addition, the Council's experience shows that toilet facilities in locations such as this can be subject to vandalism and anti-social behaviour.

General Maintenance

Main Contractor

The Council employs a local contractor; John O'Conner Grounds Maintenance Limited through a 5 year contract which commenced 1st April 2008 and was extended to 2019 after comprehensive scrutiny of their performance. They were awarded the extension on the basis of their excellent service and commitment to developing services with the Council. This large family owned company has an impressive history of working with local authorities to implement action plans and to develop good relationships with customers. They have been key to ensuring the successful implementation of this management plan and have committed wholeheartedly to its aims and aspirations.

Grounds, Buildings and Equipment

The maintenance of the park is carried out to a high standard by both the main grounds maintenance contractor and where necessary by specialist contractors to carry out for instance, arboricultural or conservation operations. Local volunteer groups will periodically be invited to participate in some of the woodland and conservation work in the park. This is an area that CMS have considerable experience in and have used to great advantage in some of our other key parks, for example Southern Country Park and Pishiobury Park.

The Council's monitoring processes demonstrate considerable improvements in contract performance by the previous contractor over the last three years. The tendering process has ensured that the new contractor should not only deliver adequately but improve on these high standards. A good proactive relationship has been developed with the contractor to identify and resolve any issues quickly and effectively.

The structural features such as the pergola and railings will be included in an annual inspection and painting programme by the Grounds Contractor to carry out adhoc works to ensure that they are kept looking their best.

The Grounds Contractor and Area Environmental Inspectors are all fully committed to ensuring that any damage on site to infrastructure or to plants and trees is dealt with swiftly to ensure that vandalism on the site is not encouraged.

Horticultural and Arboricultural Standards

Our Grounds Maintenance Contractor provides a resource that covers the full range of Horticultural and Grounds Maintenance skills required to carry out the contract and additional works. We also engage specialist arboricultural and management contractors to implement the ongoing improvements to our parks across the District.

CMS have procured a tree supply contract that ensures all plants conform to BS 3936 and are of certified Local Provenance. Trees for the woodland enhancement work will be purchased from this source.

Environmental Crime

East Herts Council is committed to improving standards of neighbourhood management, raising awareness of and tackling environmental crime and anti-social behaviour. It uses powers from the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 (CNEA) to take enforcement action for non-compliance with Orders passed as part of the Environmental Crime and Enforcement Policy. The following list details the specific areas targeted by the Council under the Act:

- Litter
- Graffiti
- Dog Control
- Distribution of Free Literature
- Abandoned Vehicles
- Nuisance Vehicles
- Fly Tipping
- Abandoned Shopping Trolleys

Under the powers of the CNEA, the Council via its Authorised Officers, including the Area Environmental Inspectors, is permitted to issue Fixed Penalty Notice (FPNs) fines to those individuals or organisations breaching these Orders and committing environmental crime. Representatives from other government agencies such as housing associations and the Police will work alongside the Council to target problem areas and tackle environmental crime. The Council will be hosting a number of events across the district to raise awareness about the effects of environmental crime and to deter those already offending.

Customer Enquiry Data Base

The Council's back office system (Mayrise) provides a live link to the Council's Contractors for all Environmental issues including cleanliness, environmental crime and safety. Mayrise is driven by a 'Works Orders' structure where customer enquiries, complaints or environmental issues are logged to the system as a 'job' for handling appropriately. The 'job' is then either issued to the contractor to deal with, or to the Area Environmental Inspectors to investigate issues of cleanliness, crime and safety immediately, or within system generated response times.

Contract performance issues are recorded, verified and validated through a series of tracking and management functions and the system ensures that jobs are assigned and completed effectively. The live link on the system for Contractors' allows for effective recording, tracking and actioning of Complaints.

The system has a built in reporting tool and is integrated with a sophisticated external reporting tool for more complex auditing and management to ensure relevant and

appropriate assessment of statistics. This allows for continual development of the system and improvement of service delivery.

The system houses a map and print facility for viewing detail of areas across the district. This is linked directly to the grounds contract to measure quantities. Features such as street furniture and equipped play areas are plotted on the maps to ensure that call centre staff can deploy inspections accurately and quickly in response to customer enquiries.

Marketing Strategy

In line with the council's policy of promoting particular council services and individual events, the services of the Council's Communications Team are utilised whenever activities are programmed in the park. The park is to be promoted periodically in Link, the Council's free quarterly magazine distributed to all households in the District and on the council's website.

Going forward – The Ridgeway Local Park 2015-20

Following a period of rapid development and physical improvements within the park during the previous plan period, it now has a functional and well established infrastructure. In recognition of this and a reflection of what has been achieved so far, the focus looking forward is twofold: consolidation of standards achieved and maintained to date, along with a fine tuning of land management activities focussed on boundaries and borders.

The vision for this plan period will see more emphasis on how the park interacts with its surroundings, both physically and functionally and will have an eye to the future and any adjacent development which may be on the horizon. This broader view will necessitate a wider partnership of interested parties to work together to achieve success. Work to establish these relationships has already begun.

Having established the basic aims and aspirations for the park, it was important to explore and assess in more detail, the various features and issues that relate to the day to day management and use of the park. This assessment was carried out by both Council and CMS Officers after having consulted with residents and local park users. Revised actions have been prioritised and included in the Action Matrix and on the annual Management Maps. These actions are not exhaustive and it is expected that as the management plan is developed further, new actions may be included or existing actions revised.

Funding

The aspirations described in this plan are more modest than the huge developments achieved in the initial improvement stage. The Council should therefore be able to deliver improvements over these five years from existing reserves, subject to any unforeseen spending cuts.

Whilst external funding is not specifically required for this phase in the park's development, the Council will remain informed of any potential funding initiatives or grants available to supplement its spending or to engage in specific enhancements which may not yet have been envisaged.

Signage

During the first development phase of the park, signs were installed introducing the project and setting out the Council's plans. These signs are now due to be replaced.

A consistent approach to signage helps to brand the Council's open spaces. Customers are encouraged to contact us if they would like to share any thoughts about the park. We think it important that residents understand how the Council has high regard for its network of open spaces and that they are instantly recognisable as being owned and cared for by the Council.

The visitor boards will be based around simple map based information. We will commission the design in accordance with our brief from a leading graphic design and signage company. They will be constructed from aluminium sheet which has proved to be robust and economical.

We will build upon the success of similar signage improvements at other Council parks using a layout and approach which is themed to provide a welcoming and informative notice.

This example of the style of notice board that will be installed was recently developed at Foxholes, another local park in Hertford.



The designers will be briefed with the character and facilities in the park and will be asked to meet certain criteria. For example, this is an extract of the specification from a previous project to develop signage at Hartham Common, the nearest destination park to The Ridgeway:

- create a scheme of visible and welcoming entrance features appropriate to the size and usage of each entrance;
- create a recognisable brand identity for the site which is unique and appropriate to Hartham Common's landscape heritage and high profile status as East Herts Council's flagship site;
- create structures that exude quality, reflecting the high calibre of the services offered by East Herts Council;
- produce structures of robust material and design suitable to the physical demands of a public open space;
- help visitors to navigate to other areas of the site, and to fully appreciate the scale of Hartham Common and the opportunities available;
- provide visitors with useful information about the site.

Whilst this park is much smaller and does not need large "statement" entrance structures, the same careful approach to designing appropriate signage will be employed.

Conservation

Where possible, conservation management on site contributes directly to the objectives in the local Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) 'A Vision for the Wildlife and Natural Habitats of Hertfordshire'. The functions of the BAP are to:

- To ensure that national targets for species and habitats, as specified in the UK Action Plan, are translated into effective action at a local level.
- To identify targets for species and habitats appropriate to the local area, and reflecting the values of people locally.
- To develop effective local partnerships to ensure that programmes for biodiversity conservation are maintained in the long-term.
- To raise awareness of the need for biodiversity in a local context.
- To ensure that opportunities for conservation and enhancement of the whole biodiversity resource are fully considered.
- To provide a basis for monitoring progress in the biodiversity conservation, at both local and national level.

Whilst previous landscape and tree planting works have contributed positively to the local natural environment, The Ridgeway is limited due to size and previous land uses.

Currently it is enclosed on all sides, by housing to the south and by a derelict field boundary and mature woodland to the north, giving the lower "natural play zone" a secluded feel. Whilst the derelict hedgerow does provide some valuable woodland edge habitat, notably in conjunction with Long Wood which it abuts, it is currently in a state of disrepair. Restoration of this hedgerow in its central portion will: provide for increased habitat, ensure future maintenance is simple and cost effective, strengthen the site's physical boundary whilst re-creating a visual connectedness with the surrounding undeveloped landscape.

Further native and complementary woodland planting to the western portion of the site will maximise its contribution to the surrounding wooded landscape. Planting will be designed in such a way as to retain a pedestrian route to the outer site boundary for maintenance and as a potential route into the site should the land to the north- west be developed for housing at some future time.

Much of the landscape to the north is in the ownership of Tarmac who have their regional offices within Panshanger Park nearby. Panshanger Park is an extensive parkland designed by Lancelot "Capability" Brown. Until recently access to the park has been prohibited and subject to extensive aggregate workings. More recently Tarmac have begun the process of opening the site to the public as a Country Park in accordance with long established planning obligations. Contact has been made with newly appointed staff in order to foster good relations and begin a dialogue around joint /collaborative working.

We will engage and encourage the local community to be involved with hedgerow restoration works and tree planting and future management of these features to ensure that such schemes are both successful and sustainable.

Rights of Way

The site constraints map on page 32 shows the park in the context of its surrounding non –motorised transport network. Some residents use the park as point from which to access the surrounding countryside, this access is not currently formalised through the

existence of legal Rights of Way, nor are there any current claims for such access rights.

Seating

The Council is committed to providing sustainable, robust and attractive seating across its open spaces. We have standardised our approach to this by procuring a high quality steel ended design with arms to provide support to less able users and with recycled plastic boards that have proved resistant to all but the most persistent vandalism. The adjacent photo shows seating in the park.



The last assessment of seating found that the current level of seating in the park is satisfactory.

The provision of seating, both formal and informal throughout the whole site will be reviewed and additional or replacement seating will be added when required. The informal log seating in The Dell will be replaced in year two as it is nearing the end of its useful life.

The Ridgeway Local Park 2015-20 - Operational Action Matrix and Maps

The aim over the next five years is to maintain and enhance the park, keeping up the same high standards that visitors have come to expect while doing all we can to support and benefit the local wildlife.

This new management plan picks up on a few objectives that were not achieved during the previous five years, but in the main concentrates on a continuation of small projects and maintenance activities. The following matrices and maps summarise the various actions during the five year plan.

Working with the CMS we are developing an additional access guide to complement this document which promotes the links between the surrounding parks and open spaces in this area of Hertford. The 'Hertford & Beyond' document will establish and promote linking routes on foot between the nearby East Herts Council owned green spaces in south west Hertford - including the green flag award winning The Ridgeway Local Park, to maximise its use by the surrounding communities.

Action plans & maps

The action plan tables describe a detailed programme of works, both annual and development, and a corresponding map provide an easy to follow visual summary of the works to be undertaken in each year in the park.

Action Plan Matrix

Year 1 2015 – 16

Action Matrix Year 1 (2015 - 2016)					
Annual Management Actions					
Action	Specific Date	Organisation	Responsible Officer	Indicative Cost	Funding stream
Review of Initial 5yr Action Plan	Jan to Mar - 15	EHC / CMS	Parks & Open Spaces Team	Internal resource	n/a
New Action Plan	Apr-15	EHC	Parks & Open Spaces Team	Internal resource	n/a
Open Spaces Inspection – 4 x year	Quarterly	EHC	Parks & Open Spaces Team	Internal resource	n/a
Carry out annual audit review of pathways	Apr-15	EHC	Contracts Compliance Officer	Internal resource	n/a
Conservation and rough grass mowing	Mar/Aug-15 or Jul/Sep-15	Contractor	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract rates	Grounds budget
Review need to repaint / varnish Bird Hide / Youth Shelter	May-15	Contractor	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract rates	Grounds budget
Assess the need to control any invasive weeds	May-15	EHC & CMS	Parks & Open Spaces Team	Set contribution	n/a
Annual play area Safety Audit by RPII I inspector	May/Jun-15	EHC	Parks & Open Spaces Team	Contract rates	Play Area Budget
Identify any play area works from Annual RPII Report	Jul to Oct-15	EHC	Parks & Open Spaces Team	Contract rates	Play Area Budget
Prune and tie climbing plants	Sep-15 to Feb-16	Contractor	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract rates	Grounds budget
Prune hedges	Nov 15 – Feb 16	Contractor	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract rates	Grounds budget
Review new tree and shrub planting requirements	Oct-15 to Mar-16	CMS / EHC	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract rates	Grounds budget
Carry out tree risk inspections	Dec-15	Contractor	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract rates	Tree Risk Budget

Annual risk assessment and hazard review - Parks & Open Spaces	Jan-16	EHC	Contracts Compliance Officer	Internal resource	n/a
Work identified in annual risk assessment and hazard review to be completed	Jan / Feb-16	EHC	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract rates	Grounds budget
Apply for Green Flag Award	Jan-16	EHC	Contracts Compliance Officer	Internal resource	Grounds budget
Amenity mowing / strimming	Seasonal	Contractor	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract rates	Grounds budget
Minor tree and shrub bed maintenance	All Year	Contractor	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract rates	Grounds budget
Play areas / Leisure area inspection and maintenance	All Year	Contractor	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract rates	Grounds budget
Inspect & maintain the footpath infrastructure	Ongoing	Contractor	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract rates	Grounds budget
Cut path edges	Ongoing	Contractor	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract rates	Grounds budget
Routine inspections & monitoring of litter picking requirements	Monthly	EHC	Contracts Compliance Officer	Internal resource	Grounds budget
Empty dog bins	Weekly	EHC	Contracts Compliance Officer	Internal resource	n/a
Review any information received relating to the use of motorcycles on site	Ongoing	EHC	Parks & Open Spaces Team	Internal resource	n/a

Action Plan Matrix

Year 1 2015 – 16

Action Matrix Year 1 (2015 - 2016)					
Development Actions					
Action	Specific Date	Organisation	Responsible Officer	Cost	Funding Stream
Review site information signs as part of Hartham & Beyond Project – need a corporate style for all signage in Hertford parks	Ongoing project	EHC & CMS	Parks & Open Spaces Team	Internal resource	Grounds budget
Liaise with neighbouring landowners	Ongoing	CMS / EHC	Contracts Compliance Officer	Internal resource	n/a
Promote Health Walks	Ongoing	CMS / EHC	CMS Officer	Set contribution	Grounds budget
Engage with local community re: promoting park	Ongoing	CMS	Parks & Open Spaces Team	Internal resource	Grounds budget
Review and renew rear sloped pathway & sandpit edging	Apr- 15	EHC	Parks & Open Spaces Team	Internal resource	n/a
Review of play equipment – replace climbing logs in sand pit	May/Jul -15	EHC	Parks & Open Spaces Team	Obtain new equipment quotes	Play Area Budget

Action Plan Map

Year 1 2015 – 16



Action Plan Matrix

Year 2 2016 – 17

Action Matrix Year 2 (2016 - 2017)					
Annual Management Actions					
Action	Specific Date	Organisation	Responsible Officer	Indicative Cost	Funding stream
Annual Review of Action Plan	Apr-16	EHC	Parks & Open Spaces Team	Internal resource	n/a
Open Spaces Inspection – 4 x year	Quarterly	EHC	Parks & Open Spaces Team	Internal resource	n/a
Carry out annual audit review of pathways	Apr-16	EHC	Contracts Compliance Officer	Internal resource	n/a
Conservation and rough grass mowing	Mar/Aug-16 or Jul/Sep-16	Contractor	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract rates	Grounds budget
Assess the need to control any invasive weeds	May-16	EHC & CMS	Parks & Open Spaces Team	Set contribution	n/a
Annual play area Safety Audit by RPII I inspector	Jul-16	EHC	Parks & Open Spaces Team	Contract rates	Play Area Budget
Identify any play area works from Annual RPII Report	Jul to Oct-16	EHC	Parks & Open Spaces Team	Contract rates	Play Area Budget
Prune and tie climbing plants	Sep-16 to Feb-17	Contractor	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract rates	Grounds budget
Prune hedges	Nov 16-Feb 17	Contractor	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract rates	Grounds budget
Review any new planting requirements	Oct-16 to Mar-17	Contractor / CMS / Volunteers	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract rates	Grounds budget
Clearance of derelict elm boundary scrub and ground prep for woodland planting	Nov - 16	Community Project	CMS/EHC	Internal resource	n/a
Creation of box fence for new hedge to delineate boundary	Nov - 16	Community Project	CMS/EHC	Internal resource	n/a

Planting new hedge, and additional woodland planting in north-western corner of site	Nov - 16	Community Project	CMS/EHC	Internal resource	n/a
Carry out tree risk inspections	Dec-16	Contractor	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract rates	Tree Risk Budget
Apply for Green Flag Award	Jan-17	EHC	Contracts Compliance Officer	Internal resource	Grounds budget
Annual risk assessment and hazard review - Parks & Open Spaces	Jan-17	EHC	Contracts Compliance Officer	Internal resource	n/a
Work identified in annual risk assessment and hazard review to be completed	Jan / Feb-17	EHC	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract rates	Grounds budget
Amenity mowing / strimming	Seasonal	Contractor	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract rates	Grounds budget
Minor tree and shrub bed maintenance	All Year	Contractor	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract rates	Grounds budget
Play areas / leisure area inspection and maintenance	All Year	Contractor	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract rates	Grounds budget
Inspect & maintain the footpath infrastructure	Ongoing	Contractor	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract rates	Grounds budget
Cut path edges	Ongoing	Contractor	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract rates	Grounds budget
Routine inspections & monitoring of litter picking requirements	Monthly	EHC	Contracts Compliance Officer	Internal resource	Grounds budget
Empty dog bins	Weekly	EHC	Contracts Compliance Officer	Internal resource	n/a
Review any information received relating to motorcycles use on site	Ongoing	EHC	Parks & Open Spaces Team	Internal resource	n/a

Action Plan Matrix

Year 2 2016 – 17

Action Matrix Year 2 (2016 - 2017)					
Development Actions					
Action	Specific Date	Organisation	Responsible Officer	Cost	Funding Stream
Review site information signs as part of Hartham & Beyond Project – need a corporate style for all signage in Hertford parks	Ongoing project	EHC & CMS	Parks & Open Spaces Team	Internal resource	Grounds budget
Review & renew rear sloped pathway edging	Apr- 17	EHC	Parks & Open Spaces Team	Internal resource	n/a
Liaise with neighbouring landowners	Ongoing	CMS / EHC	Contracts Compliance Officer	Internal resource	n/a
Promote Health Walks	Ongoing	CMS / EHC	CMS Officer	Set contribution	Grounds budget
Engage with local community re: promoting park	Ongoing	CMS	Parks & Open Spaces Team	Internal resource	Grounds budget
Review formal & informal seating	Apr- 17	EHC	Parks & Open Spaces Team	Internal resource	n/a
Replace informal log seating in The Dell – use felled logs from other open spaces	Apr- 17	EHC	Parks & Open Spaces Team	Internal resource	Grounds budget

Action Plan Matrix

Year 3 2017 – 18

Action Matrix Year 3 (2017 - 2017)					
Annual Management Actions					
Action	Specific Date	Organisation	Responsible Officer	Indicative Cost	Funding stream
Annual Review of Action Plan	Apr-17	EHC	Parks & Open Spaces Team	Internal resource	n/a
Open Spaces Inspection – 4 x year	Quarterly	EHC	Parks & Open Spaces Team	Internal resource	n/a
Carry out annual audit review of pathways	Apr-17	EHC	Contracts Compliance Officer	Internal resource	n/a
Conservation and rough grass mowing	Mar/Aug-17 or Jul/Sep-17	Contractor	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract rates	Grounds budget
Review need to repaint / varnish Bird Hide / Youth Shelter	May-17	Contractor	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract rates	Grounds budget
Assess the need to control any invasive weeds	May-17	EHC & CMS	Parks & Open Spaces Team	Set contribution	n/a
Annual play area Safety Audit by RPII I inspector	Jul-17	EHC	Parks & Open Spaces Team	Contract rates	Play Area Budget
Identify any play area works from Annual RPII Report	Jul to Oct-17	EHC	Parks & Open Spaces Team	Contract rates	Play Area Budget
Prune and tie climbing plants	Sep-17 to Feb-18	Contractor	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract rates	Grounds budget
Prune hedges	Nov 17-Feb 18	Contractor	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract rates	Grounds budget
Maintain newly planted trees	Ongoing	EHC	Contracts Compliance Officer	n/a	n/a
Carry out tree risk inspections	Dec-17	Contractor	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract rates	Tree Risk Budget
Apply for Green Flag Award	Jan-18	EHC	Contracts Compliance Officer	Internal resource	Grounds budget

Annual risk assessment and hazard review - Parks & Open Spaces	Jan-18	EHC	Contracts Compliance Officer	Internal resource	n/a
Work identified in annual risk assessment and hazard review to be completed	Jan / Feb-18	EHC	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract rates	Grounds budget
Amenity mowing / strimming	Seasonal	Contractor	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract rates	Grounds budget
Minor tree and shrub bed maintenance	All Year	Contractor	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract rates	Grounds budget
Play areas / Leisure area inspection and maintenance	All Year	Contractor	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract rates	Grounds budget
Inspect & maintain the footpath infrastructure	Ongoing	Contractor	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract rates	Grounds budget
Cut path edges	Ongoing	Contractor	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract rates	Grounds budget
Routine inspections & monitoring of litter picking requirements	Monthly	EHC	Contracts Compliance Officer	Internal resource	Grounds budget
Empty dog bins	Weekly	EHC	Contracts Compliance Officer	Internal resource	n/a
Review any information received relating to motorcycles use on site	Ongoing	EHC	Parks & Open Spaces Team	Internal resource	n/a

Action Plan Matrix

Year 3 2017 – 18

Action Matrix Year 3 (2017 - 2018)					
Development Actions					
Action	Specific Date	Organisation	Responsible Officer	Cost	Funding Stream
Review of play areas and equipment	Jul -17	EHC	Parks & Open Spaces Team	Obtain new equipment quotes	Play Area Budget
Liaise with neighbouring landowners	Ongoing	CMS / EHC	Contracts Compliance Officer	Internal resource	n/a
Promote Health Walks	Ongoing	CMS / EHC	CMS Officer	Set contribution	Grounds budget
Engage with local community re: promoting park	Ongoing	CMS	Parks & Open Spaces Team	Internal resource	Grounds budget

Action Plan Map Year 3 2017 – 18



Action Plan Matrix

Year 4 2018 – 2019

Action Matrix Year 4 (2018 - 2019)					
Annual Management Actions					
Action	Specific Date	Organisation	Responsible Officer	Indicative Cost	Funding stream
Annual Review of Action Plan	Apr-18	EHC	Parks & Open Spaces Team	Internal resource	n/a
Open Spaces Inspection – 4 x year	Quarterly	EHC	Parks & Open Spaces Team	Internal resource	n/a
Carry out annual audit review of pathways	Apr-18	EHC	Contracts Compliance Officer	Internal resource	n/a
Conservation and rough grass mowing	Mar/Aug-18 or Jul/Sep-18	Contractor	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract rates	Grounds budget
Assess the need to control any invasive weeds	May-18	EHC & CMS	Parks & Open Spaces Team	Set contribution	n/a
Annual play area Safety Audit by RPII I inspector	May/Jun-18	EHC	Parks & Open Spaces Team	Contract rates	Play Area Budget
Identify any play area works from Annual RPII Report	Jul to Oct-18	EHC	Parks & Open Spaces Team	Contract rates	Play Area Budget
Prune and tie climbing plants	Sep-18 to Feb-19	Contractor	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract rates	Grounds budget
Prune hedges	Nov 18 – Feb 19	Contractor	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract rates	Grounds budget
Maintain newly planted trees	Ongoing	EHC	CMS Officer	n/a	n/a
Carry out tree risk inspections	Dec-18	Contractor	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract rates	Tree Risk Budget
Apply for Green Flag Award	Jan-19	EHC	Contracts Compliance Officer	Internal resource	Grounds budget
Annual risk assessment and hazard review - Parks & Open Spaces	Jan-19	EHC	Contracts Compliance Officer	Internal resource	n/a

Work identified in annual risk assessment and hazard review to be completed	Jan / Feb-19	EHC	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract rates	Grounds budget
Amenity mowing / strimming	Seasonal	Contractor	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract rates	Grounds budget
Minor tree and shrub bed maintenance	All Year	Contractor	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract rates	Grounds budget
Play areas / Leisure area inspection and maintenance	All Year	Contractor	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract rates	Grounds budget
Inspect & maintain the footpath infrastructure	Ongoing	Contractor	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract rates	Grounds budget
Cut path edges	Ongoing	Contractor	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract rates	Grounds budget
Routine inspections & monitoring of litter picking requirements	Monthly	EHC	Contracts Compliance Officer	Internal resource	Grounds budget
Empty dog bins	Weekly	EHC	Contracts Compliance Officer	Internal resource	n/a
Review any information received relating to motorcycles use on site	Ongoing	EHC	Parks & Open Spaces Team	Internal resource	n/a

Action Matrix Year 4 (2018 - 2019)					
Development Actions					
Action	Specific Date	Organisation	Responsible Officer	Cost	Funding Stream
Liaise with neighbouring landowners	Ongoing	CMS / EHC	Contracts Compliance Officer	Internal resource	n/a
Promote Health Walks	Ongoing	CMS / EHC	CMS Officer	Set contribution	Grounds budget
Engage with local community re: promoting park	Ongoing	CMS	Parks & Open Spaces Team	Internal resource	Grounds budget

Action Plan Map

Year 4 2018 – 2019



Action Plan Matrix

Year 5 2019 – 2020

Action Matrix Year 5 (2019 - 2020)					
Annual Management Actions					
Action	Specific Date	Organisation	Responsible Officer	Indicative Cost	Funding stream
Annual Review of Action Plan	Apr-19	EHC	Parks & Open Spaces Team	Internal resource	n/a
Open Spaces Inspection – 4 x year	Quarterly	EHC	Parks & Open Spaces Team	Internal resource	n/a
Carry out annual audit review of pathways	Apr-19	EHC	Contracts Compliance Officer	Internal resource	n/a
Remove protective fencing from zig zag shrubs	April 19	EHC	Contracts Compliance Officer	Internal resource	n/a
Conservation and rough grass mowing	Mar/Aug-19 or Jul/Sep-19	Contractor	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract rates	Grounds budget
Review need to repaint / varnish Bird Hide / Youth Shelter.	May-19	Contractor	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract rates	Grounds budget
Assess the need to control any invasive weeds	May-19	EHC & CMS	Parks & Open Spaces Team	Set contribution	n/a
Annual play area Safety Audit by RPII I inspector	Jul-19	EHC	Parks & Open Spaces Team	Contract rates	Play Area Budget
Identify any play area works from Annual RPII Report	Jul to Oct-19	EHC	Parks & Open Spaces Team	Contract rates	Play Area Budget
Prune and tie climbing plants	Sep-19 to Feb-20	Contractor	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract rates	Grounds budget
Prune hedges	Nov 19 – Feb 20	Contractor	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract rates	Grounds budget
Review new planting requirements - plant trees and shrubs	Oct-19 to Mar-20	Contractor / CMS / Volunteers	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract rates	Grounds budget

Carry out tree risk inspections	Dec-19	Contractor	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract rates	Tree Risk Budget
Apply for Green Flag Award	Jan-20	EHC	Contracts Compliance Officer	Internal resource	Grounds budget
Annual risk assessment and hazard review - Parks & Open Spaces	Jan-20	EHC	Contracts Compliance Officer	Internal resource	n/a
Work identified in annual risk assessment and hazard review to be completed	Jan / Feb-20	EHC	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract rates	Grounds budget
Amenity mowing / strimming	Seasonal	Contractor	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract rates	Grounds budget
Minor tree and shrub bed maintenance	All Year	Contractor	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract rates	Grounds budget
Play areas / Leisure area inspection and maintenance	All Year	Contractor	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract rates	Grounds budget
Inspect & maintain the footpath infrastructure	Ongoing	Contractor	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract rates	Grounds budget
Cut path edges	Ongoing	Contractor	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract rates	Grounds budget
Routine inspections & monitoring of litter picking requirements	Monthly	EHC	Contracts Compliance Officer	Internal resource	Grounds budget
Empty dog bins	Weekly	EHC	Contracts Compliance Officer	Internal resource	n/a
Review any information received relating to motorcycles use on site	Ongoing	EHC	Parks & Open Spaces Team	Internal resource	n/a

Action Plan Matrix Year 5 2019 – 2020

Action Matrix Year 5 (2019 - 2020)					
Development Actions					
Action	Specific Date	Organisation	Responsible Officer	Cost	Funding Stream
Start work on next 5 year Management Plan 2021-26	Jan-19	CMS & EHC	Parks & Open Spaces Team	Internal resource	n/a
Review the need for younger children's play equipment	Apr-19	EHC	Parks & Open Spaces Team	tbc	external funding?
Liaise with neighbouring landowners	Ongoing	CMS / EHC	Contracts Compliance Officer	Internal resource	n/a
Promote Health Walks	Ongoing	CMS / EHC	CMS Officer	Set contribution	Grounds budget
Engage with local community re: promoting park	Ongoing	CMS	Parks & Open Spaces Team	Internal resource	Grounds budget
Update information in notice boards	Ongoing	EHC	Parks & Open Spaces Team	Internal resource	n/a

Action Plan Map

Year 5 2019 – 2020



Appendix 1- Links to other documents & websites

The Ridgeway Local Park Greenspace Action Plan 2009 – 2014

<http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/article/10084/The-Ridgeway-Local-Park-Greenspace-Action-Plan-2009-2014>

Appendices for The Ridgeway Local Park Greenspace Action Plan 2009 – 2014

<http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/theridgewaylocalpark>

Parks and Open Spaces Strategy 2012 – 2017:

<http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/parksstrategy>

Parks and Open Spaces Strategy 2007 – 2012:

http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/media/pdf/b/m/Parks_Open_Spaces_Strategy_2007_-_2012.pdf

East Herts Local Plan Second Review (April 2007)

<http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/index.jsp?articleid=24627>

East Herts District Plan 2013 - 2031

<http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/districtplan>

Everyone Matters – A Sustainable Community Strategy for East Herts 2009 – 2024

<http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/sustainablecommunitystrategy>

East Herts Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2013 – 2018

<http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/wellbeing>

East Herts Public Health Strategy Action Plan

<http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/wellbeing>

Hertfordshire Local Biodiversity Action Plan:

http://www.hef.org.uk/nature/biodiversity_vision/

Green Infrastructure Plan:

<http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/article/22871/Hertford-Green-Fingers>

Playing Pitch Strategy & Outdoor Sports Assessment 2010

<http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/playingpitchstrategy>

Green Flag Award Criteria – web link:

<http://www.greenflagaward.org.uk/judges/judging-criteria/>

Appendix 2 - Contact Details:

Address	Contact / Position	Telephone / Email
East Herts Council Wallfields Pegs Lane Hertford Herts, SG13 8EQ	For general enquiries – including Out of Hours Service	East Herts Council Environmental Services Tel: 01279 655261 Email: operations.admin@eastherts.gov.uk Website: www.eastherts.gov.uk
Countryside Management Service (CMS) The Old Dairy Bedford Road Ickleford, Nr Hitchin Hertfordshire, SG4 9DF	For general enquiries	Tel: 01462 459395 Email: northeast.cms@hertscc.gov.uk Website: http://www.hertslink.org/cms/
Hertfordshire County Council County Hall Pegs Lane Hertford Herts, SG13 8DN	For general enquiries	Tel: 0300 1234040 Email: hertsdirect@hertscc.gov.uk Website: www.hertsdirect.org
Hertford Town Council The Castle Hertford Herts, SG14 1HR	Town Clerk	Tel: 01992 552885 Fax: 01992 505876 Email: town.clerk@hertford.gov.uk Web site: www.hertford.gov.uk
Environment Agency North East Area Office Apollo Court 2 Bishops Square Business Park, St Albans Road West Hatfield, Herts, AL10 9EX	For general enquiries	Tel: 0370 8506506 - general enquiry Tel: 0800 80 70 60 to report an incident Email: enquiries@environment- agency.gov.uk Website: <a href="http://www.environment-
 agency.gov.uk">www.environment- agency.gov.uk
Police Neighbourhood Team Hertford Police Station Hale Road (junction with Gascoyne Way) Hertford, Herts, SG13 8ED	Neighbourhood Team	Tel: 101 - Non-emergency number for help, advice and information. Always dial 999 in an emergency Website: www.herts.police.uk
Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Hertford Fire Station Old London Road Hertford, Herts, SG13 7LD	Fire Station Manager	Tel: 01992 507611 (Station) Tel: 0300 1234046 (Fire Safety & Advice) Always dial 999 in an emergency Email: hertford.fire@hertscc.gov.uk

If you would like a translation of this document in another language, large print, Braille, audio or an electronic format, please contact Communications at East Herts Council on 01279 655 261 or email communications@eastherts.gov.uk

Jeżeli chciałbyś, aby ta informacja została przetłumaczona na język polski skontaktuj się z Działem Łączności przy Radzie Wschodniego Hertfordshire tel. 01279 655 261 lub wyślij e-mail communications@eastherts.gov.uk

Se desejar esta informação traduzida em português, por favor contacte o departamento de comunicações do East Herts Council no telefone número 01279 655 261 ou via email communications@eastherts.gov.uk

If you need any further information please contact us:

Office Opening Times: 8.30am to 5pm Monday to Friday



CLICK

www.eastherts.gov.uk



PHONE

01279 655261

ask for Environmental Services



WRITE

Environmental Services, East Herts Council,
Wallfields, Pegs Lane, Hertford SG13 8EQ

or email: operations.admin@eastherts.gov.uk



VISIT

- Charringtons House, Bishop's Stortford
- Wallfields, Hertford