



# OLD TOWN REC GREEN FLAG MANAGEMENT PLAN



## CONTENTS / SUMMARY

This management plan has been prepared to support Eastbourne Borough Council's application for Green Flag status for Old Town Recreation Ground (locally known as 'The Rec').

Section 1 of the report sets out the context of Old Town Recreation Ground

Section 2 of the report explains the background of the site including its history, aspects of ecology and bio-diversity, planning policy, legal definitions and other contextual information.

Section 3 describes a number of character areas within the Rec and identifies management objectives for all of these in the context of the eight Green Flag award criteria.

Section 4 looks at the Green Flag criteria in detail and describes achievements to date and actions to be undertaken to deliver against these criteria an action plan format.

Section 5 identifies a number of over-arching management objectives that will secure Green Flag status for the Recreation Ground.

The Management Plan is supported by data on management and maintenance specifications and financial planning contained within the Appendices.

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# FOREWORD

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by EXECUTIVE MEMBER

Old Town Recreation Ground is one of Eastbourne's best local parks and forms an important link between the town and countryside beyond. In many senses, it brings the Downs of the Sussex coast into Eastbourne itself. The Friends of Old Town Recreation Ground (FoOTRG) were formed in 2012 and Eastbourne Borough Council has been working closely with this group to improve the park and its facilities. A successful partnership has developed and evolved with the Friends and this has been expressed in a number of projects to enhance the park and make it more attractive for local people.

Further significant funding has been identified by Eastbourne Borough Council to invest in Old Town Recreation Ground and there is the opportunity to introduce new features and landscaping to improve the popularity of this park.

Old Town Recreation Ground achieved Green Flag status for the first time in 2016. The ground was also a DeFRA Bees' Needs Champions winner in 2016. There are still many new aspirations for Old Town Recreation Ground and this management plan sets out how the site is currently managed and aspirations for the future. The plan is also a demonstration by the Council of its determination to improve Eastbourne's green spaces for the benefit of local communities.

The aspiration is to establish a series of new objectives for Old Town Recreation Ground so that its many users can continue to enjoy the many facilities on offer in the decades ahead.

Cllr Steve Wallis

Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Environment



Fig.1 - View from Old Town Recreation Ground towards Eastbourne

## PARKS VISION STATEMENT

The Eastbourne Corporate Plan 2016-20 sets out a number of objectives for the Borough's public open spaces.

By 2020, Eastbourne will have a high quality built and natural environment which highlights the cultural heritage and tourist offer of the Borough, surpassing other UK towns of a similar size.

Our public space will be distinctive, high quality, well preserved and create a sense of belonging

Our open space will increase in quantity and quality, enabling the community to come together and enjoy its public spaces in a safe and secure way.

The plan also sets out a number of objectives in respect of 'Pride of Place'.

The Eastbourne Local Strategic Partnership brings the public, private, community and voluntary sectors together to work to help improve the life of the residents of Eastbourne.

The vision for Eastbourne is that by 2026 Eastbourne will be a premier seaside destination within an enhanced green setting. To meet everyone's needs Eastbourne will be a safe, thriving, healthy and vibrant community with excellent housing, education and employment choices, actively responding to the effects of climate change.



Fig.2 - Mature trees in Old Town Recreation Ground







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INTRODUCTION

## 1. INTRODUCTION

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Old Town Recreation Ground (the 'Rec') is situated within the Old Town area of Eastbourne, approximately 2.7 kilometres from the town centre. Old Town is a residential area on the fringe of the Borough of Eastbourne and moderately densely populated.

The 7 hectare park is a key public open space for the surrounding area. Old Town Rec has open views across Eastbourne town but is also sheltered behind stands of mature trees on its southern and western edges. The 'Rec' functions very much as a local open space for local people.

The Rec provides a good range of leisure opportunities for residents including formal sports (tennis and football), children's play, dog walking and passive recreation. The Recreation Ground is separated from the South Downs National Park by a narrow strip of woodland that delineates the built edge of Eastbourne. This woodland belt connects the elevated open Downland around Beachy Head at the easternmost end of the National Park.

Eastbourne Borough Council has made a significant and on-going commitment to up-grading the Recreation Ground's facilities, including most recently, works to refurbish the playground and forthcoming works to resurface the tennis courts.

The Rec has a long-established and active 'Friends' group which organises volunteering and other activities in partnership with the Council.

## 1.1 PURPOSE OF THE MANAGEMENT PLAN

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The purpose of the management and maintenance plan is:

- To demonstrate that the management of Old Town Recreation Ground is informed by a coordinated and fully resourced plan for continued management and maintenance of the park for a five year period from January 2015 to December 2020.
- To identify how the various areas of responsibility within the EBC are coordinated to the general objective of high quality management and maintenance and to identify who is ultimately responsible for each aspect of management;
- To identify, discuss and resolve issues relating to conflicts of interest between user groups or between expectations and available resources.
- To provide a reference document for those managing and maintaining the site and for other people who have an interest in the site.
- The management and maintenance plan and its appendices will act as the central reference document relating to the management of the Rec. This document will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis.
- The management and maintenance plan; prepared in December 2014, will provide the benchmark at which delivery and performance will be measured.



## 1.2 GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION

The Rec lies in the west of the Borough of Eastbourne and approximately 2.7 kilometres from the town centre. The Recreation Ground lies at the western edge of the built area of Eastbourne and is separated from the adjoining Downland by a narrow strip of woodland running approximately north-south. This edge is punctuated with a series of greenspaces, including the Royal Eastbourne Golf Club, the Eastbourne Downs Golf Club and the Willingdon Golf Club. To the west lies the Beachy Head area of South Downs National Park, characterised by open chalk grassland. To the east lies the Old Town area of Eastbourne with the town centre beyond this.

The Recreation Ground is approximately rectangular in shape and aligned east-west with an extension aligned approximately north-south. The Recreation Ground is demarcated by Cherry Garden Road and Bodmin Close on its southern boundary, by Longland Road on the east side and by houses lining Osborne Road and Sancroft Road to the north and west respectively.

- Entrances: Longland Road, Sancroft Road
- Bus Services: 55

- Parking: Parking is available in the streets surrounding the park.

“...Very good park..well maintained..”

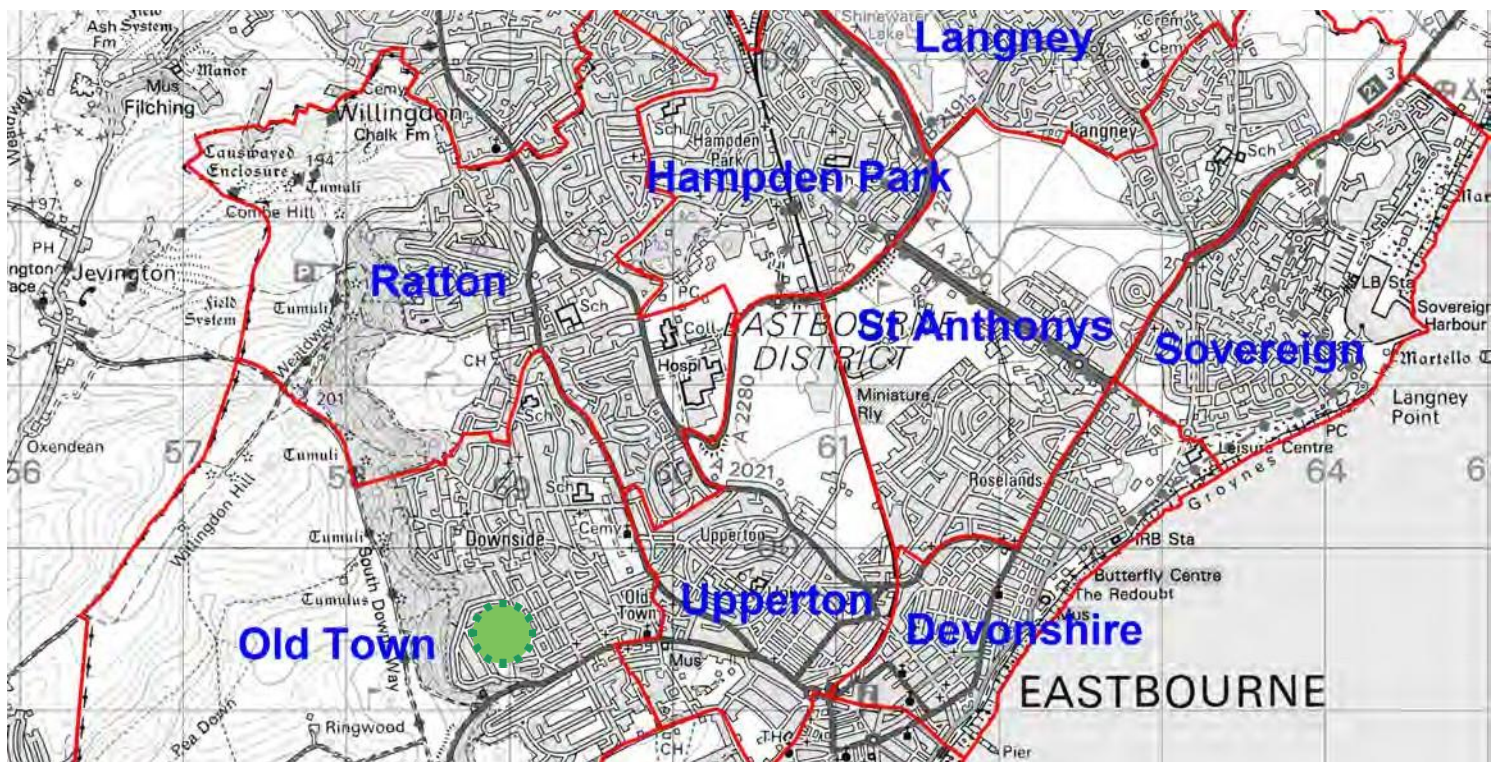


Fig.3- Old Town Recreation Ground location map







BACKGROUND



## 2.1 HISTORY OF THE SITE

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Eastbourne remained an area of small rural settlements until the 19th century. Six villages and hamlets occupied the site of the modern town. Old Town was formerly known as Bourne (or, to distinguish it from others of the same name, East Bourne). This village surrounded the Bourne Stream which rises in the present day Motcombe Gardens, Old Town.

In the 19th century, these villages coalesced to form Eastbourne as the urban area now defined. The town expanded at its fringes during the last century and Old Town Recreation Ground was created in the 1930s as part of the development of this easterly extension.

## 2.2 BIO-DIVERSITY AND NATURAL HERITAGE

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Old Town Recreation Ground is not designated as an area of importance for nature conservation but the site does lie adjacent to the Seaford to Eastbourne Downs Bio-diversity Opportunity Area identified within the Sussex Bio-diversity Action Plan. The Recreation Ground's proximity to this area does offer scope for extension of management for habitat and bio-diversity within Old Town Recreation Ground and particularly at its fringes.

150 species have been identified within the Sussex BAP over the past 10 years, including (with particular relevance to Old Town Recreation Ground), Mouse Moth (*Amphipyra tragopoginis*) Mottled Rustic (*Caradina morpheus*), Latticed Heath (*Chiasmia clathrata*) Phantom Hoverfly (*Doros profuges*), Small Phoenix (*Ecliptopera silaceata*), Yellowhammer (*Emberiza citrinella*), August Thorn (*Ennomos fuscantaria*), Red-backed Shrike (*Lanius collurio*), White Admiral (*Limenitis camilla*), Dot Moth (*Melanchra persicariae*), Brown Long-eared Bat (*Plecotus auritus*), Buff Ermine (*Spilosoma luteum*) and Turtle Dove (*Streptopelia turtur*).



Fig.4 - Planting wildflower plugs in the wildlife edge of the park.

## 2.3 PUBLIC ACCESS AND RECREATION

The Recreation Ground is well used for formal and informal recreation, providing the opportunity for people who live and work nearby to enjoy the haven of green space and to make use of the Recreation Ground's facilities.

Due to its position at the edge of the town and its limited range of facilities, the Rec is a local amenity and has a local catchment.

The varied sports facilities on site are a draw for participants in formal sports and active lifestyle pursuits such as jogging. The Rec is of an open character and predominantly set to short grass. As a consequence the main uses aside from sport are dog walking, various forms of passive recreation and use as a through route. The playground is the key attraction for the majority of young families that visit this site.

A user opinion survey carried out in 2014 (Appendix 4) has revealed a wide variety of ages and ethnicities amongst typical users and a variety of interests, ranging from sporting activities, jogging, dog walking and passive recreation. The refurbished play area and open expanses of grassland provide ample space for informal ball games and play activities.

Events held at the park provide many more opportunities for public access and recreation. As an example the Annual Summer Fair organised by local faith groups and supported by the Friends of Old Town Recreation Ground attracts approximately 1,000 people to the Recreation Ground to participate in a variety of activities.

## 2.4 OWNERSHIP

Old Town Recreation Ground is owned and managed by Eastbourne Borough Council.

## 2.5 LEASES AND COVENANTS

Land Ownership and administration:

A charter was granted to the Borough of Eastbourne in 1883. The Borough gained County Borough status in 1911 under the Eastbourne Corporation Act of 1910. The County Borough was abolished in 1974 and succeeded, with an enlarged territory, by Eastbourne Borough Council, a district within the Administrative County of East Sussex.

The rights to land at Old Town Recreation Ground transferred to Eastbourne Borough Council upon its creation in 1974.



Fig.5 - OTRG title deed plan, 1913.

## 2.6 HYDROLOGY AND SOILS

The South Downs dominate Eastbourne and can be seen from most of the town. These were originally chalk deposits laid down under the sea during the late Cretaceous, and were later lifted by the same tectonic plate movements that formed the European Alps, during the middle Tertiary period. The chalk can be clearly seen along the eroded coastline to the west of the town, in the area known as Beachy Head and the Seven Sisters, where continuous erosion keeps the cliff edge vertical and white.

The town area is built on geologically recent alluvial drift, the result of the silting up of a bay. On the west side of The Rec a belt of woodland nestling at the foot of the escarpment marks the approximate transition from chalk to a thin veneer of superficial deposits on the lower ground of the Recreation Ground. It is also the transition between two land use zones; from woods and farmland to the built urban zone.

## 2.7 TOPOGRAPHY

The Recreation Ground occupies a shelving site that falls approximately west to east from a high point of approximately 60m. The southerly extension shelves to the south and to the east.

## 2.8 ECOLOGY

Old Town Recreation Ground is predominantly set to short amenity grass for sports and informal recreational use. This habitat is generally of low value ecologically. Eastbourne Borough Council has developed wildflower meadows along the eastern edge of the southern extension and along a section of the path that runs through the Rec. Both are species rich and offer habitat opportunities for communities of invertebrates. Councillor Steve Wallis, Portfolio holder for the Environment, has unanimous council support for the motion: *'That this authority supports the Friends of the Earth Bee Cause initiative, and will continue to ensure that where suitable, all planting undertaken within the parks and gardens owned by the Council will support bee and other pollinating insects lifestyles.'* Enhancement of the area for bees and wildlife generally has been ongoing for the last 4 years and in 2016 Eastbourne Borough Council was recognised as a Bee Champion at an awards ceremony hosted by Defra at Kew Gardens with Lord Gardiner in attendance and presenting.

The fringe of trees planted on the southern, western and northern boundaries offer opportunities for nesting birds.

The woodland fringe to the west of the site, that acts as a transition to the adjoining Downland, is species rich and is suspected to support communities of bats.



Fig.6 - Southern entrance.



## 2.9 TREE STOCK

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The Recreation Ground has tree cover along its southern, western and northern boundaries and along the eastern boundary of the southern extension.

The trees along the boundaries of the main fields are planted formally as parkland trees and are decorative varieties.

A small group of trees is clustered around the Longland Road entrance and in a more naturalistic arrangement, creating an informal avenue into the Rec.

Eastbourne Borough Council adopted a Trees and Woodland management strategy for 2010-15. The management of trees in Old Town Recreation Ground is informed by this strategy. Trees are inspected and pruned on a cyclical basis. Emergency works to trees are carried out where a specific health and safety risk is identified.



Fig.7 - Tree fringe provides nesting opportunities for birds.

## 2.10 PLANNING POLICY

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Old Town Recreation Ground is defined and protected by a number of planning designations contained within Eastbourne Borough Council's Core Strategy of February 2013.

The Core Strategy develops a number of key spatial objectives, including:

### Key Spatial Objective 7: Green Space and Biodiversity

To designate a network of green spaces linking the South Downs, Eastbourne Park and Pevensey Levels, to protect the diverse character and local distinctiveness encourage biodiversity and provide access to additional leisure opportunities.

Policy B2 details the steps the Council will take through its planning policies to support The creation of sustainable communities, including the need to:

- Create an attractive, safe and clean built environment with a sense of place that is distinctive and reflects local character
- Respect the natural environment by adapting to climate change and reducing potential negative environmental impacts;

Policy D9 of the Core Strategy elaborates the ways in which the Council will support the natural environment by:

- Producing a Green Network Plan and creating environmental interpretive focal points in Eastbourne's parks and gardens and natural areas. Improved infrastructure will encourage walking and cycling as a means of accessing and connecting the green network and countryside.
- Identifying a network of strategically and locally important green space areas. Development will only be permitted where it does not cause fragmentation of these existing habitats or landscapes or exceptionally where there is an overriding need for the development which cannot be met on alternative land.
- Requiring development proposals to improve the quality and quantity of green spaces and address local deficiencies in accessible green space where appropriate.

This policy goes on to discuss how to promote effective conservation and enhancement of Eastbourne's wildlife by:

- Producing Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPS) to identify measures to preserve and enhance the geology, habitats and species of importance in Eastbourne.
- Safeguarding local, national and international protected sites for nature conservation from inappropriate development.
- Ensuring that development seeks to enhance biodiversity through the inclusion of wildlife needs in design, and ensuring any unavoidable impacts are appropriately mitigated for.
- All developments over 500m<sup>2</sup> or 5 dwellings will be required to produce a Biodiversity Survey to ensure development does not impact on species of importance. The Survey must also include proposals to show how any impacts will be addressed by enhancement and mitigation measures

Policy D210 proposes ways in which natural and built heritage will be protected through planning policy. Specifically;

Designated Parks, Gardens and Open Spaces as well as those of importance will be protected from development that would adversely affect their character and historic interest. Views into and from these sites will be protected. Sites should not be subdivided.

Section 3.5 of the Core Strategy describes a number of planning policies in place within the Old Town area of Eastbourne, embodied in an overall vision for the area:

Old Town will maintain its position as the most sustainable neighbourhood in the town, protecting and enhancing its important local services and facilities and improving opportunities for sustainable transport alternatives. However it will generally see little development due to the limited availability of sites.

Policy C4 proposes that this vision will be supported through

- 'Resisting the loss of parks and greenspaces, including Gildredge Park and Old Town Recreation

## 2.12 USES AND EVENTS

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Ground.’

- ‘Increasing provision for facilities for children and young people’
- ‘Enhancing access to the South Downs National Park whilst preventing development on the boundary; and’
- ‘Encouraging the provision of safe walking and cycling routes to link residential areas to shopping centres and other parts of the town’

In 2011, Old Town Recreation Ground attained Queen Elizabeth II Field in Trust designation.

East Sussex’ Sustainable Communities Strategy sets out a number of aspirations for the county including ‘protecting our natural and built environments and adapting and responding to climate change’ and ‘enabling people to enjoy culture, sports and leisure’.

Old Town Recreation Ground is popular with local residents and attracts a considerable number of visitors. The Council has not formally quantified the number of visits the Rec supports every year, but this is likely to exceed one hundred thousand.

Eastbourne Borough Council undertook a visitor attitudes survey during the summer of 2014. The results appear as Appendix 1. The survey reveals that the majority of visits are made by people who live locally, and it also reveals the variety of leisure activities people using the Rec will typically engage in. These include:

- Formal sports – football, tennis and stoolball
- Dogwalking
- Children’s play
- Jogging and exercising
- As a through route from A to B
- Informal recreation
- Events

The Friends of Old Town Recreation Ground support an annual summer fair in July which draws in up to one thousand participants. Attractions include a dog show, food, music and performances.

## 2.11 BY-LAWS

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A full review of the byelaws has been programmed for 2017 with a view to fully adopt new by-laws in 2018.



## 2.13 RECENT PROJECTS

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Eastbourne Council has delivered a number of projects in Old Town Recreation Ground over the past 5 years.

These include:

- Playground refurbishment;
- Wildflower meadow planting;
- Amenity horticultural planting; and
- Tennis court refurbishment - £70k; April 2015

The action plans that follow identify a number of further projects that will be subject to internal and external funding applications over the next 5 years.



Fig.8 - Children's playground and picnic area.





# CHARACTER AREAS AND MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES



### 3.1 CHARACTER AREAS AND MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES

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This management plan is based upon character areas within the Rec, each with its own set of functions. Management and maintenance specifications have been developed to respond to each area's individual function. This was developed to fulfil the overall management vision for the Old Town Recreation Ground.

Area A: Activity hub – toilet block and playground

Area B: Playing fields

Area C: Woodland fringes

### 3.2 AREA A: ACTIVITY HUB – TOILET BLOCK AND PLAYGROUND

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#### Description

This part of the recreation ground lies on the main path connecting the Longland Road and Sancroft Road entrances and is home to the children's playground which is a major attraction for families with young children. The northern section of the playground is planted to provide a horticulturally rich setting. The adjacent toilet block provides important WC facilities for people using the rec and offers potential for future development into a kiosk or small café. The area is planted and shaded with mature trees and surrounded by short amenity grass.

#### Vision

The role of this part of the Recreation Ground as an activity hub could be strengthened by converting the toilet block for use as a kiosk or small café. Improvements to the Longland Road entrance, additional tree planting and enhanced horticulture would reinforce the existing qualities of this space and separate it more effectively from the open grass areas beyond.

#### Management objectives

Footpaths will be repaired and maintained to facilitate

enhanced access to this part of the Rec.

Equipment in the children's playground, and the safety surfaces, will be checked weekly and repaired as necessary according to the makers' specifications, to maintain the safety of the facilities. Dogs will not be allowed within the playground. Litter will be collected and bins emptied to maintain the playground in accordance with COPLR Zone 1 standards.

Shrub and herbaceous beds will be managed to maintain a healthy stock of plants, pruning and coppicing as necessary for the plant species removing dead and damaged branches to retain a natural shape.

Grass areas will be kept as amenity grass and regularly spiked to prevent over-compaction. Turf repairs are undertaken annually to address areas of excessive wear.

Street furniture will be regularly checked and repaired or replaced as necessary.



### 3.3 AREA B: PLAYING FIELDS

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#### Description

The central area of Old Town Recreation Ground is given over to amenity grass for use as formal sports grounds. The 2 enclosed hard courts situated on the eastern boundary running adjacent to Longland Road, each contain 2 tennis courts which were refurbished in 2015; these are open for use by the general public.

#### Vision

The vision for this area of the Recreation Ground is to maintain its features to a high standard, to support sporting activities and to continue to do so in the future.

#### Management objectives

Grass will be maintained as amenity grass or as specialist sports turf in the broader central spaces.

Areas around the perimeter and along the central path will be enhanced for bees and wildlife. This has been ongoing since 2012 with new planting and evolving grounds management methods. The actions included a more relaxed mowing regime to the periphery of the site, introducing chalk wildflowers, new planting, habitat piles, hibernaculum and bird/ bat/ insect boxes and a general reduction in the use of pesticides, some of which are directly beneficial to bees.

In 2016 the Council received an award as Bee Champion at a ceremony held at Kew Gardens.

Litter will be removed from short grass areas on a regular basis to stop it blowing into adjoining planted areas. Sports clubs will be encouraged to be self-policing in terms of litter generated during formal sporting activities.

Regular maintenance of drainage systems will ensure good levels of playability and the condition of fencing will be regularly checked and repairs undertaken as necessary. The focus of this part of the Recreation Ground will be on formal sporting activities and the Council will continue to work in partnership with local sports clubs to ensure the site continues to support these functions to a high standard in future.

### 3.3 AREA C: WOODLAND

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#### Description

The southern, western and northern fringes of the site have been planted with a single avenue of decorative trees, that interrupt the open quality of the space, screening it from neighbouring houses, providing a sense of enclosure to the Recreation Ground and establishing visual connectivity with the woodland belt to the west of the site. On the eastern edge of the southern extension, an understorey of wildflower planting has diversified the texture of the ground, adding visual interest and biodiversity to the site.

#### Vision

The woodland fringe acts as a transitional zone between the Rec and neighbouring residential areas, but could also connect more strongly to the landscape qualities lying outside the site and beyond the Eastbourne urban fringe. The visual connection between the Rec and neighbouring residential areas could be strengthened by additional tree planting to de-formalise the current tree avenues on site; by adopting differential mowing regimes we can add texture and greater habitat diversity to the edges of the site.

Thirty five new trees have been planted within the central part of the recreation ground and the well-received perimeter planting to the play area has been further extended as requested by the Friends of OTR. New native hedge - line planting has been created on the fenced boundaries with the Friends arranging the planting and species secured from the Woodland Trust.

#### Management objectives

Existing tree stock will be regularly checked for health, and trees will be pruned on a cyclical basis.

Wildflower meadows will be mown twice a year with arisings left in situ to support the development of a seed bank.

### 3.4 TREE STOCK

Trees in parks are surveyed on a 5-year rotation with ad hoc inspections carried out as required. Programmed work to trees in Old Town Recreation Ground are supplemented with emergency tree works where health and safety issues are identified. Tree works are carried out by the Council's contractors.

### 3.5 PATROLLING AND ENFORCEMENT

Monitoring of issues around antisocial behaviour, vandalism and security will be monitored regularly by the Council's Neighbourhood First Officers, who liaise closely with the PCSOs; further support will be forthcoming from the police as required.

Members of the public have the opportunity to report issues relating to anti-social behaviour, maintenance and repairs through the free 'Report it' smartphone application, as well as by telephoning and increasingly by emails to "Customer First". The Council also encourages members of the public to report anti-social behaviour or vandalism to the police using the non-emergency number 101. The Council web pages can also be used to report issues noted within Eastbourne's open spaces.



Fig.9 - Example of information available to users.





# THE MANAGEMENT OF OLD TOWN RECREATION GROUND



## 4.1 THE MANAGEMENT OF OLD TOWN RECREATION GROUND

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The management of Old Town Recreation Ground is informed by Eastbourne Council's departmental business plan for parks and open spaces.

Following a recent Council restructure the Parks and Gardens department has now moved into the Specialist category, led by Specialist Advisors in Open Spaces within Customer First.

The Council employs external contractors for the maintenance of local parks and gardens, led by the Specialist Advisors for Open Spaces. These contractors were appointed in 2007, after a successful tender for a 10 year contract and work to adhere to the contract specifications seen in Appendix 2.

Customer First consists of five teams:

A Customer First contact team to deal with all enquiries, face to face, over the phone and online.

A Customer First caseworker team to provide a joined up and integrated service for all applications and cases reported to the Council.

A Neighbourhood First team based in your area to help you quickly resolve issues and improve standards.

A team of Specialist Advisors who manage complex cases and provide expert input where required.

A Service Improvement team dedicated to identifying ways to improve service performance and quality.

## 4.2 A WELCOMING PLACE (refer to Table 1)

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Old Town Recreation Ground is a well-used amenity for the residents of the Old Town area and it is estimated that the site has over one hundred thousand visits a year. The Rec provides a place where people can relax and be involved in recreational activities, both active and passive.

Good and Safe access

The Recreation Ground has four points of entry and two of these allow fully DDA compliant access to the site. The action plan sets out proposals to make all entrances more welcoming and to improve access to the required statutory standards.

Staff presence

The Recreation Ground is intermittently staffed 7 days per week, 52 weeks per year by a mobile team of maintenance operatives. All Parks staff wear a distinct uniform.

The Council website, Visit Eastbourne, is the main source of information regarding parks, however, the Council accepts enquiries using various methods and encourages the use of online accounts and emails through the web site. Information signage is also present in each park.

Signage

Signage within the Recreation Ground has been reviewed and a re-signing process is being undertaken. The signage strategy for the site will concentrate on:

- Communicating the brand for Eastbourne Parks;
- Communicating information about events and activity opportunities within the site;
- Wayfinding within the Recreation Ground and to destinations beyond and
- Information and interpretation to inform visitors of the Recreation Ground's natural heritage.

## 4.1.1 Entrances, boundaries and signage

The identity of Old Town Recreation Ground has been enhanced by updating the existing entrances to be more welcoming and user-friendly; this reinforces the identity of the site and the sense of arrival. The action plan identified the need to:

- Consider entrance detailing for entrances on Longland Road and Sancroft Road.
- Consider the quality of access from Longland Road with a view to enhancing access for people with disabilities.

In 2016 the main entrances off Longland Road have been enhanced with new Breedon gravel paths and colourful new entrance beds.

AIM 1 : Positively welcome people into the Park in terms of both physical and social access. Continue to improve access to the Park, overcoming any intellectual, physical, sensory, social and cultural obstacles					
	Objective	Achievement to date	Action required	Timescale	Responsibility / comments
1.1	Ensure the site is easy to get around and feels welcoming	Closed unofficial and dangerous entrance off Cherry Gardens Road at Police request	Improvements to entrances and points of entry	Internal capital bid 2016-17	Senior Specialist Advisor
			Improved notice board signage (uniformity/ brand image)	£30k Internal capital bid 2016-17	Senior Specialist Advisor
			Convert toilet block as kiosk/concession – or alternative? Find partner	Market testing 2016-17	Specialist Advisor – Open Spaces or external consultant

Table 1: Management objectives – Aim 1

## 4.2 HEALTHY SAFE AND SECURE (refer to Table 2)

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- The Recreation Ground needs to provide a safe environment for the public to visit and for contractors and EBC staff to work. It is imperative that the infrastructure of the site is designed and maintained in such a way that it provides a safe environment for users. The management of Old Town Recreation Ground is focused on the provision of healthy and safe facilities and a secure environment in which to relax.
- The parks maintenance team visits the site on a daily basis and reports all and any health and safety matters to the Specialist Advisor for action. Qualified Council staff undertake sample visits to a number of playground sites to undertake a quality control assessment. In June of each year, a RoSPA (Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents) assessment is undertaken for each playground and a final report submitted for the attention of the Specialist Advisors of Open Spaces.
- The site has a range of health and safety related equipment deployed as follows:
  - Toilets – within the toilet block and available for use 7 days per week;
  - Emergency numbers are posted on all signs across the park.

### Security vandalism and graffiti

User surveys indicate that the overwhelming majority of users feel safe or very safe using Old Town Recreation Ground. Incidents of crime and anti-social behaviour and vandalism are rare. The objective of the management regime will be to ensure that this remains the case.

The parks maintenance team visit the site on a daily basis, providing reassurance to the public using the site and is a first point of contact in respect of issues regarding anti-social behaviour and breaches of the byelaws or statute law. The Neighbourhood First team liaises closely with the Police and local PCSOs and regularly shares intelligence with these as a means of driving down anti-social behaviour in the public realm. The Council engages positively with the local community regarding anti-social behaviour and enviro-crime through its Neighbourhood Panel which is attended by both the police and PCSOs. To support this dialogue, members of the public are encouraged to report any incidence of crime or anti-social behaviour through the 'Report It' app and via the 101 non-emergency police number.

Regular maintenance of planted areas keeps key views open around the main footpaths and foci of activity. Further works will be undertaken to ensure that users continue to feel safe to use the space.



<b>AIM 2 : Ensure a healthy, safe and secure experience for park users/ To maintain and improve health and safety measures in the park to ensure a safe and enjoyable visitor experience</b>					
	Objective	Achievement to date	Action required	Timescale	Responsibility / comments
2.1	Undertake weekly safety inspections of play equipment/pathways and all site facilities	On-going programme of safety inspections and repairs	Review current system. Update, improve & regulate	On-going	Neighbourhood Advisors and Specialist advisor – Open Spaces
2.2	Apply and update Risk Assessments for all uses and areas of the site.	Risk assessments direct funding to remedial works	Review and update risk assessments	On-going	Specialist Advisor – Open Spaces
2.3	Deal with incidents of vandalism or temporary hazards as soon as possible, making safe and rectifying	Reporting through Neighbourhood First, 'Report It' App and grounds maintenance inspections	Monitoring of policy for repairs and repairs performance	On-going	Specialist Advisor – Open Spaces
2.4	Follow set procedure for reporting incidents and accidents. Where appropriate, put measures in place to reduce such health and safety related incidents	Incident reporting through Neighbourhood First	Operations, monitoring & effectiveness	On-going	Specialist Advisor – Open Spaces
2.5	To manage the site to deter and reduce the incidents of crime, ensuring the site is a safe and secure place for visitors.	Patrolling by Neighbourhood First. Monitoring of crime and ASB by Neighbourhood Panel	Improve entrances  Consider fear of crime/hiding place	Internal capital bid 2016-17  On-going through GM	Senior Specialist Advisor  Senior Specialist Advisor
2.6	Where possible, enforce Park Bylaws.		Bye-laws review and adoption of new bye-laws	2017-18	Senior Specialist Advisor
2.7	Improve the relationship with Police, community safety staff – outreach workers to tackle and monitor anti-social behaviour. Consult Crime Prevention Officer	Patrolling by Neighbourhood First.  Neighbourhood Panel including Police and PCSOs	Continued shared intelligence with Police, Neighbourhood First and specific operations (e.g. Operation Blitz)	On-going	Specialist Advisor – Open Spaces

Table 2: Management Objectives – Aim 2

## 4.3 CLEAN AND WELL-MAINTAINED (refer to Table 3)

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The cleanliness of the Recreation Ground is taken very seriously by both the Council and its users. Litter clearance is undertaken as part of the borough wide grounds maintenance contract. This has delivered significant improvements in cleanliness since its inception. The Council has and continues to take a very robust approach to the management of litter in the public domain.

The Council also takes a robust approach to the control of dog faeces in the site. Dog bins are provided across the site and suitable signage demonstrates the different modes of dog management required in each area.

The Council encourages users to report incidents of poor maintenance, vandalism and repair issues through the use of the 'Report It' app. Reported issues are referred to the Customer First team and acted upon, with health and safety issues always being given top priority.

The Council encourages responsible dog ownership and endorses an annual dog show to promote this across the Borough.

### 4.3.1 Infrastructure and services: maintenance and repair

Buildings in the Recreation Ground are maintained as part of the Council's Planned Maintenance programme. An internal bid will be submitted for the refurbishment of the toilet block and market testing carried out to assess the possibility of its being converted for use as a kiosk or café.

Paths are inspected by the Council's grounds maintenance contractors on a regular basis and any issues relating to quality and safety are addressed as priority. An internal capital bid will be submitted to refresh the access via the Longland Road entrance.

Planting management within the Rec is carried out by a mobile grounds maintenance team. The management approach is informed by the need to strike a balance

between the following criteria:

- The need to provide areas suitable for organised sport;
- The need to protect bio-diversity;
- The need to provide areas of horticultural interest and excellence within the Recreation Ground; and
- The need to keep sight lines open so that users can enjoy the space from a perceived position of safety.

<b>AIM 3</b> : Provide a well-maintained and clean Park environment, maintaining the landscape, buildings and infrastructure of the park to consistently high standards.					
	Objective	Achievement to date	Action required	Timescale	Responsibility / comments
3.1	To ensure the site provides a high quality facility that is clean and safe for all to enjoy.	Monitoring through grounds maintenance contract	Enhanced horticultural and ecological management	Deliver enhanced standards through new GM contract 2017-22	Senior Specialist Advisor GM contractor Specialist Advisor – Open Spaces
3.2	Monitoring/ inspections/incident reporting.	Weekly/monthly monitoring through GM contract	Review effectiveness of monitoring	On-going	Specialist Advisor – Open Spaces
3.3	Communicate effectively with dog owners to encourage responsible use of the site	Responsible dog ownership events in parks	Ad hoc events in Old Town Recreation Ground	2015 and on an on-going basis	Neighbourhood First Officers
3.4	Respond rapidly to complaints	Monitoring through weekly/monthly reports, Neighbourhood First reporting and 'Report It' App	Review effectiveness and performance	On going	Specialist Advisor – Open Spaces
3.5	New park facilities	Enhanced playground	Install cycle racks	Internal capital bid 2016-17	Senior Specialist Advisor

Table 3: Management Objectives – Aim 3



## 4.4 SUSTAINABILITY (refer to Table 4)

Sustainability is becoming increasingly important in all aspects of day-to-day parks management. It is important that management practices at the Rec are subject to review in light of the most recent developments in sustainable practices.

As part of its aspiration for the management of the public domain, the Specialist Advisor has defined a number of objectives for sustainability. Specifically in respect of Old Town Recreation Ground, the service will (as resources allow):

- Develop bio-diversity informed management plans for the site;
- Revise the management plan to include a bio-diversity action plan upon adoption;
- Separate and collect recyclable materials to increase waste recycling from parks;
- Increase conservation areas within the recreation ground;
- Further develop and enhance our relationships with voluntary and community sector engagement in long term sustainable commitment to our parks and green spaces.

These actions will build on the following measures that have been or are in the process of being completed:

- Implementation of a Pesticide Reduction Strategy (no scheduled use of pesticides) permitted within contract;
- Initiated a no-peat policy.

AIM 4 : Improve the environmental quality and sustainability of practices carried out in the Park.					
	Objective	Achievement to date	Action required	Timescale	Responsibility / comments
4.1	To manage the site in a sustainable way	All green and tree waste re-cycled and re-used in Eastbourne's parks. Mowing regime varied to support wildflower meadow along one perimeter.	Further sustainability measures built into new contract from 2017 (e.g. re-cycling, waste segregation, electric vehicles)	2017-2022	Senior Specialist Advisor GM contractor

Table 4: Management Objectives – Aim 4

## 4.5 CONSERVATION AND HERITAGE (refer to Table 5)

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The heritage of Old Town Recreation Ground is described and outlined in Section 2.1 of the management plan. The site originally functioned as farm land until it became subsumed into the built fabric of Eastbourne. The open quality of the landscape and its original configuration in terms of field and hedgerow are preserved in the contemporary layout of the Rec.

Today, the recreation grounds natural heritage is a key aspect of its significance. Bio-diversity considerations have been included in the existing contract management specifications and will be formalized upon the procurement of new term contractors in 2017 following a review of the existing specifications. This will ensure that ecological management is central to the maintenance of Old Town Recreation Ground in the coming years.

In pursuit of these recommendations, the Council will undertake a number of ecological initiatives including the installation of bat and bird boxes, the creation of log-pile habitats and working in partnership with local organisations to promote the natural heritage of the site and make it available to a wider audience. We will work closely with the Friends of Old Town Recreation Ground and other partners to extend learning and volunteering opportunities to disseminate this aspect of the Recreation Ground's character. To this end, the Friends have proposed the creation of a wetland habitat within the Recreation Ground and this proposal has been carried forward into the action plan for consideration through consultation.

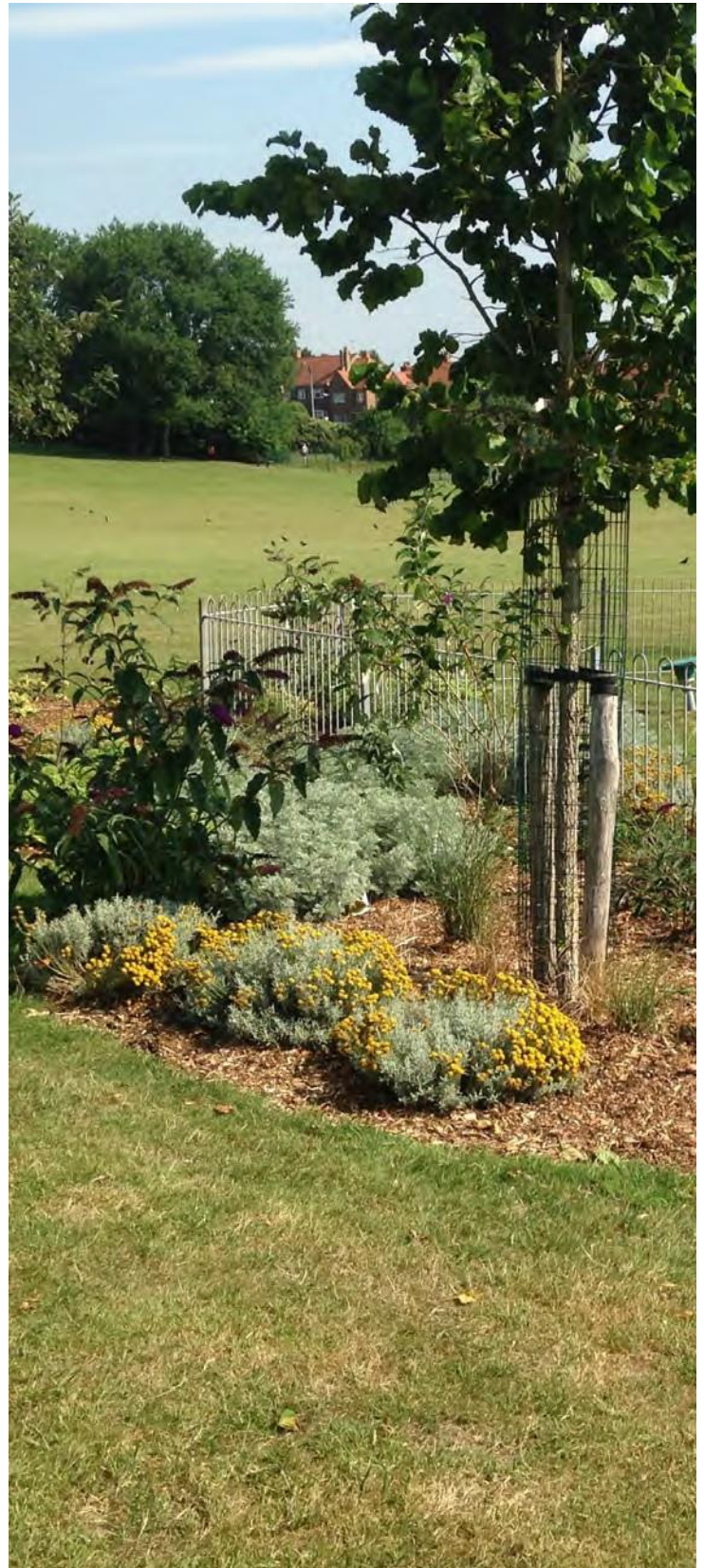


Fig.9 - Planting bed.

AIM 5 : Maintain the historic landscape character and enhance the Parks biodiversity value, whilst ensuring provision for contemporary users.					
	Objective	Achievement to date	Action required	Timescale	Responsibility / comments
5.1	To protect the fabric of the site whilst enhancing biodiversity and amenity benefits.	Achievement of Queen Elizabeth II Field in Trust status	New interpretation signage	Internal capital bid 2017-18	Specialist Advisor - Open Spaces
5.2	Involve experts in developing the biodiversity/habitat value of areas in the site e.g. Tree trail	Wildflower meadow planting	Tree trail Interpretation	Internal capital bid 2017-18	Senior Specialist Advisor
5.3	Develop Tree Asset Management Strategy, including specific management objectives and targets for the trees in Old Town Recreation Ground	Tree index or ArboTrack	Tree Management Plan	2017-18	Specialist Advisor – Open Spaces
5.4	To have a rolling programme of tree planting and replacement to ensure the tree stock is maintained whilst the species and locations selected for planting	Rolling programme of tree replacement.	5 year rolling assessment and re-planting programme focusing on native trees – biodiversity & habitat creation	2015 and on-going	Specialist Advisor – Open Spaces
5.5	For Old Town Recreation Ground to remain a significant contributor to the Eastbourne's open space resource	Old Town Recreation Ground protected in perpetuity through designation as QE II Field in Trust	Better marketing through the Council's website & other effective media	2015 and on going	Specialist Advisor – Open Spaces
5.6	Develop bio-diversity value of Old Town Recreation Ground	Bee-friendly planting area Wildflower meadows	Install a pond  Eastbourne Pollinators initiative  Planting for food foraging	2016-17 internal capital bid subject to review and consultation  2015 and on going  2018; External funding application in partnership with Edible Eastbourne	Senior Specialist Advisor  Specialist Advisor – Open Spaces  Specialist Advisor – Open Spaces  Specialist Advisor – Open Spaces

Table 5: Management Objectives – Aim 5



## 4.6 COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT (refer to Table 6)

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Old Town Recreation Ground is a key area of significance within the local community. The enthused Friends of Old Town Recreation Ground and various other groups and clubs that use and enjoy the site are afforded opportunities of involvement through community events and volunteering activities arranged by the Council as resources allow.

The Council has a very strong relationship with the Friends of Old Town Recreation Ground. This gives local residents the opportunity to raise issues around management and maintenance and to get these issues resolved as soon as possible. The Friends group has been running as an organisation since 2012 and is very well respected by the Council and local residents. We will continue to build relationships with other voluntary sector organisations to ensure that the volunteer offer is strengthened.

Community involvement in the management of the Recreation Ground is key to providing a facility that people will use, respect and enjoy. The Friends Group is highly organised and acts as one voice for users to communicate park issues to EBC.

It will be considered that the Friends Group may not represent the wider community and therefore it is necessary identify other ways to engage with additional people. In recognition of this, the Council engages separately with specific interest groups (e.g. sports clubs and families with young children). This ensures that their aspirations for the Rec are understood and that they have an understanding of the constraints within which the Council operates when trying to reconcile the sometimes conflicting aspirations of different user groups.

The Council has identified potential areas of conflict between the following groups of users.

- Dog walkers and other users; the site is very popular with a variety of user groups which can lead to conflict.

Any guidelines issued by park staff rely on the goodwill of site users to interpret and follow them as the use of Byelaws is limited to preventing real abuse and misuse of the park. This will be reinforced by the introduction of new signage around the Rec to inform the public on issues around dog control, dog fouling and by advising cyclists to cycle responsibly.

The level of conflict between different users will be monitored with the Neighbourhood First team who will play an active role in communicating with visitors.



Fig.10 - Community cleaning and planting activities.

**AIM 6 : Provide opportunities to increase community use and involvement, particularly through events, education, interpretation and building partnerships.**

	Objective	Achievement to date	Action required	Timescale	Responsibility / comments
6.1	To fully involve and utilise the local community to gain support for site, encouraging a sense of ownership and sense of place	Good communication between the Council and Friends	Develop relationship with Friends and involve in future management decision-making & at all levels for effective engagement  Broaden partnerships	Develop additional volunteering opportunities through new GM contract: 2017 onwards  2015-16	Senior Specialist Advisor  GM contractor  Specialist Advisor – Open Spaces
6.2	To encourage the community to become actively involved in management of specific areas of the site, e.g. Wildlife areas. Any such group would need to be self-sufficient e.g. volunteers or supported by EBC or other agency	Friends actively involved in bulb planting and development of wildflower meadow	Community/partner involvement in developing specific areas – (e.g. – wildflower meadow and greater connectivity with Sussex Downs AONB); Sussex Wildlife Trust, South Downs National Park and RSPB	2015-16 and on going	Specialist Advisor – Open Spaces
6.3	To enhance educational opportunities in the site		Maximise potential of park as educational resource through partnerships with local schools and colleges – project engagement opportunities	On going	Specialist Advisor – Open Spaces
6.4	To have regular contact and meetings with Old Town Recreation Ground Friends Group, to maximise effective use of their commitment to and resources for the site.	Meetings with Friends of Old Town Recreation Ground as resources allow. Annual audit of partnership	Attend friends of meetings and develop enhanced relationship. Greater Friends influence over future management & maintenance input	On going	Specialist Advisor – Open Spaces
6.5	To carry out regular surveys to gauge/ monitor levels of support, issues, perception of safety, enjoyment and frequency of use.	User satisfaction survey 2014	Annual user survey	2015 and on going	Specialist Advisor – Open Spaces
6.6	To provide a good range of facilities and activities for people to enjoy	Playground refurbishment (2012?)	Consult stakeholders on current and future provision in the park – user & non-user groups to inform future funding bids  Trim Trail	Tennis court refurbishment (2015)  External funding bid 2018-19	Specialist Advisor – Open Spaces  Senior Specialist Advisor
6.7	Encourage fund raising and sponsorship schemes to help mark community involvement and feeling of ownership		Local business sponsorships to be investigated	2015 and on going	To be confirmed subject to resources and partnership development

Table 6: Management Objectives – Aim 6

## 4.7 MARKETING (refer to Table 7)

The Council are developing a new strategy for marketing and this will include promoting the recreation ground to raise awareness of the activities within. Provision for educational signage to include interpretation and information is also within the financial plan for future funding applications and is identified in the action plan

below.

The Neighbourhood First team works closely with the communications team to provide information to residents and visitors to Eastbourne on activities and events taking place in Eastbourne's parks.

The Tourism team ensures that parks and events are promoted through a variety of media.

AIM 7 : Develop the Park as a civic amenity, a source of pride, which realises the full potential of its historic and natural attributes and ensure effective promotion of the Park as a community resource.					
	Objective	Achievement to date	Action required	Timescale	Responsibility / comments
7.1	To enable people to appreciate the site's heritage		Better signage and interpretation across the site  More information on the Council's website	Internal capital bid 2016-17  Enhancement of Parks webpages in partnership with EBC tourism: 2015 and on-going	Senior Specialist Advisor  Specialist Advisor – Open Spaces
7.2	To keep people informed about what is happening in the Recreation Ground	Bulb planting, wildflower meadow planting and sensory garden planting in partnership with Friends	Develop marketing strategy for the park – to attract more users from all areas (locals, businesses & tourists/ visitors etc.)	Enhancement of Parks webpages in partnership with EBC tourism: 2015 and on-going  More partnerships working	Specialist Advisor – Open Spaces
7.3	To develop new audiences from under-represented and socially excluded groups		Engage with excluded groups to encourage their participation.	On-going	Specialist Advisor – Open Spaces
7.4	Promote parks activities	Play opportunities provided in partnership with other agencies and range of sports-based initiatives.	Work with partners to extend range of activities and events (e.g. schools and colleges) – park as an educational facility & health improvement opportunity	On-going	Specialist Advisor – Open Spaces
7.5	Increase scope for partnering opportunities involving other agencies with the site and with continued management of the site.		Relationships with other agencies – East Sussex Wildlife Trust, RSPB, SDNP?	On-going	Specialist Advisor – Open Spaces
7.6	To deliver employment and training opportunities for the immediate labour market.	Horticultural apprenticeships through existing GM contract	Partnerships to promote employment and training opportunities through new GM contract	2017-22	Senior Specialist Advisor  GM contractor

Table 7: Management Objectives – Aim 7



## 4.7 MARKETING (cont.)

The events are promoted on the Council's website and via the local press and internally. The notice board is used to provide site users with general information as well as seasonal updates.

### Eastbourne's Website

The website, [www.visiteastbourne.com](http://www.visiteastbourne.com) contains information on Eastbourne's major parks, their facilities, a map, an events calendar and information on the history of the site.

### Signage

Signage throughout all Eastbourne's parks is being updated. New signage will adhere to Eastbourne Council's signage guidelines and access requirements. New signage will include up-to-date information with regards to the recent Council restructure.

### Press

The Council will seek, whenever possible, press coverage for events and activities taking place in the park.

We are strongly committed to developing Old Town Recreation Ground as a place where people can volunteer and acquire new skills.

The identity of the Recreation Ground is to an extent

determined by the number of events that take place within it. This ensures that the Rec develops its role as a key facility for the adjacent community and the rest of Eastbourne.

## 4.8 CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PLAN (refer to Table 8 and Section 5.0)

The continuous improvement action plan tables set out the objectives and priorities for action, to address the issues identified throughout the Green Flag Management Plan and to take forward the vision to meet the identified management aims for the site. The aims and the associated objectives have been broadly divided under the eight Green Flag Award criteria to enable ease of use and self-assessment. It is noted that the aims and objectives do not exist independently from one another but are bound together by the overall vision for the site.

For each objective the target timescale is set and the person/team responsible for implementation identified. The action plan will be annually reviewed to assess whether timescales have been achieved and to aid future budget planning.

AIM 8 : Ensure all those involved (including the local community) in the management and maintenance of Old Town Recreational Ground Park effectively use the Management Plan as a working document.					
	Objective	Achievement to date	Action required	Timescale	Responsibility / comments
8.1	Monitor and review the management plan regularly.	Preparation of GFMP 2014	Annual monitoring of GFMP by EBC and stakeholders	2015 and on going	Specialist aAdvisor – Open Spaces
8.3	Refer to management plan in relation to any future projects or management issues.	EBC medium term financial strategy	Refer to plan to inform future projects and prioritise projects listed in this plan	2015 and on going	Senior Specialist Advisor /Specialist advisor – Open Spaces
8.4	To ensure that administrative systems are in place for the effective collection, storage and distribution of information related to the site		Make information on the park available via the Council's website	Improve website pages: 2015 and on-going	Specialist Advisor – Open Spaces

Table 8: Management Objectives – Aim 8



# MAINTENANCE GUIDELINES

## 5.1 CONTRACTUAL ARRANGEMENTS

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This section identifies the different hard and soft landscape management regimes required within Old Town Recreation Ground. The plans will be read in conjunction with the annual maintenance schedule below that lists the operations required to maintain each component area and the more detailed maintenance guidelines which follow.

### Parks Grounds Maintenance Contract

Procurement of the grounds maintenance contract is undertaken in accordance with the Council's Contract Standing Orders (CSOs) and in line with EU regulations. Maintenance of this site currently forms part of the grounds maintenance contract for the whole borough.

As detailed earlier in the plan, the parks grounds maintenance contract provides for a single borough-wide integrated grounds maintenance service enabling a standardised approach across all parks and benefiting from economies of scale.

The contract is operated by The Landscape Group and commenced in 2007. The contract will remain in operation until 2017 when it will be re-tendered.



## 5.2 ACCESS AND SECURITY

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Both of these considerations are discussed earlier in this plan. In principle access to the site will be as free as possible, for all types of user, but through the defined entrances.

To maintain this situation:

- Access points will be clearly marked and in a good condition;
- They should not restrict access for the disabled, but should be designed to control access where required, eg. for vehicles, motor bikes etc.;
- Paths within the site will be maintained in a sound condition;
- Except at the defined access points the boundary will be maintained to deter access.

Security within the Recreation Ground is largely the responsibility of the Police and PCSOs, delivered through regular patrols and an intermittent on-site presence. In addition regular monitoring will be carried out over the whole site to identify any areas which seem less secure than others. If security issues are detected, measures need to be taken to address this, e.g. through strategic pruning of shrubs to improve sight lines into these areas, attracting more people to these areas through events or by making these areas more attractive.

In making the site secure it is however very important to avoid becoming too regimental and prescriptive about behaviour as this would tend to drive people away. Instead efforts will be made to attract a wide variety of people to the site and to work with them to instill a sense of ownership. As a consequence users will start to treat it and other users with respect; this respect will produce a self-policing community that takes pride in their local park which will help to reduce, or eliminate potential mis-use of the site.

### Health and Safety

Security is also addressed elsewhere in the management plan and it is imperative that the necessary measures be taken to ensure the site is safe for visitors to the park and for EBC staff and contractors working within. The main considerations are as follows:

- The structures and fabric of the site will be designed and maintained in such a way that they pose no danger to the users;
- Any work carried out in the site must comply with the relevant health and safety regulations.
- Staff and contractor training should be kept up to date, including first aid; and
- Incidents of vandalism will be dealt with immediately or the necessary action taken to minimise the risk of harm to users until repairs can be actioned.

Contractors and park staff will be fully briefed on the health and safety procedures and the measures to be taken in the event of a problem. This should involve a full reporting procedure for incidents and accidents.

## 5.3 VISITOR MANAGEMENT AND INTERPRETATION

Attracting visitors to the Recreation Ground touches on a number of different issues.

- Attracting them;
- Providing a satisfying experience when they do visit;
- Allowing them a voice in the development and management of the site; and
- Responding to that voice and communicating with visitors.

The following section proposes general guidelines/principles to consider in relation to visitor management.

### Attracting visitors

Modern advertisement techniques will be employed through the local community to attract visitors to the site, or to specific events held in the site. This can be done through advertising points further afield as well as through the Council's website.

To ensure the beauty of the site is maintained, consideration will be given to the design of the landscape features coupled with the standards of maintenance that can also attract additional park visitors. A commitment to achieve the Green Flag standard of excellence provides an added incentive to produce and maintain an attractive space.

Events and activities need to be aimed at the varied community using the park. They need to be well-organised and once completed, organisers should leave the park in a clean and sound condition with consequent damage repaired immediately. There needs to be effective communication and coordination between the organisers of events and park staff, this will provide a well-balanced mixture of large and small events of different types and ensure that the park remains accessible to all.

Literature advertising the Recreation Ground and its activities will be attractive with clear, concise information and will be well distributed using all available forms of media.

### Providing a satisfying experience



Fig.11 - Information panel located near park entrance.

Once a visitor has been attracted to the park, whether to enjoy the park itself or an event therein, their satisfaction is strongly influenced by the extent to which their expectation of a visit matches the reality of their experience. To achieve this coincidence:

- The Recreation Ground must be attractive, safe and well maintained and the resources within it (toilets, playgrounds etc.) function as they should;
- The Rec/event must be advertised accurately;
- The Rec/event must function as expected. Events must be well organised and of good quality; and
- The facilities, history and services on offer in the Rec must be effectively and coherently presented to the visitor.

### A voice in the development and management of the Recreation Ground

The Council's Community Strategy stresses that parks will be managed for their users. The views of those users, in all their variety, will be gathered and assessed. The Friends of Old Town Recreation Ground is an effective and valuable voice for many users but this will be augmented by information of user attitudes collected through a variety of approaches. Information gathering processes will include

the views of those people not visiting the Recreation Ground. The surveys will be aimed at both general park use and also at responses to particular events.

#### Responding to and communicating with park users

All customer feedback will be collated, assessed and used to inform the continuing management and development of the site. It is important that any action/response to this feedback takes into consideration the vision, aims and objectives of this management plan before being implemented. Comments on health and safety issues may however require a rapid response and will be assessed and acted upon as appropriate to maintain the safety of the site and its users.

It is important in fostering a degree of involvement in the running of the Recreation Ground to provide feedback on user concerns and information on the management of the site and current projects. This can be achieved through meetings, through the use of the Council's website or in leaflets made available within the site. In distributing information to users and stakeholders, it is important to coordinate the distribution of all information to ensure that:

- The information distributed communicates clearly with the reader;
- Different sources of information are consistent with one another; and that
- There is a visible and recognizable link between the various types of information disseminated on the Recreation Ground itself.

## 5.4 ADMINISTRATION AND ARCHIVING

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The effective management of public space will be informed by effective record keeping. Records of the site's fabric will include its history, botanical and other baseline surveys, user comments, information disseminated, minutes of meetings, event record and contracts etc. Much of this information is stored digitally and although there is a range of software that can be used in managing the various data, some general points need to be considered:

- Information can be archived digitally on CDs but any archive must be supported by and controlled through an efficient index procedure for easy retrieval of data; and
- The format and software used for storage of different kinds of information about the site will be where possible, compatible with one another for ease of use and ease of data comparison/analysis where required.

GIS (Geographic Information Systems) offer the opportunity to store and inter-link to map data with associated databases of text or graphic information. For example, tree surveys are most useful when the surveyed trees digitally plotted and displayed on a map are directly linked to the digital survey database including species, age, condition etc. so that this information can be easily retrieved, analysed, displayed and updated. This method of tree surveying is currently being undertaken by the Council.

The use of digital media will be informed by Government's guidance 'E-Government: a framework for public services in the Information Age'.







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# FINANCIAL PLAN

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## 6. FINANCIAL PLAN

Ongoing revenue maintenance costs for Old Town

Recreation Ground are as follows:

- £36,083.71 Park Maintenance

Revenue maintenance costs are subject to an annual increase in RPI (Retail Price Index).

The below future projects are to be included in the development plan of Old Town Recreation Ground; however they are subject to funding and resource availability.

FINANCIAL PLAN		
Project	Timescale	Cost
Tennis court improvements	2015	£70k
Install cycle racks	2015-16	£2k
Increase biodiversity planting through perennial wildflower planting	2015-16	£1k
	2016-17	£2k
	2017-18	£2k
Pollinating insect planting – Bee Beds	2015–16	£2k
	2017-18	£3k
	2018 -19	£10k
Re-signing throughout Eastbourne including parks	Capital bid 2016-17	£30K
Improvements to main entrances	Capital bid 2016-17	£15k
Create hard stand apron for basketball unit	2016-17	£15k
Create pond subject to consultation – deferred by the FoOTR	2016-17	10k
Additional tree planting and cover	2016-17	£8k
Liaise with East Sussex County Council, improve main path through Old Town Rec - Longland to Sancroft Road	2017 -18	£35k
Create outdoor fitness area – trim trail	2017- 18	£40k
Planting for food foraging	2018 - 19	£5k
Total Costs		£250K





# MONITORING AND PLAN REVIEW

## 7. MONITORING AND PLAN REVIEW (see Table 8)

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The Management Plan will be continually reviewed and revised. The cycle for the management plan is to:

- Revise and adopt the management plan;
- Operate according to the aims and objectives held within the plan;
- Monitor the operation of the management plan;
- Review the working of the management plan; and
- Revise and improve the management plan where necessary.

### Review and Revision

The management plan will be reviewed annually by Eastbourne Borough Council's Specialist Advisors for Open Spaces to enable any improvements and alterations to be made as necessary, whilst continuously working towards the aims and objectives therein.

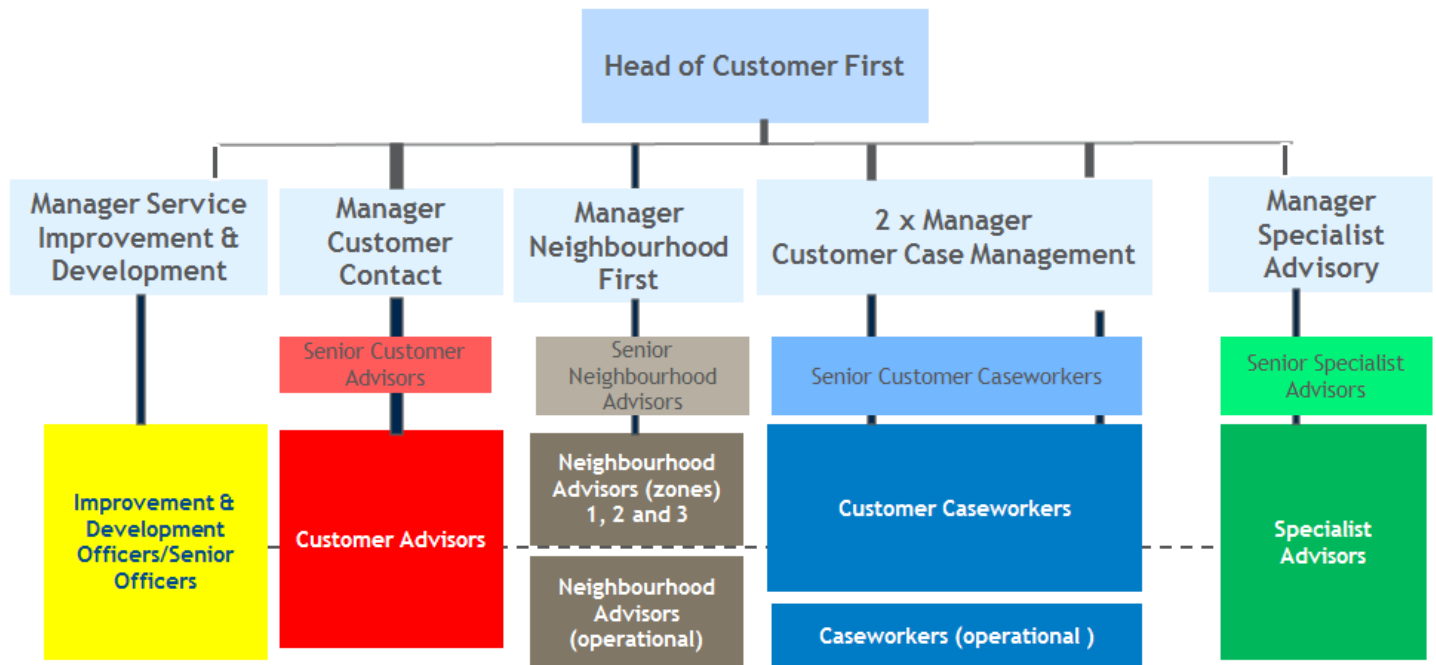
The annual application to the Keep Britain Tidy Green Flag Award will provide an annual monitoring tool and baseline annual assessment from which further improvements will be made.







## A1. CURRENT MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE



Technical operations for the Parks and Gardens section are managed by the Specialist Advisor (Open Spaces).

Trees are managed by Specialist Advisor (Arboriculture).

A Senior Specialist Advisor oversees the “Clean and Green” portfolio which includes:

- Open Spaces (Parks and Gardens);
- Arboriculture;
- Downland Management; and
- Engineering.

On-site support is provided by the Neighbourhood First team who carry out basic site inspections that do not require specialist or technical horticultural knowledge for judgement.

Incoming calls/emails are taken through the Customer First team in accordance with the Future Model; issues

requiring specialist information are noted, and sent to an appropriate Specialist Advisor, where necessary.



HAMPDEN  
PARK

# APPENDIX 2

# GROUND'S MAINTENANCE SPECIFICATIONS

Table 9: Maintenance Schedule

Spec. Ref.	Section/Task	Maintenance Tasks/Specification	Period of year	Quantity m2
C/LC/A	Litter CollectionA	Where there is evidence of dense litter accumulation, prompt response and removal is required within 6 hours. Removal of less dense or scattered litter is required within twelve hours.	Yearround	218,624
C/LC/B	Litter Collection B	Removal of scattered litter is required within 24 hours and dense litter is required within 12 hours.	Yearround	108,840
C/LB	Litter bins	All litter bins to be emptied on a regular basis before reaching 75% capacity. Work must be programmed to anticipate busy periods such as weekends, Bank Holidays and events.  Each bin to be washed and disinfected to remove debris and dirt when bin is unhygienic and attracting insects.	Yearround	27 no.
C/PS	Path sweeping & hard surfaces	All paved concrete or tarmacadam surfaced areas to be swept clean, including seat bases, brick channels, edges, synthetic and safety surfaces. Remove arisings, debris and litter to litter code grade A.	Yearround	5641
2.3.5	All fly tipping	Remove from site within six hours of occurrence or reporting. Inform the Supervising Officer of any evidence of origin or source of illegal dumping.	Yearround	Item
2.3.8	Excreta: Gardens and Grounds	Remove excreta daily from paths, steps, sports grounds and other areas in public use throughout the day.  Remove excreta weekly from planted areas and grass or as part of routine grounds maintenance operations.	Yearround	Item
2.4.9	Fallen leaves and arisings	Leaves on paths, slopes, steps and other areas where they cause a risk to users are to be removed daily, as a priority. Leaves must be cleared from drains and gulleys before they cause an obstruction to the efficient flow of water.	Yearround – mainly autumn/winter	Item
2.19.0	Infrastructure Graffiti	Graffiti shall be removed as soon as possible by scrub cleaning and/or use of solvents.  Any obscene/ racist graffiti to be reported and removed within four hours	Year Round	Item
2.19.11	Public Garden Signs and Outdoor Notice Boards	Clean surface with brush, detergent and warm water as necessary to ensure sign is legible and has a clean appearance.	Yearround	Item



Spec. Ref.	Section/Task	Maintenance Tasks/Specification	Period of year	Quantity m2
G/AG	Amenity Grass	Throughout the year grass will be maintained between 50 and 75mm as a cut and let fly operation. Edges to be reformed once a year. Grass to be collected if it exceeds 100mm in height.	Yearround	122,165
G/GB	Grass Banks	Grass managed between 50 and 75mm. Removal of cuttings required after each cut.	Yearround	120
G/RG	Rough Grass	Grass managed between 50 and 100mm. Grass not to exceed 150mm between April and September.	Yearround	12,012
2.5.6	Bulbs and corms in grass	Areas of bulb planting to be left until the foliage have fully died back. Cut and remove arisings as part of routine grounds maintenance.	Yearround	Item
R/F/S	Football – Senior Pitch	Marking out - overmark once a week Chain harrowing Piercing/ spiking  Aeration with tines, penetration of 100-150mm Rolling Fertiliser Weed control Forking goal mouths to 300mm	Aug – May Nov - April Monthly in playing season Playing season Playing season April/ May April/ June 1 Sept - 30 April	35 6 7 6 3 1 1 17
	Football – Senior Pitch	During main season the optimum playing surface should be maintained at 25-35mm.	1 Sept - 30 April	29890
R/F/J	Football – Junior pitch	During main season the optimum playing surface should be maintained at 25-35mm.	1 Sept. to 30 April	17166
A/SG	All shrubs and ground cover	Routine maintenance to include effective weed control and mulching.  Inspect and re-firm newly planted shrubs in ground. Water if showing signs of drought stress during the first two growing seasons to ensure establishment	Yearround	2,430
A/SP	Shrubs and perennials	Routine maintenance to include effective weed control and mulching excluding chemical weed control.	Year round	139

Table 9: Maintenance Schedule

Spec. Ref.	Section/Task	Maintenance Tasks/Specification	Period of year	Quantity m2
H/01	Established hedge 1 cut	Hedge to be cut as close as possible to previous years outline  Self-seeded trees and bushes to be cut to ground level and poisoned as a part of maintenance.	May - Sept	139
S/CH	Countryside hedge	Hedge to be cut as close as possible to previous years outline and not allowed to grow into the road.	May - July	680
P/PG	Playgrounds, inspection and maintenance	Weekly inspection to be carried out by a suitably trained and qualified person.  Annual certified inspection to be carried out by The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA).	Year round  June	52  1
R/T/H	Tennis hardcourt	Sweep clean all hard surfaces and remove arisings, litter and debris before start of tennis season.  Mark out all lines using permanent marking compound.  Inspect weekly to ensure safe for play.  Carry out weed control to court, surrounds and base of perimeter fence	Year round  Minimal availability from Sat. preceding Good Friday to first Sat. in November	1600









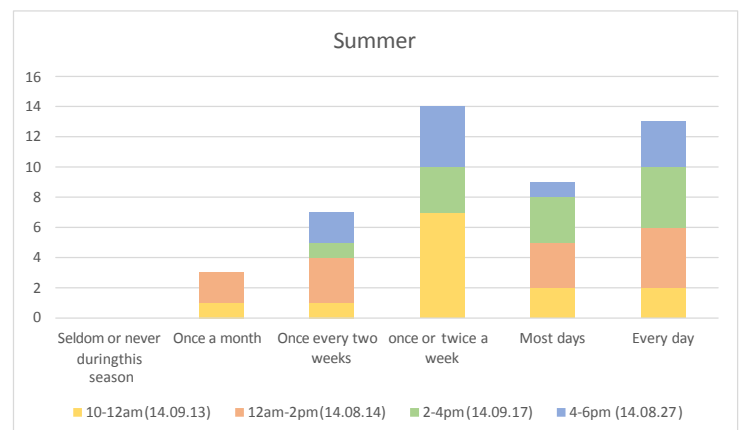
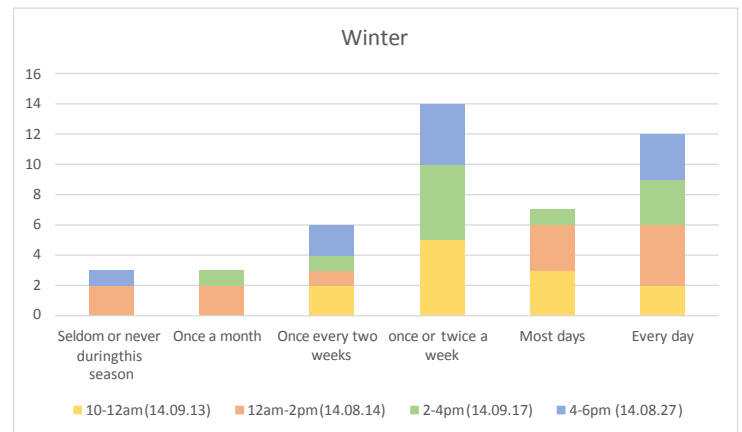
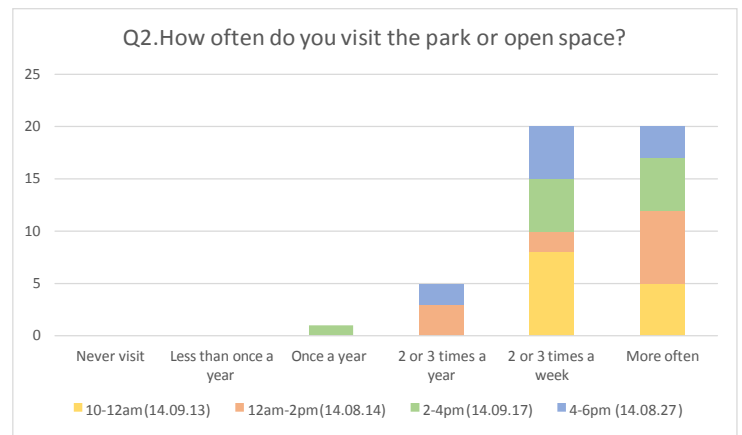
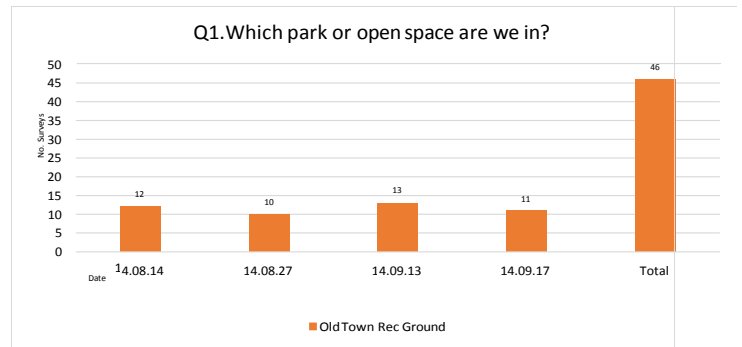
APPENDIX 3  
USER OPINION SURVEY  
HEADLINE RESULTS

### A3. USER OPINION SURVEY HEADLINE RESULTS

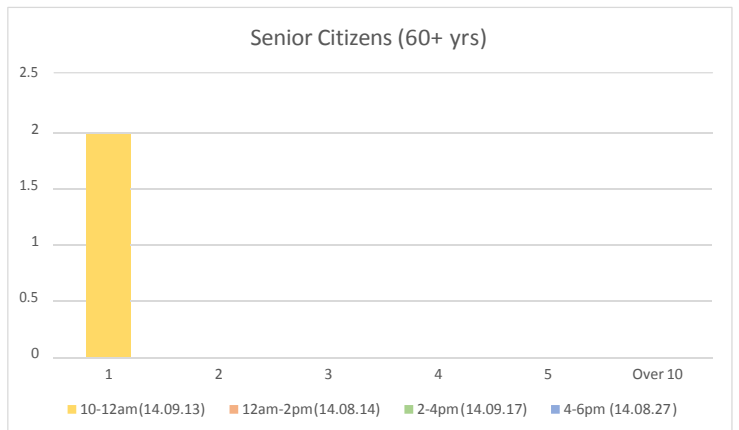
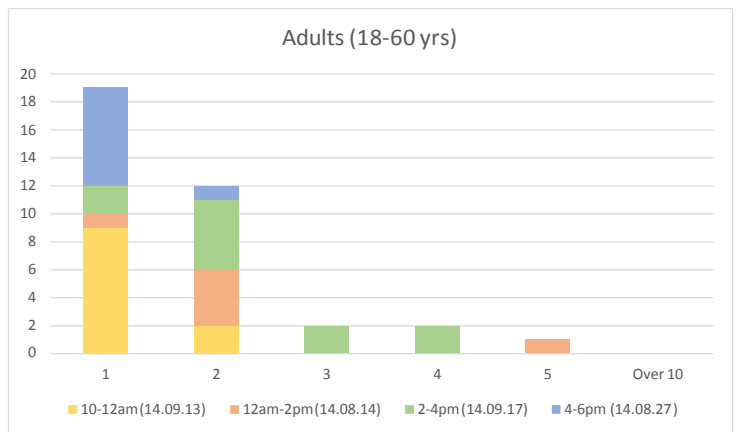
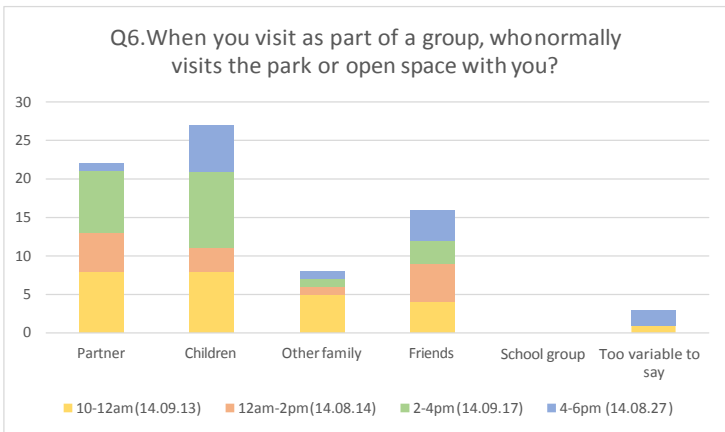
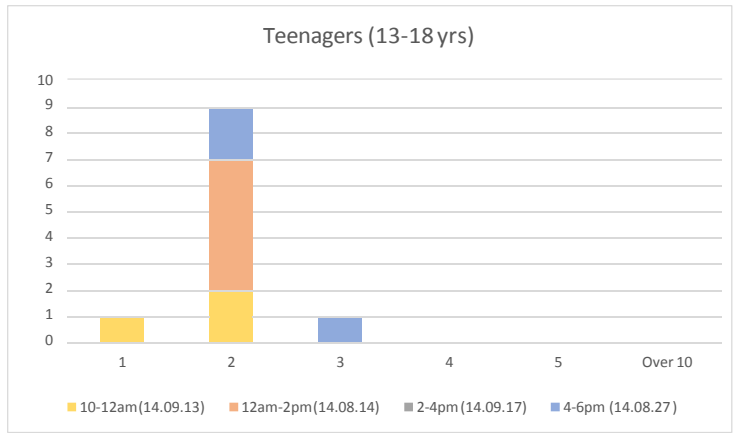
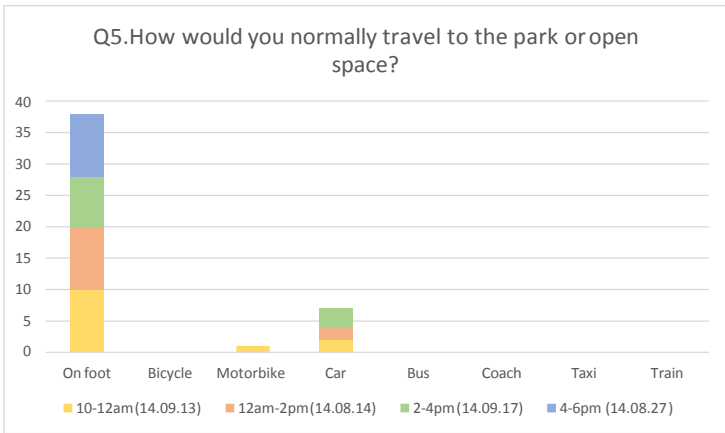
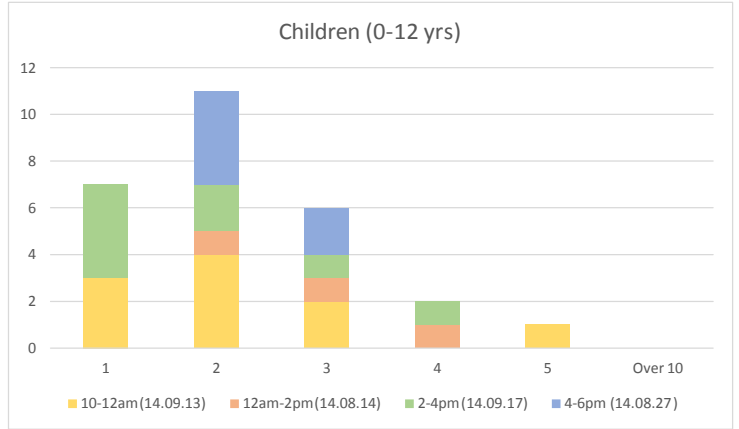
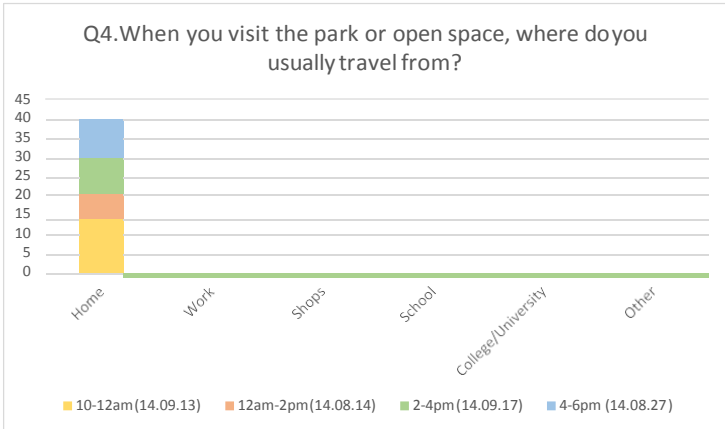
In support of the development of the management plan, we have commissioned a user opinion survey to assess end-user perceptions of Old Town Recreation Ground. The views and opinions expressed will be used to inform future dialogue around management and maintenance and future interventions in the site.

The following pages illustrate the findings of this survey.

The survey was undertaken on 4 separate days and at different times of the day in August and September 2014. A total of 46 people were canvassed.

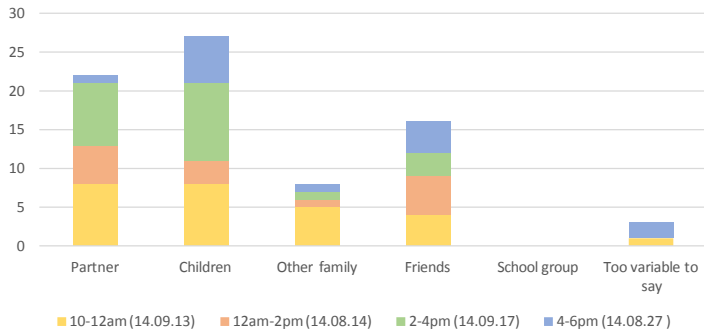




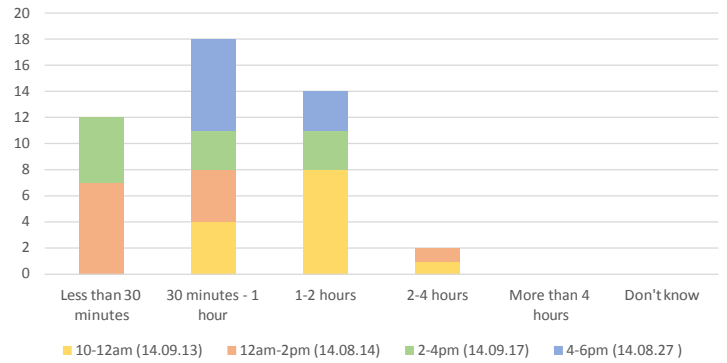


### A3. USER OPINION SURVEY HEADLINE RESULTS (cont.)

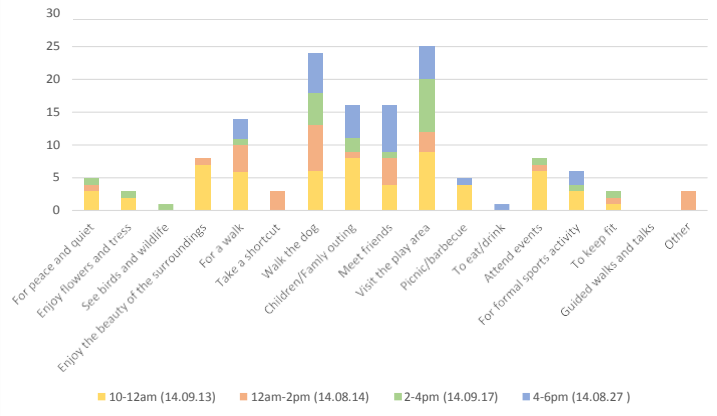
Q6. When you visit as part of a group, who normally visits the park or open space with you?



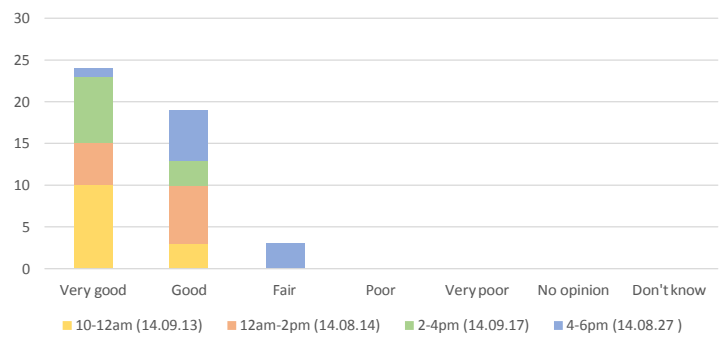
Q9. How long do you expect to stay here today?



Q8. What do you normally do when you visit the park or open space?



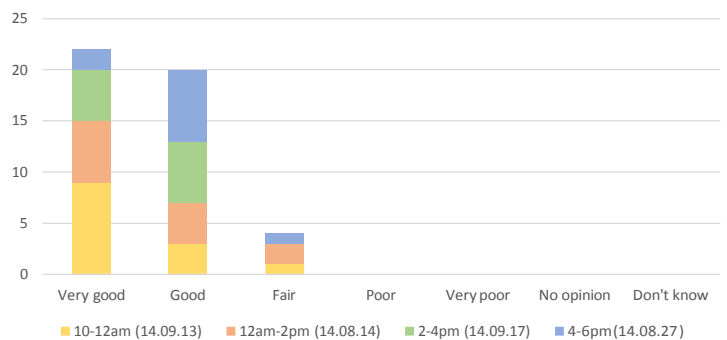
Q10. How do you rate the design and appearance of the park or open space?



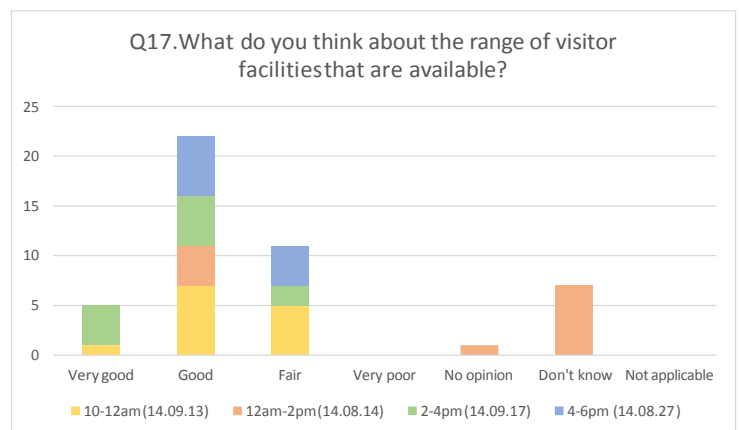
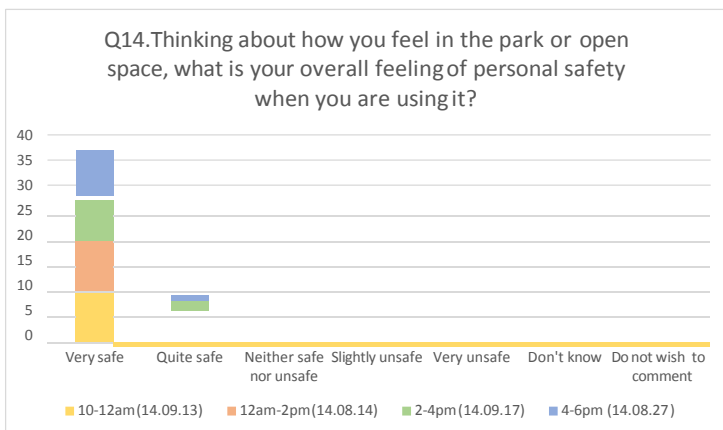
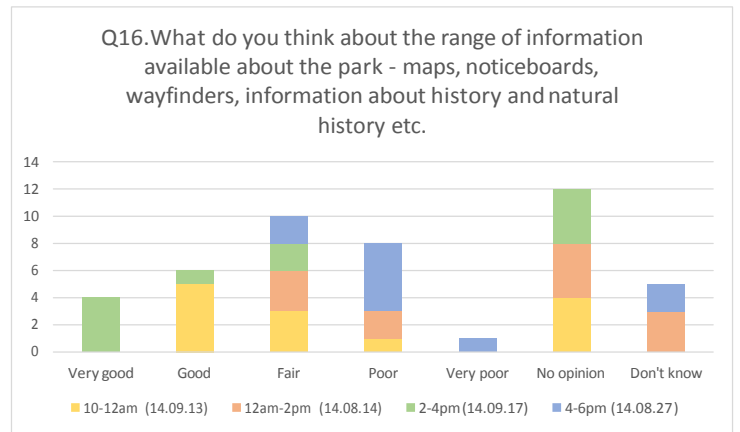
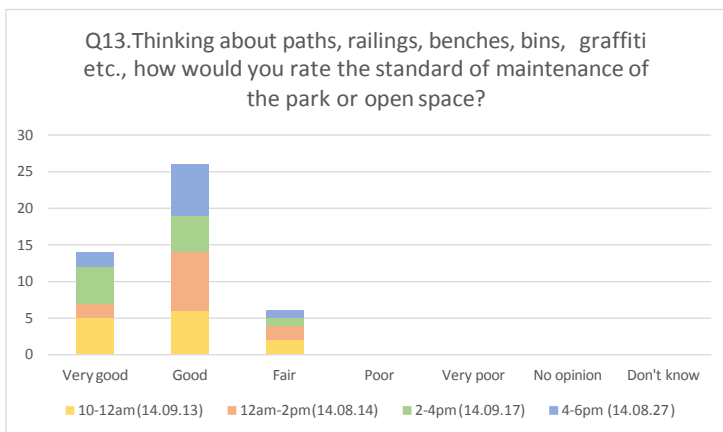
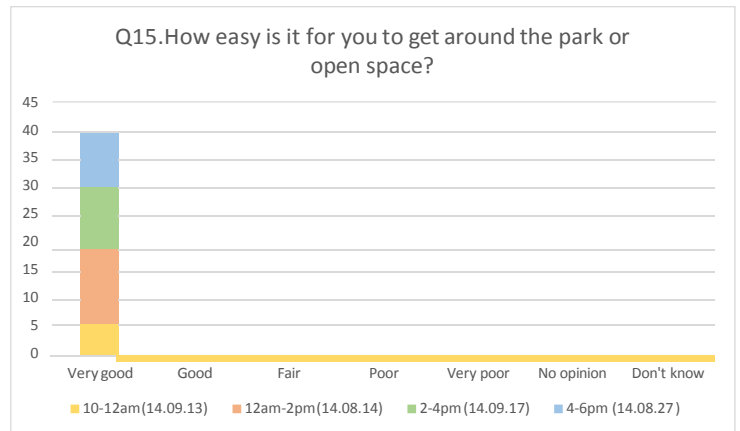
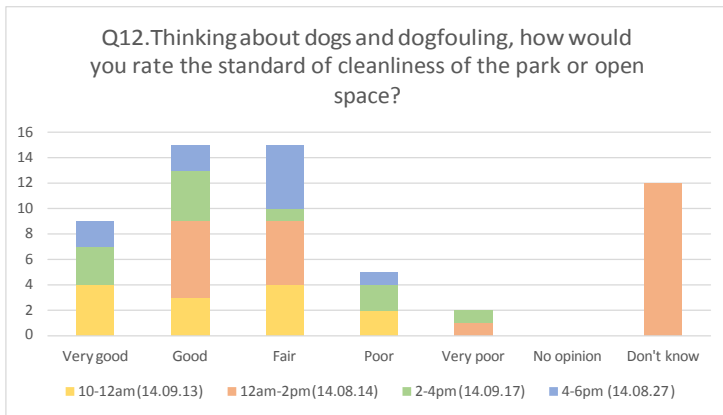
Q8. OTHER

- cycling
- football
- bikes
- football
- child's sporting event
- football
- tennis courts
- play football
- play football
- football
- football

Q11. How do you rate the standard of cleanliness and maintenance of the park or open space?

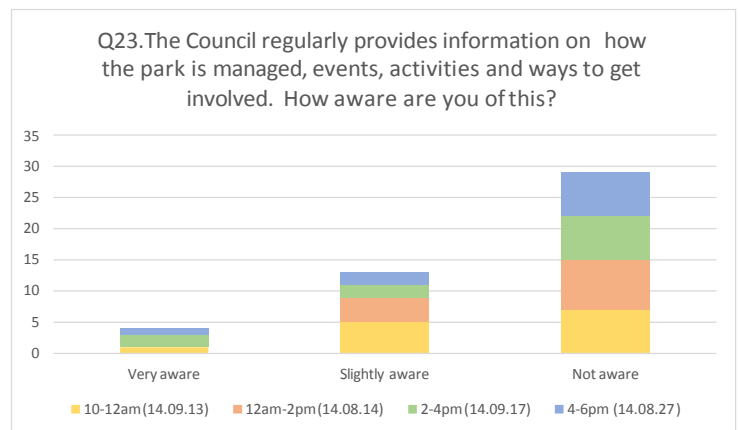
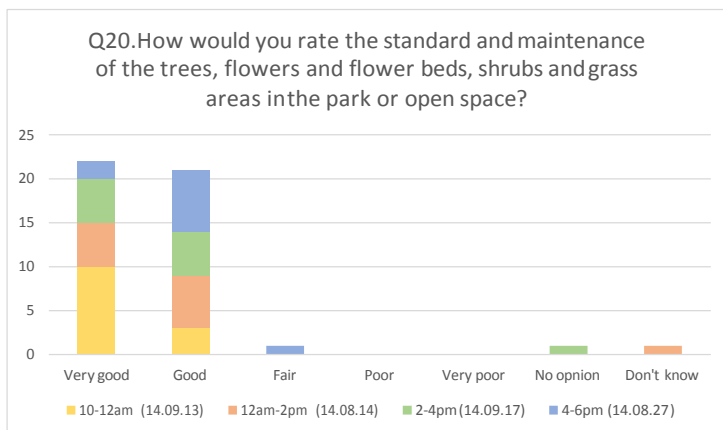
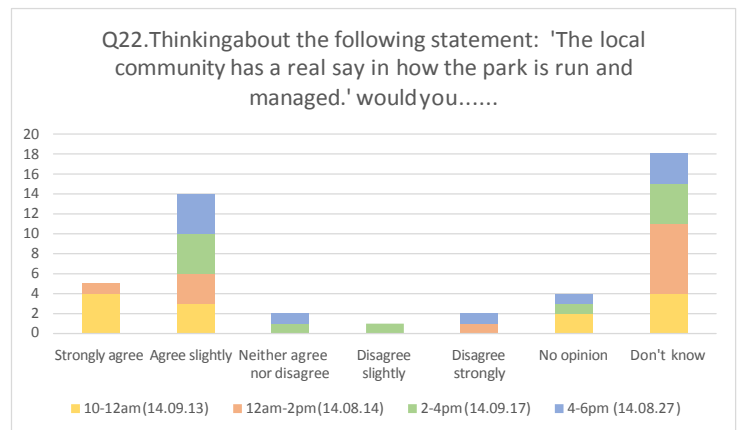
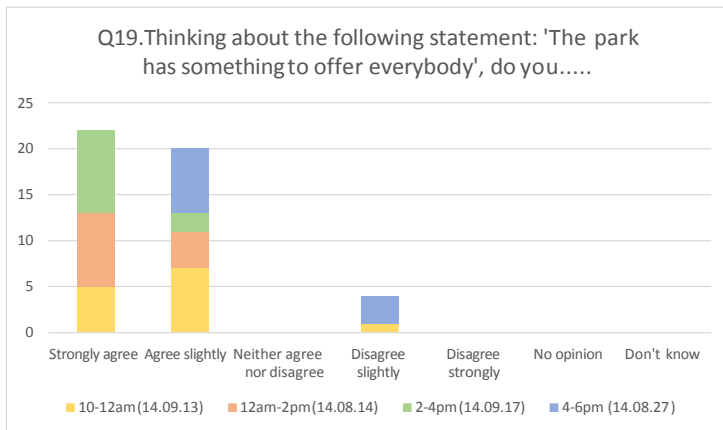
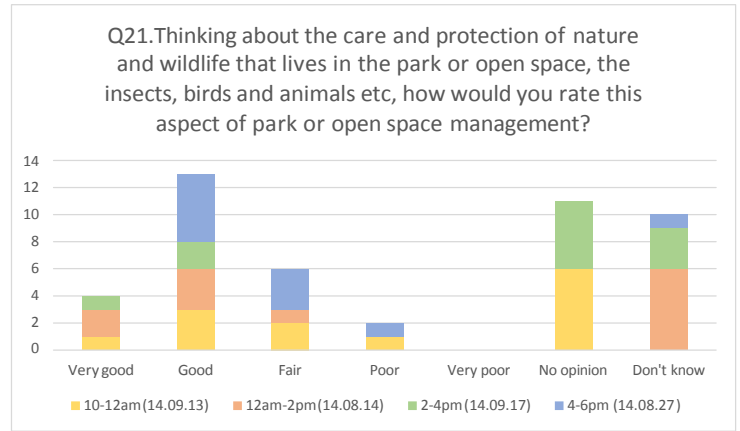
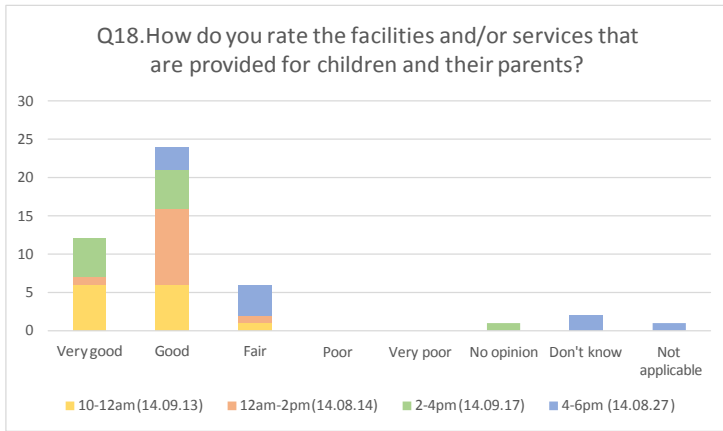


### A3. USER OPINION SURVEY HEADLINE RESULTS (cont.)

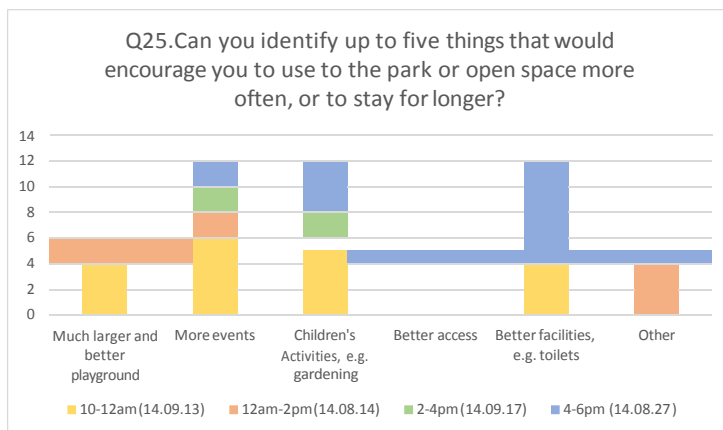
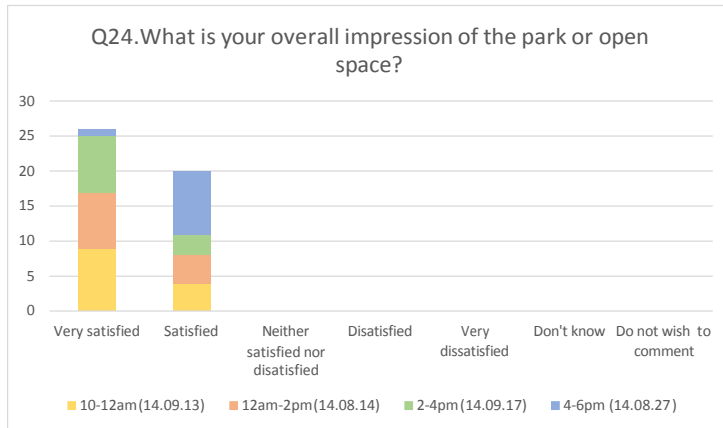




### A3. USER OPINION SURVEY HEADLINE RESULTS (cont.)



### A3. USER OPINION SURVEY HEADLINE RESULTS (cont.)



Q26. Are there any more comments that you would like to make about the way this park or open space is managed or maintained, the facilities that are available, or the activities that take place?

- Should be busier.
- Loos timetables, plants and pond, info on community involvement.
- Roundabout in the playground.
- Are pesticides used?
- Wildlife area. Something for older kids. New swings. Zip wire.
- Café.
- Basketball - older kids. Skatepark. West end wasted.
- Kiosk or cafe would bring people in summer.
- Very good, well maintained.
- Don't build on it!
- Generally great, but dog fouling an issue.

#### Q25. OTHER

- Lighting in evenings, solar?
- Cafe. Lighting at night.
- Cafe, fitness gym .
- Refreshment facilities?
- Kiosk? Improvements to rose garden (sponsorship?)
- Empty dog bins more, been better lately but sometimes over full.
- Bin for dogs.
- Gate at beginning and end of long path to keep dog/kids safe
- More goal posts
- Hard surface for scooters and bikes
- Older kids activities/ facilities
- Azip wire!
- Loostimetables