



Management Plan 2025 to 2030

# Springfield Hall Park

Protect Manage and Enhance Green Space Assets

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## Foreword

Good-quality green spaces are central to every community. They bring people together, encourage physical activity and allow our communities to spend time enjoying the great outdoors. In short, they are essential for a healthy and active nation.

One of the Council's principal aims is to improve the quality of life for its residents. Making parks and green spaces important elements of everyday life both now and for the future. Generating enormous social, economic, environmental and ecological benefits as well as making areas more attractive.

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

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

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



**Cllr Rose Moore**

Cabinet member for Parks & Green Spaces



## Summary and Outlook

### Guidance in reading the management plan

Management plans within Chelmsford's Parks Service are all about review and improvement to both site facilities and management practices. We seek to review, consult and look to undertake well planned continuous improvement.

This management plan is designed to be used as an easy reference manual that can be understood by all interested parties. The plan deals specifically with matters relating to Springfield Hall Park. It needs to be read in conjunction with Chelmsford's Green Infrastructure Strategic Plan (the later document contains much of Council's corporate strategy and policy documents as they relate to parks). Also, Our Chelmsford Our Plan.

The Management Strategies adopted in this space aim to raise both the standards of provision and type of provision to cater for the needs of current and future park users

#### The objectives broadly speaking aim on:

- Satisfying current and future user needs and guiding the development, interpretation and management of the park.
- Reflect on the corporate policies of Chelmsford City Council.
- Preserve and enhance the value of the parks in their setting.
- Preserve, enhance and interpret the ecological value of the parks.
- Develop a range of facilities that will improve access for all park users and increase usage.
- Visually enhance the site.
- Conserve water consumption.
- Protect the wildlife interest and value of the site and interpret it where possible.
- Ensure the full and continued involvement of local community and stakeholder groups.
- Provide opportunities for hands on parks volunteering through regular lead practical sessions.
- Maintain and foster continued partnership working
- Ensure that fear of crime does not deter local community from using the park.
- Work with the sports clubs on site to establish a programme of events particularly targeting young people.
- Seek to ensure the best possible service by continuously reviewing policy and procedures.

Parks & Green Spaces are continually reviewing and updating strategic documents to ensure we are responding to changing needs, complying with the latest legislation and setting targets in accordance with the corporate plan, Our Chelmsford Our Plan and annual service plans.

In drafting the document, the Green Flag judging criteria were used as an audit tool. This ensures that we are embracing the criteria necessary to deliver a facility that matches the national standard for parks and that we have embraced the eight key Green Flag objectives.

- A Welcoming Place
- Healthy, Safe and Secure
- A well maintained and clean Park
- Environmental Management
- Biodiversity, Landscape & Heritage
- Community Involvement
- Marketing and Communication
- Management

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



## **The structure of the Plan is as follows:**

### **Section 1: A Welcoming Place**

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

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

### **Section 2: Healthy, Safe and Secure**

Chelmsford City Council has a corporate health and safety policy which is updated and reviewed annually.

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

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

### **Section 3: Well maintained and clean**

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

- Litter and other waste management issues must be adequately dealt with.
- Grounds, buildings, equipment and other features must be well maintained.
- Policies on litter, vandalism and maintenance should be in place, in practice, and regularly reviewed.

### **Section 4: Environmental Management**

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

## **Section 5: Biodiversity, Landscape and Heritage**

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

## **Section 6: Community Involvement**

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

## **Section 7: Marketing and Communication**

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

## **Section 8: Management Action Plan**

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



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## Section 1: A Welcoming Place

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

Broadly speaking the key management objectives for Springfield Hall Park take account of the Council's strategy document, Our Chelmsford, Our Plan. Which is all about a strategy for creating a fairer, greener and more connected community.

- Creating a distinctive sense of place, making the area more attractive, promoting its green credentials and ensuring communities are safe
- Protect, expand and improve the quality and accessibility of green spaces, improving habitat value and increasing biodiversity.
- Improve the environmental quality, attractiveness, safety, leisure and recreational potential of public spaces, green areas rivers and waterways

The park is a significant open space serving the 10,500 residents in Springfield North and 5,400 plus residents residing in The Lawns Wards of the City.

A full landscape appraisal of the site was undertaken during the time of preparation of this management plan. The appraisal identified opportunities for further improvement. The key issues that emerged were:

- To ensure that the correct balance of landscape design, horticultural, leisure and development interests are addressed.
- To ensure that developments accord with the strategic context of the Parks design and layout
- To preserve and enhance existing appropriate leisure facilities
- To develop interpretation.
- To protect, enhance and develop horticulture within the parks.
- To protect, enhance and interpret ecology and wildlife within the parks.
- To provide quality playing surfaces at the sports area

Whilst the primary reason for developing a management plan is to aid the efficient and effective management of the sites more specific objectives include:

- Defining priorities for investment and future development.
- Specifying maintenance, security and access arrangements.
- Understanding the links between strategic and policy documents and what needs to happen on the ground.
- Ensuring resources are best used to help us achieve our agreed objectives.

The park seeks to cater for both active and passive use.

## Springfield Hall Park, Chelmsford

<b>Site Name</b>	Springfield Hall Park, Chelmsford
<b>Site Status</b>	Designated as public open space. 1974 (Land purchases on 29 March 1974 and October 1974, with the Council formally registering the land on 3 September 2008)
<b>Total Area of Site</b>	15.44 hectares
<b>Component areas</b>	Football Pitches play area, sports pavilion, Football Club pavilion, biodiversity areas allotments, Car park.
<b>Surrounding land</b>	Edge of a LNR and residential. The park is on the edge of Chelmer Valley Local Nature Reserve. It takes its name from Springfield Hall Farm which is at the northern end of the reserve and dates as far back as 1839.
<b>Natural Geology</b>	London clay over gravel beds
<b>Significant features / Key issues noted indeed packet</b>	Easements, Public right of way.
<b>Tenure</b>	Freehold
<b>Location</b>	Springfield Hall Park
<b>Nearest bus route</b>	First Bus Service
<b>Ward</b>	The Lawns and North Springfield
<b>District</b>	Chelmsford
<b>County</b>	Essex
<b>Post Code</b>	CM1 7QE
<b>Byelaws</b>	None
<b>Opening Hours</b>	Displayed on site <a href="https://loveyourchelmsford.co.uk/green-spaces/find-a-green-space/springfield-hall-park/">https://loveyourchelmsford.co.uk/green-spaces/find-a-green-space/springfield-hall-park/</a>
<b>Use</b>	Primarily a sports ground, with linkage via land management to the adjacent LNR
<b>Essex Police Support</b>	Emergency 999 Non-Emergency 101





## Overview - Springfield Hall Park, Chelmsford

The park is located in the northeast of Chelmsford's urban area characterised by a mix of residential areas, schools and neighbourhood shopping centres. It serves the needs of residents in neighbouring wards as a local park, besides the Lawns Ward.



Springfield Hall Park lies adjacent to the River Chelmer, with a vehicular entrance point at Arun Close and pedestrian entrances from Chelmer Valley Local Nature Reserve (CVLNR).

Chelmer Valley LNR is a riverside walk which forms part of the wider riverside walk network for the city. The park is on the edge of Chelmer Valley Local Nature Reserve and its management takes this into account with adjoining biodiversity rich areas on the boundary to assist in merging the two. It takes its name from Springfield Hall Farm which is at the northern end of the park and dates as far back as 1839. It was developed as part of the residential area which is known as Springfield.

Today's Park provides top class facilities for the sports users, with a large car park suitable for cars and coaches. Parking restrictions apply in accordance with a Traffic Regulation Order and seek to deter commuter parking.

The park is popular in its location, serving its local neighbourhood and with good links to the river corridor and to footpath and cycle networks that connect to the City Centre some 2.1 miles away. It is well used as a walk-through space.

With several football pitches on site the park is home to [Springfield Football Club](#) who have a long and proud history of providing football in the community. There is a sports pavilion with disabled toilet facilities (radar key) and a well-equipped play area. The park is known locally as the Rocket Park due to its iconic climbing frame.

Within the park there is local allotment provision with a fenced allotment site, primarily to serve the local neighbourhood. There are a number of linked conservation areas which seek to blend with the LNR. These are enjoyed by numerous dog owners and is well used for everyday recreation.

This plan seeks to ensure thought is directed to the following statements over the ensuing years and certainly over the life of the plan.

- To ensure that the correct balance of landscape design, horticultural, leisure and development interests are addressed.
- To ensure that developments accord with the strategic context of the park
- To work with local sports clubs
- To preserve and enhance existing appropriate leisure facilities
- To provide quality playing surfaces
- To maximise opportunities for ecology and biodiversity and ensure the link is maintained with the management plan for CVLNR

### **Open to all – The Park user**

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

- Natural surveillance, transparency and views in and out of the park are maintained.
- Responsible dog ownership is enforced
- Hiding places and blind spots are minimised.
- Planting does not crowd footpaths.
- Shrubs and hedges are maintained below eye level where practical.
- Lighting is maintained to prevent dark spots.
- Good linkage to footpaths and cycle tracks
- Responsible dog walkers are encouraged as they offer natural surveillance in early mornings and in the evenings.
- Areas are designed with women and girls in mind
- Fear of crime is reduced.
- Anti-social behavior is eliminated.

Contact with Essex Constabulary and Safer Neighbourhood Teams is maintained.

### **Access Target Groups**

Chelmsford's Parks are open to all, and we encourage community use of the parks and green spaces throughout the city. We seek where practicable to adapt facilities for this.





## Section 2: Healthy Safe and Secure

### Health and Safety Obligations

#### Corporate Health and Safety Policy

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**The Group policy includes information on the following topics.**

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

### **Staff training, learning and development**

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

As part of the policy a separate Health and Safety file is produced for each location together with a Risk Assessment file.

All staff who work with children are Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checked and each employee undertakes safeguarding training.

### **Site safety initiatives**

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

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

## Health & Safety obligations

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

### The Health and Safety File includes:

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

### The Risk Assessment File includes:

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

## Use of tools and machinery

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

## Training for the safe use of tools and machinery

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

## Maintenance of Equipment/machinery

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

## **PAT testing and portable appliance testing**

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

## **Use of chemicals/COSHH Assessments**

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

- Follow safe working practices, avoiding skin and eye contact with chemicals and avoiding breathing fumes, vapours or dusts
- Read and follow all instructions, safety precautions and emergency procedures detailed on the containers and in the assessment sheets
- Wear all PPE as recommended in the assessments
- Do not smoke, drink or consume food whilst using, or in the vicinity of, the products listed in the assessment
- Observe good hygiene -thoroughly wash all parts of the body and remove any clothing which may be contaminated with chemicals before eating, drinking or smoking
- Follow all relevant codes of practice when using pesticides
- Keep all chemicals sealed in their original, labelled containers and store in a secure place: when not actually in use, dispose of used containers in a safe and proper manner
- Clean all application equipment after use

## **Accident recording**

Accident report forms for the park are held centrally at the parks depot and are managed by the Quality and Performance Officer. All staff are trained as part of their induction, on first aid and accident reporting.

All accidents and near misses must be reported and a form completed. This is then investigated by the Quality and Performance Officer and actioned accordingly. This is monitored by HR business support. All quarter officers meet and review all forms as part of the Health and Safety welfare committee to review all incidents and look to change and improve where appropriate.

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

## Accident reporting

Staff can offer assistance to members of the public when on site and can summon emergency services as necessary. There is always an appointed person on site to manage First Aid as appropriate whilst fixtures are being played. Standard Chelmsford City Council accident forms are completed wherever possible to record details of reported incidents.

The public are able to report faults to Park Services by contact numbers advertised in the park.

## Safe Equipment and Facilities

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

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

## Personal Security

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

Parks Services have one member of staff dedicated to the day-to-day management at this park.

Parks staff are able to report anti-social behavior to the police.

High standards of upkeep and cleanliness, and the presence of permanent park staff and sports club members, are contributory factors to the creation of a sense of security.

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

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

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

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

## ParkWatch Report Line

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

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

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

The contact number for ParkWatch is 07831 189918

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

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

## Control of Dogs and Dog Fouling

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Failure to clear up after your dog in a public place or an area designated by the council is an offence and could lead to a £100.00 fixed penalty being issued by the Dog Warden, or even court prosecution.

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

### **Control of drug use**

Incidents of drug abuse in the recreation ground are low with no reports within the last 12 months. Currently the Park staff responds to disposal of needles using equipment supplied by NEEDAS.

### **Appropriate Provision of Quality Facilities and Activities**

The offers on site are appropriate to the community the site serves. The 2016 Open Space Survey findings indicated across the city there was a shortfall in wildlife areas and teenage facilities. Over the course of this plan attention will be given to upgrading play equipment ensuring there is provision on site for older children/young people which includes consultation.

### **Management of park events ensuring public safety**

The following health and safety procedures are in place regarding Events held in the parks. Events are arranged through Parks & Green Spaces, where officers are responsible for monitoring Health and Safety requirements of an event.

Special event organisers and helpers are required to:

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

## Section 3: Well Maintained and Clean

### Service Standards: Clean and Well Maintained

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

#### Management objectives

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

- Developing, supporting and enabling a wide range of sporting, recreational, cultural, social, educational and tourism opportunities which enhance the quality of life, promote healthy, active lifestyles for people within the City Council area and, by stimulating attraction for visitors and by helping to create a positive business environment, bring jobs and investment to the local economy.
- Managing Chelmsford's rich and diverse landscapes, parks and green spaces and promoting polices and activities that enhance and protect Chelmsford's built and natural features plus the surrounding countryside and unique heritage.

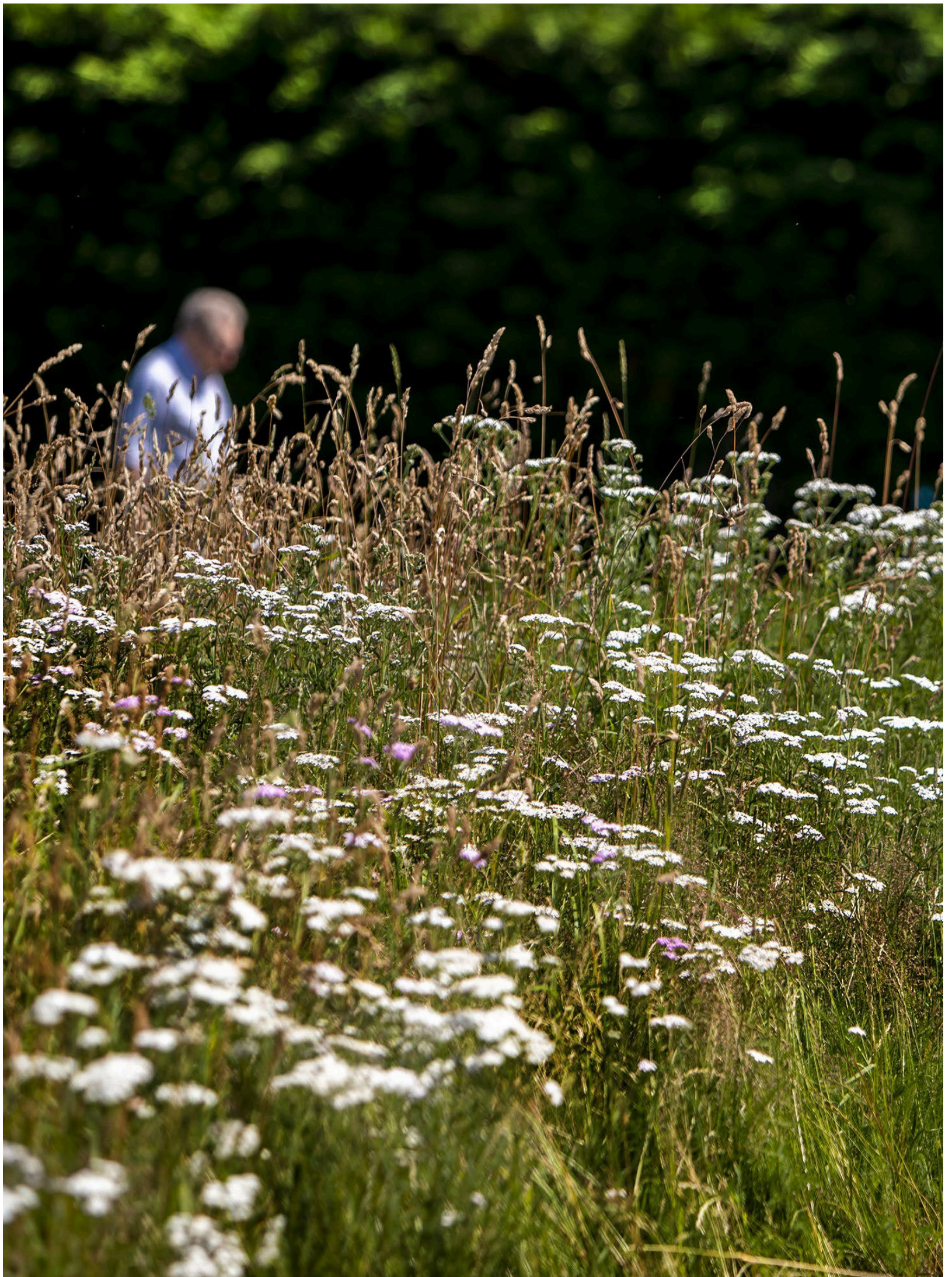
#### General Objectives

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

#### Litter and Waste Management

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





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

Litter is an item on the daily inspection schedule.

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

## Horticultural Maintenance

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

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

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

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

### The work includes:

- All grass maintenance (mowing, feeding, spiking)
- Sports ground maintenance
- Planting and maintenance of young trees (to establishment), shrub beds.

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

## **Grounds Maintenance Standards and obligations**

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

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

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

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

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

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

- Statutory Obligations
- Traffic and Pedestrian Safety Management
- Noise control

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Arboricultural Maintenance

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

The Council only employs suitably qualified and experienced staff to inspect and manage trees under its care. Street trees are the responsibility of the Highway Authority, Essex County Council.

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

The tree stock is plotted on the Treewise database. Tree planting in the park is undertaken carefully, selecting the correct species for the site. It may also include donated trees.

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

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

All trees are plotted on the tree management data base. New plantings are selected in the main from native genera appropriate for the park setting. The Tree Policy outlines a strategy for tree management.

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

The Parks Service will:

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

## **Building and Infrastructure Maintenance**

### **Building Maintenance**

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

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

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

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

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

An independent D.D.A. Audit has been undertaken and certain works have been determined as being required as a result. Phased works to comply with the recommendations have been scheduled.

## Inspections and monitoring

All services carried out are subject to regular quality inspections by the Parks Quality Performance Officer. Table 1 illustrates the current inspection regime in operation in the park

**Table 1 Park Inspection regime**

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

## Grounds

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

## Buildings

The inspection regime is undertaken by the Parks team and consists of daily visual inspections by the parks staff dedicated to the park: Park staff inspect all the buildings on a daily basis including the inspection of toilets. Any defects are reported to building maintenance inspectors who implement necessary repairs within set performance agreements.

Building Services undertake formal inspections of facilities and features at the intervals recorded in the boxes below.

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

**Table 2 Park Building Inspection regime**

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

Toilets are available within the sports pavilion.

Toilets are subject to three visits per week by the cleaning contractor (Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays) Parks Staff inspect the toilets daily. Any major defects are reported to Operational Services.



## Play areas

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

The playground situated in Springfield Hall Park is located away from entrance points and access roads. Dogs are excluded from the area, being fenced with self-closing gates. An annual audit of the play equipment ensures that it remains compliant with the current British Standard (BS EN 1176) and that the surfaces beneath the equipment are adequate for their use. The main surface in the playgrounds comprise of wet-pour rubber surfacing.

The playground is checked daily by the park staff during weekdays. (excluding Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, Boxing Day, New Year's Eve, New Year's Day). This includes a visual check of the equipment and seating for wear, graffiti or damage as well as the cleanliness of the immediate area.

The playground is also subject to monthly safety inspections by the playground inspectors. An external consultant undertakes an annual safety audit of the play equipment.

Minor faults are rectified at the time of inspection. Any significant damage is reported to the Grounds Maintenance Manager within two hours of the inspection and dealt with as an urgent item. Damaged and dangerous play equipment is made safe by the inspector by means of hazard warning tape, flexible fencing and signage during the inspection. The response time for the inspector on a call-out is:

- Summer period (1 April -30 Sept) call before 2.30pm: Inspector to attend the same day.
- Winter period (1 Oct -31 March) call after 1pm or summer period (1 April -30 Sept) call after 2.30pm: Inspector to attend the next day irrespective of whether weekday, weekend or public holiday.

The inspector is not allowed to carry out any work whilst children or members of the public are present.

Playground Inspectors and Maintenance Contractors are required to undertake training relevant to the guidelines laid out in the RoSPA publication 'Assessing Risks in Children's Playgrounds'. The Contractor is also required to hold appropriate and current 'Construction Industry Scheme' certification.

## Equipment Maintenance

### Accident and Vandalism reporting

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

### Control of Vandalism

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

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

#### The current approach consists of:

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

Vandalism and other criminal damage are noted daily through the inspection regime and by staff working on site. The Parks staff are required to report any theft, vandalism or other damage caused to any plant, horticultural feature or location immediately to the Grounds Maintenance Operations Manager. Reinstatement works are carried out under instruction.

All incidents reported on the ParkWatch telephone number are recorded by the duty officer and a report is forwarded to the Police as and when the situation dictates.

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

The national trend of rising anti-social behaviour affects all parks and spates of damage does occur on both sites. Any damage generally occurs during the evenings when the park is least used.



## Section 4: Environmental Management

### Managing Environmental Impact

#### Promoting Sustainable Management and Awareness

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

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

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

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

The implementation of these actions is monitored through periodic reports to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee of the City Council. The City Council and its operations will be subjected to risks as a result of Climate Change. Extreme weather events are likely to see an increase in risks to public health, buildings, infrastructure and supply chains. The City Council has made a commitment to achieving net zero carbon by 2030. [Click here to view the latest greenhouse gas report.](#)

#### Parks, Green Spaces & Waterways Strategy

The policy underlines the guiding principles regarding the propagation of environmental sensitivity and responsibility by management and seeks to link a number of key strands together to ensure that Parks and Green Spaces strategies reflect the Council's overarching policies set out in Our Chelmsford Our Plan, the Council wide Green Procurement Strategy and the Climate Change policy.

## Environmental awareness education

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

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

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

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

Water consumption/footprint [cu.m]

Fertiliser usage [kg]

Bulky top-dressing usage [kg/tonne]

Carbon footprint [kg/tonne CO<sub>2</sub>]

Fuel – petrol/diesel- consumption [gallons/litres]

Gas consumption [KWh]

Electric consumption [KWh]

Waste generation [Kg/tonne of total waste]

Recycled/reused waste [Kg/tonne of total waste]

Machinery use [hours of use and/or miles/km]

Machinery noise pollution complaints [reported occurrences]

## Sustainable Procurement

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

## Use of materials

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

- The avoidance of products containing peat and use of peat-free growing mediums where practicable.
- The use of in-house compost where practicable.
- The avoidance of using tropical hardwoods where possible; substitution with timber from sustainable forests (FSC certified). Park benches being manufactured from sustainable products.
- The avoidance of excessively packaged items, in particular where the packaging components cannot be re-used or recycled (e.g. plastics).
- The use of recycled products in preference to non-renewable sources.
- Preference is given to local suppliers and locally grown plant stock. Note: at present many bedding plants are supplied as plugs and grown on at the Council's own nurseries; shrubs and trees primarily come from East Anglian suppliers.

## Resource Conservation

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

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

### Utility Management: Energy efficiency

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

### Utility Management: Water and drainage

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

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

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

### **Utility Management: Water management**

There is a water management plan to ensure efficiency.

The grounds maintenance specification covers a number of water management issues in the park. These include:

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

Sports pitches across the site have a comprehensive drainage system to ensure the pitches are free draining. There are main drains running through the site serviced by sand banding across the pitches.

The Council actively monitors water use and seeks to introduce efficiencies where at all possible particularly in publicly accessible buildings such as sports changing rooms and toilets/washrooms.

Gas and Electric usage are monitored centrally as part of Chelmsford City Council's Energy and Water Management Policy set up to drive efficiencies across the council.

### **Utility Management: Transport. 'The Green Fleet'**

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

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

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

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

## Pollution reduction measures

With reference to Our Chelmsford Our Plan: promoting a more sustainable environment - the Council's goal is to limit hazard to the community and the environment from pollution sources by identification, assessment and management in an ecologically sustainable manner pollution sources and minimisation of pollution generation.

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

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

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

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

## Waste Minimisation

### Waste management and recycling

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

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

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



## Recycling green waste

Last year the city council recycled over 3500m<sup>3</sup> of green waste from their parks and green spaces. Parks services have a green waste recycling machine at Sandford Mill, that can shred bedding, leaves, grass cuttings and prunings. Either an organic soil conditioner or mulch is created from the green waste. It takes eight months to a year to develop the soil conditioner and only three to four months to create the mulch. Both are used in Chelmsford's parks and open spaces in areas such as shrub beds, and this recycling initiative is diverting materials that would otherwise have to be sent to landfill.

There are off-site recycling facilities within Park Services.

## Energy and recycling

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

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

## Use of local mulch

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

## Composting & green waste recycling

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

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

## Recycled materials

Trade waste is collected from the sports clubs operating at the park.

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

## Chemical Usage

The City Council has carried out COSHH assessments on all products and chemicals used and these are reviewed and updated regularly [or at least yearly]. The use of pesticides including herbicides on Chelmsford City Council land is applied in accordance with the Policy for the use of pesticides including herbicides on Chelmsford City Council land.

### **Management Guidelines: Use of chemicals**

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

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

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

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

- That any operation that requires the use of a pesticide be carried out only if no alternative method is reasonably practicable.
- That any pesticide, which has carcinogenic, mutagenic or teratogenic properties, should not be applied unless no acceptable alternative substance is available for the task in question.
- That, where a choice of acceptable pesticides is available for a task, the least hazardous substance be selected in every case.
- That all users be advised of the Council's views on the matter and instructed to follow adopted guidelines.
- That any new substance be permitted to be used until evidence is obtained to indicate that it has unacceptable qualities.
- That the list of pesticides currently in use be submitted for re-consideration at intervals determined by the Grounds Maintenance Services Manager.

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

Parks Services follow the COSHH regulations when specifying pesticides. All specifiers are experienced members of staff and liaison with contractors over chemical use are encouraged.

The Contractors only use those herbicides; pesticides or cleaning agents specified in the contract, and these are all subject to COSHH risk assessments.

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

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

## Peat Use

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

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

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

Compost for soil enrichment is made in-house from shredded compostable material. The operation is undertaken at Sandford Mill.

## Climate Change Adoption Strategies

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

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

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

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

As the impact of climate change becomes more apparent and more extreme weather situations occur, we need to consider how to adapt our open spaces and plans for new spaces for the future. The increasing urbanisation and new housing development in particular high-rise flats within Chelmsford means that outdoor spaces and their use will become more important for people particularly if we have extreme temperatures. Strategic reviews of parks areas in relation to these factors and knowledge on how these issues can be mitigated needs to be planned.

The rising temperature usually causes a deterioration of air quality in the urban environment. Green spaces and especially urban trees have significant roles to play. Trees which are currently commonplace may not be able to survive in the longer term and could possibly need to be replaced with more suitable species. Additional tree stock will also be required to increase shade canopy. Due to the time lag for these trees to mature and to become effective pollution filters and providers of shade, 25-50 years of growing time is needed. This suggests that additional tree planting, etc. will be required in the shorter term, with planning to adapt to the impacts of climate change going forward. We will therefore seek to link parks and tree strategies to the climate change strategy and to have actions relating to preserving existing tree stocks and replacing/ expanding them where possible. It is also becoming harder to establish trees in this changing climate and this will require additional resources to ensure success. Our greening policy reflects this.

Green spaces are vital in the absorption and retention of precipitation and flood water and therefore the loss of such capacity to urban development seems incompatible. Retention of water, which could be used to provide irrigation for example, to mitigate the effects of hotter drier summers are worthy of consideration. Retro fitting such systems within existing facilities should be considered and linked to the intended use of facilities now and in the longer term. The energy manager plans for this area and its impact within parks buildings.



## Section 5: Biodiversity, Landscape and Heritage

### Management of Natural Features, Wild Flora and Fauna

We believe in proper investment in green infrastructure. This idea is moving to the forefront of strategies and planning across regional and local government, with the introduction of Local Nature Recovery Network (LNRN) and biodiversity net gain (BNG). It sits at the heart of Our Chelmsford Our plan.

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

#### Biodiversity Duty

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- The Council will arrange for surveys of and the monitoring of parks, green spaces and corridors and their species
- The Parks and Green Space Strategy supports the protection and enhancement of biodiversity in parks and green spaces in accordance with NERC 2006.
- The Council will prepare a program for the adoption of management plans for every significant park and green space that includes measures to enhance biodiversity.
- The Council will continue the Local Nature Reserve Designation Program.
- The Council will support the development of effective partnerships and funding arrangements to enhance biodiversity in parks and green spaces.
- The Council will raise awareness and support education for all sectors of the community relating to habitats and species within parks and green spaces.

## Biodiversity in Parks

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

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

## Planning policy

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

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

We are also working as part of the county wide team of authorities on the BNG and LNRN

## Conservation of Landscape Features Buildings and Structures

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

- The protection and enhancement of important cultural and historical resources.
- The protection of the character, environment and setting of Chelmsford City conservation area and the town generally.
- To protect and restore as far as is practicable the nature and habit of field boundary plantings: Trees & Hedges.
- To ensure that design improvements to parks consider means to visually and physically link features to enhance visitor appreciation.
- To improve the presentation and interpretation of the landscape design of the park.
- To ensure that footpaths and design improvements to the park consider means to visually and physically link features to enhance visitor appreciation and understanding.
- To protect and manage important habitats associated with the site.
- To improve the presentation, setting and interpretation of important visible features.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## General objectives

Maintain the quality, appearance and facilities to provide a safe and attractive environment for visitors.

- Maintain structures in a safe, clean condition at all times.
- Maintain sports facilities in a sustainable manner.
- Monitor plant establishment and replace plantings as necessary to maintain amenity and ecological objectives.
- Build character and heritage value into the park.
- Develop new facilities that will attract the non-sports user to identify with and make use of the park facilities.

**Landscape** – The site is important open space due to the location within the city centre envelope and its connection to the broader open space system in and around Chelmsford.

A full landscape appraisal of the sites was undertaken. The key issues that emerged were:

- To ensure that the correct balance of landscape design, horticultural, leisure and development interests are addressed.
- To ensure that developments accord with the strategic context of the parks policies
- To preserve and enhance existing appropriate leisure facilities.
- To develop interpretation of the park.
- To protect, enhance and maintain tree canopy
- To protect, enhance and interpret ecology and wildlife.
- To provide quality playing surfaces

**Grasslands** - Different mowing regimes are employed within the sports ground taking account of the various playing surfaces. The margins of the site are maintained for the benefit of native flora and fauna with relaxed mowing regimes. Where possible there are areas set aside to encourage native flower species in addition to being a protected habitat for fauna. The park has a receptor field for slowworms, which is managed accordingly, with our Park ranger service.

## Management of the tree stock in relationship to wildlife

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

1. Maintain and improve wildlife habitats
2. To ensure, where it is safe to do so, that no wildlife habitat is damaged or lost due to arboricultural operations
3. Ensure consideration is given to tree roosting species e.g. Bats and to surveys undertaken by licensed operatives prior to any work commencing

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



## Biodiversity

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

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

## Ecology & Wildlife

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

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

With reference to Our Chelmsford Our Plan: The Council's objectives cover:

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



## Habitat creation and management

### Trees

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

The site has a number of semi-mature trees within the site boundaries which are important to the general ambience of the site and lend themselves to being host to many eco-systems. It also includes recent planting and scrub. All new trees are checked and watered for the first three years from planting.

### Grasslands

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

We have developed a range of different cutting regimes across the site to encourage natural flora to re-colonise areas of the recreation ground. The council has recently adapted its grassland policy to enhance opportunities for biodiversity. The site includes management of banks to encourage and maximise habitat for slow worms. The grassland management assists with providing Bat foraging habitat. The recent bat survey indicates where Bats thrive and the site benefits from bat boxes and habitat on the adjacent CVLNR. There is also as previously mentioned a field dedicated to habitat for slowworms and Great Crested Newts linked with two ponds.

### Fauna

This is an important site for wildlife being a buffer of green space within the urban landscape. The blending into CVLNR is critical to maintaining opportunities for many species including Muntjac, Bats, Foxes, Hares, bird species, butterflies, Slowworms etc.:



## Allotment Site

Chelmsford City Council currently own and manage 23 allotment sites in the Chelmsford area, with nearly 1,000 plots to rent. The site at Springfield Hall Park has 51 plots and has water and parking on site. Information on the site can be found at:

<https://loveyourchelmsford.co.uk/green-spaces/allotments/find-an-allotment/> along with information on how to get an allotment plot.

Chelmsford also has several allotment sites managed privately or by Parish Councils.

Each allotment site has its own unique character and sense of community, giving the opportunity to local residents to grow their own fresh fruit and vegetables.

## Buildings and Hard Landscape Fabric

### Buildings and Structures

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

Sports Pavilion & Changing Rooms

Toilets (restricted opening)

Play area

Car parking area

### Boundary Treatments and Entrances

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

### Road and Path Network

There is a hoggin access track to the allotments Two car park areas, one with tarmac car parking, the other with grass cells

### Park furniture & Signage

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

### Bench seats

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

## Litterbins and dog bins

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

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

## Signage & site interpretation

Signage is provided at the main park entrances to help orientate the visitor, although there are plans for a further upgrade of signage to include information on the ecology of the site

## Access Target Groups

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

## Parks and green spaces footfall

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

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

## Older People

Older people are an important user group of the park. This group of people use the park for informal exercise and relaxation, many with dogs. 'Healthy Walks' known as Heart and Sole use part of the park on a route from the city centre and ARU.

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

## Parents and children

Many Park visitors are parents with young children. There is a well-equipped play area on site, which was recently refurbished following a public consultation. The area is well used in school holidays for picnics and meet ups.

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

## People with Disabilities

The term 'disabled' covers a wide range of specific needs including ambulant disabled, wheelchair users, hearing impaired, visually impaired and people with learning difficulties. All people with specific needs should be able to enjoy the park to its full potential in a safe environment. Bench seating has been installed to encourage the visitor to gain access to more of the park. With sit and rest spots. The play area has been redesigned to include inclusive play facilities and access



## Section 6: Community Involvement

We run a parks volunteer programme throughout the borough on parks land, with some 2,800 volunteers registered and approximately 100-150 volunteering with us on each week. Volunteers support our work and the environment in many different ways: from helping us to manage habitats, surveying wildlife, volunteering in our formal gardens, planting trees, and helping look after them, to the construction of new features on site such as culvert bridges. Details can be found on our website <https://loveyourchelmsford.co.uk/volunteer/>

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

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

The site has regular volunteer sessions on it. For example, ragwort management in the receptor field, pond restoration etc. There is also a small wildflower meadow which has been created by working with local schools.



## Section 7: Marketing and Communication

### Marketing and Promotion

#### Marketing information

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

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

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

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

News concerning the park is distributed to ensure information is in the public realm at off-site venues. This is done in several ways:

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

#### Promotion

##### Printed material

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

**Public Relations**

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

**Green Flag**

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

**Fields in Trust**

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

**Appropriate information Channels**

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

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

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

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

Web site information [www.chelmsford.gov.uk](http://www.chelmsford.gov.uk) and [www.loveyourchelmsford.co.uk](http://www.loveyourchelmsford.co.uk)

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

Parks and Green Spaces interact also via the LYC website and LYC Facebook/Instagram.



## Section 8: Management Action Plan

### Landscape improvements: (2025-2030) Implementation of the five-year action plan

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

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

#### Long term Objectives (within the life of the plan 4-5 years)

No	Objective	Time frame	Cost implication
Objective 1	To engender a strong sense of place through distinctive landscape	1-5	£1,500
Objective 2	Promote as a venue for both community and sporting events.	1-5	Within existing budgets
Objective 3	To promote Springfield Hall Park as a site used by local schools to encourage children to consider the park theirs and to feel respect for it	1-5	Within existing budgets
Objective 4	To develop a wide range of partnerships and stakeholders in the parks by identifying and bringing them together with a common aim.	1-5	Within existing budgets
Objective 5	To increase the perception of safety amongst park users by empowering park users to become involved.	1-5	Within existing budgets
Objective 6	To increase length of time spent in the parks by park users through attractive additional facilities/features	1-5	Via external funding opportunities
Objective 7	Make biodiversity a key element of the park, carrying out regular monitoring and ensuring that the maintenance is supportive of biodiversity within sporting constraints.	1-5	£2,000

Notwithstanding the longer-term development proposals there are a number of minor improvements and maintenance related strategies (separate to the rolling maintenance programme) that are potentially achievable within current budgets and undertaken in the short to medium term, i.e. within the life of this Plan. The recommendations from a biodiversity enhancement assessment of the park also forms Part of the 5-year landscape improvement plan.

### Medium term objectives (2-3 years)

No	Objective	Time frame	Cost implications
<b>Objective 1</b>	Provide site interpretation boards within the parks to promote conservation & biodiversity	2-3	£4k
<b>Objective 2</b>	Add additional seating	2-3	£3k
<b>Objective 3</b>	Undertake relevant wildlife surveys	1	£4k

### Short term objectives (annually)

No	Objective	Time frame	Cost implications
<b>Objective 1</b>	Improve the sports grass pitches to enhance turf resilience	Annually	Within revenue budget

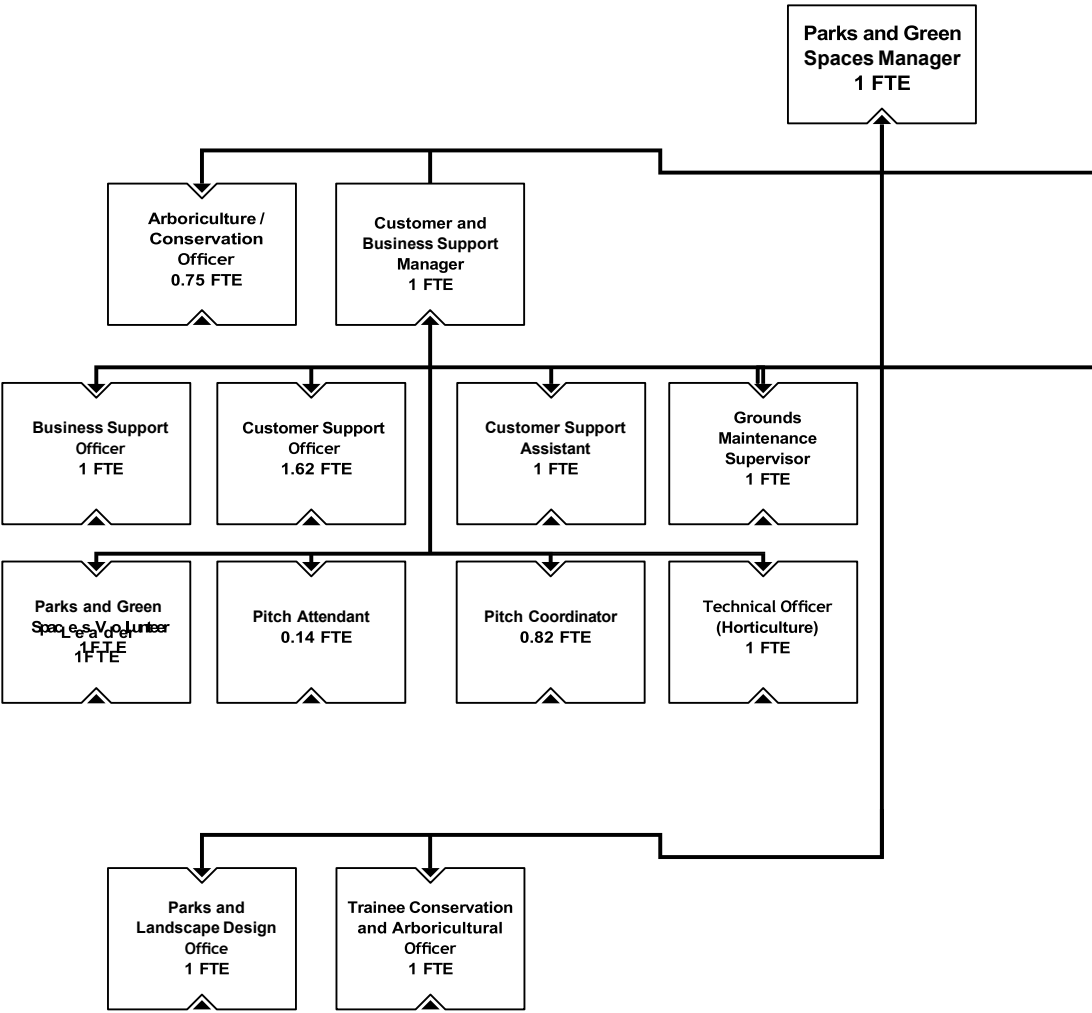
## Appendices

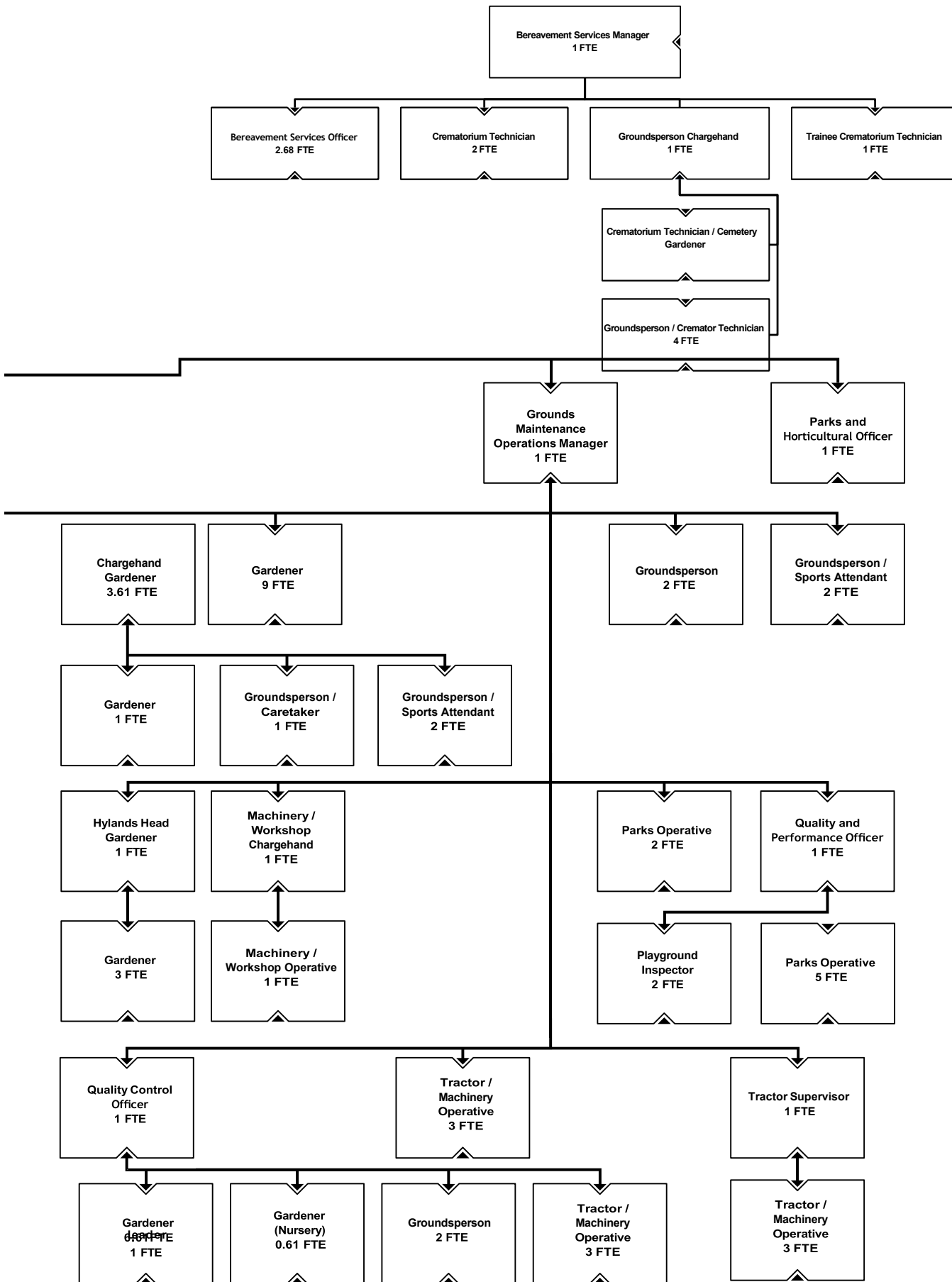
### The list of documents below informs the Management Plan

- Our Chelmsford Our Plan
- Chelmsford Local Plan - adapted 27 May 2020
- Chelmsford Green Infrastructure Strategic Plan
- Chelmsford Biodiversity Action Plan
- Procurement Strategy
- Chelmsford City Council (2016) Open Space Audit
- Community Safety Strategy
- Parks, Green Spaces and Waterways Strategy
- Chelmsford Fixed Equipment Playground Strategy 2022
- Tree Management Policy 2021
- Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services and its outcomes and actions
- Chelmsford Health and Wellbeing Plan
- General Parks Volunteer Policy
- Grassland Management Policy
- Policy on the use of Pesticides
- Parks Outdoor Event Policy 2020
- Drone Policy
- Drugs and Alcohol Policy
- Policy for metal detecting, excavating, foraging and collecting items
- Chelmer Valley Local Nature Reserve Management Plan
- Local Nature Recovery Network and Biodiversity Net Gain Strategies
- Local wildlife site review 2016 ([Local Wildlife Site Review 2026](#))

# Management Structure

## Parks & Green Spaces: Operational Management Structure in context





## Management structure

The two divisions of Parks Strategy and Development and Grounds Management both have an input into the management at the sites.

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

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

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

### Leisure and Heritage Services: Sports and Recreational Development

#### Sports in Parks

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **Healthy living/Healthy walks**

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

Leisure Services run a healthy walks scheme in conjunction with the local PCT and key parks are being used by the scheme to promote healthy living concepts to the community at large. The project uses volunteers to lead the walks on a regular basis for short, pleasant walks for patients who have been referred by their doctor to the scheme.

## **Leisure and Heritage Services: Arts and Entertainment**

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

## **Community Safety – Public Health & Protection Services**

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

- Public Health Enforcement Officers (dog and litter related)
- Antisocial Behaviour Coordinator
- Community Safety Partnership
- Safeguarding Officer

## **Dog warden service**

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

## **Noise abatement**

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





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

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Chelmsford  
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## Parks and Green Spaces

### Chelmsford City Council



Civic Centre, Duke Street, Chelmsford. CM1 1JE



01245 606606 (ask for Parks & Green Spaces)



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