



Green Flag Management Plan 2026 to 2031

Frankland Fields LNR

Protect Manage and Enhance Green Space Assets

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 being 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 LNR 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 site 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 Green Flag 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 Frankland Fields LNR. It needs to be read in conjunction with Chelmsford's Green Infrastructure Strategic Plan and Our Chelmsford Our Plan (the later document contains much of Council's corporate strategy and policy documents as they relate to parks). Most significantly it should be read with the sites current LNR management plan.

The management strategies adopted in this space aim to protect and enhance the LNR for users and habitat. They seek 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 to:

- Satisfy current and future user needs and guide the development, interpretation and management of the site
- Reflect the corporate policies of Chelmsford City Council
- Preserve, enhance and interpret the ecological value
- Develop a range of facilities that will improve access for all park users
- Visually enhance the site
- Protect the wildlife interest and value of the site and interpret it where possible
- Provide opportunities for hands-on volunteering through regular led practical sessions.
- Maintain and foster continued partnership working
- Ensure that fear of crime does not deter local communities
- 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 and Landscape
- Community Involvement
- Marketing and Communication
- Management Action Plan



The structure of the Plan is as follows:

Section 1: A Welcoming Place

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

Through the visual appearance of the LNR, range of facilities, standards of maintenance and ease of access we strive to make the LNR a place where people feel that they 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 fertilizers. Horticultural and arboricultural decisions should reflect an understanding of the impacts of climate change.

Section 5: Biodiversity and Landscape

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 LNR 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

The key management objectives for Frankland Fields LNR 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

Frankland Fields LNR is situated in the Borough of Chelmsford, on the southern edge of the town of South Woodham Ferrers. The town has a population of some 16,000 and some 6,600 households. There are two wards, Elmwood & Woodville and Chetwood & Collingwood. Both are within walking distance of the site. The site sits between two other LNRs and acts as a corridor for a range of wildlife such as birds, bats, small mammals, and other species. This 'corridor' links with the SSSI (site of special scientific interest) at Marsh Farm and the wider Ramsar site (a wetland site of international significance) at the River Crouch.

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 and evolution of the site which is indicated in the sites LNR Management Plan. The key issues that emerged were:

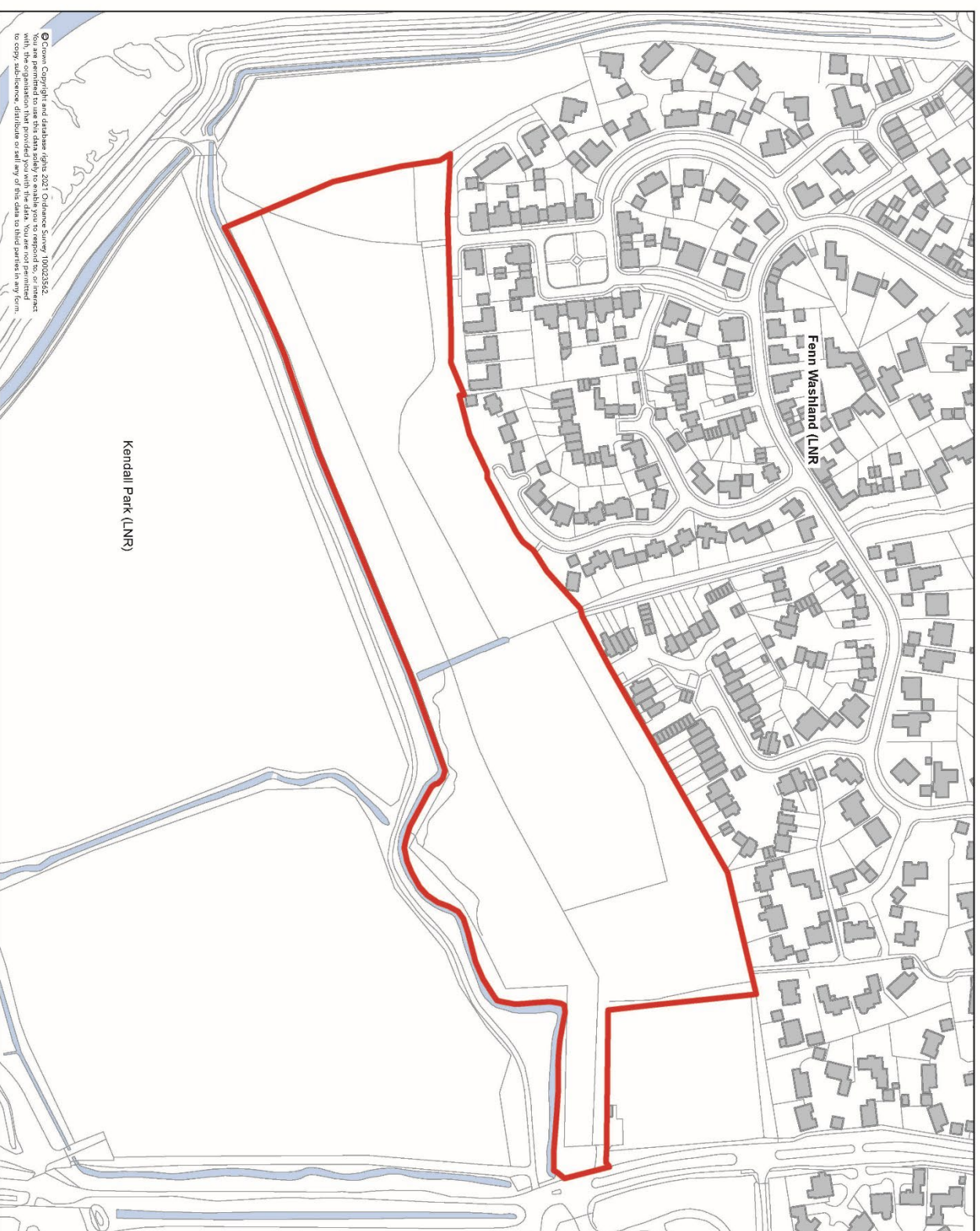
- To protect, enhance and interpret ecology and wildlife
- To ensure that the correct balance of nature conservation, leisure and development interests are addressed as part of the ongoing management.
- To ensure that projects accord with the strategic context of the LNRs design and layout

Frankland Fields LNR, Chelmsford

Site Name	Frankland Fields LNR Chelmsford
Site Status	Designated as public open space and a LNR in 2022
Total Area of Site	2.9 hectares
Component areas	Local nature reserve
Surrounding land	Built up residential and River Crouch
Natural Geology	Tidal flat deposits, clay, silt, gravel and river terrace deposits
Significant features/Key issues	Adjacent to Ramsar site and connects to wider network of LNRs and green spaces
Tenure	Freehold
Location	South Woodham Ferrers
Ward	Chetwood and Collingwood, and Elmwood and Woodville
District	Chelmsford
County	Essex
Post Code	CM3 7AS
OS grid reference	W3W for Frankland is ///paler.goggle.normal TQ 80935 96061
Byelaws	n/a
Opening Hours	Opening times are in accordance with the information on the site notice boards Frankland Fields South Woodham Ferrers - Love Your Chelmsford
Use	Local Nature Reserve providing areas for recreation and habitat for wildlife
Essex Police Support	South Woodham Ferrers
Emergency	999
Non-emergency	101

Aerial of Frankland Fields LNR, Chelmsford





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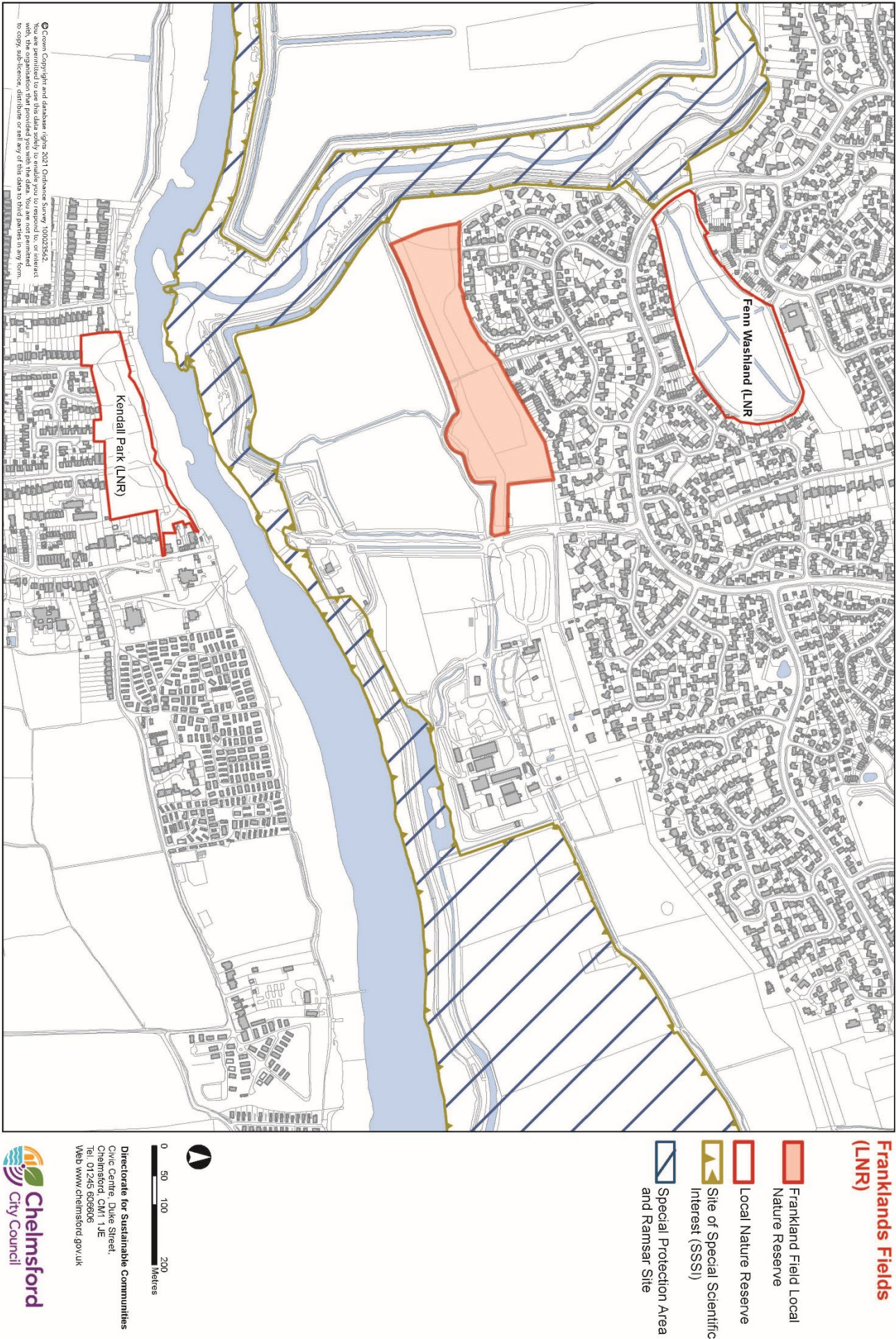
Franklands Fields

 Area of Local Nature Reserve



Directorate for Sustainable Communities
Civic Centre, Duke Street,
Chelmsford, CM1 1JE
Tel: 01245 606006
Web: www.chelmsford.gov.uk





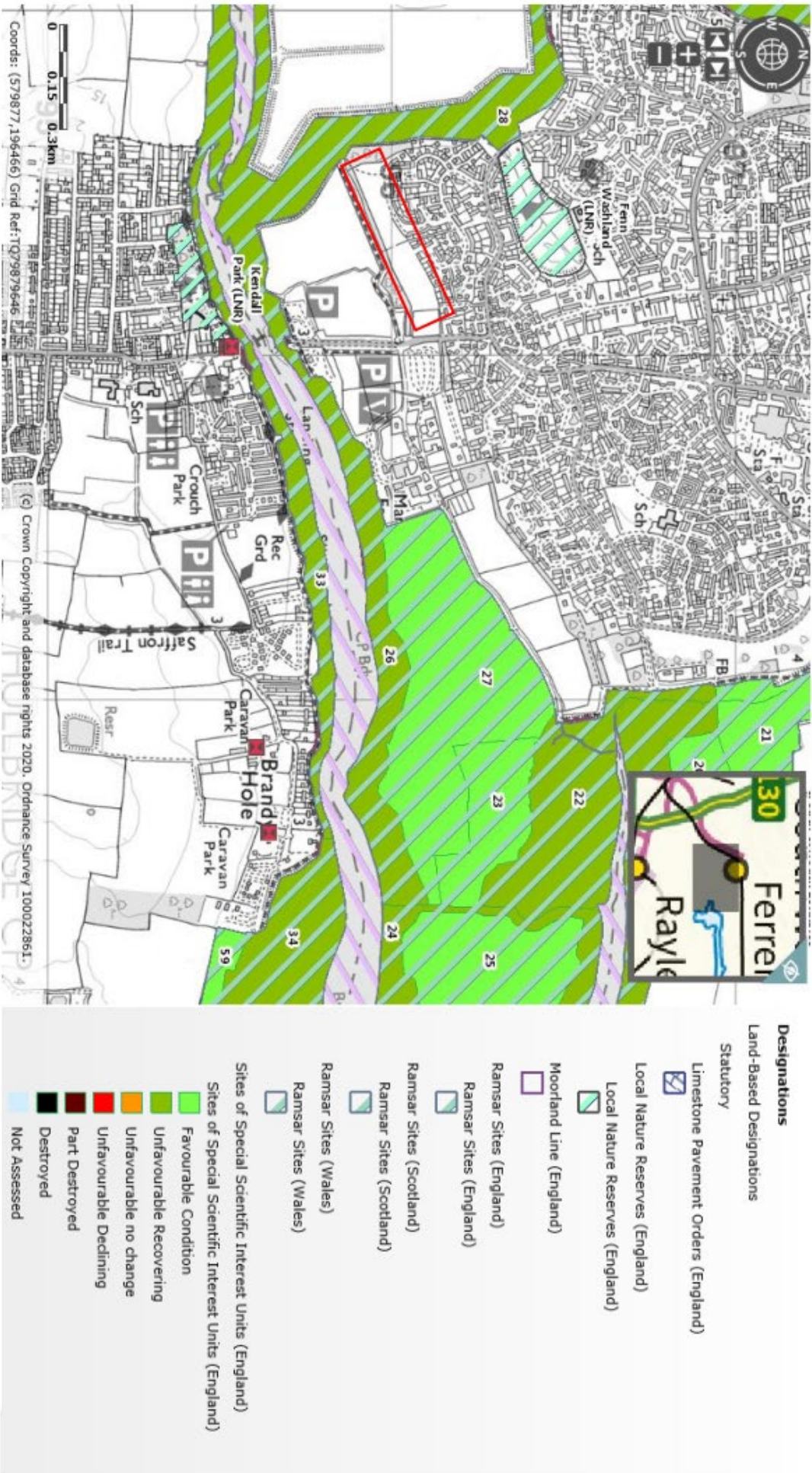


Figure 3: Map showing the nature reserves and important conservation sites located near to Frankland Fields, highlighted in red (Magic Map, 2020)

Overview of Frankland Fields LNR

The local nature reserve is located within South Woodham Ferrers, close to the River Crouch and opposite Marsh Farm Country Park. The site runs parallel to the River Crouch and there are a number of pedestrian access points from the adjoining residential areas to the north and from the river to the south. The site was originally farmland, part of Peatlands Farm until the 1990s. It was originally in the possession of Essex County Council but transferred to Chelmsford City Council for open space in 2003

Regular Parks Conservation Volunteer sessions are run by the Rangers during the year, which include workshops with local schools and colleges.

There are other important sites for wildlife located close to this site and it is for this connectivity to other sites is where Frankland Fields has importance, shown in figure 3.

1. LNRs – there are two LNRs located within 500m of the site (Fen Washland and Kendall Park).
2. Ramsar sites - these are sites of wetland importance (particularly for waterfowl) both banks of the River Crouch and a large area to the east of South Woodham Ferrers are designated as Ramsar sites.
3. SSSIs – these are Sites of Special Scientific Interest based on the wet grassland habitat. The SSSIs located nearby are in favourable and unfavourable (recovering) conditions and are the same as the Ramsar sites
4. SACs – the Special Areas of Conservation are wetland habitats designated under the Directive 92/43/EEC. The SACs located nearby include the River Crouch channel and associated smaller channels.
5. SPAs – the Special Protection Areas are areas designated for the conservation of wild birds. The SPAs located nearby are also the same as the SSSIs and Ramsar sites.

Many species will move between a variety of these different sites and Frankland Fields is part of the mosaic of different habitats in this area.

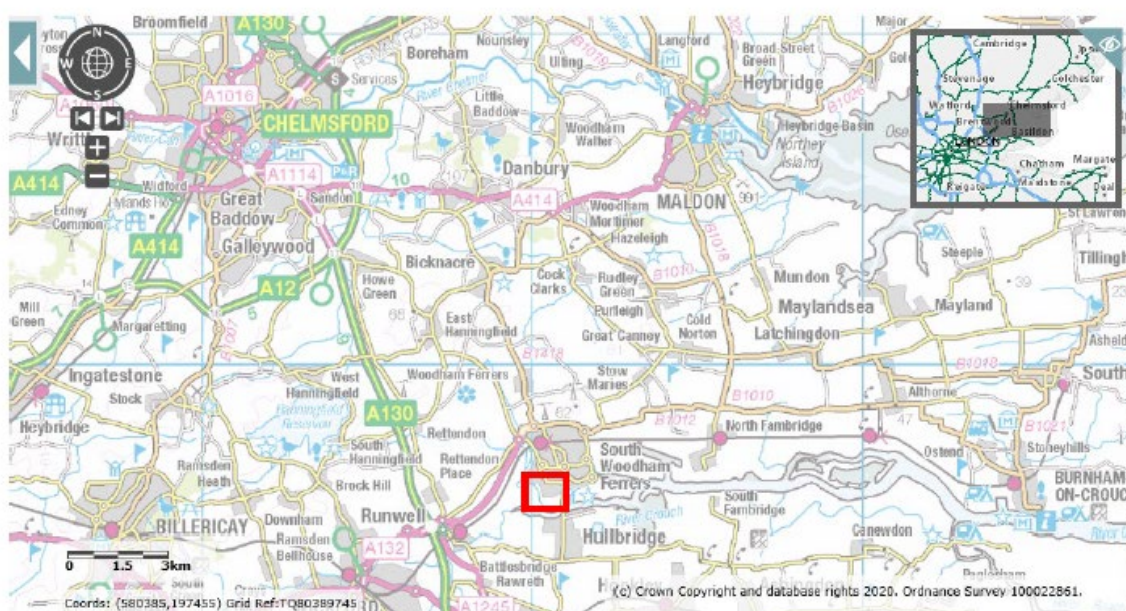


Figure 1: Frankland Fields, South Woodham Ferrers. (Magic Map, 2020).

Land use & function

The 2.9 hectares of local nature reserve provide part of a green necklace that surrounds the town of South Woodham Ferrers, providing green space for its urban area. The area is linked via a number of footpaths to the wider Crouch Estuary, creating primary green space for a large population and two ward areas.

Management aims

Key to the success of the site is to increase biodiversity and maintain the open grassland land, whilst keeping the site accessible. The site can be prone to flooding in the winter months in parts, due to its geography.



Open to all – The Parks user

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

- Natural surveillance, transparency and views in and out of the LNR are maintained, where practicable
- 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
- 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 behaviour is eliminated

Contact with Essex Constabulary and Safer Neighbourhood Teams is maintained.

Appropriate Provision of Quality Facilities and Activities

The site has been in the process of being developed to an LNR since 2003. This work links into the Parks Volunteer program. The LNR Management Plan seeks to evolve and develop sites for both habitats and use of the LNR for recreation.



Residents Survey

Chelmsford's Parks are open to all, and we encourage community use of the parks and green spaces throughout the city. Essex County Council undertook a resident's survey in 2022. One of the aspects was research and insight into green and natural spaces, environment and climate change.

The 2022 Resident Survey is a sample survey designed to:

- be representative of the Essex adult population,
- provide insight on specific groups and cohorts; and
- draw conclusions at the district level

The survey was delivered in partnership with Opinion Research Services (ORS) and conducted in line with Market Research Society standards.

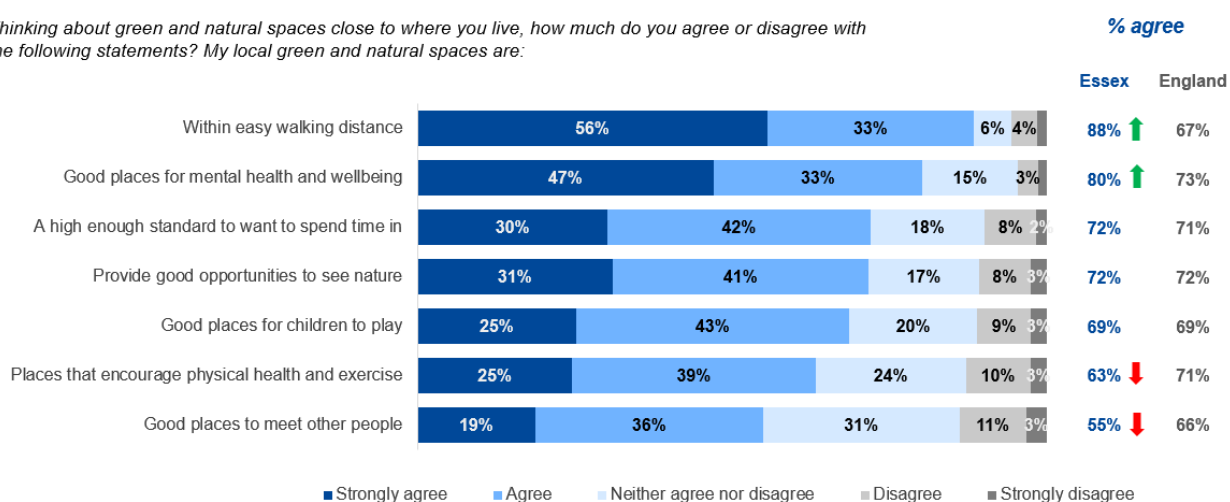
Fieldwork took place during February - May 2022. 35,000 households received a postal invite to participate in the survey, which could be completed online or via a paper questionnaire. A total of 5,987 residents aged 18+ responded to the 2022 survey.

This provides a robust sample size which enables reliable analysis of the data by area and by population sub-groups. Key slides from this survey show uses of green space, that Chelmsford is perceived as having good quality and access to green spaces. This indicates the on the ground result of the City Councils policies in provision of green space and their commitment to protect and manage green space especially in urban areas such as where Frankland Fields LNR is located.

Green and natural spaces

Almost 9 in 10 (88%) agree that their local green and natural spaces are within easy walking distance, well above the national average of 67%. Seven in ten each agree they are a high enough standard and are good places to see nature and for children to play, in line with views nationally.

Thinking about green and natural spaces close to where you live, how much do you agree or disagree with the following statements? My local green and natural spaces are:



Base: All residents (answering) excluding 'Don't know' responses (5,553 – 5,876 per statement);
Benchmark: People and Nature Survey for England Apr-20 to Sep-21 (36,237–37,017 per statement)
Produced by Essex County Council Chief Executive's Office

↑ ↓ Denotes a statistically significant difference vs the England benchmark at the 95% confidence level

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The table below summarises the resident groups more or less likely to spend free time outside in green and natural spaces

The % in brackets shows the % of that group who spend time outside in green and natural spaces by different frequencies (e.g. 63% of residents in Uttlesford spend time outside in green and natural spaces more than twice a week)

Frequency	Essex total	The following groups are more likely to spend time in green and natural spaces often/infrequently							
		Those living in...				Those who are...			Those with...
More than twice a week	51%	Uttlesford (63%) Maldon (59%) Chelmsford (57%) Tendring (57%)	Less deprived areas: IMD quintile 4-5 (54%)	Rural areas (61%)		Aged 45-74 (56%)		In a high-income household earning £75K+ (62%) Financially comfortable (60%)	Secondary school age children (56%)
At least once a week	74%	Uttlesford (86%) Maldon (82%) Chelmsford (80%)	Less deprived areas: IMD quintile 4-5 (77%)	Rural areas (82%)		Aged 35-44 (80%) and 65-74 (77%)		In higher-income households earning £45-75K (78%) or £75K+ (84%) Financially comfortable (81%)	Children (81%, rising to 87% of those with pre-school age children)
Less than monthly or never	13%	Harlow (24%) Basildon (22%)	More deprived areas: IMD quintiles 1 (25%) and 2 (19%)	Urban areas (14%)	Social rented housing (23%)	Aged 75+ (23%)	In non-working households (19%)	In a low-income household earning less than £20K (22%) Struggling financially (20%) or just about getting by (16%)	A limiting long-term health condition or illness (22% all age / 18% working-age) Personal caring responsibilities* (19%)

Base: All residents (answering) (5,860). * Those providing personal care (e.g. help with getting dressed/fed/washed) and/or home mobility support

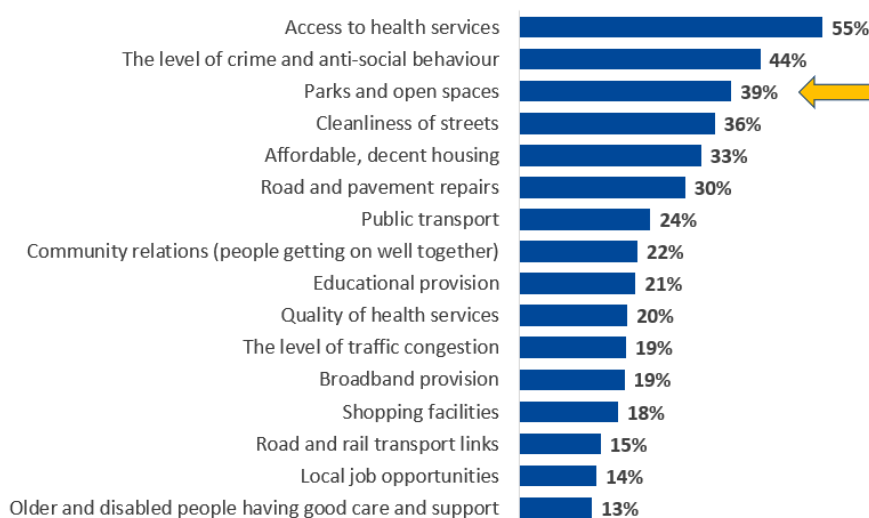
Produced by Essex County Council Chief Executive's Office

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Parks and open spaces are seen as the third most important asset in making an area a good place to live, behind access to health services and (low) levels of crime and anti-social behaviour

Thinking generally, which of the things below would you say are most important in making somewhere a good place to live? (MAXIMUM OF 5)



65% said either access to or the quality of health services were important in making somewhere a good place to live

Base: All residents (answering) (5,149)

Produced by Essex County Council Chief Executive's Office

CHART SHOWS ALL RESPONSES GIVEN BY 10% OR MORE OF ALL RESIDENTS

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Local green and natural spaces tend to be most highly rated in Epping Forest, Chelmsford and Maldon, with residents in Harlow, Tendring and Castle Point least positive

Thinking about green and natural spaces close to where you live, how much do you agree or disagree with the following statements? My local green and natural spaces are:

% agree	ESSEX TOTAL	Basildon	Braintree	Brentwood	Castle Point	Chelmsford	Colchester	Epping Forest	Harlow	Maldon	Rochford	Tendring	Uttlesford
Within easy walking distance	88%	87%	85%	84% ↓	87%	93% ↑	89%	92% ↑	89%	91% ↑	86%	84% ↓	92% ↑
Good places for mental health and wellbeing	80%	79%	77%	84% ↑	76% ↓	84% ↑	80%	90% ↑	66% ↓	83%	83%	75% ↓	85% ↑
A high enough standard to want to spend time in	72%	64% ↓	71%	74%	64% ↓	78% ↑	75%	82% ↑	59% ↓	79% ↑	72%	65% ↓	81% ↑
Provide good opportunities to see nature	72%	69%	66% ↓	73%	66% ↓	72%	76% ↑	87% ↑	60% ↓	76% ↑	73%	68%	73%
Good places for children to play	69%	65%	66%	76% ↑	62% ↓	75% ↑	70%	68%	67%	72%	72%	64% ↓	69%
Places that encourage physical health and exercise	63%	62%	56% ↓	70% ↑	65%	68% ↑	66%	69% ↑	49% ↓	66%	66%	59% ↓	66%
Good places to meet other people	55%	50% ↓	52%	52%	53%	62% ↑	55%	57%	49% ↓	63% ↑	57%	56%	54%

↑ ↓ Denotes a statistically significant difference vs the Essex total at the 95% confidence level

Base: All residents (answering) excluding 'Don't know' responses (5,553 – 5,876 per statement)

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Section 2: Healthy Safe and Secure

Health and Safety Obligations

Corporate Health and Safety Policy

The Health and Safety Policy as it applies to this site 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 ground's 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 parks' 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, where practicable on an LNR
- 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 the 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, conservation tasks specific to task/site
- 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 utilised 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 them 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 site 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 volunteer sessions/school workshops are run. Standard Chelmsford City Council accident forms are completed wherever possible to record details of reported incidents.

The public are also able to report faults to Park Services by contact numbers advertised on the site and via the web site email.

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.

Personal Security

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

Parks staff can report anti-social behaviour to the police.

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

Strong links have been forged with the Community Police and Traffic police who visit sites 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 the Local Nature Reserve 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 directly 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 behaviour in any park or public open space owned by Chelmsford City Council.

Calls may relate to security, vandalism, fire, misuse of council property, traveller 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 behaviour, 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 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 on the Local Nature Reserve providing they act in a responsible manner by keeping their animals under control and that they clean up in the proper manner.

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 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.

Dog fouling is not seen as a major problem as dog owners who use the site generally do so responsibly.

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.

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

Details are all on the www.loveyourchelmsford.co.uk web site.



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 policies 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 at all times.
- 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 of the site. 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. Category A litter, i.e. 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.

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 site.

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 participate in internal and external training to gain recognized qualifications. We run an apprenticeship scheme for both new staff and those already employed.

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 site is inspected by ground staff who are based at Saltcoats Park and park rangers when running volunteer sessions. Damage and faults are recorded, and remedial work actioned.

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.

The landscape elements within the LNR 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	
• Pathways		Min. 14 cuts
• Natural		Min. 1 cut and collect
• Miscellaneous Detail		
Hedges	11.11	Min 3 occasions
Trees	1.9	Min 9 visits
Native Species plantations		Min 10 occasions
Site Furniture	11.1	Min 2 occasions

The specifics of each landscape type are 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.

Parks Conservation Volunteers

Many of the areas on the LNR are maintained working with parks Volunteers, these sessions are linked directly to the LNR Management Plan and are run by the Parks Rangers.

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. This is under a framework agreement.

The tree stock is plotted on the Tree Database. Trees are managed in accordance with the Tree Management Policy. Consideration is given to species that may use them as habitat such as Bats and an independent ecologist is employed to check for relevant species and adjust methodology of any works appropriately

Tree planting is undertaken within the parks, carefully selecting the correct species for the site. A number of new trees have been planted in the last 20 years as part of the Council's Greening Policy. New plantings are selected in the main from native genera appropriate for the park setting on the LNR.

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.

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 as 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.





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:

- Public co-operation through ParkWatch
- Regular liaison with local police
- Daily inspections seeking to stop damage
- 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
- 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 is reported 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 Park Watch 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 program 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 do occur. 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 the council's 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 CO₂]

Fuel – 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, park services employ 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. Low energy appliances are used where possible. Energy efficiency is considered in purchase of new machinery.

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 the 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 program: – The Council has participated in the Carbon Trust's Local Authority Carbon Management Program (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 hazards to the community and the environment from pollution sources by identification, assessment and management. Working in an ecologically sustainable manner.

Storage and pollution minimisation measures for fuels and chemicals within the park are covered by the Grounds Maintenance Specification and within the Park Service's Health and Safety Policy: Control of Substances Hazardous to Health and relevant task risk assessment sheets. All materials are stored centrally at the depot

Regulations and specifications regarding maintenance of equipment and noise control are covered by the Grounds Maintenance specification and within the Parks 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

Recycling green waste

Last year the City Council recycled over 3500m³ 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 pruning's. Either an organic soil conditioner or mulch is created from 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 by staff to the site and minimizing the need for transport of goods and waste to/from the site, for example through onsite recycling, such as bark chip mulch etc.

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.

Recycled materials

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 parks 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 is limited to the absolute minimum.

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 ground's 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.

Eliminating 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.



Section 5: Biodiversity and Landscape

Management of Natural Features, Wild Flora and Fauna

We believe in investment in green infrastructure. It is heartening to see that 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).

Climate Change Adaption 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 and 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.

The extreme weather patterns that are beginning to develop have an impact on the landscape and we are seeking to plan for this as much as is possible. This may mean for example altering tree species choice to aid establishment and assessing how we manage spaces with the impact of these extreme weather systems.

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 promotion 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 and 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.

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.

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.

Park furniture & signage

The LNR has a number of flat bench seating on periphery edges as part of its development. Additional seating will also be added as the site develops. There are a number of interpretation boards and poster cases that promote the site and how to get involved in parks volunteer sessions

Dog bins

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 visitors' needs, although this will be monitored to ensure the level of adequacy is maintained.

Management of the tree stock in relationship to wildlife

There is a policy for maintaining and improving wildlife habitats as part of arboricultural operations 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
4. An overall policy of non-intervention will be applied if at all possible.

The designation of LNR ensures that the valuable habitats are protected and understood in terms of management as the site forms a web of stepping-stones and corridors for wildlife, forming one of the key components of ecological networks.



Biodiversity at Frankland Fields LNR

The existing natural assets of the LNR will be conserved and enhanced. The site 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 and within these to encourage as much structural and species diversity as possible and to maintain the balance of succession. The site's LNR plan will be reviewed with independent ecological advice every 5 years. New actions will arise from this and be implemented as part of the management plan.



Habitat creation and management

Landscape

Frankland Fields LNR is one of a number of critical open spaces that provide significant open space provision for South Woodham Ferrers, designed as a new town with the majority of its open space on the periphery as part of the Essex Design Guide. The site was declared an LNR in 2022. The designation of LNR ensures that the valuable habitats are protected and understood in terms of management as the site forms a web of stepping-stones and corridors for wildlife, forming one of the key components of ecological networks in the city.

It has its own LNR management plan that will be reviewed every 5 years with the assistance of independent ecologists. Opportunities for species development are assessed as part of this work. Work is ongoing on the site to improve and enhance habitat creation. Full details are listed in the site's LNR Management Plan.

Protected species

There are a number of species that are designated as protected on the site and the management plan takes account of this and seeks to enhance habitat on the site for them. Review and survey of these is undertaken by qualified independent ecologists.

Site evaluation

The site is small but contains a diverse mix of habitats including grassland, scrub, ditches, and woodland. The site is primarily comprised of open grassland with some areas of scrub and trees scattered around the site. A key aim of the management plan is to continue to consolidate the key habitat areas and ensure that the site remains open. Figure 4 below outlines the habitats that are present on the site of Frankland Fields. The benefit of the site for wildlife must be balanced against the value for people that use the site.

The site has a rich biodiversity and provides an important habitat for many different species. The mix of habitats and links with other wildlife sites nearby enhance its value and help to increase its biodiversity. With any site, the greater the number of habitats present usually means that there is a greater biodiversity (figure 4). The maintenance of this site intends to enhance and protect the habitats present. The most important habitat is grassland and is surveyed in order to determine their value and condition

Site description

The site is divided into six habitats: grassland (meadow), scrub, woodland, meadow with trees, amenity grassland and a ditch (figure 4). There are two main areas which make up the nature reserve. These two areas were previously part of two separate fields which were agricultural land. Woodland to the South is on land managed by Essex County Council and hedgerows are present on the site, some of which are remnant hedgerows from the time when the area was agricultural land. Also, there is a bank on the northern edge of the site which provides flood protection for the new houses

Biodiversity Management Objectives

The overall aim for managing this site is to maintain and enhance the grassland habitat and to maintain the other habitats.

1. To manage the variety of habitats within the site to maximise their biodiversity value.
2. To maintain and enhance the grassland.
3. To ensure informal recreation spaces within the site

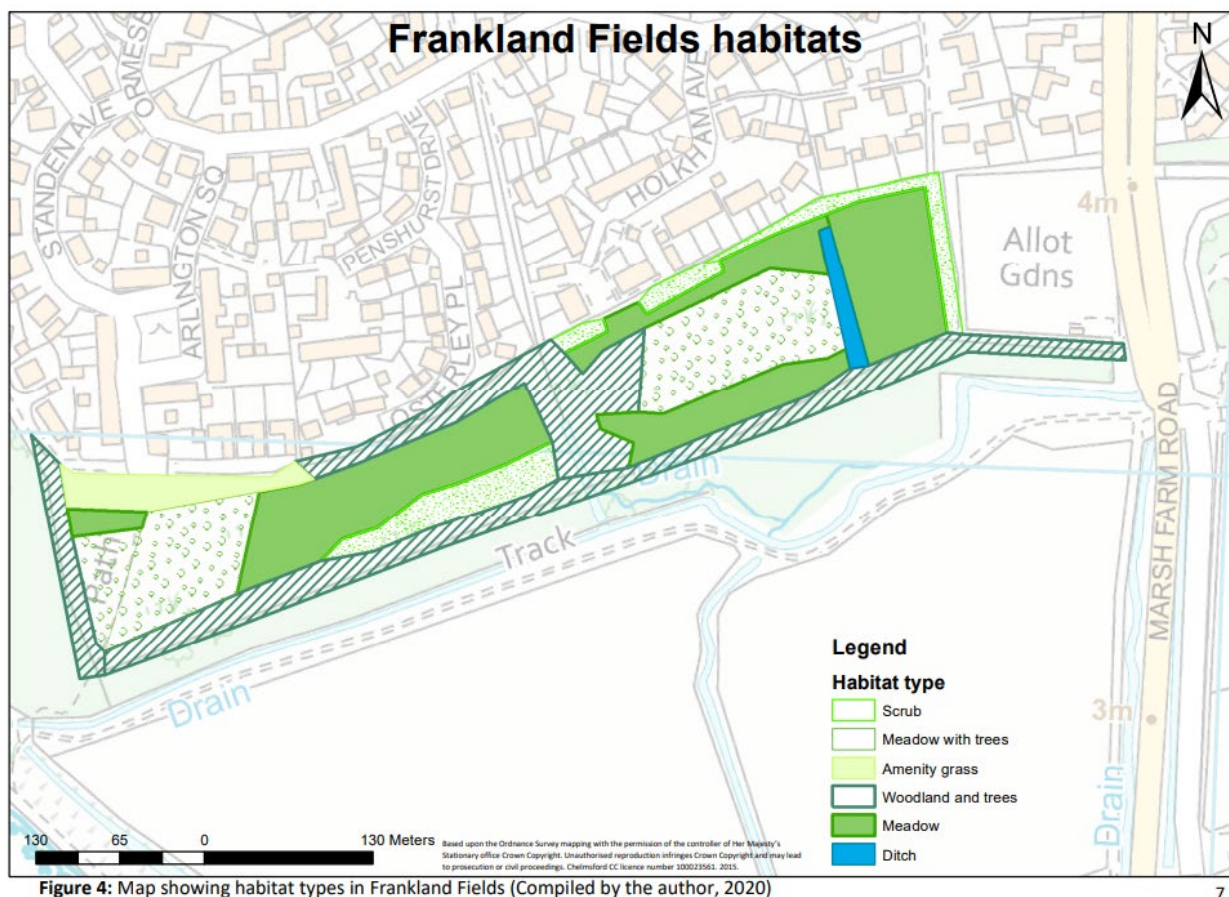


Figure 4: Map showing habitat types in Frankland Fields (Compiled by the author, 2020)

Grassland/Meadow

The meadow areas are the main habitat on site (figure 4), and they are important for a wide variety of wildlife. This habitat is comprised of species including Yellow Rattle, Grass vetchling, Buch vetch, Oxeye daisy, Creeping buttercup, Birdsfoot trefoil and Meadow buttercup. Also, within some areas of the meadow there are trees dotted around which do not affect the overall open character of this grassland (figure 4). The trees dotted in these areas consist mainly of Hawthorn, Blackthorn and some fruit trees. It is an important habitat for a wide variety of wildlife, especially bees. This site was surveyed by Bumblebee Conservation Trust, and it was identified as an important site for the Shrill Carder Bee and the Brown-banded Carder Bee (Bumblebee Conservation Trust, 2014). In addition to this, the wildflowers in this habitat are important for other pollinators including butterflies and other insects. This habitat is also important for reptiles and amphibians, particularly for Common Lizard, Slow Worms and Newts.

Amenity Grassland

There is a small area of amenity grassland located to the West of the site, close to Arlington Square (figure 4). This is cut monthly to provide some amenity space for the local residents. It has limited value for wildlife, however it only accounts for a small percentage of total area of the site. The scrub on site is mainly Hawthorn, Blackthorn and Bramble and located mostly around the edges of the site and a small clump in between Allotment Field and Arlington Field. It is an important habitat for a wide range of birds and small mammals. In addition, this habitat provides important linkages to other sites for birds, bats and small

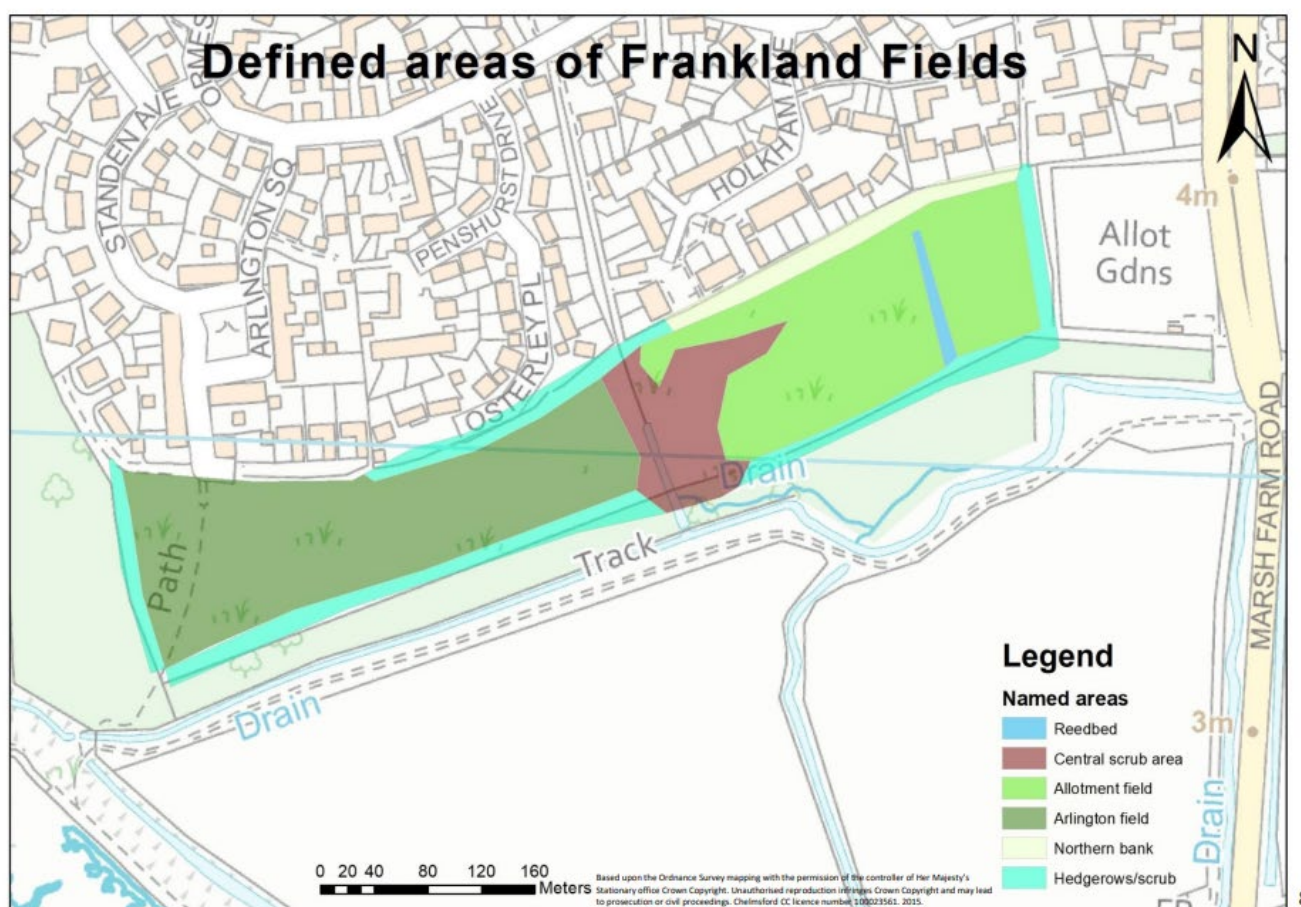


Figure 5: Map showing defined areas of Frankland Fields (Compiled by the author, 2020)

Management of the tree stock in relationship to wildlife

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

- Maintain and improve wildlife habitats
- To ensure, where it is safe to do so, that no wildlife habitat is damaged or lost due to arboricultural operations
- 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.

It is also important to note that the balance between scrub and grassland is important to ensure that the site has greatest value. To maintain the biodiversity of the site the scrub area needs to be maintained.

Hedgerows

The hedgerows on site are comprised of similar species to the scrub areas, being Hawthorn, Blackthorn, Bramble and Field Maple. The hedgerows on site are around the edges and connect the site to surrounding hedgerows and therefore surrounding sites. The hedgerows on the site provide habitat for birds, bats, mammals and insects. They are also important for enhancing biodiversity through allowing connectivity to other parts of the site.

Woodland

The woodland on site is located mostly along the southern boundary of the site (figure 4). It links to the woodland on the Essex County Council area of land which is adjacent to this site. It is comprised of Ash, Oak, Poplar, Hawthorn and Blackthorn. It provides habitat for birds, bats, small mammals, insects and reptiles during the winter months.

Ditches

The ditches on site provide wetland habitat which enhances the biodiversity. Ditches are located close to the allotment end of the site and have standing water for the winter and early spring months of the year. They connect to the ditches on the adjoined site managed by Essex County Council. They have common reed and other grass growing on the banks. They provide habitat for birds, insects, newts, frogs, and small mammals (particularly water voles)

A list of species is identified in the sites LNR Management Plan.



Section 6: Community Involvement

We run a Parks Volunteer programme throughout the borough on Parks land, with some 2,500 volunteers registered and approximately 100-150 volunteering with us 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 as workshops, and businesses to engage in their local green space. At this site we offer local schools/colleges free workshops. The site is also used as part of our outreach program with Thriftwood College.

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 parks volunteers on the management of site every month, including habitat surveying as well as practical tasks. Park Rangers explain at the start of each session why we are undertaking a task and gather information on the site from local residents who volunteer with us..

Local schools are encouraged to use the LNR for green classroom events. It is hoped that the visiting public will also appreciate the site for its tranquillity and links to nature through its natural landscape setting.

Parks services link workshops with projects such as 'Space to Thrive' which in turn is linked to the Councils Climate Emergency Declaration in 2019. <https://loveyourchelmsford.co.uk/space-to-thrive/>





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 considered.

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 for the City Council involves all of 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.

City Parks also publicises the site on its web pages and where the City Council promotes specific activities such as volunteer sessions or schools' projects, these tend to be advertised on site, for example banners and posters in the notice boards.

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 noticeboards, 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 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.

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 and 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 Spaces.

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

The 2022 resident survey undertaken by ECC shows very positive results for Chelmsford parks and LNRs. Information from this is used in marketing.

Section 8: Management Action Plan

Landscape improvements: (2026-2031) 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. This is linked to the sites LNR management plan.

The action plan is subject to annual review and update by the Parks and Green Spaces Manager to ensure a continued programme of 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.

Frankland Fields LNR

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

No	Objective	Time frame	Cost implication
Objective 1	To continue to ensure biodiversity is a key element and that the site maintenance is supportive of this.	1-5	Within existing budgets
Objective 2	To develop facilities suitable for an LNR such as nature trails, seating/educational features and interpretative signage.	1-5	tbc
Objective 3	Undertake relevant wildlife surveys/monitor	ongoing	£4k

Medium term objectives (2-3 years)

No	Objective	Time frame	Cost implications
Objective 1	Manage habitats and enhance	2-3	Existing budget
Objective 2	Provide additional seating	2	£4k

Short term objectives (annually)

No	Objective	Time frame	Cost implications
Objective 1	To engage with local schools/community and undertake small scale projects	Annually	Current 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
- Frankland Fields Local Nature Reserve Management 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
- Local Nature Recovery Network and Biodiversity Net Gain Strategies
- Essex County Council parks survey 2022 [Essex Resident Survey 2022 Dashboard | Essex Open Data](#)

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 strategic management service, design service, professional horticulture services, management direction, a tree management service, Community engagement and outreach, in managing and running the volunteer program and managing the two parks volunteer leader roles & involvement along with Service promotion and marketing. Private tree contractors undertake tree works as directed by the Arboricultural & Conservation officer.

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.

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. The latter, 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 school holidays. 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, an activity that is ran during the summer holidays. 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 please
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Chelmsford City Council



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01245 606606 (ask for Parks & Green Spaces)



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www.chelmsford.gov.uk/parks/



www.loveyourchelmsford.co.uk