



## Downhills Park Management Plan 2012



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<b>Preface</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>1 Introduction</b>	<b>6</b>
1.1 Haringey Parks Vision Statement	6
1.2 Open Space Provision in Haringey	6
1.3 Vision Statement for Downhills Park	6
1.4 Site Description	6
1.5 Facilities	6
1.6 Area Team Responsibility	7
<b>2 Welcoming Place</b>	<b>8</b>
2.1 Access	8
2.2 Equal Access for All	9
<b>3 Healthy, Safe and Secure</b>	<b>9</b>
3.1 Health and Safety	9
3.2 Raising Health and Safety Concerns	10
3.3 Community Safety - The Parkforce Model	11
3.4 Metropolitan Police Activity	12
3.5 Extending Neighbourhood Watch into Parks	14
3.6 Dog Control Orders	15
3.7 BTCV Activity	17
3.8 Designing Out Crime	17
3.9 Locking of Parks	18
<b>4 Clean and Well Maintained</b>	<b>18</b>
4.1 Hygiene	18
4.2 Monitoring of Waste	19
4.3 Keep Britain Tidy	19
4.4 Better Haringey	19
4.5 Current Maintenance by Leisure Operations	20
4.6 Scheduled Maintenance	20
4.7 Measuring Service Standards	20
4.8 Monitoring Maintenance Standards	21
4.9 Landscape and Maintenance Issues and Actions	22
4.10 Graffiti	22
4.11 Maintenance of Buildings, Equipment and Landscape	22
4.12 Maintenance Zoning	24
<b>5 Sustainability</b>	<b>25</b>
5.1 Environmental Policy	25
5.2 Biodiversity	27
5.3 Parks and Green Spaces Habitat Action Plan	27
5.4 Nature Conservation at Downhills Park	28
5.5 The Environmental Improvement in Downhills Park	28
5.6 Pond design	29

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5.7	Terrestrial Habitats	30
<b>6</b>	<b>Community Involvement</b>	<b>31</b>
6.1	Haringey Parks and Open Spaces Volunteer Framework	31
6.2	Friends Forum	33
6.3	Friends of Downhills Park	34
6.4	Other Groups Using Downhills Park	34
<b>7</b>	<b>Conservation and Heritage</b>	<b>35</b>
7.1	Site History	35
7.2	Conservation	36
7.3	Downhills Park Wildflower Meadow (TQ 325 894)	37
<b>8</b>	<b>Marketing</b>	<b>39</b>
8.1	The Marketing Approach	39
8.2	Publicity	39
8.3	Publications	40
8.4	Campaigns	40
8.5	The Greenest Borough Strategy	41
8.6	In Bloom Competition	41
8.7	Events Participation	42
8.8	Sponsorship	42
8.9	Consultation and Market Research	42
8.10	Residents Survey	42
8.11	KMC Survey 2009	43
<b>9</b>	<b>Management</b>	<b>45</b>
9.1	How Haringey's Parks are Managed: An Overview	45
9.2	Haringey's Cultural Strategy	45
9.3	Haringey's Community Strategy	45
9.4	Open Space Strategy	46
9.5	Objectives of the Open Space Strategy	46
9.6	Place & Sustainability Business Plan	47
9.7	Management Structure	47
9.8	The Quality Management System	48
9.9	Investors in People	48
9.10	Monitoring	48
9.11	Finance and Funding	49
<b>10</b>	<b>Improvement programme</b>	<b>50</b>
10.1	Recent Improvements	50
10.2	Future Improvements	50
<b>11</b>	<b>Action Plan – The Next 12 Months</b>	<b>51</b>

## Tables and Figures

Table 1:	Downhills Park features	7
Table 2:	Downhills Park local management	7
Table 3:	Police activity in Downhills Park	12
Table 4:	Neighbourhood Watches within West Greem Ward	15
Table 5:	BTCV activity in Downhills Park	17
Table 6:	Frequency of when dog and litter bins are emptied	19
Table 7:	Asset management prioritisation	23
Table 8:	Downhills Park zoned work programme	24
Table 9:	Vascular plants found in Downhills Park by D.Bevan (14/07/2008)	38
Table 10:	Residents' satisfaction survey 2010/11 – Understanding feelings of safety by area, ethnicity, tenure and social grade	43
Table 11:	Actual event income Jan –Dec 2011	50
Table 12:	Next 12 month action plan	51
Figure 1:	Downhills Park layout	8
Figure 2:	Extract from the quality document – grass maintenance	21
Figure 3:	Downhills Park work zones	25
Figure 4:	Leisure organisational structure	48

## Preface

2011 was a rapid period of change for the Parks Service in Haringey. The Local Government Settlement for Haringey resulted in an £81m reduction in funding to Haringey, including £41m from 2011/12.

Members agreed a package of change proposal for parks around 3 themes:

- further operational efficiency
- transfer and fund delivery of services
- reducing scope and scale of grounds maintenance activity

The related actions achieved a net cost saving of £1.06m, the majority of which - £991k - was from 1 April 2011.

The most challenging element was the 'reduction in grounds maintenance' with a £510k budget cut, and reduction of 19 FTE staff (17 permanent and 2 FTE agency).

The Service has contractual commitments to both Homes for Haringey and the Heritage Lottery Fund (Lordship Recreation Ground, Finsbury Park, and Markfield Park) which need to be met.

Whilst Friends of Parks have remained engaged and participated in the two Lead Member led summit meetings to date, they have also expressed their concerns regarding the budget cuts through a petition and deputation to Full Council in November 2011.

### Action to Date

In the short term the Council has, in conjunction with partners, including Friends Groups, developed an action plan with 3 key themes, aimed at mitigating the impact of the reductions outlined above and redefining a core service offer:

- redesign and revision of our current parks and open space horticultural content
- proactive and joined up use of supported employment and training initiatives
- a smarter approach to supporting and developing volunteering

**Redesign and revision of current parks and open space operation** - Work has begun to review each operation within the core service offer to ensure that resources are deployed effectively and a good standard can be achieved. This will be undertaken for all of the areas. The hygiene operation review has been completed and is operational. The review of grass cutting has commenced and it is evident that the key issue is the grass cutting equipment. To improve this operation capital investment will be required. The reviews of the other areas of the base standard will hopefully identify efficiencies that can be reinvested in the base service.

### Proactive and joined up use of supported training and employment initiatives

Over the last six years the Parks Service has actively engaged in initiatives to bring young people into horticulture. With an ageing workforce and natural vacancies that arise each year it is important that such schemes are maintained. The level of skills of our agency staff is an ongoing area of concern. This will be funded by transferring funding from agency staffing, the benefit being that skills and qualifications are improved. Opportunities will only be offered to local people.

Another area that has been explored is the use of low level offenders to undertake one off and seasonal work. This work would otherwise not get done or would draw

the limited parks staff away from other more skilled work. The Council has, and will continue, to work with partner agencies in tackling challenges, such as worklessness, community safety and health inequalities, and where appropriate, will develop programmes that enhance and add value to the maintenance of our local environment.

**Smarter approach to supporting and developing volunteering** - Haringey Parks Service has a strong track record of developing local engagement and volunteering. In discussion with the existing Friends Groups and volunteers it is clear that as a group they do not have the capacity to 'volunteer more'. Therefore our approach to developing volunteering further will be to focus on capacity building with residents to seek new and additional volunteers. Capacity building will focus on the establishment of Friends Groups in parks where they do not exist, and also recruiting additional volunteers for existing groups.

In addition more formal 'social delivery' models are being researched to see what role they can play. Other areas of one off or small scale volunteering such as school litter picks or corporate volunteering are also continuing.

### **Summary**

2011 was very challenging for the Parks Service in Haringey and it will remain so for the foreseeable future. However, despite the challenge before us, our active network of Friends Groups and partners remain committed to providing the best possible parks that we can. Politically Members remain supportive of the Service and committed to high quality parks in Haringey.

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Haringey Parks Vision Statement

The borough-wide vision for parks and open spaces, as set out in the Open Space Strategy is:

*To enrich the quality of life for everyone in Haringey by working in partnership to provide safe, attractively designed, well used, well maintained open spaces for the benefit and enjoyment of the whole community.*

## 1.2 Open Space Provision in Haringey

Based on 2007 Government Indices of Deprivation, Haringey is the 18th most deprived district in England and the 5th most deprived district in London. This deprivation also extends to the provision of open space.

A 2005 strategic assessment noted that Haringey was deficient in all types of open space. This fact underlines the importance of improving and maintaining sites like Downhills Park to enable more intense and diverse use. Downhills Park is also in an area of deficiency in access to natural open space.

## 1.3 Vision Statement for Downhills Park

To provide a horticultural oasis of scent and colour to enhance the local urban environment for the benefit of all, whilst providing suitable recreational facilities to encourage a range of healthy, educational and leisure activities within a clean and safe environment.

## 1.4 Site Description

Downhills Park is an amenity park of 12 hectares (Grid reference: 532250, 189750), bounded by housing, schools and residential streets. The park is situated in Tottenham, North London, within West Green Ward a densely populated area, with a diverse community of different cultures.

Downhills Park Road skirts the northern end of the park with West Green Road to the south, Keston Road to the east and Belmont Road to the west. To the north of the park, over the road, lies Lordship Recreation Ground, a park of approximately 16 hectares. To the north-west of the park lies Belmont Recreation Ground of approximately 3 hectares. Downhills Primary School and Park View Academy, a secondary school, bound Downhills Park on its southern boundaries. Together Downhills Park and Lordship Rec form an area of Metropolitan Open Land, both also contain areas designated as Local Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation.

## 1.5 Facilities

The facilities in Downhills Park are numerous and wide ranging, encouraging a wide and varied use of the park to all sectors of the community.

Downhills Park has a wide range of sport facilities; on the recreation ground there are two sport pitches, with dressing room facilities. In the eastern section of the park there are three tennis courts on site, which are well used; and a hard surface ball area with combination game facilities.

The bowling green was closed due to low levels of membership and the pavilion was demolished in early 2007. Since then a multi use building has been constructed and is currently managed by Haringey Council's Adult Services in partnership with the Friends of Downhills Park. A volunteer group of people with learning disabilities

now run the café on a daily basis providing tea, coffee, sandwiches and cakes. There are also toilet facilities within the café available to park users.

In the middle of the park there is also a playground which is in need of refurbishment for both under 5s and under 12s, which is very popular throughout the year. It has recently been allocated £40,000.00 from the London Marathon fund for improvements.

There are numerous benches around the park positioned to allow park users a place to sit, relax and enjoy the surrounds. There are also picnic tables close to the playground.

The Italian Gardens and wooded areas provide peaceful areas for those park users who require something less strenuous.

Feature	Number
Park benches	54
Picnic tables	4
Litter bins	24
Dog waste bins	11
Dog waste bag dispenser	1
Notice board	4
Entrance "Welcome" signs	5
Playground signs	1
Entrance gates	5
Basketball court	1
Playground	1
Tennis courts	3
Hard surface ball area	1
Staff yard	1
Football pitch	2
Recycling bins	3
Pond	1
Multi purpose building	1
Wildflower Meadow	1

Table 1: Downhills Park features

## 1.6 Area Team Responsibility

Haringey parks are managed by Operational Services which sits within the Leisure Services Business Unit of the Place and Sustainability Directorate within the London Borough of Haringey.

Within the Operational Services team, the direct management and maintenance of the parks is split into two areas – East and West. Within each area there are three zonal teams covering grounds maintenance operations. Downhills Park is in the East area, covered by zonal team 5.

Job Title	Telephone
Parks Operations Manager East: Frank Hunt	07870 157650 frank.hunt@haringey.gov.uk
Assistant Parks Operations Manager West: Steve Hall	07967 336225 stephen.hall@haringey.gov.uk

Table 2: Downhills Park local management



Figure 1: Downhills Park layout

## 2 Welcoming Place

### 2.1 Access

All entrances are both wheelchair and pushchair accessible. There are four entrances off Downhills Park Road, one off Belmont Road and one off Philip Lane.

There are four vehicle access points to Downhills Park, one on Philip Lane near Park View Academy and three on Downhills Park Road, one on the junction of Keston Road, one on the junction of Belmont Road and one positioned opposite Wilmot Road.

London Buses 41, 67, 230 and 341 stop on West Green Road along the southern boundary of the park. The W4 bus stops along Downhills Park Road along the northern section of the park. The nearest tube station is Turnpike Lane, approximately half a mile away.

Four notice boards were installed in strategic positions during spring 2006. Information covering various aspects of Downhills has been placed in these notice boards, and updates will be put in as required.

A review of park entrance and directional signage took place during November 2006 but this was put on hold pending restructuring of the directorates within Haringey.

Following on from this restructure and the launch of the new Haringey logo, new signage has been developed. During winter of 2007 / 08 a project was carried out to assess the types and amount of signage in Haringey parks. From this a new template was developed for each type of signage, which will be used as replacements and additions are needed.

#### Toilets

The completion of the new café provides toilet provision during opening hours, including disabled access.

## **2.2 Equal Access for All**

### Disability Discrimination Act 1995

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) came into effect on the 1 October 2004. The Act defines a disabled person as someone with 'a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'.

Haringey is required by law to ensure that disabled people are not discriminated against with regard to access to public places, such as Downhills Park, and are therefore able to use park facilities without hindrance.

To ensure that this happens, reasonable physical changes may need to be made. For example such changes might include:

- ensuring parks are accessible and providing clearer signs
- providing suitable seating
- if possible, installing a permanent ramp and a handrail at the entrance to a building where there are steps
- replacing a door handle with one that is easier to reach and to grip
- using colour contrast to ensure entrances and exits are easier to use

Making such changes would not only benefit disabled users of the parks and their carers / companions, but they would also benefit users with small children and older people who would appreciate easier access.

More information can be found on <http://www.disability.gov.uk>

## **3 Healthy, Safe and Secure**

### **3.1 Health and Safety**

The health and safety of visitors to, and staff working at Downhills Park is given the highest priority. Leisure Operations has adopted and maintains a health and safety management system.

The main principles of this system are as follows:

- Responsibility - this section identifies who has responsibilities within Leisure Services from the Assistant Director of Leisure through to all staff.

- Training - all staff receive training to enable them to carry out all tasks asked of them. This ranges from on site instruction to a training course or qualification, as determined through appraisals and one to ones.
- Communication - there are many avenues for communication of Health and Safety issues. These include the quarterly Health and Safety Forum that all safety representatives attend, team briefings, health and safety notice boards, fortnightly CRM, monthly Departmental Consultative Committee (DCC) meetings, staff appraisals and verbal briefings.
- Co-operation - all staff are required to comply with health and safety measures and managers are encouraged to promote a positive safety culture.
- Monitoring - accident and incident reporting provides a means of reactive monitoring, whereas monthly inspections carried out as part of the QMS are forms of active monitoring. All reporting is presented at CRM and the Health and Safety Forum.
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) - there is a minimum standard of equipment required for grounds maintenance staff. All other PPE required is supplied and must be worn when completing tasks. Damaged or worn PPE is replaced.
- Vehicles, Machinery and Tools - all equipment must be regularly serviced and repaired and all staff are trained on equipment that they are required to use.
- Chemicals – Leisure Operations complies with the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 1994 and therefore all chemical use is strictly controlled.
- Manual handling - all efforts are made to reduce manual handling problems and risk assessments are carried out.
- Welfare - all workplaces comply with the Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare Regulations 1992 and are inspected as part of the QMS on a monthly basis.
- First Aid - each area has at least two people trained in first aid and all sites have a fully stocked first aid kit. It is the responsibility of the area manager to ensure that the first aid kit is fully stocked.
- Emergency Procedures - emergency procedures are displayed at every parks site and all staff are required to be familiar with these. All managers must ensure that they are familiar with fire prevention and understand the use of various types of extinguishers.
- Fire extinguishers are checked annually by manufacturers.

### **3.2 Raising Health and Safety Concerns**

All staff are encouraged to raise health and safety issues with their manager or with the health and safety representatives who can raise concerns at the quarterly Health and Safety Forum.

#### **Risk assessments**

Risk assessments are carried out in accordance with the risk assessment register which is maintained centrally and which flags up which assessments require updating. Most risk assessments are updated annually and some every two years. Area managers have remote access to the current versions of the assessments and can download them from the council's network.

#### **Safety representatives**

Each area has a safety representative who may or may not be member of a trade union. All safety representatives attend the quarterly health and safety forum where they have the opportunity to raise issues that have not been fully addressed

elsewhere. The forum is also a place to discuss health and safety issues and legislation, and their implications on working practices.

### 3.3 Community Safety - The Parkforce Model

Haringey's then Parks Service employed park rangers during the 1990s, to patrol the borough's green spaces. Later a Parks Constabulary was created which carried out various security functions, including locking of parks and cemeteries. The Constabulary was disbanded in 2009 as it did not fit with the new approach that the council was then taking in regards to issues of supervision.

'Safer Haringey' is Haringey's most recent response to residents' fear of crime. The introduction of the Parkforce model into parks in 2009 was linked to, and shared the aims of the overall strategy set out in the document 'Safer for All'.

Fear of crime in Haringey's parks and open spaces has often been identified as a concern for residents through user surveys. The council's response was to reorganise the majority of its park-focussed activities around a model called Parkforce.

CABE Space launched the Parkforce campaign in September 2005. The Parkforce Charter set out several pledges to which stakeholders were encouraged to sign up to. The campaign encouraged local authorities to recognise the value of an on-site presence in every significant park, during daylight hours. CABE Space's intention was for local authorities and communities associated with open space to consider a range of ways to achieve this objective. In doing this, local authorities and their partners would work towards making parks safer, cleaner and more beautiful, contributing to the health and wellbeing of local people and the quality of the natural environment.

Haringey's approach to Parkforce was first to identify significant parks, and then to identify who was regularly present in those parks during opening hours. The parks identified as most significant were selected using several criteria. Size, visitor volumes and commitments given in funding bids guided the council to select the following parks:

Finsbury Park	Bruce Castle Park
Lordship Recreation Ground	Belmont Recreation Ground
Markfield Recreation Ground	Chestnuts Park
Railway Fields	Stationers Park
Downhills Park	Chapmans Green
Priory Park	Albert Road Recreation Ground

Participants to Parkforce were segmented into four main groups:

- **Supervision** – including directly and indirectly employed staff
- **Community involvement** – including Friends, residents groups and associations, neighbourhood wardens, BTCV
- **Activities and programming** – including cafés, clubs, children's centres, holiday schemes, schools
- **Enforcement** – including Metropolitan Police (inc Safer Neighbourhood Teams), environmental enforcement, anti-social behaviour action team

Parkforce was launched at an event in July 2009.

The task of establishing and increasing supervision in parks was made easier because Haringey had retained its in-house grounds maintenance service, meaning that many sites already had staff located within them.

To provide a presence in the parks during evenings and weekends, agency staff were employed as Parkforce Stewards. Stewards were tasked with providing a presence in the parks, while positively engaging with users and stakeholders.

A key enforcement aspect of the Parkforce model was the partnership with the Metropolitan Police. The council provided funding for four constables, who were dedicated to patrolling the parks, known as the Safer Parks Team.

Officers were equipped with motor cycles to enable them to move quickly from park to park. They followed fixed routes but were also able to respond to emergencies at short notice. The relationship was governed by a service level agreement which was monitored by the council, at meetings held on a quarterly basis.

A range of activities that can be described in general as 'green outreach' were and continue to be provided by environmental charity BTCV. These activities range from providing environmental education from a base at Railway Fields Local Nature Reserve, through to bulb planting in parks and providing support to groups of volunteers working in woodland sites and parks.

In conjunction with BTCV a tariff was agreed that assigns a different, notional financial value to each activity. This allows comparisons to be drawn across different parks and is the basis of a key performance indicator for the whole contract.

Reductions to local authority budgets in 2010 forced Leisure Services to review the way the Parkforce pledge was delivered. Funding for the Safer Parks Team was withdrawn. A reduction in funding to BTCV saw their grant reduced by nearly two thirds. This, along with staff reductions, has resulted in a change in the way supervision, community involvement, activities and programming and enforcement in parks is now delivered.

### 3.4 Metropolitan Police Activity

Once the Safer Parks Team was disbanded talks with the Police resulted in the Safer Neighbourhood Teams including parks in their routine patrols.

The information detailed below has been extrapolated from CRIS based on the FG location type code (identifies crimes that have occurred in a park, common or heath) and covers the twelve month period commencing from the 1st of January 2011. As the location type code is mandatory in CRIS the accuracy of this dataset is exceptional, with a confidence interval of less than 0.1%. This information is for guidance only and does not represent official MPS performance.

A total of nineteen (19) offences have been recorded in Downhills Park in the last calendar year, as shown below.

		29/01/2011	GBH with intent	FG	Park / Common / Heath
1	Victim was punched in the face and as he fell whilst trying to run away, the suspect kicked him three or four times in the head.				

		08/02/2011	Robbery person	FG	Park / Common / Heath
2	Six suspects surrounded the victim in the park before stealing his MP4 player and cash.				
		09/05/11	Common assault	FG	Park / Common / Heath
3	The victim was punched from behind on his head.				
		12/05/2011	Snatch	FG	Park / Common / Heath
4	The suspect snatched the victim's mobile phone as he took it from his pocket to check the time.				
		25/05/2011	Common assault	FG	Park / Common / Heath
5	The victim was assaulted causing injuries amounting to common assault				
		27/05/2011	Possession cannabis	FG	Park / Common / Heath
6	Suspect was arrested after being seen smoking cannabis in the park and further cannabis found in his possession.				
		27/05/2011	Possession cannabis	FG	Park / Common / Heath
7	Suspect was arrested after being seen smoking cannabis in the park and further cannabis found in his possession.				
		10/06/2011	Burglary non-dwelling	FG	Park / Common / Heath
8	Entry gained to the rear of the premises and keys removed.				
		20/06/2011	Theft from motor vehicle	FG	Park / Common / Heath
9	By unknown suspects gaining unforced entry to the victim's vehicle and stealing quantity of tools.				
		04/07/2011	Robbery person	FG	Park / Common / Heath
10	The victims' cycles were taken after they have been threatened by the suspect who was in possession of knives and baseball bats.				
		06/07/2011	ABH & Malicious Wound	FG	Park / Common / Heath
11	The victim was assaulted in the park after refusing to have sex with the suspect.				
		14/08/2011	Snatch	FG	Park / Common / Heath
12	By suspect snatching phone from victims hand.				
		05/09/2011	Possession Cannabis	FG	Park / Common / Heath

13	Suspect arrested for possession of cannabis following a stop and search.				
		20/09/2011	Possession Cannabis	FG	Park / Common / Heath
14	Suspect arrested for possession of cannabis following a stop and search.				
		11/10/2011	GBH w/intent	FG	Park / Common / Heath
15	The Victim was hacked several times with a machete in an unprovoked attack causing serious loss of blood and suffer severe damage to both legs.				
		01/11/2011	Theft of cycle	FG	Park / Common / Heath
16	By person unknown stealing the victim's cycle.				
		17/11/2011	Theft of cycle	FG	Park / Common / Heath
17	By person unknown stealing the victim's cycle.				
		02/12/2011	Theft from motor vehicle	FG	Park / Common / Heath
18	By suspect unknown smashing the front passenger window and stealing the car stereo.				
	2830657/11	29/12/2011	Robbery person	FG	Park / Common / Heath
19	The 13 year old victim lent his phone to the suspect (16 years) who then assaulted the victim and demanded further property.				

**Table 3: Police activity in Downhills Park**

### 3.5 Extending Neighbourhood Watch into Parks

Following the withdrawal of funding to the Metropolitan Police and with it the deletion of the Safer Parks Team, the council has looked at other ways of partnership working to increase community safety within the parks.

With reductions in the Metropolitan Police budget and the threat of their existing post of Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator being deleted, it was decided that the Council would fund the post, effective from April 2011, with the aim of extending the successful and established Metropolitan Police Neighbourhood Watch scheme into the borough's parks and open spaces.

The scheme now encourages Friends of Parks and park users to report incidents of anti social behaviour or anything they think suspicious to the Community Neighbourhood Watch coordinator.

The coordinator, still based within the Metropolitan Police within Haringey, acts as liaison between various agencies to deal with the reported matter and resolve it in the most appropriate and effective way possible, while keeping all parties informed of progress.

Existing Neighbourhood Watches - of which there are now over 300 in Haringey with an estimated 19,000 members - are run by local residents with support from the

police and partner agencies, including the council. Members of the Watch decide their objectives and how it will operate. The Haringey Association of Neighbourhood Watches meets on a quarterly basis to update members and share information.

Until recently Watches had focused on activity within their local streets, but they are now being encouraged to 'adopt' their local parks and green spaces and report incidents to the Community Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator. Those areas surrounding parks that are deficient in Neighbourhood Watches are going to be a focus with the aim of creating new Watches and linking them to parks.

Watches within West Green Ward, encouraged to 'adopt' Downhills Park are:

Watches	POSTCODE
BOUNDARY ROAD	N22
CRAWLEY ROAD	N22
CROSSFIELD ROAD	N17
DOWNHILLS WAY	N17
GRAHAM ROAD	N15
IVATT WAY	N17
KESTON ROAD	N17
LANGHAM ROAD	N15
MANNOCK ROAD	N22
MILLER HOUSE	N15
MILTON ROAD ESTATE	N15
MOIRA CLOSE	N17
SIRDAR ROAD	N22
VINCENT ROAD	N15
WALDECK ROAD	N15
WALPOLE ROAD	N17
WESTBURY AVENUE	N22

**Table 4: Neighbourhood Watches within West Green Ward**

### 3.6 Dog Control Orders

Dogs and dog walking are a very valuable part of the park scene, and dog carers are probably the main daily user group in many green spaces. Their collective presence is a key ingredient of green spaces being populated and safe to use, especially at quieter times of the day and year. They are often described as 'eyes and ears' of a green space, and need to be fully involved in all consultations and improvement plans. Obviously, like any other user group, they are expected to use the park responsibly.

In December 2011, the council agreed to carry out a formal consultation on dog control orders covering dog exclusion, dogs on leads, dogs on leads direction and dog fouling.

Following the consultation period that is due to run between February and April 2012, it is proposed that Dog Control Orders will be implemented by July 2012.

If Orders are implemented as per the current recommendations it will mean that **Downhills Park would be covered by Schedule 2 – where dogs to be placed on leads when directed to do so, and dog fouling will be prohibited. Dogs will also be banned from the playground and ball court areas.**

Whilst the council recognise that there are many responsible dog owners in the borough who wish to exercise their dogs, this needs to be balanced by the need for residents and children to play and enjoy our parks and open spaces. We also wish our borough to be a clean place to live and reduce the amount of dog fouling that takes place.

Residents, Friends of Parks and Safer Neighbourhood Teams have raised with us their concern over dogs that appear to be out of control and how intimidating this can be. Dog control is a theme that runs through a number of Council commitments. Specifically this includes the following pledge:

*We will ensure all of our parks and open spaces are designated as Dog Control Areas, encouraging owners to look after their dogs and keep them under control.*

The proposals are for consultation and affect every part of the borough. There are several elements to the proposals:

- A borough wide order on dog fouling
- A borough wide order allowing directions to take place on dogs on leads to be given where the dog is out of control
- Exclusion of dogs from playgrounds and similar areas and the whole of Russell Park
- A borough wide order to require dogs to be on leads on the public highway, publicly accessible land, some parks or parts of parks
- These orders also include council housing land controlled by Homes for Haringey

The delivery of this commitment will need to use our powers to introduce dog control orders as well as the commitment from the Police and authorised Officers to enforce them.

There is a council commitment to bringing in borough wide powers for dog control and the police have specifically asked for powers to require any dog to be placed on a lead where a dog is found to be out of control.

The proposal will rely heavily on the Police. Some limited resource will be available through the new Neighbourhood Action Teams and patrolling officers will be expected to work with local Safer Neighbourhood Teams on priority issues for each Area Committee. Apart from some necessary investment in signage, the proposal here will seek to target resources through existing structures and budgets working closely with the Police.

- A Dog Exclusion Order - All public areas identified as children's playgrounds, sports courts, marked games areas and marked pitches and whole of Russell Park.
- Dogs on Leads by Direction Order - Whole or borough which would give officers the power to request that dogs are put on leads where they are not under the appropriate control of their owner, or where they are causing damage or acting aggressively.
- Dogs on Leads Order - All roads, footpaths; Car parks; Communal public areas on housing estates; Small areas of land – less than half hectare; Cemeteries, crematoriums and church yards.

- Fouling of Land by Dogs Order - This order would cover the whole borough to make dog fouling an enforceable offence.

The penalty for committing an offence under a Dog Control Order is a maximum fine of level 3 on the standard scale (currently £1000). However an authorised officer of an authority may alternatively issue a Fixed Penalty Notice. This includes Police and Community Support Officers (PCSOs).

The amount of a fixed penalty can be set by the local authority within a prescribed range (up to £80), but will be £75 unless another amount is specified.

### 3.7 BTCV Activity

BTCV have worked in the borough for many years. Between 2009 and 2011 three full time BTCV officers worked in Haringey providing green outreach work on behalf of the Council, formalised through a grant agreement, specifically under the umbrella of the Parkforce model.

In 2011 funding provided by the council was reduced by nearly two thirds, resulting in a reduction of provision and posts.

Haringey and BTCV are still committed to working together through the tough times and the council recognise that BTCV are a vital partner in supporting community groups in helping to deliver services that the council can't currently provide.

Although yet to be formalised through a grant agreement, the Council have in theory agreed to continue funding BTCV's work in the borough for the next four years, with their main base continuing to be Railway Fields, but offering outreach work within other parks and open spaces.

The direction of the work that BTCV will be more aligned with helping community groups to become much more self enabled and sufficient.

The table below shows amount of volunteer hours and the notional financial value of the work carried out by BTCV in Downhills Park, over the last two years.

#### April 2010 - March 2011

Site	Category	Volunteer Workdays	Value
Downhills Park	Tree Planting	17	1200
	Wetland/Ponds/Watercourses	25.5	2300
<b>Downhills Park Total</b>		<b>42.5</b>	<b>3500</b>

#### April - December 2011

Site	Category	Volunteer Workdays	Value
Downhills Park	Horticulture/gardening/food growing	11	2350
	Wetland/Ponds/Watercourses	8	900
<b>Downhills Park Total</b>		<b>19</b>	<b>3250</b>

Table 5: BTCV activity in Downhills Park

### 3.8 Designing Out Crime

It is universally recognised that key factors in ensuring park safety and the perception of safety are to ensure high usage, adequate onsite staffing presence,

good maintenance of buildings and infrastructure and a high level of community involvement and 'ownership'. These matters are dealt with in other sections.

Sensitive landscape management can assist in reducing crime. Assessing accessibility and potential crime spots, known as 'designing out crime', may result in the removal of inappropriate tall shrubs and their replacement with a more suitable low growing species. In other instances entrances may be redesigned, or lighting installed.

### **3.9 Locking of Parks**

Some parks in the borough are locked at dusk and opened at dawn. Downhills Park is not one of these parks.

## **4 Clean and Well Maintained**

### **4.1 Hygiene**

The Leisure Operations hygiene function is to maintain and improve the cleaning of parks and open spaces across Haringey. Measurement is through resident satisfaction and compliance with NI 195 Litter and Detritus targets.

The Service was supported by an Area Based Grant of £150k and performance monitored through Better Places Partnership and in conjunction with Haringey's Waste Management Service. The funding has now been consolidated within the Parks base budget.

A planned revision and reduction of Leisure Operations has taken place and was implemented in July 2011. This was in anticipation of and in line with the council wide budget reductions. The Hygiene Service has been reviewed within this scope and consideration has been applied in realigning the work schedules in line with reduced staff levels, to limit as much as possible the future impact upon service delivery.

The Hygiene Service was previously deployed under two Neighbourhood Area Managers. The two teams were deployed in the borough, one in the East and West Areas to cover parks litter and bin emptying with an additional staff member to cover the same function at Finsbury Park.

One operative was deployed in respect of the Dog Hygiene Service borough wide i.e. emptying of dog waste bins. In total four full time employees were deployed in the East area and three in the West area with additional back up of five seasonal positions (agency staff) in the summer months. In 2008/9 this was further enhanced by agency staff (ten FTE's) borough wide under the Parkforce remit (since disbanded).

As from July 2011 the Hygiene Service now operates as a single team under the responsibility of the Operations Manager - East. Two staff are deployed in the East and West areas respectively, with three FTE's additional seasonal cover from Agency Staff. Finsbury Park is now amalgamated within this.

The amount of litter and dog bins and the frequency that dog and litter bins are emptied and Downhills Park is litter picked is detailed below.

Park	No of Litter Bins	No of Dog Bins	Frequency (per week) dog and litter bins are emptied and park is litter picked
Downhills Park	48	8	7

**Table 6: Frequency of when dog and litter bins are emptied**

To rationalise the hygiene function further, a pilot scheme is currently taking place in Bruce Castle Park which will see litter and dog bins strategically placed to minimise operative movement and make the operation more efficient. This pilot will run between January and March 2012 and if successful will be implemented across all parks and open spaces in the borough, including Downhills Park.

#### **4.2 Monitoring of Waste**

Leisure Operations works to Keep Britain Tidy standards and the work is monitored by Haringey's Waste Management Service. Results are reported at the CRM; and also through the independent Keep Britain Tidy Capital Standards Local Environmental Quality Surveys as detailed below.

Collection of litter is monitored as part of the quality management system by means of a form known as the Quality Assurance Form 12 or 'QAF 12'.

#### **4.3 Keep Britain Tidy**

Haringey participates in the Keep Britain Tidy Capital Standards Local Environmental Quality Surveys (LEQS): National Indicator NI 195. This scheme is commonly referred to as NI195.

These standards were established in 2008 to improve the cleanliness of London for its users. Its key objectives are to improve the sharing of information between boroughs and to establish best practice. To achieve this LEQS are carried out annually across 26 member boroughs and the information is distributed to help the boroughs benchmark their performance.

The LEQS undertaken by Keep Britain Tidy have 10 classes that contribute towards the overall borough score. Recreation areas are one of the LEQS classes that parks contribute towards the overall borough score.

At the beginning of the 2007/08 financial year the council ceased internal hygiene monitoring and instead begun using the monitoring data collected by the Waste Management Service. This ensures that we are monitored externally to a set standard by two different groups using the same methodology. The monthly Waste Management data provides a Key Performance Indicator (KPI) which is reported to senior management and acted on throughout the directorate.

#### **4.4 Better Haringey**

Haringey Council launched the Better Haringey – 'cleaner, greener, safer' campaign in September 2003. This environmental improvement programme, worth £20 million, aimed to improve the quality of life for people in Haringey by tackling some of the borough's biggest problems and making it one of the cleanest boroughs in London. As part of the programme, funding was sought to allow for major improvements in many of the Council run parks in Haringey.

#### **4.5 Current Maintenance by Leisure Operations**

Maintenance of open spaces within the London Borough of Haringey (not including Homes for Haringey land) is organised into two areas: West and East. Each area is split into 3 zones, with 6 members of staff in each zone covering grounds maintenance and open space maintenance.

Each area also has a taskforce consisting of 7 operatives with responsibilities for hygiene, play fitting, arboriculture, tractor maintenance and workshop fitters. To assist with the requirements of the service an allocation for 12 full time equivalent agency staff has been made.

Downhills Park is within the East area. The Area Manager in charge of each area oversees the maintenance of open spaces and the sites under contract within that area.

Operatives largely cover Monday – Thursday 7.30 – 3.45pm and Friday 7.30 to 1.30pm.

#### **4.6 Scheduled Maintenance**

Maintenance at Downhills Park is organised into daily, weekly, fortnightly, monthly and ad-hoc tasks. Review and monitoring of tasks is carried out via on site inspections, staff appraisals and contract monitoring within the QMS.

#### **4.7 Measuring Service Standards**

To further raise the standards of the work carried out in the parks, a service standards booklet has been produced. The aim of this booklet is to illustrate the different standards and thus how a park is scored on cleanliness and presentation in the QMS.

Photographs, alongside brief and simple text, provide staff with a clear means of assessing performance and what their target means.

## Grass Maintenance (inc edging)



- A
- Grass has been uniformly cut and is 35mm or less.
  - Edges are trimmed and not growing onto hard surface or bedding.



- B
- Grass has been uniformly cut.
  - Edges are slightly untidy
  - **or**
  - Grass is longer than 35mm but due to be cut, or unevenly cut.
  - Edges are uniformly cut.



- C
- Grass is longer than 35mm and not scheduled to be cut in the next week, or unevenly cut.
  - Edges are untidy and encroach surface or bedding.



- D
- Grass is not uniformly cut, or very long.
  - Edges very untidy and grass is growing into the bedding, or over the hard surface.

Figure 2: Extract from the quality document – grass maintenance

### 4.8 Monitoring Maintenance Standards

Site safety inspections are carried out on a monthly basis at all sites. These are linked to the QMS and ensure that staff are adhering to health and safety requirements, and that equipment within the park meets the required safety standards.

As part of the Quality Management System, checks on the general maintenance of parks are carried out twice yearly with spot checks carried out throughout the year.

Playground equipment is checked on a monthly basis and ROSPA inspections are carried out on quarterly and annual basis.

Playing fields are checked and cleared of any litter before and after fixtures. Pre and post season checks are made on the playing fields and any required repairs are carried out.

The results from these checks are fed back into the QMS and fortnightly Operational Review Meetings where any issues, outstanding, current and potential, are flagged and resolved by area managers present. Forums such as the DCC (Departmental

Consultative Committee) meeting, the Health and Safety Forum and QMS Review meeting also help to flag up issues arising within the general maintenance of parks.

#### **4.9 Landscape and Maintenance Issues and Actions**

The management process concentrates on important areas that include both current and historical issues through the continued management of the park. This involves input from the local community, the Leisure Services Business Plan (LSBP) and Green Flag Judges Feedback Report recommendations, KMC surveys and audits, and staff audits in line with Green Flag objectives. As a result issues have been identified under key objective headings and actions to resolve these issues are noted.

#### **4.10 Graffiti**

All graffiti of an obscene nature is removed within 24 hours and all other graffiti is removed within 5 working days. Graffiti is removed by the council's waste management team on request via Leisure Operations. The council also has a 'Graffiti Hotline' that can be called by the general public to report graffiti in a public place.

#### **4.11 Maintenance of Buildings, Equipment and Landscape**

The Council holds a variety of paper based and digital records pertaining to the maintenance of buildings, equipment and landscape. Following the reorganisation of the Leisure Services in June 2011 a decision was made to rationalise this information to be maintained within the Councils Asset Management Database 'Confirm'.

The completed data base will hold the following information:-

- Data on all assets in terms of the size, location, manufacturer and condition.
- Maintenance information in terms of how the asset will be maintained and by whom.
- Information on the cost of maintaining each asset or where the asset is maintained by volunteer input the value of that volunteer contribution to managing the site.
- Record all service enquiries, defects and adhoc work undertaken through to resolution.
- Performance monitoring information in terms of completed work and standards achieved.

#### **Implementation Plan**

Service enquiries will go live in February 2012 and in the course of 2012 will also become part of a Haringey specific 'Love Clean Streets' initiative which will allow members of the public to record problems via their smart phone or internet. Members of the public will automatically be updated on the progress of their enquiry directly back to their phone or via email / text message.

Site survey data will be collected throughout 2012 beginning with two tranches of data capture during February to April. The first 12 parks to have their data captured are:

##### **Tranche 1**

- Downhills Park
- Down Lane Recreation Ground
- Markfield Park
- Priory Park
- Stationers Park

##### **Tranche 2**

- Chestnuts Park
- Albert Road Recreation Ground
- Bruce Castle Park
- Paignton Park
- Finsbury Park

- Tower Gardens
- Woodside Park

Once the site survey information is updated and is contained within an all digital format the information will be enhanced by following the staged approach.

#### Stage one

Development of a map showing condition rating and location of assets. The condition rating will be based on the current Asset Management Plan standards of:

A = no works required

B = minor works required

C = major works required

D = replacement required

The works highlighted will then be prioritised according to urgency as per table 7.

Code	Priority	Description	Specification
1	Urgent	Immediate action required	Work, which if not carried out immediately will present a threat to the health and safety of people
2	High	Within 12 months	Work which does not present an immediate threat to the health and safety of people but could do so if not attended to within a reasonable period of time
3	Medium	Within 2 to 5 years	Work which should be undertaken as part of the normal building maintenance programme
4	Low	Monitor deterioration	Work of a minor nature and should be monitored for further deterioration
5	None	No action required	In a condition that no work has been identified

**Table 7: Asset management prioritisation**

#### Stage two

Once condition of features is established, priorities will be set. In the first instance this will involve the replacement of unserviceable features.

#### Stage three

Stage three will involve a gap analysis of further bins, benches, signage, notice boards etc required.

#### Stage four

Stage four will bring together all the information compiled in order to draw up a ten-year maintenance plan for the borough. This plan will then be used to provide evidence to support resource bids.

#### Stage five

When the data set is complete it will be possible to calculate the replacement cost of each site in its entirety. Established tariffs exist to allow valuations to be put on mature trees and other living assets which do not otherwise have recognised

replacement costs. An accurate reflection of the value of each park supports the sensible allocation of resources to maintenance and replacement.

#### 4.12 Maintenance Zoning

Since our reshaping exercise, Leisure Operations has adjusted maintenance requirements. Leisure Operations will still undertake maintenance requirements as per previous zoning regimes. To supplement the reductions in outputs Leisure Services as a whole are currently engaging further with volunteers and other community groups.

A Volunteer Framework and Action Plan is currently being developed to detail how the council will work with volunteers, community groups and other organisations and this could be implemented by April 2012, subject to consultation.

Review and monitoring of tasks is carried out via on site inspections, staff appraisals and contract monitoring within the QMS.

The process of zoning ensures that all areas of the park are covered and that a relevant amount of attention is paid to each area according to its priority.

By assessing the work to be completed during the year, the annual grounds maintenance budget can be calculated and distributed proportionally to each zone. Tasks can also be allocated to partners / volunteer groups as specified in the Volunteer Action Plan. The zoning also helps to raise the standard of the park according to use.

Zone	Area covered	Work to be done	Frequency
A	Gate areas	Litter collection	Daily
B	Playground areas	Litter collection and general clean up	Daily
C	Sports areas	Cut grass	Fortnightly
		Mark out fields	When needed
D	Basketball	Check and clean up	Daily
E	Tennis club	Check and clean up	Daily
F	Ornamental bedding and roses	Maintenance during growing season	Subject to review
G	Conservation area	Cut grass	Twice annually
H	Wildflower Meadow	Cut and raked	Subject to review
I	Ornamental grass	Cut	Fortnightly
J	Trees <sup>1</sup>	Safety checks and pruning	Twice annually
All	All park	Litter collection	Daily

**Table 8: Downhills Park zoned work programme**



Figure 3: Downhills Park work zones

## 5 Sustainability

### 5.1 Environmental Policy

Leisure Services has an Environmental Policy and from this an environmental statement has been developed to cover its operations in parks and open spaces such as Downhills Park. This reads as follows:

The London Borough of Haringey Leisure Services aims to:

- participate in sustainable environmental practices and reduce the amount of non-sustainable practices where feasible;
- reduce the use of water on all parks sites and buildings;
- undertake nature conservation of local flora and fauna;
- promote environmental awareness in the local community;
- measure environmental performance against agreed standards.

The future development of Leisure Operations Environmental Management System (EMS) will link this statement with the current Quality Management System (QMS). Development of the EMS will require careful assessment as certain aspects are similar to the QMS whilst others will need to be created and maintained separately. A feasibility study has been completed and the action plan for implementation has been drawn up.

#### Pesticide Use

Leisure Operations Pesticide Policy outlines the requirements for appropriate handling, storage, usage and reduction in use of pesticides. It specifies the types of pesticide used and for what activities. All fuel and chemicals held at site offices are banded, locked when not in use and records are made of incoming and outgoing material.

In order to reduce the use of pesticides and herbicides, weeds are first removed using manual controls. At non-priority sites where weeds can no longer be controlled manually, chemicals may be used. The main method of controlling weeds and slugs and to increase moisture retention, is to spread a thick layer of recycled woodchip over the shrub beds in spring, topping it up in autumn. Although there is debate on whether or not this is good horticulture practice Leisure Service will continue with this practice until evidence proves it outweighs problems associated with herbicide use and environmental damage through transportation.

Some pesticides are used in Green Flag parks such as Downhills Park, to reduce weeds around static objects such as bins and benches, but this practice is kept to a minimum.

#### Sustainable use of materials

Leisure Operations refrains from the use of non-sustainable peat based products and challenges nursery suppliers to provide alternative supplies. Wolves Lane Nursery currently supplies Leisure Operations with the majority of annual bedding plants, all of which are now grown in peat free soil. Where procurement of other plants from other nurseries is required, peat free grown plants are requested.

Green waste recycling within Haringey parks continues to develop as different recycling avenues are explored. Where possible green waste is recycled on-site; grass cuttings are left on the grass; and hedge cuttings are mulched and placed under the hedge or in other areas of the park. Excess green waste is composted on site in the staff yard. In autumn when a large amount of green waste is generated, that which cannot be used or composted on site is taken to North London Waste for recycling. The resulting compost can be collected for use in the parks and free compost is often given away at public events.

A monitoring system, which links in with the QMS, is in place to record the amount of green waste that is mulched on site and the amount that goes to North London Waste for recycling, as well as recording the percentage of green waste that is recycled. The system aims for 100% recycled green waste. Leaf litter is already composted on site and utilised by nearby allotments, so there is scope to compost other green waste on site.

Each year when spring and summer bedding is removed to make way for the next planting, it is made available to local residents to take home. Unwanted plants are then composted.

Our infrastructure procurement aim is to use recycled materials where possible. We aim to acquire recycled plastic benches where possible; or where timber is required we seek to use those from sustainable sources.

#### Recycling

Site offices recycle paper, plastic, cans, and glass. Currently these are taken to the main office and placed in the recycling collection point there. As part of the EMS, three recycling bin units were placed in Finsbury Park during 2008 as a trial, which proved successful. This has now been expanded to other key parks including Downhills Park. Recycling bins within the parks aim to be implemented as part of the EMS subject to cost effectiveness and in agreement with the Waste Management department.

#### Pollution reduction

Any new machinery is required to have low vibration levels and low emissions. Machinery is serviced on a regular basis, helping to ensure low emission and pollution levels. We also aim to reduce vehicle emissions through increasing the amount of on-site composting; and through reducing downtime caused by excessive travelling. Staff are required to stay on site for tea-breaks, only going back to their mess-room for lunch and home time. This policy has reduced the time spent driving in vehicles by up to 45mins per gardening team on any given day.

Bonfires are not used for safety reasons as well as health concerns resulting from the smoke.

#### Water efficiency

Drought resistant plants are increasingly being chosen by managers to ensure that they survive the drier and warmer months.

#### Buildings

Management of buildings within parks has now been handed over to the Council's Corporate Property Services. Property Services comply with all environmental and sustainable issues relating to these buildings.

### 5.2 Biodiversity

In 2009 Haringey adopted a biodiversity action plan (BAP). This document informs the council's approach to increasing biodiversity across all areas of its activities. Parks and open spaces can make a significant contribution to achieving the council's objectives for biodiversity.

*'Biodiversity is all around us: not just in wild places and nature reserves but also in our cities, the places we live and work, our farmland and our countryside. We are an integral part of this biodiversity and exert a major influence over it.'* (Natural England - Biodiversity)

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) lists the following numerous reasons why biodiversity matters;

- It plays an important role in tackling climate change.
- It is an indicator of the wider health of our environment.
- It helps to sustain local economies.
- It supports other vital services that sustain life on earth (Ecosystem Services).
- It contributes to our health and wellbeing.
- It is an important part of our cultural heritage and identity.
- It offers opportunities for community engagement and volunteering.
- It provides us with essential products and materials.
- We have a responsibility to conserve biodiversity.

The Biodiversity Action Plan contains the following recommendations for parks and green spaces.

### 5.3 Parks and Green Spaces Habitat Action Plan

#### Vision Statement

- To encourage good conservation practice in parks and green spaces across the London Borough of Haringey, respecting their varied functions and the aspirations of local communities.

- To improve access to nature in Haringey's parks and green spaces, particularly in areas of deficiency in access to natural green space.
- To raise awareness of the importance of parks, squares and green spaces in the conservation of Haringey's biodiversity.

#### Targets

- Target 1 – Raise awareness of how parks management can be improved to enhance access to nature for Haringey residents and visitors.
- Target 2 – Undertake biodiversity improvement work in a minimum of 10 LB Haringey parks and green spaces by 2015.
- Target 3 – Increase the number of volunteers recording wildlife in Haringey's parks and green spaces.

### **5.4 Nature Conservation at Downhills Park**

Excluding the playing fields, much of Downhills Park is designated a Local Site of Importance for Nature Conservation due to the diverse number of habitats available to local wildlife.

These habitats include the recently created pond and bog garden as well a central area of woodland, perimeter shrubs and avenues of mature trees. A well kept formal garden of bedding plants provides a good source of nectar for insects in the north of the park whilst in the south a wildflower meadow has been established.

Opportunities exist to expand the meadow and seek to have it managed as part of a Higher Level stewardship agreement with Natural England. Elsewhere further bulb planting and the erection of bird and bat boxes could further enhance the park for nature conservation.

### **5.5 The Environmental Improvement in Downhills Park**

The Friends of Downhills Park group approached Froglife with an interest in creating a standing water habitat in Downhills Park with the idea of a pond being a much needed additional habitat to the park. The creation of a pond would also work towards the Standing Water Habitat Action Plan, which was to be implemented in the Haringey Biodiversity Action Plan. Creation of the pond was completed in 2010.

#### Pond creation proposal

The pond together with a bog garden in the park has a fence around it with a dipping platform. It also includes associated habitats around the pond with areas of long grass and various artificial hibernacula – which considerably improve the local wildlife in the park.

#### Educational Resource

The pond is an excellent educational resource for local school children. It fits perfectly with the national curriculum to allow children to learn about different animals and plants inside and outside of the water. Learning about different life cycles such as frogs and toads, watching spawn develop into tadpoles and then into froglets, and the food chain will make learning exciting and help children learn about other pond visitors such as dragonflies laying eggs, hedgehogs and other tiny insects flying about. It teaches them the basics of ecology and conservation and how to respect other habitats and animals.

#### Schools

This pond creation project was supported by:

- Park View Academy Secondary School

- Downhills Primary School
- Woodlands Primary School
- Broadwater Farm Primary School
- West Green Primary School

#### Adults and children

Water promotes mental and physical wellbeing and is an asset to any park. Adults enjoy water as it has aesthetic qualities and helps people to relax. The pond provides a focal point to the park where visitors can view, sit or walk – taking in the water feature and its associated animals.

#### Haringey's Habitat Action Plan

The pond is associated to Haringey's Habitat Action Plan (HAP) and supports the new Standing Water HAP for London, which promotes good practice within the borough. The SWHAP encourages council and local groups to create and restore standing water in parks and open spaces.

Having a water feature greatly enhances an area and therefore will attract more visitors into the park. The pond increases biodiversity, attracting many different animals such as frogs and butterflies.

#### Location

The pond is situated on the site of the old pond (near Downhills Park Road entrance). This is the historical site of the pond and was an ideal place to restore the pond as there is a natural dip in the landscape.

#### Health & Safety

Ponds can be perceived as a health and safety hazard for children however, this can be minimised in public areas. The new pond is created so that it provides safe opportunities for pond dipping for children. A fence runs all the way around the pond with a locked gate – which is self closing and has a childproof locked gate - and a dipping platform so the pond can be safely and easily utilised by local schoolchildren.

Tall grasses and reeds have been planted to make a natural barrier around the pond. A gently sloping side around the pond is essential, to allow children to climb out if they fell in. The pond has not been made too deep so an adult can easily get into the pond if needed.

## **5.6 Pond design**

#### Timescale

The pond was created in the winter/spring 2009/10 to allow animals and plants to establish and to fill up with water.

#### Water source

The pond was left to fill up naturally by rainwater. It is perfectly natural for a pond to dry up every few years but it can always be topped up using a hose.

#### Liner

The liner is a Geotextile strip/bentonite clay sandwich . It is relatively vandal proof as it can withstand some degree of slashing. To prevent the liner from being damaged all stones were removed before laying, but it is currently failing to retain water properly.

### Shallow areas

The drawdown zone is vital to a pond; by having a marshy area that may dry up slightly in the summer can be vastly beneficial to wildlife. The deeper areas of a pond allow animals and plants to survive that require water throughout the year. The depth is no more than one metre deep. This allows animals to hibernate and adults to get into the water if needed. The shallow areas also prevent children from falling in.

### Planting

The planting of some plants has been beneficial to prevent algal blooms. All plants were recommended by Froglife and were only recommend native plants.

## 5.7 Terrestrial Habitats

### Hibernacula

Terrestrial habitats are often a neglected element in pond creation. However, amphibians, some invertebrates and birds only use water for a limited period of time such as for breeding. The surrounding terrestrial habitats are equally as important. For this reason artificial hibernacula for amphibians and invertebrates were used around the pond area. The hibernacula consists of a pile of wooden logs with loose soil and rocks on top.

It was important that the area of long grass around pond was not mowed or cut until late August which ensured adequate cover was provided for small mammals, amphibians, invertebrates and more vulnerable plants

Other animal friendly habitats that were used were:

- Dead wood piles and sawdust
- Grass cutting piles from mowing the playing field
- Areas of long grass
- Compost heaps
- Create habitats with recycled material
- Wild flower meadows

These habitats support wildlife as a food source, refuge, breeding areas, protect against predation, damp cool areas to rest and warm areas to warm up.

### Mowing regime

Mowing has been reduced around the pond in some areas to once a year in August/September to minimise frog and toad fatalities. This also provides a vital habitat for animals; being aesthetically pleasing for people in the park and reduces the need for mowing.

### Bog Garden

This maximises the habitat as marshy area can be constructed around the pond. This wet area is a good habitat for wildlife and an additional safety feature for children as it is boggy and does not hold water very well. The following plants were used:

- Bugle *Ajuga reptans*
- Marsh marigold *Caltha palustris*
- Hard rush *Juncus inflexus*
- Lady's smock *Cardamine pratensis*
- Yellow flag *Iris pseudacourus*
- Ragged robin *Lychnis flos-cuculi*

- Purple loosestrife *Lythrum salicaria*
- Marsh woundwort *Stachys palustris*

#### Management

The pond requires occasional clearance. Every 1-2 years some but not all of the pond silt and vegetation will be removed. With the size of the pond, this will be undertaken by volunteers using spades. This will prevent the pond from becoming overgrown by emergent vegetation and maintain deep areas. The management will take place in autumn, when most amphibians have left the pond. The cleared silt and vegetation will be added to a compost heap or flowerbeds piled near the pond.

## 6 Community Involvement

### 6.1 Haringey Parks and Open Spaces Volunteer Framework

The Government's spending review 2010 set out an intention to work with the voluntary sector and community groups to develop investment opportunities in public services.

Haringey Council's 'Voluntary Sector Strategy 2011-2016' and the 'Commissioning and Funding Framework for the Voluntary Sector' set out a borough-wide approach to the support of the Voluntary Sector in Haringey. The documents have been produced to help us meet the challenges and opportunities emerging from changes to the public sector.

As part of a wider significant budget reduction within the Council, the budget for provision of the management and operation of Haringey's parks and open spaces has reduced by 51%, effective from 1 April 2011.

Against this context Leisure Services is currently exploring the potential for volunteering to mitigate/improve the Service developing a Framework and Action Plan. This framework sets out the future approach towards the management, operation and ongoing development of volunteering in parks and open spaces. If agreed, the Framework could be implemented in April 2012, subject to the outcome of consultation.

#### Purpose of the Volunteer Framework

The Framework sets out the approach that Leisure Services will take to allocate resources to the voluntary sector in terms of assessing priority needs for the service, developing partner service agreements, available revenue, and determining how delivery is implemented, monitored and evaluated.

The project will examine how volunteering in parks and open spaces might be developed and enhanced.

#### Principles of the Parks Volunteering Framework

In this context the approach to the Framework includes:

- management and maintenance
- safety and Security
- engagement and Inclusion
- provision of activities

#### Objectives

- to commission an agency to act as the volunteer coordinating link

- establish a base line for practical volunteering hours, excluding meetings and administration
- to produce an Action Plan to deliver a range of parks tasks performed by volunteers to a quality assured standard.
- to resource and maintain a motivated competent pool of parks volunteers to undertake a range of park operational tasks
- to produce a volunteers Handbook to provide information and code of practice

#### The Approach

The overarching approach will link to Council criteria:

- council priorities
- sustainable Community Strategy outcomes
- maximising outcomes
- impact, effect on community service delivery
- maximising value for money – including short and long-term savings
- local connection/presence in Haringey

The Council shall with its partners:

- identify gaps in service delivery
- determine what one-off tasks or minor park projects could be achieved through corporate volunteering or through schemes such as Community Payback
- determine what level of volunteering is feasible by park or local area.
- determine the roles of BTCV and Groundwork London and HAVCO to avoid duplication of effort
- determine overall resource requirements and how these might be provided.
- identify organisations who might provide specialist volunteering (river, frog life)
- provide volunteers with support through training, information and safety.
- adapt existing recruitment processes to engage volunteers
- produce a volunteer handbook with all policies and operational guidelines
- investigate good practice occurring elsewhere.
- ensure that new Framework is complementary to wider Council initiatives for volunteering
- compare the costs and outcomes achieved from direct service delivery versus volunteering.

For further information and guidance, please refer to “Haringey Council Commissioning & Funding Framework for the Voluntary Sector” and “Haringey Council Voluntary Sector Strategy 2011-2016” - [www.haringey.gov.uk/index/community\\_and\\_leisure/voluntary\\_sector/voluntary\\_sector\\_strategy.htm](http://www.haringey.gov.uk/index/community_and_leisure/voluntary_sector/voluntary_sector_strategy.htm)

#### Parks Operations – tasks retained

The tasks retained by Parks operations include:

- all grass cutting and strimming including wild flower meadows, but excluding some box-cutting
- pitch and sports marking out
- hygiene - litter collection and tidying
- hedge cutting
- established trees maintenance
- path sweeping
- path edging
- playground, outdoor gyms & ball court safety checks

### Volunteer Tasks – (those suitable to be undertaken)

The following parks operational tasks are set for rationalisation / change to facilitate less frequent maintenance / change of use, and thus would be suitable for consideration as Volunteer tasks at local park level:

Shrub beds	Ponds
Rose beds	Hanging baskets
Flower beds	Grass box cutting
Habitat areas	Path edging & detritus removal
Conservation areas	Flower bed edging & detritus removal
Young trees	

### Planning for Volunteers

There needs to be a consensus amongst stakeholders including decision makers and Friends Groups, parks management, staff and trade unions that promoting more volunteering in parks should occur.

Acceptance that although volunteering is given free, that there are associated costs to be budgeted for:

Volunteer's expenses	Materials
Training costs	Tools
Staff time	Uniform and PPE
Provider agency time	insurances

### Volunteering

People and organisations become involved in volunteering for a variety of reasons and there are accepted opportunities, threats, risks, advantages and disadvantages associated with volunteering. What is certain is that volunteering has a cost, which has to be measured against benefit.

'Volunteer England' defines a regular volunteer as someone who volunteers at least once per month, and splits volunteering into two categories:

- Formal volunteering - giving unpaid help through groups, clubs or organisations to benefit other people or the environment.
- Informal volunteering - giving unpaid help as an individual to people who are not relatives.

## 6.2 Friends Forum

Haringey residents have proved to be committed to protecting and improving open space within the borough and there over 40 separate Friends of Parks groups, including one for Downhills Park, as well as a borough-wide Haringey Friends of Parks Forum which meets 6 times a year.

The Forum was set up by Friends Groups as an independent network in 2002, one of the first to be established in London. The Forum provides an opportunity for Friends Groups to work together for the good of Haringey's green spaces. The Forum's 'What We Do and How We Do It' document describes the work of the Friends Groups as such:

Friends Groups do a huge amount and put in thousands of hours of volunteer time to:

- help develop maintenance and management plans for our parks and green spaces

- raise funds for improvements needed
- prevent inappropriate development in parks and green spaces
- plant trees, shrubs and flowers and help create play areas, seating and other facilities
- conduct regular walkabouts with parks staff and produce maintenance updates
- organise activities that encourage local residents to safely use their local open spaces, including festivals involving up to thousands of local people

The forum goes on to explain it's own work: The Forum has been effective in lobbying and campaigning for

- better planning policies as they affect open spaces
- more ambitious and effective open space standards
- greater levels of on-site staffing
- giving support to individual Friends Groups

Friends Groups communicate and co-ordinate through the Forum's email list. The Friends Groups liaise closely with the Council's Leisure Services, and have been key agents in helping to bring in millions of pounds in external funding to improve facilities for local people. They have worked with the Council on achieving Green Flag status for many parks and open spaces. The Forum is supported by Leisure Services and Leisure Officers attend a session during the Forum's meetings to take note of each local Friends Group's issues, and to discuss wider issues of common concern. The Council is publicly committed to active partnership working with Friends Groups and the Forum, and minutes of all Forum minutes are displayed on the Council's website.

The Forum works with Haringey Federation of Residents Associations and the Haringey Allotments Forum. It also links up with similar grass-roots residents' Forums and networks throughout the UK through the London Friends Groups Network and the National Federation of Parks and Green Spaces.

### **6.3 Friends of Downhills Park**

Established in 1999, this is one of the original parks friends groups in Haringey.

Downhills Park Friends Group has become a very important link between Haringey Park Services and the local community. Members have been instrumental in helping to improve the facilities within the park and in helping to obtain funding.

The Friends have supported and participated in bulb and tree planting sessions, an annual Art in the Park day and various other activities. The Friends produce an annual newsletter and also have a website <http://www.downhills.org.uk/>

They have recently formed a Downhills Park Forum to incorporate all stakeholders in park development.

After school wildlife clubs regularly visit the park to learn about the environment including wildflower meadows and fungi identification.

### **6.4 Other Groups Using Downhills Park**

Every year the very successful Art in the Park day takes place. This is a community art event (painting, crafts, messy play, performance etc) for everyone, organised by the Friends since 1999. Hundreds of local people of all ages and abilities actively participate each year. It is thought to be one of the oldest community-run 'art in the park' events established in the UK.

In 2006 the Friends Group, in conjunction with BTCV, fundraised, designed and produced a commemorative video / DVD detailing memories of local residents and covering the last 100 years of Downhills Park. This video / DVD is available on request from the Friends Group.

In autumn 2007 the Park View Academy Environmental Club planted trees in the park as part of the Clean Sweep program in the area. Students from Bruce Grove Primary School planted bulbs in the park.

#### **Keston Road Day Centre**

This centre caters for adults with learning disabilities by providing them with a variety of work such as horticulture, catering and work provided by the Outreach Service. Adults are also taught communication and social skills to allow them to take part in every day activities.

The Keston Road Day Centre for adults with learning difficulties has also benefited from the knowledge provided by being able to learn basic horticultural skills and to just enjoy being outdoors. Currently a two year course in basic NPTC Horticultural training is being run with individuals from the Ermine Road Day Centre and this has been rolled out to the Keston Road Day Centre. Twelve students from Keston Road Day Centre have enrolled and their horticultural trainer is based in Haringey and is employed by the BTCV training division.

#### **Ermine Road Day Centre**

The centre provides day opportunities for adults with learning disabilities and a wide range of complex needs such as autism, sensory impairment and mobility needs. A programme of activities includes cooking, arts, horticulture and sporting activities both within the centre and in the community. The centre is run by Haringey Social Services.

#### **Downhills Primary School**

Downhills Primary holds 500 students from Key Stage 1 through to Year 7.

#### **Park View Academy Secondary School**

Park View Academy opened in September 1999, it now teaches around 1200 students of a diverse ethnic background where 75% of the students speak English as a second language. Students come from poor backgrounds and this is reflected in the above average number who qualify for free school meals and who require special educational support. As a result of a local regeneration program the school has received funding to improve its services and facilities. In the past five years the school has gone from strength to strength in improving its teaching and learning culture and this has been reflected in the continued improvement of end of year results.

## **7 Conservation and Heritage**

### **7.1 Site History**

Downhills Park has enjoyed a varied history. The site was once part of the 117 hectare Mount Pleasant Estate where in 1789 a house was built on the site of an earlier dwelling. In the 19th century the house was renamed Downhills, (but also appeared as Uplands), which was occupied by a gentleman by the name of Rowland Stephenson. The house was demolished in 1902 by Tottenham Urban

District Council, which laid out the first 10.5 hectares of the park and opened it to the public in 1903.

The Park was extended to its current size on the recommendation of the District Medical Officer following a smallpox epidemic, with 1.6 hectares purchased from the Great Eastern Railway Company in 1904. Early 20th century postcards show the park soon after it opened with features including a rockery, Italian gardens, lake, thatched arbour, water tower, conservatory, bandstand, model railway, keepers lodge, elaborate stone terraces and a famous hornbeam avenue.

Today few of the original features survive, although parts of the park retain their historic character. The Italian gardens, in the centre of the park, are still laid out with formal bedding and roses, but the ornamental pool is now a planter. North of the tennis courts and bowling green, are the remains of a terrace and stone balustrade, and some of the 20th century specimen trees. The remnants of the ancient woodland area and the cedar lawn can still be seen today.

## **7.2 Conservation**

Haringey UDP part 11 – Open Space and Natural Environment 1998. Under these plans an open space site cannot be developed in a way that will have an adverse effect on its natural habitats, and all landscaping is required to take into account nature conservation. Haringey is committed to encouraging the conservation, preservation, enhancement and interpretation of these habitats. (Haringey UDP Part II – Open Space and the Natural Environment, 1998, page 85 – 87 & Haringey Biodiversity Action Plan, 2004).

Downhills Park is noted to have excellent tree cover, in places forming a woodland structure over dense shrubberies and a predominance of native species. No changes have been proposed to the site under the UDP.

The site contains two areas of particular nature conservation interest. An area of woodland adjacent to the Italian Gardens with mature trees of a range of species; and an area of tall grassland or wildflower area to the south of the park adjacent to Park View Academy. However, species of conservation importance such as the endangered stag beetle, which was recently recorded on the site (in 2005) in logs near the Neighbourhood Office, are not necessarily confined to these areas.

Haringey would like to see more conservation areas within its parks, for environmental and educational reasons. These sites need careful planning and siting within those chosen parks.

Downhills Park presents its own opportunities within this respect and education will play an important role in notifying users of the park to the ideas behind the scheme. Conservation can on occasions, be viewed as neglect and Leisure Services will need to focus on supplying the correct information to inform people. Downhills Park management in partnership with BTCV will work to enhance the present wildflower areas to increase the educational and conservation value of the site for all.

A survey conducted by the Parks Conservation Officer noted that the recent recorded sighting of the rare stag beetle is cause for celebration and also highlights the need to expand the provision of suitable habitat for it. Dependant on tree works, any trees, particularly oaks, that need to be removed will have large logs from it placed in shaded, wooded areas of the park to help provide further habitat for the

stag beetle. Signs will need to be erected in order to explain to park users their purpose.

Of further importance is the need to maintain a relatively dense area of shrubbery and trees in order to maintain breeding habitats for the spotted flycatcher. A programme of shrub replacement has been started in 2006. Many shrubs in the park are old and the beds need to be replanted and redesigned. This will take place on a rolling basis with beds being prepared in the autumn of the first year and planted up the following spring. Shrubs planted will be hardy, drought resistant if possible, and many will be wildlife friendly.

There is a need to replace the loss of mature trees through old age and disease; and also to ensure generational growth of trees so that a continuous habitat for wildlife is provided. Downhills Park management and staff in partnership with the Haringey Arboriculture Section, BTCV and Friends of Downhills Park have embarked on a re-planting programme. The Friends of Downhills fundraised during 2007 and used the money to buy eight lime trees to gap the lime avenue, and a further five trees for the woodland area. Planting of three or four oak trees along the northern boundary of the wooded area took place in 2007 but these subsequently died. However, a number of trees were planted by the Friends group, BTCV and the Parks Service in November 2008. These trees included six lime trees to continue the lime avenue; six birches along the midnight alley / wildflower boundary; and two Mountain ash in the wood.

In the autumn of 2010 a further 5 Oak trees were planted by the Friends in the wood/pond area in memory of David McDonald, the chairman of the Friends who had passed away earlier in the year. On the same day these trees were planted, several bird and bat boxes were made in a workshop held by BTCV for installation in Downhills Park.

The Conservation Officer noted that the wildflower area was doing well despite being relatively fertile. Suggestion was made to reduce the fertility of the area by collecting and removing arisings. A survey of the species contained in the wildflower meadow was carried out in 2008 and can be found in Appendix 7. The Friends group have received £3567 in funding from Breathing Spaces to design and purchase an information board, and to purchase three benches to be placed in and around the meadow. In addition to this, the friends also purchased a litter bin, two standard *Sorbus aucuparia* (mountain ash) trees and a wild flower mix.

It has been suggested that a tree trail be set up to target Key Stage 3 pupils (approx. 7 to 9 years) and link into the National Curriculum. However, due to changes in BTCV staffing, this has not been followed through. The consensus is to now assess the viability of a more general natural trail encompassing all wildlife areas and notable trees within the park.

Bulb planting has taken place for many years. Most recently organised by the Friends of Downhills Park in 2011.

### **7.3 Downhills Park Wildflower Meadow (TQ 325 894)**

The attached list of vascular plants found growing in the wildflower meadow at Downhills Park was compiled on July 14th 2008 during a visit lasting approximately two hours. They were all in flower or fruit at the time of my visit, and they provided a colourful display. The majority of those highlighted are English native wild flowers; however the presence of two southern European variants (*Sanguisorba minor* ssp.

muricata and *Lotus corniculatus* var. *sativus*) suggests that the provenance of some of the “wildflower seed” was likely to be European rather than British. Dittander (*Lepidium latifolium*) is a scarce native plant of damp bare ground near the sea in southern England (though it has occasionally been introduced elsewhere); it too is likely to be of European origin.

Three species of butterfly were seen visiting the flowers at the time of my visit – meadow brown (*Maniola jurtina*), small white (*Pieris rapae*), and red admiral (*Vanessa atalanta*).

Linnean	English name	Stage	Status
<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	Yarrow	Flowering	Native
<i>Aesculus hippocastanum</i>	Horse-chestnut	Seedling	Introduced
<i>Aethusa cynapium</i>	Fool's Parsley	Flowering	Native
<i>Agrostis capillaris</i>	Common Bent	Flowering	Native
<i>Agrostis stolonifera</i>	Creeping Bent	Flowering	Native
<i>Anisantha sterilis</i>	Barren Brome	Flowering	Native
<i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>	Cow Parsley	Flowering	Native
<i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i>	False oat-grass	Flowering	Native
<i>Artemisia vulgaris</i>	Mugwort	Flowering	Native
<i>Avena sativa</i>	Oat	Fruiting	Introduced
<i>Ballota nigra</i>	Black Horehound	Flowering	Native
<i>Betula pendula</i>	Silver Birch	Sapling	Planted ?
<i>Bromus hordeaceus</i>	Soft-brome	Flowering	Native
<i>Centaurea cyanus</i>	Cornflower	Flowering	Introduced
<i>Centaurea nigra</i>	Common Knapweed	Flowering	Introduced
<i>Cerastium fontanum</i>	Common Mouse-ear	Fruiting	Native
<i>Chrysanthemum segetum</i>	Corn Marigold	Flowering	Introduced
<i>Cirsium arvense</i>	Creeping Thistle	Flowering	Native
<i>Crepis capillaris</i>	Smooth Hawk's-beard	Flowering	Native
<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>	Cock's-foot	Flowering	Native
<i>Diptotaxis tenuifolia</i>	Perennial Wall-rocket	Flowering / fruiting	Introduced
<i>Elytrigia repens</i>	Common Couch	Flowering	Native
<i>Galium mollugo</i>	Hedge Bedstraw	Flowering	Introduced
<i>Galium verum</i>	Lady's Bedstraw	Flowering	Native
<i>Geranium dissectum</i>	Cut-leaved Crane's-bill	Flowering	Native
<i>Geum urbanum</i>	Wood Avens	Flowering / fruiting	Native
<i>Hirschfeldia incana</i>	Hoary Mustard	Flowering / fruiting	Introduced
<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	Yorkshire-fog	Flowering	Native
<i>Hordeum murinum</i>	Wall Barley	Flowering / fruiting	Native
<i>Hypericum perforatum</i>	Perforate St John's-wort	Flowering	Native
<i>Knautia arvensis</i>	Field Scabious	Flowering	Introduced
<i>Lapsana communis</i>	Nipplewort	Flowering	Native
<i>Lepidium latifolium</i>	Dittander	Flowering	Introduced
<i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i>	Oxeye Daisy	Flowering	Introduced

<i>Lolium perenne</i>	Perennial Rye-grass	Flowering	Native
<i>Lotus corniculatus</i> var. <i>sativus</i>	Bird's-foot Trefoil	Flowering	Introduced
<i>Malva moschata</i>	Musk-mallow	Flowering	Introduced
<i>Malva sylvestris</i>	Common Mallow	Flowering	Native
<i>Medicago sativa</i> subsp. <i>sativa</i>	Lucerne	Flowering	Introduced
<i>Mellilotus albus</i>	White Melilot	Flowering	Introduced
<i>Onobrychis viciifolia</i>	Sainfoin	Flowering	Introduced
<i>Papaver rhoeas</i>	Common Poppy	Flowering	Introduced
<i>Picris echioides</i>	Bristly Oxtongue	Flowering	Native
<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	Ribwort Plantain	Flowering	Native
<i>Plantago major</i>	Greater Plantain	Flowering	Native
<i>Poa annua</i>	Annual Meadow-grass	Flowering	Native
<i>Polypogon viridis</i>	Water Bent	Fruiting	Introduced
<i>Ranunculus acris</i>	Meadow Buttercup	Flowering	Native
<i>Rumex cristatus</i>	Greek Dock	Fruiting	Introduced
<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>	Broad-leaved Dock	Fruiting	Native
<i>Rumex sanguineus</i>	Wood Dock	Fruiting	Native
<i>Salvia verbenaca</i>	Wild Clary	Flowering	Introduced
<i>Sanguisorba minor</i> subsp. <i>muricata</i>	Fodder Burnet	Flowering / fruiting	Introduced
<i>Senecio jacobaea</i>	Common Ragwort	Flowering	Native
<i>Silene dioica</i>	Red Campion	Flowering / fruiting	Introduced
<i>Silene latifolia</i>	White Campion	Flowering / fruiting	Native
<i>Sonchus oleraceus</i>	Smooth Sow-thistle	Flowering	Native
<i>Trifolium pratense</i>	Red Clover	Flowering	Introduced
<i>Trifolium repens</i>	White Clover	Flowering	Introduced
<i>Tripleurospermum inodorum</i>	Scentless Mayweed	Flowering	Introduced
<i>Urtica dioica</i>	Common Nettle	Flowering	Native
<i>Vicia sativa</i> subsp. <i>segetalis</i>	Common Vetch	Flowering	Native

Table 9: Vacular plants found in Downhills Park by D.Bevan (14/07/2008)

## 8 Marketing

### 8.1 The Marketing Approach

Marketing Downhills Park involves more than simply publicising and promoting the park, it also involves listening to the users of the park. A common phrase associated with marketing is 'putting the customer at the centre of the business'. This section of the plan will firstly outline how facilities and activities at Downhills Park are promoted and publicised and secondly how Downhills Park users are positioned at the centre of the business.

### 8.2 Publicity

Haringey.gov.uk

The Haringey website contains extensive information on the borough's parks and open spaces, including Downhills Park, and details the provision of the Parks Service. Information such as locations, facilities and transport links for all Haringey parks and open spaces is available. Policy information such as the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy which draws upon a range of information and seeks to establish a longer term vision for the borough's parks and open spaces is also available.

Detailed information on the Green Flag Award with clear links to the Green Flag park pages within the LBH site can also be viewed.

22% of respondents to the 09/10 residents survey prefer to find out information via the web.

#### Events Listings

Listings for events taking place in the borough's parks can be submitted to the web team for inclusion on the Haringey website's 'What's On' page.

This submission can be made internally by a council service or externally by an organisation or individual. Details of how to make this submission are included on the events confirmation letter, sent to all groups holding events within the parks.

#### YourLondon.gov.uk

The Greater London Authority launched their website in January 2006. This site brings together details of all parks and open spaces in London.

#### VisitLondon.com

In November 2007 a special feature on Haringey appeared on the Visit London website. In this feature Haringey's parks were mentioned with a link to the park pages on the Haringey website.

### **8.3 Publications**

#### Your Parks, Sports and Leisure Facilities

A leaflet showing a map of the borough highlighting all parks, sports and leisure facilities helps to market Haringey's parks. This leaflet is produced in summer and winter of each year, and is distributed to all council reception points, libraries, community centres and park cafes for the public to take away.

Not only are all of the borough's parks and open spaces marked on this map, but the Green Flag award winning parks are highlighted by having the Green Flag logo printed over them. This map also shows the parks facilities.

#### Your Park...

The 'Your Park...' series of leaflets was established in 2005 to initially market the four parks that had been awarded Green Flags. This series has now developed in to a series of leaflets covering parks including Downhills Park.

#### Haringey People

Haringey People is the Council magazine, distributed six times a year by direct mail to all households within the borough. The magazine is produced by the Council's Central Communications Team which has editorial control over the content.

Independent research shows that Haringey People is the source most often used by residents to obtain information about the Council (45% of respondents to 09/10 residents' survey). A number of articles are published each year promoting the borough's parks.

### **8.4 Campaigns**

#### Better Haringey Programme

Better Haringey was an environmental improvement programme, launched by the Council in September 2003, with the aim of improving the quality of life for people in

Haringey, by tackling some of the borough's biggest problems and making it one of the cleanest boroughs in London.

During the campaign's 7 year reign over £20 million was invested to make Haringey 'Cleaner, Greener and Safer.' Better Haringey was one of the council's five key priorities and was key to realising its ambition of being a top-performing London borough.

As part of the programme, funding was sought to allow for major improvements in many of the council run parks in Haringey, therefore becoming part of the programmes established and well received publicity campaign that was continually run.

In July 2007 a Better Haringey advertising and publicity campaign was launched with the aim of promoting the borough's parks. The strap line used was 'Parks to be proud of. Love your borough.'

The campaign saw advertising at tube stations, on buses and on billboards throughout Haringey. Adverts were also placed in Haringey People and local newspapers and a media assault was launched to promote various initiatives within the parks.

### **8.5 The Greenest Borough Strategy**

The Greenest Borough Strategy was adopted in July 2008 and sets out how the Council will take forward actions to tackle climate change and embed environmental sustainability into everything it does.

Activities in the strategy are broken down into seven priority areas, with parks mainly aligned to the priority 'Protecting the natural environment' where key objectives include:

- adapt to the impact of climate change on green and open spaces
- actively manage biodiversity
- improve open spaces through partnership action
- increase the use, awareness, appreciation and involvement in our green spaces.

### **8.6 In Bloom Competition**

Up until 2009 the Parks Service co-ordinated the borough's submission into the annual horticultural competition London in Bloom.

As part of the submission, the local Haringey in Bloom competition was run to encourage individuals, community groups, schools and businesses to brighten the borough using floral and shrub displays.

Two internal categories within Haringey in Bloom were run to promote the borough's parks and open spaces: best parks and best bedding categories.

The competition was sponsored by a local garden centre and the Journal newspaper, therefore getting maximum coverage for not only the Parks Service but those parks and open spaces that are entered into the best parks and best bedding display categories.

We are currently exploring ways of running the Haringey in Bloom competition with the emphasis on community groups working within the parks, with a Diamond Jubilee theme.

### **8.7 Events Participation**

In preparation of the events that take place annually throughout Haringey, a display board is used by Leisure Services promoting the parks, open spaces and leisure centres and informs people of the recreational activities available to them.

The board and promotional material will continue to be displayed at a number of locations including the borough's Leisure Centres and will visit events that take place within the parks over the coming year.

### **8.8 Sponsorship**

#### **Tree and Bench Sponsorship**

Leisure Operations runs a scheme where members of the public can sponsor the planting of a tree or the installation of a bench in any Council run park and open space. This can be done to commemorate a loved one or an event.

The sponsor pays for the item and planting / installation, thereafter Leisure Operations maintains it subject to certain conditions. Should sponsors wish to, they can also help in maintaining their item.

### **8.9 Consultation and Market Research**

Users of Downhills Park are able to contribute to the management of the park by completing a form known as QAF 32. This form is incorporated into the quality management system operated in Haringey, and allows anyone to comment on the standard of facilities within the park. There is no limitation on the number of times this form can be completed.

Other channels available to the public include the on-line survey 'Your Visit' available on the Haringey website. This survey is advertised on the back of most signs and notice boards within Haringey's Parks. The Haringey website is constantly updated to provide the wider public with information on all of the LBH Park sites and promote upcoming events.

Until 2009 Haringey commissioned Ken McAnespie Consultants (KMC) to conduct an annual survey of the boroughs residents regarding their use (or non-use) of open spaces in Haringey. The data is aggregated to produce summary information that allows comparisons to be drawn across time or across different areas. Respondents are also given the opportunity to add comments and suggestions. A selection of responses regarding Downhills Park are included below.

Due to funding reductions this survey is now planned to take place every four years, with the next happening in 2013.

### **8.10 Residents Survey**

The Haringey Residents' Survey is undertaken each year to measure residents' satisfaction with and perception of the council's services. Results are used by council departments to improve services and to measure the effectiveness of initiatives undertaken throughout the previous year.

Between 2001 and 2010 perceived service delivery with parks and open had continuously increased from 34% of residents thinking service delivery was good to excellent, to 69% in 2010. The 2011 survey shows a fall in satisfaction to 65%.

In 2011 an extra question regarding safety in parks and open spaces was added. This showed that 85% of those surveyed felt either very safe or safe when using the borough's parks and open spaces.

Area	Very safe	Safe	Not thought about it	Unsafe	Very unsafe
Central Haringey	12%	82%	1%	4%	1%
Crouch End/ Stroud Green	12%	75%	2%	3%	2%
Muswell Hill	24%	66%	4%	6%	4%
Northern Haringey	10%	70%	8%	12%	8%
Tottenham Hale/ Seven Sisters	6%	73%	4%	13%	4%
Wood Green	11%	71%	5%	9%	5%

Ethnicity	Very safe	Safe	Not thought about it	Unsafe	Very unsafe
White British	19%	70%	2%	6%	2%
Other White	10%	73%	4%	8%	5%
Asian	2%	79%	4%	15%	0%
Caribbean	9%	73%	4%	12%	2%
African	7%	74%	14%	1%	3%
Mixed/other	11%	69%	6%	12%	2%

Tenure	Very safe	Safe	Not thought about it	Unsafe	Very unsafe
Owner Occupied	18%	69%	3%	9%	2%
Council Rented	7%	75%	6%	7%	6%
Other	11%	75%	5%	6%	3%

Social grade	Very safe	Safe	Not thought about it	Unsafe	Very unsafe
AB	24%	64%	5%	6%	1%
C1	15%	72%	2%	8%	3%
C2	5%	81%	2%	9%	4%
DE	6%	75%	5%	8%	4%

**Table 10: Residents' satisfaction survey 2010/11**  
Understanding feelings of safety by area, ethnicity, tenure and social grade

### 8.11 KMC Survey 2009

The 2009 survey included the following responses from users about Downhills Park:

- More trees - big beautiful trees which will grow tall, live long - can provide nesting sites for birds
- Police to supervise the parks, because of the intimidating people in there - often parks feel very frightening
- Like to see wardens
- Parks seem ok, however the roads/pavements could be much cleaner - why don't you get tenants/owners of properties to be responsible for their part of pavement, like in Germany, and fine them if they don't keep it clean?
- Café
- An area for a café, better facilities for children's play areas, more events
- Skate pathways for roller-blading/roller-skates
- Getting/educating the children/teenagers not to leave takeaway chicken boxes and bones on the grass/paths
- Safer, no sexual type activities
- Improvement and repairs to children's playground, dog control (including litter)
- More creative facilities for the youth, also security should improve to prevent crime and bad behaviour in the area
- Stone ping pong tables
- The bowling green that used to be there is now unused and looks terrible - they should make it into a football pitch, but in grass, not concrete, and

it should be taken care of like other parks in different boroughs. Security should be there - cameras and lighting. We already have a cafe, but it is too small, and the field where to play football is terrible

- Toilets
- Re-asphalt the pathways where necessary, improve lighting, but above all clear the parks of drunks and drug addicts, along with loose dogs
- More dog bins, exercise equipment
- Flowers - people like to walk in a park that has nice wildlife (trees and flowers). Guards - don't feel overly safe, but this is true of all areas where high unemployment is found, such as Haringey
- What it takes to keep/raise standards. I've only lived there for a year. Better lighting for parks after dark
- Don't know
- CCTV, extra lighting
- More entertainment for kids, and more colourful plants to brighten up the park, also high security patrol
- "More gardens" and seats in them - Haringey is amazingly bad at doing gardens. I take from the park what I want from the surroundings. Chestnuts must be the most boring park on earth - no character, no exciting areas
- Catering facilities
- More lighting, more patrols
- Seating areas, flowers/shrubs
- More safe there by providing guards
- A café, better toilet facilities
- More seats
- Yes, paddling pool for children
- I will appreciate it very much, if most provisions in other parks, are included here also
- Generally quite run-down, benches very old, and needs painting
- More flowers, other activities besides football for children, pathways for roller-blading
- Educational projects - educating the ignorant communities!
- More dog bins as you enter the park, update children's play area
- More flower plants, and facilities for shelter if it rains
- Toilet facilities, and replacement of old benches
- Toilet facilities, better cleanliness, police patrol - I feel unsafe to walk in the open green space, because there is no supervision or security on the various groups playing football there and everywhere on open space in the park - can you do something about it? Allocate a specific space for football?
- More visible security, toilets
- Café provision, toilets, no glass permitted in park/play area
- Better quality of plants, better quality of benches, more water - fountains or ponds
- Better lighting, café/ice cream van, water fountains
- To improve on seats and benches
- New play areas
- Downhills has had a face-lift, and it has much improved - it has become quite a beautiful park and I enjoy going there as it is. I would happily pay more if the borough planted trees in the streets

## 9 Management

### 9.1 How Haringey's Parks are Managed: An Overview

Downhills Park is managed in accordance with a range of strategies; principally the council's cultural strategy and its community strategy. These strategies set out, in broad terms, the aims and the objectives that the council has adopted, the time scale over which they should be achieved and how they will be measured.

There is also an open spaces strategy which sets out a route from where parks and open spaces are now and where the council would like them to be. As in the case of the overall council strategies, the open spaces strategy sets out time lines and performance indicators.

Parks and open spaces are managed from within Leisure Services. Until the restructure of services in 2011 the key document within the section was the Leisure Services Business Plan. This document described timescales and key performance indicators. These targets are now detailed in the directorate's Place & Sustainability Business Plan.

Each of these key documents is described briefly below.

### 9.2 Haringey's Cultural Strategy

The strategy examines how different partners, agencies and organisations are working together and aims to develop the range and quality of culture and cultural activity available to the people who live and work in Haringey. The strategy looks at:

- how we can grow a firm base that will support and develop the creative and cultural economy,
- how we can develop cultural infrastructure, training and business support,
- ideas and actions that will increase the range of opportunity to participate in cultural activity.

The strategy recognises the important role that parks and open spaces play, and the need to provide support for projects that increase use and access to these areas. Also recognised is the role Leisure Services has taken to create 'Friends of Parks' groups in order to involve the community in the management and maintenance of green spaces.

The Cultural Strategy also aims to work with the Mayor's office, the Greater London Assembly (GLA), London Tourist Board, Lee Valley Regional Park Authority (LVRPA), the police and transport providers, and neighbouring authorities to market the potential of Haringey and north London as visitor destinations, with a focus on significant venues and green spaces.

Further information on Haringey's Cultural Strategy can be found at [http://www.haringey.gov.uk/index/council/strategies and policies/cultural\\_strategy.htm](http://www.haringey.gov.uk/index/council/strategies_and_policies/cultural_strategy.htm)

### 9.3 Haringey's Community Strategy

The Community Strategy is the overarching plan for the borough to improve the quality of life for people living, working, learning, visiting and investing in Haringey. This strategy sets out the priorities of the Haringey Strategic Partnership (HSP).

The strategy identifies five priorities to make the borough a better place through working together. These priorities are:

- providing modern, better quality, accessible services for everyone who needs them - particularly in health and social care;
- creating safe and confident communities with less fear of crime and the ability to prevent crime and resist committing crimes;
- creating a cleaner, greener environment with better transport and leisure opportunities;
- raising achievement in education and creating opportunities for life long success;
- narrowing the gap between the east and west of Haringey by improving the most deprived neighbourhoods.

#### **9.4 Open Space Strategy**

Haringey Leisure Services has adopted an open space strategy for the borough in order to guide the future direction of open space management and development. It also takes into account legislation and national policy.

The Vision Statement, eight strategic objectives and the action plan, which contains 97 actions to be implemented over the short, medium and long term, provide the key structure for this strategy.

The overall strategy has considered and defined the council's position in relation to the key issues of: deficiency, safety, community involvement, education, recreation, social inclusion, culture, biodiversity.

The following is the Council's vision:

*'To enrich the quality of life for everyone in Haringey by working in partnership to provide safe, attractively designed, well used, well maintained open spaces for the benefit and enjoyment of the whole community.'*

#### **9.5 Objectives of the Open Space Strategy**

- To address deficiencies in open space provision across the Borough in order to improve opportunities for local people to access a variety of open space environments.
- To create safe, open space environments that can be enjoyed by all sections of the community.
- To involve the whole community: residents, public, private and voluntary organisations, in the preparation and implementation of individual parks management plans in order to ensure that parks and open spaces contribute fully to the development of sustainable and cohesive local communities.
- To develop the educational role of open space, particularly for young people, in order to promote greater knowledge and understanding of the importance of the natural environment.
- To provide a range of opportunities and facilities for active and passive recreation, which can contribute to, improved mental and physical health and wellbeing.
- To manage and develop parks and open spaces in order to promote social inclusion and usage by all of Haringey's diverse communities.
- To develop and promote an increased range of opportunities for people to enjoy cultural experiences and activities.
- To promote biodiversity and the conservation, protection and enrichment of species and habitats.

## **9.6 Place & Sustainability Business Plan**

Since the reshaping of Haringey Council services and the reformation of Recreation Services into Leisure Services, the Recreation Services Business Plan has now been replaced with a directorate – Place and Sustainability Business Plan. Leisure Services contributes to the outcomes with the Place and Sustainability Plan by focusing on four key objectives.

These objectives are designed to encompass the issues that face the service on a daily to annual basis and also includes future development. The four headings are included as part of staff appraisals and one to one discussion throughout the year. These four headings are also the basis of the monthly progress reports and Team Briefings to all staff.

The four key Business Plan Objectives are:

- Cleanliness and Presentation - Improving the presentation and cleanliness of parks and open spaces.
- Improvement and Replacement -Improve Recreation Services facilities, physical infrastructure and recycling.
- Usage and Access - Deliver sustainable recreation services and provision across the borough
- Managing and Changing - Improve the Service's management capacity, processes and practice.

## **9.7 Management Structure**

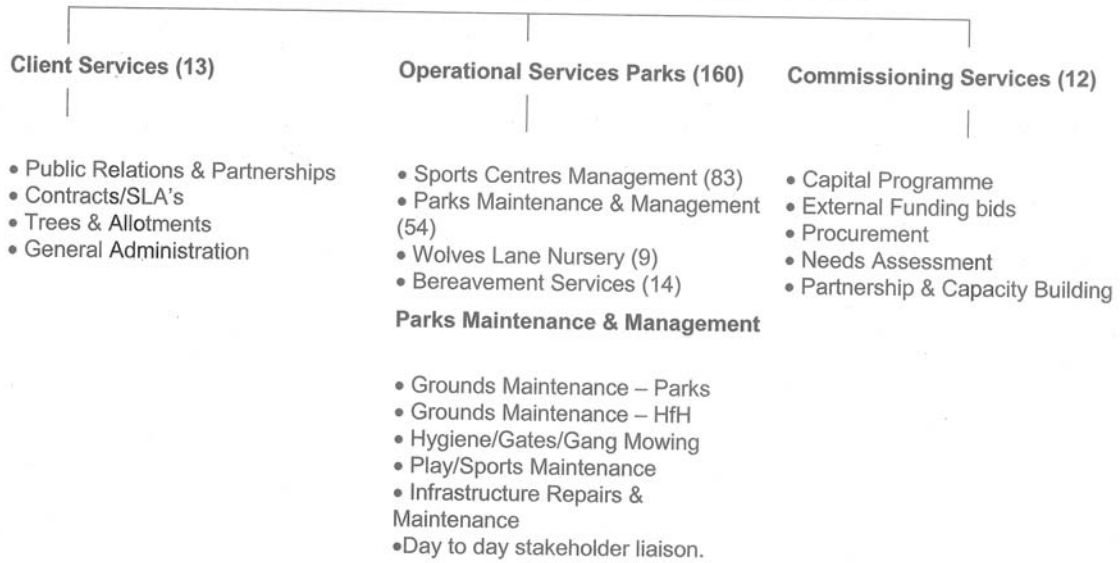
In 2011 the council saw a realignment of services resulting in a complete reshaping.

The Recreation Services Business Unit was restructured into what we now see as Leisure Services. Leisure Services was also moved out of the Adult & Community Services Directorate and into the newly formed Place & Sustainability Directorate within the Council structure.

The Operations and Client functions of the then Parks Service and Sport and Leisure Services were amalgamated. This was in preparation of the Leisure Centre and Bereavement Services functions (including the management of cemeteries) being outsourced in early 2012.

Leisure Services now consists of three units: Client Services, Operations and Commissioning. The day to day management of the parks and open spaces sits within Operations.

## A Way Forward Leisure Services – Service Chart



**Figure 4: Leisure organisational structure**

### 9.8 The Quality Management System

Leisure Operations operates a Quality Management System (QMS) which is accredited with ISO9001:2009 and is externally monitored by BSI. The scope of the Haringey Parks Service QMS includes the monitoring and management of the following services:

- maintenance of parks, open spaces and council-owned trees
- management of excavation for burial
- maintenance of cemetery gardens
- administration of allotments
- management of conservation areas
- management of event-related processes
- management of customer feedback

### 9.9 Investors in People

Haringey Council achieved IiP accreditation across the entire council, gaining it in July 2005 and has retained it ever since.

Under the IiP standard staff training and development is promoted through staff one to ones and twice yearly appraisals. The outcomes of these appraisals are monitored for training needs and managers are encouraged to co-ordinate group training and to take advantage of corporate training through the Council's 'Smart Working' initiative.

### 9.10 Monitoring

Haringey has employed the Ken McAnespie Consultancy for several years to undertake a user survey. In 2009 over 9,000 questionnaires were sent to borough residents. Respondents were asked to score different attributes for their nearest or most used park and are also offered the opportunity to express views about specific subjects and more generally. Approximately 8% of the surveys were returned and demonstrates steadily increasing levels of satisfaction over the last 4 years in almost every category measured.

Due to budget pressures the KMC Park User Annual Survey hasn't been carried out since 2009, and it has now been decided that instead of taking place every year, the survey will now be conducted every four years with the next due to take place in 2013.

### **9.11 Finance and Funding**

#### **Annual Budget**

Downhills Park sits within the East area of Operational Services which has an overall annual budget of £1.567m. Unlike previous years no capital funding has been allocated to Downhills Park for improvements, although there are other smaller funding streams available.

#### **Parks and Open Spaces Small Grant Scheme**

The Parks and Open Space Small Grant Scheme has been running for a number of years. The scheme offers community groups associated with parks and open spaces - such as Friends of Parks groups - to bid for funding of between £50 and £1000, to support and develop community activity to help meet the council's aims and priorities for improving the borough's parks and open spaces.

The scheme has been running for a number of years and for the past few years the annual budget has been £10,000.

As part of the shift towards engaging with volunteers and community groups to work closer with the council, a larger budget of £20,000 will be available to community groups in April 2012.

The aims and priorities of the grant scheme will also shift slightly to encourage groups to bid for the money so they can undertake improvement works in parks. The new guidelines will be available at the beginning of March 2012, to give community groups sufficient time to develop bids by 1 April 2012.

#### **Events Income**

A number of parks within the borough play host to commercial and community events throughout the year. As part of the financial reorganisation in April 2011 income targets for events were reviewed. New targets have now been set and a policy introduced to ring fence event income for reinvestment in parks infrastructure. Finsbury Park accounts for approximately 88% of all income received in parks during 2011. Finsbury Park is considered to be a regional venue for events and draws participation from Haringey and surrounding Boroughs.

Therefore, dependent on need a percentage of income received in Finsbury Park will be redistributed to make improvements in other smaller parks.

Each September a review of all income received in parks will be undertaken and a schedule of improvements will be drawn up based on the available funding and identified priorities in each parks management plan. During 2011 Parks event income totalled almost £100,000 and was split between the following types of event during the year.

Type of Event	Income	% Usage
Sports Event	£ 1,969	15%
Community	£ 7,664	14%
School Event	£ 5,749	14%
Sports Training	£ 1,292	11%
Private Hire	£ 6,818	7%
Fundraising	£ 5,264	6%
Filming	£ -	6%
Environmental	£ 25	5%
Concert	£ 39,835	5%
Fitness Training	£ 1,006	4%
Misc	£ -	4%
Cultural & Arts	£ 340	4%
Fun fair	£ 21,866	2%
Circus	£ 3,888	1%
Volunteering	£ -	1%
Vehicle Parking	£ 3,500	1%
Council Event	£ -	0%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>£99,215</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 11: Actual event income Jan –Dec 2011

### Other Funding Streams

On a smaller scale there are Lottery Grant initiatives such as 'Awards for All', which funds projects that enable people to take part in art, sport, heritage and community activities, as well as projects that promote education, the environment and health in the local community.

## 10 Improvement programme

### 10.1 Recent Improvements

Since 2005 investment on physical improvements to Downhills Park has been undertaken totalling nearly £450k. Improvements have been made to play areas, pathways and park furniture.

An additional investment of £200k was provided by the Council for the Oliver Tambo memorial, of which other partners included the Republic of South Africa. Details of all projects are held within the previous management plan.

### 10.2 Future Improvements

In January 2012 the London Marathon Charitable Trust awarded £40k to the council to improve Downhills Park. The money will be used for upgrading the existing under 8s play provision which is currently in a poor state of disrepair. The money will also enable cosmetic repairs to take place to the older children's play space.

There is also an opportunity to link the two spaces together by removing the existing fencing which currently separates both sites. Fencing around the site will also be improved with the provision of self closing gates.

#### New Café

Natural play options will also be created to the frontage of the café. This will add to the existing fallen logs which are already in place. Items such as stepping logs, climbing logs will be added to the space with the aim of creating a natural, usable space for users of the park.

A proposed new road layout for West Green Road will improve main entrance to the park which will open onto the new open pedestrian area.

In a recent consultation carried out with the Friends groups, the Friends of Downhills Park specified their following aims and aspirations for the park.

1. Have gardeners and maintenance staff back

These aims and aspirations will dictate any future improvements as and when funding becomes available.

## 11 Action Plan – Next 12 Months

Theme	Actions
Welcoming Place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce Monthly information update to Parks Notice Boards.</li> <li>• Fully resource Park Steward Programme seven days a week May to September.</li> </ul>
Healthy, Safe and Secure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement new Dog Control Orders as they apply to each park.</li> <li>• Apply / consider applying for Safer Parks Awards building on success in 2011.</li> </ul>
Clean and Well Maintained	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refine hygiene management plan in each park to reflect local management factors.</li> <li>• Transfer management of remaining buildings to corporate property services to ensure regular maintenance programmes can be maintained.</li> </ul>
Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete all bio diversity actions as set out in the individual bio diversity action plans.</li> <li>• Through BTCV undertake regular conservation management days.</li> <li>• Consider the opportunities for “Local Growing” in parks as part of the wider Allotment Review</li> </ul>
Community Involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to work with MPS to connect Neighbourhood Watches to Parks and Friends Groups</li> <li>• Develop SLA with BTCV to ensure that each friends</li> </ul>

Theme	Actions
	<p>group receives an organisational health check and development plan for the next three years.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launch revamp Small Grants Scheme to encourage groups to make a positive impact on there park.</li> </ul>
Conservation and Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribute to a Parks Heritage Exhibition to be hosted in local libraries during the Autumn / Winter 2012/13.</li> <li>• Commemorate the dedication of four parks as QEII fields as part of the Diamond Jubilee celebrations.</li> </ul>
Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote Parks through the Leisure Services Communication Plan.</li> <li>• Promotion to take places through three themes:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Diamond Jubilee – Jubilee in Bloom, Queens Tree’s and QEii Fields</li> <li>○ Quality Greenspace – Small grants, tree strategy</li> <li>○ National Celebration Weeks – Love Parks Week, National Tree Week.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete re-survey and re-specification of maintenance operations in each park.</li> <li>• Construct digital maps and also start to maintain the site through the Confirm Asset Management System.</li> <li>• Review each Parks Management Plan and transfer to an online format.</li> <li>• Produce visual interpretation of management plan to cover next five years.</li> </ul>
Improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investigate through the friends groups and partner organisations ways of funding key priority projects in each park.</li> <li>• Develop a three year external funding strategy for each park.</li> </ul>

Table 12: Next 12 month action plan