



Parks and Greenspaces Strategy

June 2023

Contents

1. Foreword
2. Introduction
3. Scope of the Strategy
4. Vision and Strategic Aims for Haringey's Parks and Greenspaces Strategy
5. The Main Issues and Challenges Identified to be Addressed to deliver the Key Aims of the Strategy
6. Policy Context
7. Benefits of Parks and Green Spaces
8. Partners
9. Key Documents Supporting the Overall Strategy
 - Community Engagement and Volunteering Plan
 - Physical Activity and Sport Strategy 2019-2023
 - New Policies for Parks and Green Spaces
 - Service Standards for Parks and Green Spaces
 - Asset Management Plan
 - Biodiversity Action Plan
 - Trees and Woodland Plan
 - Parks and Greenspaces Watercourse and Flood Risk Plan
10. Additional Studies
11. Actions Proposed to Deliver the Key Aims
12. References

1. Foreword

Public parks were developed to improve the health of communities at a time when the industrial revolution led to a growth in urbanisation and a decline in air quality. This vision of our predecessors enabled communities living in cramped and badly ventilated housing to take outdoor exercise in green open spaces.

The council is the custodian of some wonderful parks across the borough. We have a civic duty to put plans in place to ensure that our residents get the most out of them and that they play their rightful role in the life of the borough. People need parks.

We found out during the pandemic exactly how much our residents needed our parks. People locked down in their homes took daily exercise in local parks, walked dogs, bought bicycles, relaxed and became more active. Local parks, big and small, became far busier and, for many of our residents, they provided a much-needed respite from a world where things were extremely difficult. Covid disrupted lives and took lives. Very few of us were left unscathed. The safety valve offered by our green spaces helped a lot of people cope with anxiety and grief. Good mental health was as recognised to be as important as good physical health.

Whilst life has largely returned to how it was before the pandemic, it has impacted many people in our community who are living healthier and simpler lives now, staying closer to home, volunteering more, valuing their communities, neighbours, family and friends. There is a renewed interest in our green spaces and what they can offer. However, greater use of parks has led to more informal social gatherings, damage from higher footfall and increased litter and waste, which the council needs to manage.

The council has re-evaluated its approach to parks and used the new evidence we have gathered from residents to develop a strategy for the next 15 years. Our parks give us a chance to show our commitment to tackle climate change, promote biodiversity and develop a greener approach to civic life and council services. Our parks can help us manage climate change impact such as warmer temperatures, reduced air quality, increased flooding and carbon capture.

We are also making a commitment to tackle inequality through this strategy. Haringey's parks and greenspaces should be key shared spaces for all our communities. This strategy is intended to explore and dismantle the barriers that prevent some of our residents from using our parks and feeling included and welcome. Some sections of the community do not feel comfortable or even safe in parks and green spaces. We have taken soundings from a wide range of residents on what needs to change before they see their local park as a space, they feel they can use.

Through this strategy and the plans and documents that explain and support it, we set out our vision and priorities for Haringey's parks and greenspaces for the next 15 years between 2023-2038.

This foreword, drafted by Councillor Julie Davies, former Cabinet Member for Communities and Civic Life has been retained in the final strategy in memory of her substantial contribution and endorsement of the vision and aims of the Parks and Greenspaces Strategy. We are forever grateful for her guidance and encouragement to champion the little greenspaces as well as promoting the benefits of our larger parks.

The baton of delivering the strategy and supporting plans now passes to Councillor Emily Arkell, Cabinet Member for Culture, Communities & Leisure.

I would like to commend the vision and aims of the strategy to everyone living in and visiting our borough. The strategy document sets out a bold and challenging vision of how the boroughs parks and greenspaces could be if we work in partnership together. There is much to do but the aims of the strategy will be our success measures. We have committed to having a clear annual action plan of improvements and Cabinet will formally review our progress every five years. The strategy was developed in partnership with the community and together we will deliver it.

Photo

Councillor Emily Arkell,
Cabinet Member for Culture, Communities & Leisure

2. Introduction

From around the 1840s onwards, designated greenspaces were considered to be the answer to the rapid expansion of towns and cities. Prior to the mid-19th century, public parks did not exist as we know them today. However, there were public walks, pleasure grounds, and public access to Royal Parks.

Concerns grew about urban overcrowding and the condition of the poor as the industrial revolution took hold – from this, the public parks movement was born. Two public parks in Haringey at Alexandra Palace (1863) and Finsbury Park (1869) were amongst the earliest to be created. The statutory power to create parks was originally contained in the Public Health Act of 1875 and since then there has been further legislation that has built upon and extended the original Act.

In June 2018, a coalition of 12 national organisations (38 Degrees, The Parks Agency, Fields In Trust, Llais y Goedwig, Unison, The Gardens Trust, The Parks Alliance, Greenspace Scotland, Friends of the Earth, Keep Britain Tidy, The Conservation Volunteers, and the National Federation of Parks and Green Spaces) launched The Charter for Parks (June 2018), collectively calling for the halt and reversal of the decline of parks and local public green spaces – particularly acute through the 1980s and 1990s, as well as post-austerity - across the UK. They set out their views in a charter, the six points of which were:

- Celebrate the central role well-run parks play in our neighbourhoods for all sections of our communities
- Recognise the right of every citizen to have access within walking distance to a good quality public green space
- Endorse a legal duty for all public green space to be managed to a good standard
- Embed effective protection from inappropriate development or use, or loss of any part of our parks
- Ensure adequate long-term resources for ongoing maintenance, management and improvements
- Encourage and enable community involvement and empowerment of local people and park users

This Strategy sets out Haringey Council's intentions for the future of its parks and greenspaces, which resonate strongly with much of the above. It's important, however, to have a clear understanding over what is meant by 'greenspace.' For the purpose of this Strategy, the following definition is drawn from the Public Health England document, *'Improving access to greenspace: a new review for 2020'*:

Greenspace is 'Any area of vegetated land, urban or rural. This includes both public and private spaces such as parks, gardens, playing fields, children's play areas, woods and other natural areas, grassed areas, cemeteries and allotments, green corridors, disused railway lines, rivers and canals, derelict, vacant and contaminated land which has the potential to be transformed.'

3. Scope of the Strategy

There are 151 parks and green spaces in Haringey, 148 of which are managed by Haringey Council. There are also 59 sites of importance for nature conservation, 27 Council-owned allotment sites, 5 local nature reserves and two cemeteries.

There are approximately 12,500 street trees: 11,300 in parks and greenspaces and 8,000 in housing sites. It is estimated there are at least another 7,000 in woodlands, schools and nature conservation sites that are not currently recorded.

The oldest tree on public land in Haringey is probably the veteran oak tree in Bruce Castle Park, which is estimated to be around 500 years old.

There are 37 play areas and 10 outdoor gyms, 56 buildings in parks including 15 cafes as well as toilets and bases for Parks Service staff, who operate 19 Parks Service vehicles. There are also 83 hard sports facilities, 4 skateboard facilities, 22 grass sports pitches, 804 rubbish bins, 1,033 benches, 1,261 bollards, posts and barriers, 754 gates, 39 memorials, 949 signs, 3 rivers, 2 lakes, 5 wildlife ponds and 2 streams.

Parks are key community spaces that anyone in Haringey can enjoy and are very popular with residents. In the 2021-22 Residents Survey (4), 83% reported that they were either satisfied or very satisfied with parks and greenspaces.

The Council has been discussing the future of its parks and greenspaces with partners and stakeholders.

Over the space of three years, there was a series of meetings with Council Members, with other Council services, with friends of parks, with the Haringey Climate Forum, primary and secondary school heads, faith communities, disabled people, older people, people from BAME communities, people from the LGBTQI community and focus groups with people with disabilities, older people, secondary school pupils and LGBTQI people. Their input and feedback informed our draft Strategy that was approved for consultation in September 2022.

We have had a fantastic response to our consultation with 616 responses to our on-line survey and 40 written responses from groups and individuals. We have also held focus groups with younger people, young adults, disabled people, LGBTQI people, older people and MIND users. All of their feedback and input has helped to inform our final Strategy and supporting documents.

- You have overwhelmingly indicated that you support the Vision for the future of parks and greenspaces in Haringey.
- You have told us about aspects of parks that could be improved to make you feel safer.
- You have shared your thoughts about how parks and greenspaces could be made more welcoming.
- You have told us about behaviour from other users that you find off-putting.
- You've offered suggestions about where new greenspace could be developed and where trees could be planted.

- Given feedback about the draft Strategy and the Plans, Policies and proposed Standards.
- And provided thoughtful input about how we should approach reviewing and updating the Strategy to keep it relevant over the next 15 years.

In support of the Strategy, we will publish an annual Action Plan including the resources that we will have available and reflect on what has been achieved in the previous year as part of the Action Plan.

We will also be taking forward plans for the training of our own workforce and for partners to support implementation.

4. Vision and Strategic Aims for Haringey's Parks and Greenspaces Strategy

Vision

That Haringey's parks and greenspaces become fully inclusive shared spaces that deliver our key aims of inclusion and wellbeing, climate change, biodiversity and sustainability and a quality service.

Key Aims

Inclusion and Wellbeing

Providing inclusive parks and greenspaces that all communities in Haringey can benefit from so that usage and enjoyment of our parks and greenspaces reflects the communities living in Haringey and contributes to improved wellbeing.

Climate Change, Biodiversity and Sustainability

Supporting the Council's declaration of a Climate Emergency by reducing the carbon footprint of parks and greenspaces, protecting and promoting biodiversity, and helping educate everyone in Haringey about contributing towards saving the planet.

A Quality Service

Securing investment, improving standards, partnerships, communications, and outcomes.

The Council proposes to use the following measures to help track progress towards achieving these three key aims:

For the *Inclusion and Wellbeing Aim*

- The profile of park users compared to that of the population of the borough
- The overall number of visitors to a representative sample of parks
- The number of community groups active in parks and greenspaces

For the *Climate Change, Biodiversity and Sustainability Aim*

- Increase tree planting across the borough and develop strategies to increase canopy cover across public and private land in the borough.
- To establish new local nature reserves and sites of importance for nature conservation and create new wildlife habitats every year in parks and greenspaces
- Decarbonise the core operational buildings and all transport related activities for service delivery

For the *Quality Service Aim*

- The number of parks and greenspaces with a Green Flag accreditation
- The proportion of park users who are very satisfied or satisfied with Haringey parks
- Percentage of park assets that are graded good or excellent
- The number of full-time equivalent (FTE) parks staff per hectare of managed greenspace

5. Main Issues and Challenges to be addressed in the delivery of the Key Aims of the Strategy

The Council talked with a range of partners and stakeholders to initially identify what its Aims for the Strategy should be and what needs to be done, as well as what needs to change, to achieve the Aims.

Relevant research and the experience of other organisations involved with parks and greenspaces were also reviewed, including research about making parks safer for women and girls, initiatives Friends groups can take to involve people from ethnic minorities and the development of a Healthy Parks Framework.

Following formal consultation, we are updating these issues and challenges to incorporate the feedback we have received.

Key issues and challenges for parks becoming more inclusive places that promote wellbeing

Haringey's parks are wonderful assets for its communities and extensively used by the majority of residents.

The profile of users is not known, however, or the extent to which the current parks offer meets the needs of different users such as those with disabilities, older people, younger people, women & girls, LGBTQI people and people from BAME communities.

Conversations held in developing the draft Strategy and feedback received from consultation indicate that parks need to be doing more to better address the needs of some groups.

This is particularly important because some of the people from these groups tend to more frequently experience the adverse health conditions that are described later under the section on 'Benefits of using parks and greenspaces'.

Safety, including feeling safe, can have a significant influence for many different users on whether or not people use parks.

Young people have raised safety concerns including about the presence of other hostile young people, about knives being carried and being concerned that bikes or phones might be stolen from them.

Lighting and a staff presence make women feel safer in parks

People using e-bikes, scooters and bikes are reported as sometimes going too fast and making other users fearful.

Large groups can feel threatening.

The absence of toilets can limit or prevent usage of parks for some residents.

Some residents can be put off by the presence of dogs, even where owners are responsible.

Where it is perceived that drug dealing or the consumption of drugs is occurring is also of concern.

And for all users, a well-maintained park makes everyone feel safer.

Moving forward, the Council will be seeking to engage more with Friends groups, user groups and partner organisations to better understand the safety and behaviour issues that impact on each park and greenspace and thereafter to identify the resources and support needed to make them feel safer and more welcoming.

These and other identified key issues and challenges for progressing the Inclusion and Wellbeing Aim are summarised below:

- Long-established focus by the Council on the physical condition of parks and greenspaces rather than on users and outcomes
- However, for some users, particularly disabled people, there are a range of key physical improvements needed to improve accessibility with priorities including pathways, toilets, and the availability of information about the accessibility of the park.
- A need to engage with a broader and more diverse group of stakeholders and support them to influence the Haringey parks 'offer' including by advocacy and engagement, through new or reconfigured provision of facilities, management, activities and marketing.
- Either directly or via partners such as Friends groups, developing stronger relationships with user groups with a view to drawing on their knowledge of individual parks and the issues and challenges they face.
- A lack of resources including staffing, to address and overcome barriers, a lack of partnerships with relevant organisations and physical barriers can also be obstacles that get in the way of communities enjoying parks and greenspaces in the borough
- Though there is a strong emerging trend towards parks becoming more inclusive, there is limited shared knowledge and experience as to what is meant by an inclusive park so training and support may be required for staff and stakeholders to develop their understanding of what it means to provide inclusive parks in Haringey.
- Additional resources are needed to take this agenda forward and make inclusion and wellbeing become an important part of everyone's role and the Council will be exploring options to obtain these resources.
- Drawing more on users to help with gaining a better understanding of local usage patterns and how individual parks are used in order to inform the main priorities for improvement.
- The current workforce needs to become more representative of the Haringey community, otherwise it may undermine the achievement of the Inclusion and Wellbeing Aim
- Obtaining relevant baseline data about the profile of park users and then being able to monitor progress over time to see how this changes.

- The Council has started to establish mutually beneficial and meaningful relationships with groups it has identified as being seldom heard and will over time likely seek to make adaptations to the way it designs, manages, markets, and activates parks to take account of what it is being told.

Key issues and challenges to mitigate climate change and promote sustainability through parks, green spaces and biodiversity

Parks are thought of as 'green' spaces, and they are major contributors in supporting nature and biodiversity.

An important area that needed to be addressed was to obtain more and better information about Haringey's natural areas and the habitats and species that exist in them so that there is a better level of insight and understanding.

This has been undertaken with a survey of all SINC sites and so plans for the protection, expansion and improvement of nature will be brought forward.

There will be a continuing need to protect those natural spaces from both inappropriate usage and overuse.

With the impact of climate change becoming increasingly evident, parks and greenspaces will need to be adapted with SuDS and other measures to include water capture and storage capacity.

The management, maintenance and usage of parks also adds to the borough's carbon footprint at a time when it is very clear that this footprint must be reduced or eliminated to save the planet for future generations.

To meet this Aim, the Council will progress a series of actions (for areas such as park buildings, vehicles and plant and machinery) that will lower carbon emissions. In addition, the Council will seek to diversify its maintenance regimes, tree species and plant types to capture more carbon.

Feedback from previous engagement and during the consultation has strongly communicated an expectation that the Council acts in a more strategic and joined-up way to achieve gains for nature and biodiversity.

Engagement has also reaffirmed that there is great passion within Haringey's communities for protecting the natural environment and a strong desire for active involvement and greater sharing of information.

This and other key issues and challenges to progress the climate change, biodiversity and sustainability aim are set out below.

- Improved inter-service coordination / joint working to achieve a more strategic and joined up approach
- Biodiversity has not been a historic priority for government and has been poorly resourced so there is a need to seek to generate enhanced resourcing of

carbon reduction / biodiversity within parks and greenspaces within Haringey at a time when government is reducing funding.

- More resourcing has been allocated for the management of trees including to be able to generate and make publicly available better data about trees but there will be a period of catching up from when there were less resources that has impacted on the Council's short-term ability to retain trees.
- The Council now has more reliable baseline data for SINC's, species and habitats but will need in the future to identify the resource capability to continue to undertake and/or facilitate the updating and review of data at regular intervals
- Obtaining the active support of the wider Parks and Leisure Service workforce
- Resourcing carbon reduction from the use of park buildings, vehicles, plant and machinery and the management of litter, including recycling to work towards an overall target of a net carbon neutral service
- The need to better protect natural spaces from inappropriate use through clearer policies with enhanced enforcement to support these policies
- Obtaining the support and buy-in of other key stakeholders, including other Council services, Friends of parks and the wider community to help in delivering the key actions
- Improving access to nature for BAME communities to address unequal access.
- Better informing residents, particularly through the Council's website and educating residents about what the Council does and why, in order to better manage resources.
- Developing alternative strategies to remove the need to use herbicides in parks and greenspaces to protect the environment

Key issues and challenges to secure investment, improve standards, partnerships, communications, and outcomes by improving service quality

Since 2011, when public sector austerity started to occur, parks have been severely affected by cutbacks in expenditure.

As a non-statutory service, the Parks Service was one of the service areas most immediately impacted. It had to achieve savings to a scale and at a speed that was damaging for parks and for the relationship between the Parks Service and its stakeholders.

Subsequently, there has been some excellent work done to mitigate and reverse the previous cuts. However, the service continues to be challenged today by the available levels of both capital and revenue funding and from the impact this resource availability has had on the way the Council works with the community. Those challenges are:

- Increased usage of parks requiring additional ongoing capital investment to maintain park fabric and assets in good condition
- Seeking to ensure that the range and quality of facilities within parks supports usage by all sections of the community
- Addressing issues of skill shortages and core competencies within the operational workforce so that they can better contribute to achieving the future Aims

- Greater use of headline key performance indicators (KPIs) to help the service to focus on key priorities in its use of resources.
- The Council's resources will always be limited so effective engagement and support for Friends of parks, drawing on the skills and knowledge of users and seeking to further develop corporate volunteering and similar schemes offering social and practical benefit can add value to Council funding
- There is limited usage made of external intelligence and best practice, mainly because of the limited current resource availability which tends to have to prioritise immediate operational issues.
- Feedback indicates that a much greater commitment to communication and informing residents would help to promote better public involvement and understanding as well as to support behaviour change/behaviour modification
- There is relatively little project management capacity to help drive key operational change (such as for waste and litter)
- There has been limited frontline gardener resources for over a decade and this limited resource directly impacts on the ability of the service to maintain parks to a decent/good standard.
- There has been consistent feedback from users and stakeholders about the need to have enforcement capacity to assist in encouraging appropriate and considerate behaviour in parks.

6. Policy Context

In 2018, the Government published its 25-year environment plan whose goals were 'cleaner air and water; plants and animals which are thriving; and a cleaner, greener country for us all'. The aspiration was 'using our land more sustainably and creating new habitats for wildlife, including by planting more trees, we can arrest the decline in native species and improve our biodiversity.'

The Environment Act 2021 has sought to advance these goals by setting targets for the recovery of the natural world in four priority areas: air quality, biodiversity, water and waste, as well as including an important new binding target to reverse the decline in species abundance by the end of 2030.

The Parks and Greenspaces Strategy and its supporting documents must appropriately align with this new legislative framework. However, the Strategy must also take account of the wider issues for which the Council is responsible within Haringey. In that respect, the most important piece of current legislation is probably the Local Government Act 1999 that provides local authorities with the powers to promote the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of their communities.

Building a fairer, greener borough – Haringey Labour Manifesto 2022-26

Following the local elections in May 2022, the Council's ambition and priorities are based on putting residents at the heart of everything the Council does. For the remainder of 2022 and into 2023, the Council will work with residents to develop the Haringey Local Deal. The Haringey Local Deal will seek to empower communities to make change, putting local people at the forefront of decision-making. The Parks and Greenspaces strategy will support the delivery of the Haringey Local Deal and, in turn, the manifesto commitments.

The Parks and Greenspaces Strategy and its supporting plans, policies and standards will support the Corporate Delivery Plan in the following ways:-

Theme 1: Resident experience, collaboration, and participation

High Level Outcome 1 - Positive Resident experience

High Level Outcome 2 – Inclusive Public Participation

High Level Outcome 3 – Enabling Community Collaboration

High Level Outcome 4 – Developing Young Voice

Theme 2: Responding to the Climate Emergency

High Level Outcome 1 – A greener and climate resilient Haringey

High Level Outcome 2 – A just transition

High Level Outcome 3 – A low carbon place

High Level Outcome 4 – Growing the Circular Economy and Making Better Use of Resources

Theme 3: Children and young people

High Level Outcome 2 – Happy Childhoods

Theme 4: Adults, health & welfare

High Level Outcome 1 – Healthy and Fulfilling Lives

Theme 6: Safer borough

High Level Outcome 1 – A Safer Borough - A borough where all residents and visitors feel safe and are safe.

Theme 7: Culturally rich borough

High Level Outcome 1 – Haringey will be a place where arts, culture and heritage is fostered, celebrated, and valued, and is woven through everything the council does.

Theme 8: Placemaking and economy

High Level Outcome 4 - Leveraging Social Value

High Level Outcome 5 - Placemaking

Equalities

The Council has a Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act (2010) to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share protected characteristics and people who do not
- Foster good relations between people who share those characteristics and people who do not

The three parts of the duty apply to the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/faith, sex and sexual orientation. Marriage and civil partnership status applies to the first part of the duty.

Although it is not enforced in legislation as a protected characteristic, Haringey Council treats socioeconomic status as a local protected characteristic.

There are two further high-level strategic documents that have a major influence on our parks. These are:

The Local Plan

<https://www.haringey.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning/planning-policy/local-plan>

The Local Plan, which is currently being updated, sets out how all land in Haringey will be used including the approach to be taken towards the provision of parks and greenspaces, sites of importance for nature conservation (SINCs), sports, play, allotments and trees as well as for housing, employment, transportation etc.

The Parks and Greenspaces Strategy, including the supporting plans and policies, can help to inform specific aspects of the Local Plan particularly in respect of trees and biodiversity.

The Haringey Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2020 – 2024

The Haringey Health and Wellbeing Strategy seeks to “improve the health and wellbeing of people in Haringey, so that people can thrive and contribute to their communities.”

It is organised around five key themes: These are:

- Creating a healthy place
- Start Well
- Live Well
- Age Well
- Violence prevention

A key challenge for that Strategy is to address the gap in healthy life expectancy between the richest and poorest areas which is 15 years for men and 17 years for women.

That Strategy recognises that air quality, communal facilities, good quality housing and green spaces all contribute to healthy, connected communities and prevention of mental and physical long-term conditions and aligns strongly with the Parks and Greenspaces Strategy in seeking to improve access to greenspace and improve air quality.

As is highlighted in the next section on ‘Benefits of Parks and Greenspaces’, there are multiple benefits for health and wellbeing associated with use of greenspace.

Other relevant policies

Each of the supporting documents for this Parks and Greenspaces Strategy has its own specific policy section that can be found in that document. These policies cover areas such as the provision of trees, biodiversity, watercourses and flooding, and volunteering as they all impact on parks.

7. Benefits of Parks and Greenspaces

This section of the Strategy is mainly drawn from the previously referenced Public Health England document 'Improving access to greenspace, A New Review for 2020'.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/904439/Improving_access_to_greenspace_2020_review.pdf

This report contains a range of evidence of the benefits associated with use of greenspace including:

Improved physical health including better heart health, lower blood pressure and cholesterol levels, a lower incidence of diabetes, a higher chance of maintaining a healthy weight, lower obesity levels and a healthier immune system.

Being more physically active helps lower the risk of type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, cognitive impairment and some cancers. There is strong evidence that regular physical activity supports both individual and community outcomes such as increasing educational attainment, improving self-esteem and reducing social isolation. Physical inactivity is a top 10 cause of the disease burden in England (117). It is responsible for one in 6 UK deaths and is estimated to cost the UK £7.4 billion annually (including £0.9 billion to the NHS alone) (118).
www.gov.uk/government/publications/physical-activity-applying-all-our-health/physical-activity-applying-all-our-health.2019

Mental health benefits that include emotional wellbeing, reduced stress and improved resilience for children and young people as well as reduced rates of hyperactivity and inattention.

In adults, benefits include higher life satisfaction and reduced mental distress, reduced levels of depression, anxiety and fatigue with the greatest benefits being for socioeconomically deprived groups.

Evidence indicates that people who report feeling more 'connected to nature' tend to have a more positive outlook on life (positive affect), increased vitality, life satisfaction, feelings that life is worthwhile and of personal growth compared to those who feel less connected. There is also an association with more pro-environmental and pro-conservation behaviours (5).

Community and social cohesion benefits that include bringing communities closer together, communities coming together to engage in social activities and formal and informal interactions with people from different cultural backgrounds.

Environmental benefits such as improved air quality, the reduction / removal of background environmental noise that have been linked to sleep disturbance, type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease, reducing temperatures and flood risk.

8. Partners

There are lots of different groups and organisations that work either directly or indirectly with the Council in helping to improve the management and usage of parks and greenspaces.

Their contributions make a big difference to our enjoyment of parks as they add value through being able to offer additional activities such as engagement with nature, enjoying sport, learning more about the environment and undertaking practical volunteering.

Partners are particularly important in generating the community and social cohesion benefits described above. Partners in Haringey include:

Friends of parks groups

There are at least 60 Friends of parks groups in Haringey who have joined together to help promote, animate, improve and protect their local park. Friends' groups improve parks through undertaking practical tasks, fundraise for and provide events and activities, bring local people together and tend to know what is happening in their local parks. They report maintenance issues, fundraise for improvements, help develop a long-term vision for their site, and generally engage with management.

There is also a Haringey Friends of Parks Forum, set up in 2001, that meets at least every two months where representatives of the different Friends' groups meet up to discuss matters of mutual interest, and to engage with Council officers and representatives present.

The Conservation Volunteers

More commonly referred to as TCV, they are long standing partners of the Council who have a lease to look after Railway Fields Local Nature Reserve and lead volunteer activity on a number of other sites to carry out practical volunteering. TCV run practical training courses to train and upskill volunteers in our parks and nature reserves. TCV also help to prepare Conservation Management Plans for sites including each Green Flag Park.

This relationship has extended to include being part of the efforts to develop The Paddock to become designated as a new Local Nature Reserve. It is proposed that, in partnership with the Friends, TCV's role at The Paddock will continue once the physical improvement works currently being progressed are completed.

Parks-based organisations

There are lots of organisations based in parks that provide both services and additional opportunities for community involvement. These include: park cafes, Wolves Lane Consortium (which manages the former Wolves Lane Nursery), Trees for Streets (partners with the Council to support street trees), Living Under One Sun (who involve local people in nature, the environment and local generation), Furtherfield (an arts charity based in Finsbury Park), The Finsbury Park Sports Partnership (which provides

a range of sports opportunities for the community), Pedal Power (a cycling club for teenagers and adults with learning disabilities) and many other organisations.

Additionally, there are many other organisations who add value to the borough's parks and greenspaces such as community organisations, residents associations and civic groups.

9. Key Documents Supporting the Overall Strategy

In this section, we describe and provide links to the other key plans and policies that inform the overall Strategy.

The approach being taken is:

- To introduce and describe the scope of each Plan
- To state the objectives of that particular Plan
- To describe some of the key issues and challenges that the plan or policy is seeking to address
- To set out a small number of the key actions contained in the document

Community Engagement and Volunteering Plan

The Community Engagement and Volunteering Plan has been developed to inform how the Council will seek to further extend the ability of communities to work with the Council in shaping the design, management, activity offer and marketing of Haringey's parks and greenspaces and to build on and strengthen the current levels of community and corporate volunteering.

Haringey's parks and greenspaces already benefit from the existence of the many (60+) Friends of parks groups that help to make parks significantly better than they would otherwise be, by contributing in a number of ways including through practical volunteering, by providing activities and events, by providing feedback to the Council on problems and by offering a means for local people to become involved.

However, the people currently attracted to become involved with Friends groups tend to be older and from the white community.

The voices of other communities, such as from BAME communities, people with disabilities and younger people, are rarely sought and hence they have limited opportunity to influence what is provided and what happens in Haringey's parks.

Through the Community Engagement and Volunteering (CEV) Plan, the Council describes how it will seek to broaden engagement and to strengthen volunteering.

As part of this CEV Plan, the Council also wants to develop new opportunities to look after smaller and more local spaces and features, such as neighbourhood greenspace, street planters and street tree planting.

Objectives contributing to each aim.

Inclusion and Wellbeing Aim

- To create a framework that will help the Council to engage and work cooperatively with all park users and stakeholders, including targeted engagement with seldom heard communities to support their increased usage and involvement.

- To better understand and appreciate the role of Friends groups and other key stakeholders
- To work with partners to identify and reduce areas of possible conflict in parks and green spaces e.g. between cyclists and walkers
- To develop a plan with identified actions and targets to support community engagement and volunteering in parks, green spaces and street planting
- To expand on the range of groups that contribute to the design, management, marketing and usage of parks and greenspaces by developing regular and ongoing engagement with BAME, faith, female, younger, older, disabled and LGBTQI communities.
- Supporting the development of more active, independent community groups in parks and greenspaces.
- Engaging more diverse group of people in volunteering in parks and greenspaces and in street-based volunteering.

Climate Change, Biodiversity and Sustainability Aim

- Improving access to nature for BAME and other seldom heard communities
- Offering skills and knowledge training for volunteers to enable them to better contribute towards meeting biodiversity/nature recovery targets.

A Quality Service Aim

- To develop more opportunities for corporate volunteering and similar schemes that provide social benefit
- To celebrate the achievements of the parks and green spaces sector
- To improve communications between key stakeholders to enable better partnership working for the benefit of Haringey's parks and green space users

Selected key issues and challenges that the Volunteering and Community Engagement Plan is seeking to address

1. Inclusion and diversity

Natural England research indicates people from BAME communities are less likely to have visited the natural environment with 44.2% of people from white communities reported as visiting the natural environment in the last 7 days, compared with 26.2% from black communities. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/monitor-of-engagement-with-the-natural-environment-2015-to-2016>.

Research indicates that BAME communities are generally under-represented as users of parks, including in more natural and wilder spaces, and that many greenspaces most often reflect the requirements and preferences of the white community in their design and management, whilst not providing so well for those with different ideals or social needs (*Green Spaces, or White? Weeds, Wildflowers and Whiteness - Dr Bridget Snaith 2016, see Additional References no. 7*).

The former council wards of Tottenham Hale, Tottenham Green, Bruce Grove and Northumberland Park have the highest % of black residents and are also amongst the

wards with the poorest access to green space. Pollution levels are higher in areas where BAME communities live. [https://www.minutes.haringey.gov.uk/documents/s107023/ Borough%20Plan%20E_QIA_FINAL.pdf](https://www.minutes.haringey.gov.uk/documents/s107023/Borough%20Plan%20E_QIA_FINAL.pdf)

Until quite recently, there has been limited engagement with seldom heard communities such as BAME communities, disabled people and young people to better understand how they use parks and what improvements or activities might help them to increase their use and engagement in the development of parks and greenspaces.

Friends groups often draw participants from a fairly narrow range of residents who tend to be older and from the white community. Groups, and the National Federation of Parks and Greenspaces, are increasingly prioritising how to include a wider profile of people.

Recently, NFGPS added this study, Ethnic Minority Inclusion and Participation in Urban Greenspace: Good Practices of UK Friends Groups, to their list of resources as a tool to help support groups in broadening their membership. [Ethnic Minority Inclusion and Participation in Urban Greenspace: Good Practices of UK Friends Groups | Birmingham Open Spaces Forum \(bosf.org.uk\)](#).

Within Haringey, the Friends of Parks Forum has established a local group to help develop inclusion amongst groups.

The Council would also wish to see the development of more autonomous community groups in parks and greenspaces who broaden the range of organised activities on offer and the people engaging in these opportunities.

2. Usage and behaviour in parks

Parks are used in many different ways and can be contested spaces, with the use and behaviour of different groups being off putting to, or unappreciated by other users. Conflicts can arise between different groups for a variety of reasons; young people being loud can make older people feel unsafe, the presence of men and male behaviour can be off-putting for some women, dogs can be frightening to some users, cyclists and joggers 'taking over' footpaths and moving too fast for users with less or limited mobility and lighting being requested by some users to make people feel safer but opposed by others because of the potential impact on wildlife, for example. Tackling these conflicts will be challenging and require engagement with and support from a range of stakeholders including Friends, seldom heard groups and from the Council's Communications and Enforcement Services.

3. Supporting the development of volunteering

Volunteering plays an important role in the improvement and development of parks and greenspaces. A 2019 survey of Haringey's Friends of parks groups revealed that an estimated 45,000 volunteer hours were spent improving parks and greenspaces worth approximately £600,000 of in-kind value annually.

The Council believes this can, with the support of partners and particularly Friends groups and TCV, be further developed in several areas including:

- Improving training support to groups to widen their ability to undertake more activity
- Expanding TCV's role across more sites in the borough e.g. The Paddock
- Expand doorstep volunteering including to support new parklets and street greening
- Celebrating the community's contributions to the usage and quality of Haringey's parks

Selected key actions from the Community Engagement and Volunteering Plan

- Identify groups and organisations to partner with that already have relationships with seldom heard communities.
- Work with partners to develop a programme of activity to encourage behaviour change and buy in from internal and external stakeholders.
- Plan and organise a calendar of events, including an annual Parks Summit, which promotes and celebrates community involvement and activity in parks, and recognises achievements across the parks and greenspaces sector.
- Co-produce a Memorandum of Understanding, or similar guiding document with Friends of parks groups, to bring together the already supportive relationship.
- Create and disseminate an annual survey which monitors usage, engagement and satisfaction with parks and greenspaces in the borough.
- Nurture existing networks and develop new networks, partnerships and reference groups which provide a range of innovative and creative engagement opportunities and improve co-productive working with seldom heard groups.
- Signpost funding opportunities and fundraising support to Friends of parks groups and other volunteer and community groups.
- Supporting the emergence of greenspace champions from seldom heard communities

[Insert link to final document](#)

Physical Activity and Sport (PAS) Strategy 2019-2023

The PAS Strategy was adopted in 2019 to inform the future approach towards the provision of physical activity and sport.

The PAS Strategy has its own Vision to:

'create and embed a culture of activity so that Haringey becomes one of the most physically active and healthy London boroughs.'

The approach taken in the document is based on three overarching themes of Active People, Active Place and Active Economy.

Through the Active People theme, the Council is seeking 'to get more people, of all ages, backgrounds and abilities, regularly active; and use physical activity and sport to connect communities and improve health and wellbeing.'

Through the Active Place theme, the strategic outcome is 'to position physical activity at the heart of place shaping and ensure a network of high quality, safe and accessible environments exist to make it easier for people to be active.'

Through the Active Economy theme, the aim is 'to maximise the sector's contribution to economic growth through training, skills development, employment and the creation of more healthy, productive work environments.'

The PAS Strategy has a strong emphasis on inclusion with a focus on tackling inactivity. This is much more prevalent in the east of the borough and is strongly linked with deprivation.

It contributes toward the Climate Change, Biodiversity and Sustainability Aim by taking a 'whole systems approach' where physical activity is a natural and sustainable way of life for the majority of residents through increased levels of active travel, visits to parks and greenspaces and interaction with a high quality animated public realm.

Objectives

There are 12 objectives overall for the PAS Strategy, with four under each theme.

Active People

- Active Mindsets: people are motivated and empowered to change their behaviours and physical activity is considered a normal part of everyday life
- Children, Young People and Families: every child, young person and family, whatever their background, will be engaged, confident and able to be active every day
- Opportunities to be Active: a wide range of partners provide and promote high quality opportunities to engage residents and sustain activity across the life-course
- Care Pathways: physical activity is visible and pro-actively used in health and social care pathways to improve physical and mental health and well-being

Active Place

- Accessible and Active Environments: protect, enhance and provide a network of well-planned and accessible environments for formal and informal physical activity, active play and sport
- Walking and Cycling: improve air quality and increase the number of people walking, cycling and scooting via continued promotion and public realm improvements
- Safer Communities: ensure more people feel safe being active in public spaces and use physical activity and sport as a positive diversionary tool amongst people vulnerable to risky behaviours
- Animated Places: activate the community by making activity more engaging and visible in community setting

Active Economy

- Strong, Resilient Workforce: strengthen, grow and diversify the sector's paid and volunteer workforce to ensure they are equipped to promote and deliver physical activity and sport at all levels
- Training, Skills and Jobs: use physical activity and sport as a tool to enhance self-efficacy, training, skills development and routes into employment
- Active Workplaces: create active workplaces and promote the benefits of a more active, healthy and productive workforce
- Open for Business: support Haringey's talent and champion the borough as a destination for sector businesses, providers, events and investment

Selected key issues and challenges that the Physical Activity and Sport Strategy is seeking to address

1. Inclusion

There is a strong correlation between physical inactivity and deprivation and between being active as a child and continuing to be active into adult life.

The PAS Strategy is seeking to involve organisations who may be in a position to provide a positive influence and encourage active lifestyles and is taking a multi-agency, multi-disciplinary approach that involves GP surgeries, public health, social workers, family support workers, educators etc supporting the people they work with to be physically active.

2. Improving access to good quality, active environments

Activity takes place across a range of environments including in parks and greenspaces, play facilities, leisure centres and as part of our day-to-day life by walking and cycling.

Access to parks and greenspaces is poorer in the east of Haringey and the street environment is also less attractive for walking and cycling because of high traffic flow and greater housing density so physical improvements are required to create better conditions and facilities and improve access.

3. Budgets

The PAS Strategy identified that budgetary support would be needed to better engage with and provide activities for people who were physically inactive and resolved to seek to collaborate more closely with colleagues from a range of Council services such as Health, Regeneration, Children and Young People's Service (CYPS) etc to better align budgets for tackling disadvantage.

Selected key actions from the Physical Activity and Sport Strategy

- To work with health colleagues to deliver projects that utilise a 'community solutions' approach to attracting underrepresented groups to visit and enjoy parks and greenspaces more.
- Utilise available budgets (from across the Council e.g., Leisure, Health, Regeneration, CYPS etc) to deliver programmes that encourage and enable inactive residents to enjoy parks and greenspaces more.
- To exploit all available communication channels to promote physical activity opportunities as effectively as possible for residents

[Physical Activity and Sport Strategies | Haringey Council](#)

New Policies for Parks and Greenspaces

The Council will adopt policies to both help inform its approach to the future management of parks and greenspaces and to provide clarity about behaviour that is permitted or not permitted, to ensure that parks can be enjoyed by everyone.

The policies cover a wide range of topics but are not set in stone and policies may be amended or added to over time. Further policies may also be developed in response to new challenges or issues. It is intended to review each policy from time to time to ensure it remains relevant and appropriate.

The purpose of having policies is to ensure that everyone – park users, staff, residents, councillors, partners etc - is clear about how the Council is seeking to manage parks and greenspaces. The policies also seek to set out the behaviour that is permitted (or not permitted) to ensure that parks and greenspaces are places that can be enjoyed by all.

A rationale for the policy position is set out in each policy document.

While it is the Council's intention to engage, educate and encourage everyone to comply with the policies set out below, it may sometimes be necessary to take enforcement action to ensure compliance. A policy for the approach to enforcement has been included within the overall range of policies. Enforcement will be preceded by engaging, educating and encouraging people to comply with the policies.

In many cases policy is underpinned and / or driven by legislation, bye laws or public spaces protection orders (PSPOs), such as in relation to littering, fly-tipping or the behaviour of dog owners (and their dogs) in parks and greenspaces. In such cases, enforcement action may take the form of fixed penalty notices or legal action.

Where necessary, bye laws or PSPOs may be sought to enable policy to be enforced.

Below is the list of proposed new policies together with a link to the full documents.

PGSS1	Barbecues and fires in parks and greenspaces
PGSS2	Alcohol in parks and greenspaces
PGSS3	Smoking and vaping in parks and greenspaces
PGSS4	Dogs and dog control in parks and greenspaces
PGSS5	Boundaries and security in parks and greenspaces
PGSS6	Chemicals and pesticides in parks and greenspaces
PGSS7	Invasive non-native species in parks and greenspaces
PGSS8	Lighting in parks and greenspaces
PGSS9	CCTV in parks and greenspaces
PGSS10	Vehicles in parks and greenspaces
PGSS11	Sustainable waste management in parks and greenspaces
PGSS12	Amplified music and speech in parks and greenspaces
PGSS13	Rough sleeping and camping in parks and greenspaces
PGSS14	Toilets, urination and defaecation in parks and greenspaces
PGSS15	Permitted activities for commercial gain in parks and greenspaces

PGSS16	Graffiti, fly posting and banners in parks and greenspaces
PGSS 17	Enforcement in parks and greenspaces

Insert link to Introduction and the Policy pack

Service Standards for Parks and Greenspaces

As part of the overall approach towards the future provision of parks and greenspaces in Haringey, the Council proposes to introduce three new measures to help in establishing the standards, amenities and management progress in meeting the overall Strategy Aims through the provision of parks.

These measures are:

1. A statement to help inform what visitors to a Haringey park or greenspace can expect in terms of amenities and overall management, maintenance and investment and to inform longer term aspirations for development and improvement.
2. Service standards that will help to define what park users can expect from the day-to-day management of a park and remind management and staff of the challenges and obligations that they should meet in delivering the service as well as informing longer term aspirations for development and improvement.
3. A smaller number of quality measures that link directly to the strategic priorities of the Parks and Greenspaces Strategy and help to assess the extent to which parks and greenspaces are meeting the needs and aspirations of residents and providing wider environmental benefits.

1. What you can expect when you visit a Haringey park?

Haringey's parks offer a different range of facilities and management depending upon the size and character of the park. Large parks will tend to offer more facilities and be looked after to a higher standard because they are used by more people and from a wider catchment area. Smaller parks will offer less facilities and receive less management. Sites vary in character and may be nature reserves, recreation grounds, woodlands, or a combination of varying character and facilities.

Sites designated as nature reserves are not included as part of these Service Standards and should have their own site-specific management plans.

There is no uniformity of access to parks and greenspaces across Haringey but, in common with the national picture, there tends to be less greenspace and less access to greenspace in more deprived parts of the borough.

Investment levels will differ as the larger parks will be providing more, so will need more expenditure to support this level of provision.

However, in finalising investment decisions, the Council will also consider the extent of local access to greenspace and the characteristics of the people within the catchment area.

Below is a table setting out what visitors to a Haringey park or greenspace can expect in terms of amenities and overall management, maintenance and investment. The table describes three different types of parks: district, local and small local.

The district parks are the largest sites in Haringey such as Finsbury Park and Lordship Recreation Ground.

Local parks are smaller, likely to be offering fewer facilities than district parks but are significant within their local area. Parks such as Priory, Markfield, Russell and Ducketts Common fall into this category.

Small parks would serve a predominantly local audience and offer fewer facilities again than district or local parks. Examples of small parks include Brunswick Park, Chapmans Green, Fairland Park and Stationers Park.

An appendix listing all 148 parks managed by the Council can be found in the Asset Management Plan ([insert link to appendix for list of parks](#)).

High level 'offer'	A2. District Parks	A3. Local Parks	A4. Small parks
Overall 'standard'	Green Flag	Green Flag or future Green Flag sites	Aspire to Green Flag or Community Green Flag
Amenity	Toilets and cafe	Toilets and café where appropriate	Toilets and/or café (only if currently provided)
Staffing	Permanent staffing presence	Mobile/occasional staffing presence and aim for dedicated on-site staffing subject to available resources,	Occasional visits by parks staff and/or Veolia and aim for regular visits subject to available resources
Horticulture	Good standard	Good standard	Acceptable standard
Recreation	Managed and informal opportunities	Active and informal opportunities	Passive recreation / travel routes
Habitats	Range of habitats	Limited habitats	Simple habitat
Investment	Priority for annual investment	Aim for planned regular investment	Occasional Council investment and community-led investment
Asset inspections	Undertake at least quarterly	Undertaken at least quarterly	Undertaken at least twice a year
Visitors	Attracts visitors from inside and outside the borough	Serves local needs and predominantly local visitors	Serves local needs

2. Service Standards

The Council is proposing to introduce Service Standards for Haringey parks. These cover areas of management and maintenance that are important for most park users such as grass cutting, horticulture, litter and the inspection of play facilities.

The areas that the proposed Service Standards would cover are set out below. The more detailed Standards are contained within the Service Standards in the Haringey parks and greenspaces main document and include columns that state what the

standard is, how it will be measured or assessed, and whether the results will be reported at a park, area or Haringey-wide level.

Service area	Detailed aspect of service
Horticulture and turf	Grass cutting and maintenance
	Bulb maintenance within grassy areas
	Hedge maintenance
	Tree maintenance
	Flower beds
	Shrub and shrub bed maintenance
	Wildflower and meadow maintenance
Sports pitches and courts	Football and rugby pitch maintenance
	Sports courts and multi-use games areas
Infrastructure	Playground equipment and surfaces
	Hard assets (e.g., paths, benches, lamps, fences etc)
Cleansing	Litter management
	Hygiene and cleansing
	Fly-tipping and dumped rubbish
	Graffiti
Site security	Preventing and deterring unauthorised and inappropriate access to and behaviour within parks (e.g., gates, entrances, buildings, lighting)

3. Quality measures

The quality measures will be used to monitor progress against a limited number of key areas that indicate progress towards meeting the Strategy Aims.

Strategic Aim	Quality measure	Purpose
Inclusion and Wellbeing	Profile of park users compared to that of the population of the borough ¹	To identify any gaps in provision/use.
Inclusion and Wellbeing	Number of visitors to a representative sample of parks	How well-used/popular are parks.
Inclusion and Wellbeing	Number of community groups active in parks and green spaces	Community involvement, engagement and partnership
Climate Change, Biodiversity and sustainability	Increase tree planting across the borough and develop strategies to increase canopy cover across public and private land in the borough.	Conservation and environmental stewardship
Climate Change, Biodiversity and Sustainability	To establish new local nature reserves and sites of importance for nature conservation and create new	Supporting wildlife and biodiversity

Strategic Aim	Quality measure	Purpose
	wildlife habitats every year in parks and greenspaces.	
Climate Change, Biodiversity and Sustainability	The core operational buildings and all transport related activities for service delivery to be net zero carbon by 2027.	Reducing the carbon footprint of parks
A Quality Service	Number of parks and greenspaces with a Green Flag accreditation	An independent measure of quality
A Quality Service	The proportion of park users who are very satisfied or satisfied with Haringey parks ²	Shows perceived quality of parks
A Quality Service	Percentage of park assets that are graded good or excellent	Indication of asset quality over time
A Quality Service	The number of full-time equivalent (FTE) parks staff per hectare of managed greenspace	Staffing numbers as a proxy for investment and visible presence in parks. Track over time

Insert link to final Standards doc

Asset Management Plan

Haringey has 148 parks and greenspaces and 27 allotment sites that are directly managed by the Council. Within these spaces there are a range of hard and soft assets.

Hard assets include buildings, bins and benches, fences and railings, paths and hard surfaces, play equipment, outdoor gyms, hard sports courts, paddling pools, bridges and structures, lighting and signage.

Soft assets include sports pitches, areas of grassland, shrub beds, hedges, and areas of woodland.

Based upon the most recent survey completed to help inform the new Parks and Greenspaces Strategy, there are 10,662 hard assets and 2,995 soft assets within parks, greenspaces, and allotments. The replacement value of these assets, based upon replacement over a 20-year period, is estimated at £40m.

The Asset Management Plan (AMP) has been developed to help inform decision making about the level of funding that can be made available for asset repairs and replacement between 2022 and 2036 informed by an analysis of costs and available resources.

The final AMP will also include an action to develop a Parks Style Guide, which sets out the approach to the type, style and design of assets that the Council proposes should be used both by the Council and any other organisation wanting to provide a new or updated asset in parks and greenspaces.

To help inform decision making for future investment in parks and greenspaces, the Council has also commissioned a Natural Capital Account that estimates over the life of the account, calculated from 2020 to 2080, that the borough's parks and greenspaces, covering both hard and soft assets, will have produced over £1,000m of benefits in terms of carbon sequestration, reductions in air pollution and, making up 80% of the total, health and wellbeing benefits through physical activity and recreation.

Objectives of the AMP

- To provide facilities and signage that are accessible and meet the needs of all Haringey's communities
- To establish and maintain an up-to-date digital record of all parks and greenspaces infrastructure and assets
- To establish an accurate understanding of the financial value of existing parks assets, as well as identifying reasonable estimates of the likely ongoing costs associated with managing and maintaining parks assets to a good level for the next 15 years
- To use the AMP data to recommend and prioritise where to best focus finite existing resources and targeted funding bids, through the establishment of an annual asset repair and replacement programme
- To use the AMP data to better target resources and procurement practices for renewal or renovation (replacement or repair)

- To reduce insurance claims and provide a robust insurance defence evidence base (subject to an effective inspection process)
- To ensure that parks and greenspaces, buildings and structures meet Government legislative and health and safety requirements, including for sustainability and climate change
- To reduce crime and the fear of crime in our open spaces by utilising designing out crime measures to create a safe and secure environment for members of the public and stakeholders

The proposed objectives for the Parks Style Guide are:

- To set out a consistent set of standards, design guidance, and quality criteria for new assets and asset repairs
- To ensure the standards reflect the available resources, robust anti-vandal criteria, accessibility and sustainability
- To ensure that Haringey's parks and greenspaces have a clear and legible infrastructure of standardised assets, whilst retaining their own individuality and character
- To ensure that all parks development schemes and asset replacement schemes (as well as regeneration / development schemes) adhere to this standard, and that over time, as budgets allow, all parks and greenspaces assets adhere to the style guide, whilst retaining their own unique sense of identity.
- To ensure that the design and installation of assets supports biodiversity and nature conservation interests
- To ensure that all new planting schemes are in line with a standard set of criteria, reflect seasonal changes, are sustainable in terms of their procurement, adaptation to climate change, and 'right plant for right place,' and can be maintained within existing maintenance resources

Selected key issues and challenges that the Asset Management Plan is seeking to address

1. Inclusion and Wellbeing Aim

We want our parks and green spaces to be safe, welcoming and accessible places for all Haringey communities.

Research and feedback indicate that communities from black and Asian ethnic backgrounds have different preferences and priorities about the facilities they most want to use in parks than people from a white ethnic background but that parks are overwhelmingly designed based upon the preferences and priorities of people from a white ethnic background.

Feedback from people with disabilities and from people from LGBTQI communities indicates that parks can be or can feel inaccessible and unwelcoming. Feedback from women and girls indicates that parks can feel unsafe.

The Council wants parks to be used by the whole community and in the future may develop new facilities that encourage usage by specific communities such as deaf and

disabled people or BAME communities, women & girls, LGBTQI communities, people with dementia, or people for whom English is not their first language.

2. Climate Change, Biodiversity and Sustainability Aim

Though we think about our parks and greenspaces as 'green' spaces that support nature and our ability to enjoy the natural environment, parks are currently contributing to the overall carbon footprint of Haringey through areas such as buildings, machinery, maintenance vehicles, paths, lighting and the day-to-day footprint generated by management and maintenance activities, including the need of staff to travel to work and to travel around the borough.

As part of the AMP, we will be seeking to take forward schemes for the replacement or refurbishment of buildings, vehicles, plant and machinery as part of an overall commitment towards seeking to make the management and maintenance of our parks carbon neutral by 2041 that supports the Council's overall Climate Change Action Plan.

3. A Quality Service Aim

Two of the main components that improve service quality are:

- Ease of maintenance
- The sufficiency of resources available for maintenance and replacement

Through the AMP we are seeking to adopt a more standardised approach so that, for instance, all waste bins in parks are from the same supplier and have been correctly installed so that they are less likely to be damaged, are easier to empty and have been tested as robust with long life expectancy.

For other assets such as paddling pools, we will need to consider updating and replacing these features with more modern water-based play that can also support our Climate Change, Biodiversity and Sustainability Aim.

Parks are valued and valuable assets which if created today from scratch would cost tens of millions of pounds to provide.

The Council recognises the importance of parks and greenspaces in making Haringey the place it is, and their role in supporting the health and wellbeing of our residents, workers, students and visitors; and will seek to provide additional funding both from its own funding and through the generation of external funding to manage and maintain parks to a high standard.

Selected key actions from the Asset Management Plan

- To Identify changes in the design of parks and greenspaces to make them more attractive, safer, more welcoming and accessible for everyone and particularly for seldom heard groups
- To carry out carbon audits of the 14 parks operations buildings and then to undertake alterations, adaptations, and retrofitting to reduce their consumption of energy and water as well as to propose new ways of generating energy to become self-sufficient

- That future capital and revenue funding needs are identified, and a Funding Plan is developed to address those needs

[Insert link to final AMP and appendices](#)

Biodiversity Action Plan

Haringey Council seeks to protect and enhance biodiversity value across the borough for the benefit of all those that live and work in Haringey and, in doing so, support regional, national, and global efforts to halt the decline in biodiversity and support the delivery of carbon reduction projects in line with the Haringey Climate Change Action Plan.

https://www.haringey.gov.uk/sites/haringeygovuk/files/final_haringey_climate_change_action_plan_-_march_2021_accessible_version_0.pdf

The Council made a declaration of Climate Emergency in 2019 with a target of being net carbon zero by 2041 and the Biodiversity Action Plan will make an important contribution towards achieving this target, by protecting and improving Haringey's natural environment and helping to remind everyone about the fundamental importance of biodiversity of species and habitats to our futures.

Haringey has a wealth of natural assets including designated Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation and 5 Local Nature Reserves. Key elements of this infrastructure are:

- The Lee Valley Regional Park that straddles the eastern boundary of the borough and is home to European designated sites and many Sites of Special Scientific Interest
- 148 Council managed parks and greenspaces
- 59 Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs)
- 27 Council-managed allotments (plus 3 externally managed)
- Alexandra Palace and Park and Highgate Woods

The Biodiversity Action Plan considers all land within the borough, including the contribution that can be made by the built environment in supporting nature, and seeks to describe a detailed picture of current biodiversity and the issues affecting it and then proposes a series of conservation actions.

The actions take a cross themed agenda towards biodiversity with the intention that this approach is integrated into the delivery of all Council services.

Objectives

- Promote community participation to raise awareness about the importance of wildlife, climate change and wellbeing to increase access to the natural environment that involve the local community
- Enhanced climate resilience by developing habitat management plans that diversify habitats and enhance priority species
- Ensure the protection of Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) focusing on key areas of improvement
- Restore and enhance the borough's biodiversity and habitats helping wildlife populations to grow and move

- Inform future projects and strategies around the built environment and the greening of the urban environment to increase green connectivity across the borough
- Identify operational management opportunities for biodiversity enhancement work programmes to raise quality and standards needed to protect our parks and open spaces from ecological degradation

Selected key issues and challenges that the Biodiversity Action Plan is seeking to address

1. Haringey's ancient woodlands climate change mitigation and biodiversity conservation

Woodlands in the UK are home to a wealth of wildlife, and ancient woodlands in particular support more species than any other land-based habitat in the UK and they are home to more threatened species than any other.

Haringey contains four ancient woodlands; Queens Wood, Coldfall Wood, Bluebell Wood and Highgate Wood (which is managed by the City of London).

A recent habitat condition assessment review of our ancient woodlands highlighted in the SINC report described the woods as being “in poor condition” suffering from soil erosion due to the excessive footfall (leading to compaction and loss of flora) and flash flooding.

The Council is engaged with external partners such as the Woodland Trust and other experts to draft new management plans for these sites to put things in place to restore Haringey's ancient woodlands and ensure their long-term protection.

2. Ecological emergency

We are all now aware of the damage occurring to the natural world as a result of climate change that causes or threatens to cause severe environmental damage as well as loss of human lives and property.

Haringey Council intends to address the Ecological Emergency in line with National and Regional Strategies e.g., Environment Act 2021, London Plan 2021 and the development of a new Green Infrastructure and Natural Environment Strategy as part of the Local Plan.

3. Improved inter service coordination / joint working

Feedback from engagement sessions undertaken to inform the development of the Parks and Greenspaces Strategy and about the draft plans and policies has highlighted frustration by some members of the community at what is perceived as a lack of joined-up working between Council departments to protect and improve biodiversity.

The Council acknowledges this feedback and is taking steps to address it as part of its wider commitment to address the Climate Emergency.

Selected key actions from the Biodiversity Action Plan

- Establish an interdepartmental coordinating group with representation from Parks, Planning, Housing, Highways, Flood Management and Regeneration to ensure effective collaboration between services in the development and ongoing management of programmes and policies that support the Council's approach towards the Climate Emergency with regards to green and blue infrastructure, climate vulnerability and the natural environment
- Engage a new officer to strengthen the role of new development in contributing to biodiversity gain including new tree planting
- Create new Local Nature Reserves, 10 additional SINC's and creating 250sqm of new wildlife habitat areas each year in parks and greenspaces
- Provide activities and events that help promote access to the natural environment to people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities
- Collate species data to help to monitor changes taking place to quality of wildlife habitats.
- Restore and enhance the management and maintenance of local nature reserves, ancient woodlands and sites of importance for nature conservation.

Insert link to final BAP

Trees and Woodland Plan

The urban forest, which includes both public and privately owned trees, plays a key role in making cities habitable environments for people. Trees remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, filter air pollution and produce oxygen.

They play a role in combating Climate Change and extreme weather events by providing shade, cooling the air and absorbing storm water.

Trees and greenspaces also provide a range of social, cultural and health benefits and have a positive impact on people's physical and mental wellbeing.

On Haringey's streets, trees help to create an attractive environment that encourages sustainable travel through walking and cycling.

Many people care passionately about trees and the Trees and Woodland Plan will consider the management of all trees in the borough on Council land and the management of private trees covered by planning legislation e.g., tree preservation orders or those trees within conservation areas.

As well as parks and greenspaces, the Trees and Woodland Plan will consider the ancient woodlands in the borough and the management of trees on the public highway and other Council-owned sites.

The Trees and Woodland Plan will also explore the opportunities for partnership working to improve standards within our woodlands and for the management of individual trees.

Objectives

- Provide a document that details how Haringey aims to manage our trees and woodlands in a sustainable way
- Ensure Haringey's tree population is healthy, varied in age and diverse in species
- Increase tree canopy cover in Haringey, particularly in areas of deficiency, with the aim of achieving a minimum of 30% cover in each ward
- Secure greater levels of external funding and increase public sponsorship of new trees to address areas with low tree canopy cover
- Plant at least 10,000 new trees by 2030.
- Maintain tree canopy cover in wards with higher than 30%, by ensuring replacement trees are planted for those removed and new trees are planted through sponsorship
- Ensure that trees on private land have the best protection through the making of tree preservation orders (TPOs), robust monitoring and enforcement of retained trees on development sites, compliance with existing legislation and the emerging Local Plan
- Improve our proactive tree maintenance programme to reduce the number of successful subsidence claims and allow for the retention of more trees
- Quantify the value and benefits that Haringey's expansive urban forest provides

Selected key issues and challenges that the Trees and Woodland Plan is seeking to address

1. Increasing tree canopy cover in wards that are below the 30% target

Haringey's tree canopy cover is much greater in the west of the borough than in the east of the borough where health outcomes are also much poorer.

Given the health benefits associated with trees, there is a need to plant more trees in those wards highlighted in red below that are below. Achieving more tree planting will contribute towards achieving better health outcomes for people living in the east of Haringey.

Ward name	Hectares	Canopy cover %	Ward name	Hectares	Canopy cover %
Alexandra	261.4	31.9	Northumberland Park	188.8	16.4
Bounds Green	138.6	21.4	Seven Sisters	129.5	18.7
Bruce Grove	93.7	14.9	St. Ann's	109.4	18.7
Crouch End	144	32.9	Stroud Green	109.4	30.6
Fortis Green	199.1	32.7	Tottenham Green	135.9	17.2
Harringay	156.7	23.3	Tottenham Hale	191.2	22.8
Highgate	249.5	45.5	West Green	139.9	19.1
Hornsey	105.4	17.0	White Hart Lane	169.9	21.6
Muswell Hill	165.3	39.1	Woodside	149.7	16.2
Noel Park	122.6	13.8			

Note. Changed Council ward boundaries have now been implemented and the number of wards has increased from 19 to 21. Updating this table is a year 1 action within the Tree and Woodland Plan.

2. Better engaging with and informing the public about the reasons for tree pruning or removal

People are, with good reason, very passionate about trees and do not want to see trees removed or significantly pruned.

However, there are occasions, overwhelmingly either because of insurance claims or for safety reasons, where removal or large-scale maintenance may be needed.

The Council wants local people to understand and support its approach to trees. The Council is passionate about trees and is proposing to introduce a tree management policy that clearly states the circumstances under which trees will not be removed or pruned, and the circumstances under which they will be.

3. Climate change

Climate change is the biggest long-term threat faced by our natural environment and ecosystems, and therefore our own life support systems. We are already seeing signs of long-term changes in weather patterns and an increase in extreme weather events such as droughts, fires, floods and storms, which all have an impact on trees and woodlands.

Both Haringey Council and The Mayor of London declared a 'Climate Emergency' in 2019, in response to the growing threat to our health, our planet and our children and grandchildren's future. It is now widely acknowledged that urgent action is required to mitigate the scale and nature of the ecological crisis impacted by climate change. Making radical changes to our lifestyles (travel, energy consumption, diet) and the way we use land and resources is essential, if we are to avoid dangerous climate breakdown and a devastating loss of nature.

It is also predicted that the impact of climate change on clay soils will lead to an increased risk of subsidence to buildings, which could lead to more claims against trees in London and specifically Haringey, where the underlying soils is predominantly London clay.

Selected key actions from the Trees and Woodland Plan

- Increase tree planting across the borough and plant at least 10,000 new trees by 2030.
- Develop an Urban Forest Planting Plan to identify areas in each ward with the aim of achieving 30% canopy cover
- Review the current tree maintenance programme to determine if an increased pruning regime will result in a reduction in tree root claims and greater tree retention
- Review and update tree web pages, to include an interactive digital map of Council trees
- Establish a Tree Forum, where resident groups and other local organisations can meet to discuss important issues and co-operate on joint initiatives

[\(Insert link to final document\)](#)

Parks and Greenspaces Watercourse and Flood Risk Plan

Water bodies and features are an important part of the overall parks and greenspace offer and key contributors to wildlife and the natural environment.

They provide a range of benefits including for nature and biodiversity, cooling, flood management and relief and supporting flora and fauna.

As the impacts of climate change become more noticeable with heavier rainfall and increased flooding etc, the role of parks and greenspaces in helping to mitigate these impacts has increased in importance.

Through the Watercourse and Flood Risk Management Plan, the Council is seeking to provide information and direction for the future approach to water and water management in parks and greenspaces, to identify issues and challenges that impact on the management, maintenance, development, and usage of water bodies, to set this against a policy framework associated with water and to identify different agencies involved with water and their roles.

Two of the most important underpinning documents for the Watercourse and Flood Risk Plan are:

- The Haringey Flood Risk Management Strategy and
- The Haringey Integrated Catchment Management Study

Objectives

- To increase access to water-based nature by seldom heard groups
- To help users better understand water features and their value by developing education and interpretation materials
- To develop more water features in parks and greenspaces that support nature, increase biodiversity and contribute to flood relief and urban cooling
- To develop an enhanced volunteer training programme that enables volunteers to take additional roles in the development and management of water features
- To improve staff knowledge and skills through guidance and training
- To promote better communication and liaison between Council services involved in SuDS schemes in parks and greenspaces
- To improve access to amenities and facilities through a reduction in flooding incidents
- To improve the quality of water features through regular maintenance, water quality testing and appropriate signage

Selected key issues and challenges that the Watercourse and Flood Risk Management Plan is seeking to address

1. Adapting parks and greenspaces

Climate change and urban growth have combined to make weather patterns more extreme and the ability of the built environment to deal with these overwhelmed. Further, and again as a result of climate change, more extreme weather and the growth of the built environment, we are losing valuable habitat and species.

Parks and greenspaces can help to mitigate these impacts by providing opportunities for natural drainage systems that can support nature and help with urban cooling.

Water features can also play a role in helping to educate and expand wider understanding and support for the roles that water features in parks can contribute.

2. Developing skills and resources to better manage and maintain water features

Managing water and water features is a specialist area requiring knowledge and training.

The Council needs to address this within its own workforce and wants to support its partners, especially community organisations such as Friends' groups who play an important role in maintaining some of the water features in Haringey, by offering training.

3. Increasing access to water features and habitats.

There are limited opportunities for the community to access water features in parks and greenspaces, particularly in the east of Haringey.

Arising from the Watercourses and Flood Risk Plan, we will be seeking to develop a programme of activities and events that will include activities to increase the involvement of communities in nature.

Selected key actions from the Watercourses and Flood Risk Plan

- Developing further water features in parks and green spaces as opportunities arise including further SuDS schemes and de-culverting
- Developing greater skills, knowledge and expertise amongst the Parks Service workforce and our key partners
- Providing new educational and interpretation materials that help in broadening understanding of the importance of water in supporting nature and mitigating climate change
- To establish an interdepartmental coordinating group with representation from Parks, Planning, Housing, Highways, Flood Management and Regeneration to ensure effective collaboration between services in the development and ongoing management of programmes and policies that support the Council's approach towards climate emergency with regard to green and blue infrastructure, climate vulnerability and the natural environment

[\(Insert link to final document\)](#)

10. Additional Studies

Haringey Green Space Health Strategy Pilot Report

This report was commissioned by the Council in 2019. It is based upon a survey of four parks, Belmont, Downhills, Chestnuts and Lordship Recreation Ground and uses a methodology called the Parks for Health toolkit.

The report identifies the incidence of a range of health conditions for the communities living within access of these parks that could be mitigated or improved by access to green spaces.

These conditions include cardiovascular disease, diabetes, childhood obesity, adult obesity and hypertension

It then looks in detail at the facilities and activity programmes offered at each of the four parks as well as the opportunities they could offer for GP referral and makes a series of recommendations for changes that would improve health outcomes for these conditions.

The Council will draw on the findings of this report to help inform future changes and improvements in parks and greenspaces that will improve health outcomes for the community.

[Inset link to document](#)

A Natural Capital Account for Haringey

Natural capital is 'the stock of renewable and non-renewable natural resources (e.g., plants, animals, air, water, soils, minerals) that combine to yield a flow of benefits to people' (6).

The Council commissioned a Natural Capital Account for Haringey to help to demonstrate the contribution and benefits made by the borough's natural capital assets. These are benefits that would not be captured in mainstream capital accounts.

Using what is still fairly new and still emerging methodology, the account, which is presented in balance sheet format, shows:

- Over the 60-year period of the account (2020-2080), the borough's greenspaces will produce benefits of over £1,000 million in present value terms
- 90% of this value is for public benefits including carbon sequestration, reduction in air pollution, and physical health and wellbeing from recreation
- The most significant benefits are physical health and wellbeing benefits from recreation which make up around 80% of the value
- The benefit estimates reflect the assumption that these natural capital assets of the borough will be maintained, and the population will increase. The value would go down if the assets are not maintained to meet the needs of the existing or growing population. Different future scenarios could be tested using the baseline natural capital accounting approach followed here.

The Council did not include the impact on property values in calculating the account as it wanted to identify the public benefits accruing to the wider community. Had property values been added, they would have significantly increased the overall value.

Further information about the Haringey Natural Capital Account can be found in the Asset Management Plan.

Access audits for Finsbury Park, Lordship Rec and Queen's Wood

Making Haringey's parks more accessible and welcoming for everyone is one of the three Aims of the Strategy.

To help in identifying what changes are needed in parks and greenspaces to make them more accessible, access audits have been carried out in the three District Parks at Finsbury Park, Lordship Recreation Ground and Queen's Wood.

These audits have made a number of recommendations covering the areas of:

- Facilities and design
- Management and operations
- Activities and behaviour
- Marketing and communications

The main recommendations from the reports will be summarised into a single document that will be used by the Council to inform the range of adjustments or procedures that could be implemented by the Council and its partners to make the borough's parks and greenspaces as accessible as it can to as many people as possible.

11. Actions Proposed to Deliver the Key Aims

Overall Outcome of Inclusion and Wellbeing

Providing inclusive parks and greenspaces that all communities in Haringey can benefit from, so that usage and enjoyment of our parks and greenspaces reflects the communities living in Haringey.

The 10 main actions to achieve more inclusive parks

1. Over time, adapt the parks workforce to become representative of who lives in Haringey
2. To Identify changes in the design of parks and greenspaces to make them more attractive, safer, more welcoming, and accessible for everyone and particularly for seldom heard groups.
3. Nurture existing networks and develop new networks, partnerships and reference groups which provide a range of innovative and creative engagement opportunities and improve co-productive working with seldom heard groups.
4. To develop additional open space in areas of deficiency, particularly in the east of Haringey
5. Create and disseminate an annual survey which monitors usage, engagement and satisfaction with parks and greenspaces in the borough.
6. Use the new frameworks developed for women and girls, healthy parks and for the involvement of ethnic minorities by Friends groups as well as seeking to draw more on local intelligence in order to make parks and greenspaces more attractive, safer, more welcoming and more accessible to seldom heard groups as well as the wider community.
7. Support the development of new user groups and develop a programme of activities and events that showcase and support increased usage and involvement by seldom heard groups, including activities to involve communities in nature, to improve health and wellbeing and activities to support thoughtful behaviour
8. Communicate with key partners and stakeholders by providing more information in parks, and via Council and Friends of Parks group's websites and social media.
9. Plan and organise a calendar of events, including an annual Parks Summit, which promotes and celebrates community involvement and activity in parks, and recognises achievements across the parks and greenspaces sector.
10. Review internal and external funding options to further support inclusive parks

Overall Outcome of Climate Change, Biodiversity and Sustainability

Supporting the Council's declaration of a climate emergency by reducing the carbon footprint of parks and greenspaces, protecting and promoting biodiversity, and helping educate everyone in Haringey about contributing toward saving the planet.

The 10 main actions to mitigate climate change through parks, greenspaces and biodiversity

1. To work towards making the management of Haringey's parks net zero carbon by 2041, by reducing or eliminating carbon generation from buildings, plant, vehicles and machinery and the overall delivery of the Parks Service
2. To establish an interdepartmental coordinating group with representation from Parks, Planning, Housing, Highways, Flood Management and Regeneration to ensure effective collaboration between services in the development and ongoing management of programmes and policies that support the Council's approach towards the climate emergency with regards to green and blue infrastructure, climate vulnerability and the natural environment
3. To increase the overall area of greenspaces in Haringey in new developments and through the delivery of pocket parks by 250sqm each year, supported by the new Local Plan
4. To recruit a new officer to strengthen the contribution made from planning applications for trees and biodiversity through enhanced protection and biodiversity net gain
5. To update SINC designations and habitat and species information for SINCs
6. To develop updated management plans for Local Nature Reserves
7. To increase tree canopy cover in Haringey from 25% (2020) to 30% and plant a minimum of 10,000 new trees by 2030 in order to reduce carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, improve air quality and reduce ambient temperature.
8. To develop new Local Nature Reserves and ten new SINC.
9. To encourage biodiversity improvements to be delivered through sustainable urban drainage systems (SuDS)
10. To establish a Tree Forum, where residents groups and other organisations can meet to discuss important issues and seek to cooperate on joint initiatives

Overall Outcome of A Quality Service

Securing investment, improving standards, partnerships, communications, and outcomes.

The 10 main actions to deliver better service quality

1. Increase the number of parks and greenspaces with a Green Flag accreditation from 22 to 30
2. To secure additional capital funding for parks to maintain assets to a good standard
3. To adopt clear policies to inform the management, operation and usage of our parks for a range of areas including toilet provision, vehicles in parks, lighting and CCTV, use of herbicides, dogs and dog control, smoking and alcohol
4. To have more and better targeted enforcement activity in parks and greenspaces and sites of importance for nature
5. To secure resources to provide more front-line gardening staff
6. To provide more information in parks and via the Council, Friends and other partner websites that support the Strategy priorities of Inclusion and Wellbeing, Climate Change, Biodiversity and Sustainability, and A Quality Service
7. To reduce the costs of managing litter and waste in parks and reinvest the savings in support of parks feeling safer and more welcoming

8. To develop volunteering opportunities for new groups support volunteering amongst existing groups and to develop an improved corporate volunteering offer.
9. Increase the resources available to manage high risk trees to ensure more can be retained and not implicated in insurance claims, giving rise to damage to residents' homes
10. To ensure the protection of all parks and greenspaces in Haringey via a 5-year programme of Fields in Trust dedications

11. References

- (1) disabled people have accounted for 59% of all COVID deaths
- (2) and unsurprisingly more have also indicated a greater impact on their lives
- (3) In May 2020, 36% of people responding to the People and Nature Survey by Natural England said they were spending more time outside during the pandemic than before.
- (4) Veolia Haringey survey report 2020-2021
- (5) Richardson M, Hunt A, Hinds J, Bragg R, Fido D, Petronzi D, et al. A Measure of Nature Connectedness for Children and Adults: Validation, Performance, and Insights. Sustainability. 2019;11(12):3250
- (6) Natural Capital Protocol <https://naturalcapitalcoalition.org/natural-capital-protocol/>

