

**South Oxhey Playing Fields GREENSPACE ACTION PLAN (GAP) 2019-2024
ENGAGEMENT RESPONSE DOCUMENT**

Below is a summary of the main comments received from the engagement process on the South Oxhey Playing Fields Greenspace Action Plan (GAP) 2019-2024, carried out in February 2019.

Theme of Comments	Response and Outcome
General support:	
<p>Comments are generally supportive of proposals to create a more welcoming and enjoyable space by improving signage and site entrances, and managing woodland and grassland to enhance biodiversity. Concern was expressed over the need to address persistent antisocial and illegal behaviours (such as motorbike and car access). There was also strong emphasis on the desire to maintain the semi-natural, rural, feel of the site.</p>	<p>Plans to improve the visibility and accessibility of the site will be sympathetic to the semi-natural feel of the site. The plan includes actions to engage with local residents to dissuade antisocial behaviours. Improving the appearance of the site as a well-kept and welcoming space is aimed at encouraging greater positive use of the site. Actions to improve site accessibility, and to vary habitat management for the benefit of wildlife, will be discussed with key user groups such as ParkRun to ensure existing site use is not compromised.</p>
A Welcoming Place:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increased visibility of entrances and installing interpretation could impact on the secluded quality of the park, to the detriment of visitor enjoyment and value for wildlife. 2. The entrance to Green Lane, by the Pavilion Pub, will be the most impactful location for clear signage which shows all site facilities. 3. Signage and interpretation panels can be vulnerable to vandalism and detract from 'wildness' of the site. 4. History of the former Oxhey Golf Course is well researched and there are a number of archive images available for inclusion in interpretation 5. Refurbished entrance structures will need to retain functionality as a barrier to illegal vehicle access (in particular at Ashburnham Grove entrance) 6. Work in nearby Oxhey Woods to improve drainage and install a crushed granite path has improved access and provides a pleasant walking surface. 7. Grass surface is a key attraction of the ParkRun route in South Oxhey Playing Fields, this could be compromised by installation of a path surface along the ParkRun route. 8. A granite path surface through Ox Pasture Spring, similar to the work in Oxhey Woods, will increase accessibility of the site for the 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Informative interpretation and well signed entrances are a key benchmark for a well-kept and welcoming greenspace. Promotion of the site, and its facilities, would be aimed at the local community. The GAP includes a number of habitat management actions to increase wildlife value. 2. This location is indicated in the year on action plan map for installation of interpretation 3. Signage will be in keeping with other TRDC greenspaces such as Oxhey Woods and Bishops Wood and will be sympathetic to the semi-natural feel of the site. Materials are available for signage which resist vandalism (such as acrylic polymers). 4. Interpretation will celebrate the site's social history 5. See specification 6.11, refurbished entrance structures will be in keeping with other TRDC sites. Gates will be lockable to exclude public access. 6. Proposals for surfacing and drainage in South Oxhey Playing Fields will be targeted at sites of seasonal waterlogging, and will aim to improve year round access for all community members. 7. Actions to reduce waterlogging will take a staggered approach, only considering surfacing in the case that improved drainage is insufficient in reducing seasonal waterlogging. ParkRun grass route will be considered in plans for path surfacing 8. Aim of improved drainage and surfacing will be to provide a circular access route from Green Lane which is accessible in most weathers, without compromising the grass surfaced ParkRun route.

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community.	
Well-maintained and clean:	
<p>1. Removing graffiti and litter picking is a reactive response to the wider problem of site misuse which needs to be addressed by greater engagement with young people</p> <p>2. Addressing site misuse by illegal vehicle access should be a key priority of the plan, for example by replacing logs placed as barriers to vehicle access from wider unfenced areas</p>	<p>1. The plan includes objectives to enforce the public space protection order, and to engage with local residents to discourage anti-social behaviours. Objectives to enhance the appearance of the site as a welcoming and well-kept place, for example by refurbishing entrance features and installing interpretation, are also aimed at encouraging greater positive use of the site and discouraging site misuse.</p>
Conservation and Heritage:	
<p>1. Oaks are the most important native tree for wildlife, a number of mature oaks have been lost from site in recent years due to age and storm damage. Will woodland management include replanting the next generation of oaks?</p> <p>2. A cautious approach should be taken in reintroducing coppicing to avoid stressing mature trees, e.g. gradually reduce trees over a number of years (avoid cutting all stems in one year and do not cutting stools too low) - (Local Wildlife Sites Officer advice).</p>	<p>1. Oak will be a key species in any replanting, particularly for the next generation of parkland trees.</p> <p>2. Reintroduction of coppice will be implemented by an experienced contractor.</p>
<p>3. Hay meadow management could be detrimental to the site by attracting vandalism (fire-setting), harbouring ticks deposited by deer, make dog faeces harder to control, and changing site ecology.</p> <p>4. Grazing would be difficult to establish on the site due to due to the risk of anti-social which could result in damage to fences etc.</p> <p>5. Grazing is not compatible with an amenity site due to inappropriate change in land-use, exclusion of dog walkers from public access land, risk to animal welfare from barbed wire, damage to soil and site ecology.</p> <p>6. To achieve the greatest outcomes for biodiversity, conservation grassland should be cut in mid-summer, leaving a small area uncut until autumn when a second cut of the meadow area will be undertaken. Leaving some meadow areas uncut over winter will be benefit insects (Local Wildlife Sites Officer).</p> <p>7. Without sufficient mown paths though meadow there could be</p>	<p>3. Hay meadow would be cut in mid-July, before grass dries, therefore there would be low fire risk. Proposals to manage some areas of the site as meadow or pasture are consistent with historic management practices and will improve the biodiversity of the site. Due to the urban situation of the site the only deer species likely to be on site is Muntjac, a woodland species. Meadow will be cut in spring and mid-summer. Therefore the sward should not reach a height inhibiting collection of dog faeces.</p> <p>4. Grazing would only be considered if with sufficient public support, e.g. volunteer daily stock checkers, to ensure infrastructure and stock are not at risk</p> <p>5. Grazing has been successfully introduced to TRDC greenspaces with public access, such as Chorleywood House Estate. Grazing at South Oxhey Playing Fields would only be introduced following an assessment of feasibility. Grazing would be seasonal, cattle would be on site for 6 to 12 weeks in the summer at a light stocking density, therefore soil compaction or poaching would not be a concern. Introduction of grazing as a tool for grassland management would not constitute a change in land use. Whilst the grazing compartment would be fenced, access will be provided for walkers by kissing gates (including to the London Loop). We</p>

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<p>aggressive interactions between dogs.</p> <p>8. In favour of meadow area, this was implemented ten years ago when there were also plans for a green hay translocation (Moor Park donor site).</p> <p>9. Meadow area proposals encroach on the ParkRun route. Please include an action to maintain the grass surfaced ParKRun route.</p> <p>10. Proposal for grazing area is adjacent to neighbouring fields which were previously grazed and which support devil's-bit scabious.</p>	<p>would use post and rail fencing rather than barbed wire for aesthetic reasons and to avoid risk of harm.</p> <p>6. Meadow management will be managed as far as possible to deliver the best outcome for biodiversity, within the limits of practicality and funding.</p> <p>7. Meadow will be cut in spring and mid-summer and therefore is unlikely to reach a length which is prohibitive to walking, aim of mowing paths would be to ease access.</p> <p>8. Green hay donation has taken place on other TRDC sites and will be explored as an option to enhance South Oxhey Playing Fields.</p> <p>9. ParkRun route will be considered in planning of mown paths through the meadow area, and the location of rough grass buffers.</p> <p>10. Restoring devil's-bit scabious is a planned action</p>
<p>1. Water is not lacking on site as there are a number of seasonally wet wallows, ponds, and a seasonal spring.</p> <p>2. There are a number of springs and watercourse in the area which would be ideal for 'day-lighting' for the benefit of amphibians and insects, it would be beneficial to scrape and restore an overgrown pond on site.</p>	<p>1. The lack of year round wet areas is a limitation for wildlife. The management plan aims to restore springs and ponds which have dried out due to artificial modification of watercourses (e.g. due to installation of culverts).</p> <p>2. Location of the over-grown pond has been included in the site description map, and an action for pond restoration is included in the action plan timetable and map.</p>
<p>Is there a benefit to installing self-cleaning bird, bat and owl boxes?</p>	<p>The site supports a number of mature trees, including standing dead oaks, which provide natural nesting holes and bat roosts.</p>
<p>Can the phase 1 habitat survey be included in the appendices?</p>	<p>Phase 1 map and target notes included as an appendix in the amended plan.</p>
<p>A medieval road runs along the lower edge of Big Wood, it would be welcome if this path could be cleared of vegetation encroachment and opened for reuse.</p>	<p>Referenced in the final Plan as part of objective E5.</p>
<p>Marketing:</p>	
<p>1. Guided walks would be welcome by the local community</p> <p>2. Include the Pavilion Bowls Club in publicity for the formal recreation offered by the site (www.pavilion-bowls-club.co.uk).</p> <p>3. Participation in ParkRun UK is likely to increase over the next few years and therefore maintenance of the ParkRun route should be a key element of the plan, to ensure the site serves the needs of the community</p>	<p>1. GAP sets an objective for two guided walks per year, led by TRDC and CMS officers and members of the local community.</p> <p>2. This will be included in the final plan.</p> <p>3. ParkRun participation will be considered in plans which could impact the ParkRun route, such as installation of surfacing and drainage and location of meadow and rough grass areas.</p>
<p>Other:</p>	
<p>Embleton Road entrance mislabelled on site description map. Correct road</p>	<p>Corrected in amended plan.</p>

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name is Bramshott Way.	
There is an additional entrance from the Highlands	Corrected in amended plan.
Vision for the site is exciting and the improvements proposed will increase value of the site for people and wildlife.	
This comprehensive GAP will support plans to achieve Green Flag status.	
Plans to manage woodlands, and make the site 'A Welcoming Place' are welcome.	
Removal of a small tree at the entrance to Ox Pasture Spring will improve the ParkRun UK route	This will be considered as part of the annual Tree Safety work programme.
A small café would be welcome to improve the visitor experience, in particular for families.	The neighbouring Pavilion Pub could potentially be approached with this proposal.
Installation of a bench at the Green Lane entrance will be welcomed by less mobile community members	This will be considered as part of the implementation of objective C4.
Dog waste bins are emptied by Watford Rural Parish Council.	This has been addressed in the plan
Signs of householder encroachment into the Playing Fields, can this be addressed by the GAP	TRDC are aware of this ongoing issue.