

Leavesden Country Park Management Plan

**(Incorporating the Horses' Field
and
East Lane Cemetery)**

2021 – 2031

Leader of the Council Statement - Foreword

Dear Residents and Park Users,

I am pleased to share with you the management plan for Leavesden Country Park, which now incorporates the Horses' Field. This plan has been developed by Three Rivers District Council, with input from your local ward councillors and consultation from local residents as part of the annual Visitor Satisfaction Survey.

We are proud of our green spaces and in particular, Leavesden Country Park and the recent work undertaken as part of the National Lottery Heritage Fund project. We remain committed to doing all we can to make our parks the very best they can be.

This park is unique in what it has to offer and celebrate: a stunning heritage sculpture trail, celebrating the diverse history of the Leavesden Hospitals, Leavesden Aerodrome and Leavesden Film Studios, an exciting themed play area and sensory garden, along with an educational building – Leavesden HIVE, dedicated to celebrating the site's rich wildlife and heritage, home to the Park Ranger and the Leavesden Hospital History Association. All of this, tied in with a welcoming café, Leavesden Cycle Hub, the YMCA facilities and the restored East Lane Cemetery makes for a remarkable visit.

Leavesden Country Park has been nationally recognised through the Green Flag Award scheme, and we continue to work with our Friends Of group to maintain and improve the park for the local community and visitors alike.

This management plan looks to show how the Council is meeting and addressing the criteria of the Green Flag Award scheme and sets out the priorities for action and improvement of the park over the coming years.

I hope you find this document useful and I would encourage you to make the most of your local park. If you want to get more involved in the future management of the park why not consider joining our Friends group, attending an event or simply just send us some of your thoughts?

Thank you,

Cllr Sarah Nelmes
Leader of Three Rivers District Council



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Welcome and Introduction

It is recommended to read this document in conjunction with the appendices and in particular, Appendix G Essential Reading.

Vision Statement

“For people to come as a visitor and leave as a friend, having explored the wildlife havens, discovered beautiful landscapes and learned about the heritage of the site.”

Leavesden Country Park is a beautiful destination park, filled with heritage, in the heart of Leavesden. The rejuvenated park, with contemporary signage and street furniture, provides a home to Leavesden HIVE (Heritage, Information, Volunteers and Education; an educational facility), full time Park Ranger, a ‘Friends of’ Leavesden Country Park group and Leavesden Hospital History Association. Respectfully restored features include the hospital railings, Font, Edwardian Garden and steps and a peaceful Remembrance Garden, paying respect to the people that worked here and the hospitals. A stunning Heritage Trail has been installed and interpretation boards detail the rich heritage of the area – the Leavesden Hospitals, Aerodrome and Film Studios. Recent restoration and conservation work to East Lane Cemetery means that the community are also able to visit the hospitals’ Victorian cemetery.

The park is a biodiversity haven for wildlife, boasting an impressive collection of specimen trees and wildflower meadows and this has now extended to include the Horses’ Field, which is situated on the southern side of Langley Lane. The park offers both woodlands, with an accessible woodland walk and grasslands amongst rolling hectares. Additional interpretation boards are found across the park to inform visitors on the biodiversity of woodlands and grasslands, along with the wildlife and historical heritage of Little Blossoms Orchard, East Lane Cemetery and the Edwardian Garden.

To enhance the natural habitats within the site, bug hotels, hibernacula, hedgehog homes, bee baths, bat and bird boxes have been created to boost the biodiversity of the site. The Heritage Orchard, Little Blossom Orchard and wildflower meadows offer a rich habitat for pollinators.

Along with the park and woodland areas, visitors can also enjoy the Woodlands Café, three exciting play spaces, a parkour area, a cycle hub, inclusive sensory garden, Charter’s Day Nursery, YMCA Woodlands Community Facility an outdoor gym and outdoor sports areas.

All of this work is as a result of community engagement since 2015 to improve the area and was made possible through the National Lottery Heritage Fund, Three Rivers District Council and support from Warner Bros. Studios Leavesden.

Accessible, well maintained parks and open spaces have never been more vital to the health and wellbeing of individuals than during the COVID 19 Pandemic. During a survey in 2020 of people using Leavesden Country Park, over 80% said that being able to use the park was either very important or important to their health and wellbeing and 98% of people said using the park enhanced their quality of life. All measures to ensure the public’s safety have been followed in line with Government guidance and restrictions.

Ensuring that the Council has a clear and effective management plan in place for the park over the next 10 years, will continue to ensure that this is a space that can be used by all of the local community for their own physical and mental wellbeing.

Three Rivers District Council, along with its partners, is delighted to deliver the vision of shared heritage and appreciation of Leavesden Country Park and the Horses' Field, and invite the community to come as a visitor and leave as a friend.

Background and History of the Park

Leavesden Country Park and the Horses' Field is a celebration of the area's rich heritage, social history and natural environment.

Covering 38 hectares, the park consists of three connected sites: East Lane Cemetery at the northern end of the site, the main parkland area of Leavesden Country Park (divided by College Road) and the Horses' Field at the southern end (divided by Langley Lane).

Background

In the late 1800s the streets of London were struggling to cope with the growing issues of homelessness, abandoned children and deprivation. The Metropolitan Poor Act Amendment of 1867 was introduced and a new asylum in Leavesden was commissioned, along with the St Pancras Orphanage/Workhouse, which opened in October 1870. The asylum covered a vast 34 hectares of land, north and south of what is now College Road. It included 17 hectares of farmland, as well as textile shops, kitchens and tannery workshops, allowing them to be largely self-sufficient. By the 1950s, there were over 3,500 patients and a staff of 1,200.

Following the closure of the St Pancras Orphanage/Workhouse in 1932, this part of the site continued to play an important role in health care. In 1939, the Canadian RAF built the Canadian Hospital for the care of their wounded soldiers. Upon its closure in 1946 it became the Abbots Langley General Hospital; a dedicated geriatric hospital.

This, along with the Leavesden Hospital closed its doors for good in 1995. At this time, 23 hectares of the site were retained by Three Rivers District Council and renamed as Leavesden Country Park.

The park also celebrates the heritage of the surrounding areas within Leavesden, including the Leavesden Aerodrome, instrumental to the success of World War 2 and the Leavesden Film Studios, producing multi-million pound films and a destination tourist attraction – Warner Bros. Studio Tour – The Making of Harry Potter.

East Lane Cemetery was the Leavesden Asylum/Hospitals cemetery, and dates back to 1870. Restoration work in 2020 included the uncovering of 510 grave markers and the resetting of 15 headstones. The tree canopy was been lifted, the lychgate restored, the Victorian irrigation system preserved and the paths resurfaced. A central memorial wall has been thoughtfully designed to reflect the architecture of the Leavesden Hospital buildings. This pays homage to those who have been laid to rest within East Lane Cemetery. The wall also displays a memorial stone to remember those staff members who gave their lives in two World Wars. The original part of the cemetery is now closed to the public but the new cemetery, which was in use from 1905 until 1974, can be enjoyed by all visitors.

The Horse's Field originally comprised four fields with a small wood and was arable farmland owned by Elizabeth Sherwood (1839 Tithe Map). In the 1930s it became part of the greater Leavesden Aerodrome site. Local knowledge suggests it was used as a "tip" during wartime aircraft production at the aerodrome, this was when the war effort was at its height and

environmental standards much lower than today. The land then passed into the ownership of the Millennium Group, who first developed the film studios on the site. Eventually the main site was taken over by Warner Bros. and the Horse's Field was passed into the ownership of Three Rivers District Council.

The Horses' Field was formally adopted by Three Rivers District Council in 2011 as part of the Leavesden Park development, which included new housing, play areas, community amenity and commercial properties.

Leavesden Country Park, East Lane Cemetery and the Horses' Field are now maintained and monitored under this one Management Plan.

Achievements over the last five years

Progress since the Leavesden Country Park Management Plan 2015 – 2020 and the Horses' Field Green Space Action Plan 2015 – 2025, has been extensive with the delivery of new and rejuvenated facilities, sympathetic restoration works and conservation management.

With significant investment in the park from Three Rivers District Council, Warner Bros. Studios Leavesden, National Lottery Heritage Fund, YMCA and Sport England, it has moved from a dog walking space into a destination attraction.

There have been several areas across the site to benefit from improved facilities. These are the Woodlands Café, Leavesden Cycle Hub, Leavesden HIVE, Heritage Trail, East Lane Lychgate and Cemetery, the Orphanage Railings, the Font, Remembrance Garden, accessible woodland path, The Garden, Multi Use Games Area (MUGA), 3G Sports pitches, Tennis Courts, park maps, two play areas, a parkour area, street furniture, including sustainable lighting, interpretation boards, picnic area, benches, oak cube seats and site wide signage.

A sense of arrival has been achieved with site wide branding throughout the park, pulling all providers together. This has improved visitor experience and flow across the park, which was previously unclear as customers had fed back that they did not realise the scale/amenities within the park.

In practical terms, the significant developments in each area of the Key Management Objectives have all been achieved. This includes the planting of two orchards, dealing with deadwood, habitat and wildflower meadow management and halo thinning of native trees.

Habitats for protected species, such as bats, have been taken into consideration, not just with the construction works, but with all the restoration and conservation works throughout the park.

The Horses' Field has developed into a beautiful haven for wildlife of mostly natural habitats, including meadow grassland nesting sites for various species. Of particular note is that the Horses' Field is now home to the Linnet and the ground nesting Skylark, both of which are classified in the UK as 'Red' under the Birds of Conservation Concern 4: the Red List for Birds (2015). They are also protected in the UK under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 and are a priority Species under the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework.

Leavesden HIVE (Heritage, Information, Volunteers and Education) was built for the dedicated Park Ranger and Leavesden Hospital History Association to use the HIVE as a base for learning, delivering a diverse and exciting activity programme. Opportunities for learning extend into The Garden – an inclusive, year round, eco-friendly space, which was created as a result of our relationship with a local severe learning disability school.

A stunning nine sculpture Heritage Trail was created to pay tribute to the history of Leavesden, reflected in the themes of MINDS, MACHINES and MOVIES, as a result of community workshops to inform the design. Designed for interaction, visitors can spin the zoetrope, nestle in the cockpit to listen to stories of the past and view the subtle movements of the MINDS pieces, whilst reflecting on the artists' concepts. The existing Remembrance Garden has had an extensive makeover and is now a contemplative place of reflection of those who lived and worked at Leavesden Hospitals.

From little or no community engagement, the Park Ranger created a flourishing, 80 strong volunteer 'Friends of' group with a core delivery team of 15. Their training included Tree Care and Identification, Visitor Observation Surveys and Orchard Maintenance. The "Friends of" group have delivered significant bulb planting, pruning of the orchard and contributed to the Great British Spring Clean.

Users fed back that access was difficult at the entrance from Langley Lane and through the woodlands. Following advice from Boxmoor Trust, both areas are now improved and accessible at all times of the year for disabled users, cyclists and buggies.

Volunteering has significantly increased across the park, ranging from 1,000 plus volunteering opportunities at Junior parkrun to 427 hours delivery by the newly established Friends of group (since October 2018). They have increased their skills and knowledge by assisting the Park Ranger on a range of activities across the park. Volunteers from the Leavesden Hospital History Association have been instrumental in unearthing and recording over 500 grave markers at East Lane Cemetery. Both of these groups have been supported with training, including orchard management, tree pruning and archaeological surveying.

The extensive Heritage and Wildlife education programme has resulted in over 3,900 attendances in 2019 to various workshops. Not only have we seen a 50% increase in knowledge and understanding of heritage and wildlife in and around the park from evaluation feedback, but we are most proud of being able to engage traditionally hard to reach target groups, such as the Home Schooled, Young Carers and those with a significant disability.

The park has also been awarded:

- the prestigious Green Flag Award as 'A park for everyone' by the International Green Flag Award judges
- Achieved 'Much Loved Park' status from the Fields in Trust in 2019, which is voted for by the community
- Won the Hertfordshire Sport Partnership's Professional Community Project of the year in 2019, as voted for by stakeholders
- Won the Small Visitor Attraction of the Year 2019 by Visit Herts.

There are a number of positive reviews on local and national social media sites about the quality of this space and community pride in Leavesden Country Park and its facilities.

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Our Park

- A. Recreational and Public Facilities
- B. Heritage and Restoration
- C. Conservation, Habitats and Wildlife
- D. The Park Community
- E. Education and Activities
- F. Marketing and Communication

Whether it is heritage, wildlife, play, sport and physical activity, walking, cycling or visiting the café, Leavesden Country Park has something for everyone.

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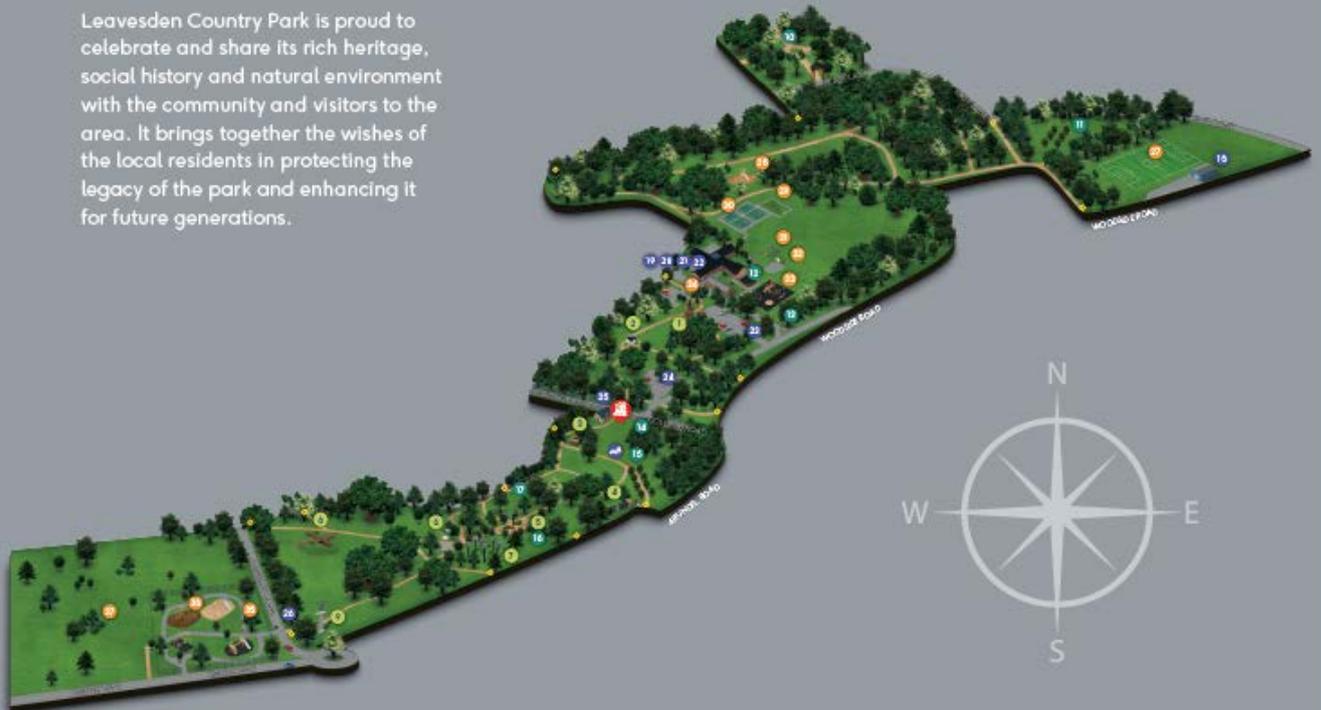
RECREATION AND PUBLIC FACILITIES

Map of the Park



Leavesden Country Park

Leavesden Country Park is proud to celebrate and share its rich heritage, social history and natural environment with the community and visitors to the area. It brings together the wishes of the local residents in protecting the legacy of the park and enhancing it for future generations.



Heritage Trail

- 1 Leavesden Spirit
- 2 A Trick of the Light
- 3 Ghosts in the Machine
- 4 The Boundary
- 5 The Community
- 6 Every Moment Shines
- 7 The Evolution
- 8 The Wooden Wonder
- 9 Kiss of the Screen Gods

Heritage, Restoration and Conservation

- 10 East Lane Cemetery
- 11 Heritage Orchard
- 12 Leavesden HIVE
- 13 The Font
- 14 Restored Orphanage Railings
- 15 Little Blossom Orchard
- 16 Remembrance Garden
- 17 Edwardian Garden

Public Facilities

- 18 TRDC Sports Pavilion for hire
- 19 YMCA Community Spaces for hire
- 20 YMCA Charters Day Nursery
- 21 Woodlands Café
- 22 Public Toilet
- 23 Main Car Park
- 24 Overflow Car Park
- 25 College Road Pedestrian Crossing
- 26 Langley Lane Pedestrian Crossing
- 27 Picnic Area
- Shared Footpaths
- Entrance/Exit

Recreation

- 27 TRDC Football Pitch for hire
- 28 Tee Pee Play Space
- 29 3G Football Pitch
- 30 Multi-Use Games Area
- 31 Outdoor Gym
- 32 Mini Sports Court
- 33 Play Area
- 34 Leavesden Cycle Hub
- 35 Langley Lane Play Area
- 36 Parkour Zone
- 37 The Horses' Field

Below are the details of the facilities and details of their location on the park map:

Public Facilities		
Main Car Park	Car park accessible from College Road entrance with disabled parking	Map location 23
Overflow Car Park	Car park accessible from College Road entrance to cater for overflow	Map location 24
Woodside Car Park	Car park accessible from Woodside Road. Only for access to the outdoor football pitches and changing rooms.	Map location 17
Woodside Sports Pavilion	Sports changing room pavilion for hire	Map location 18
Community Toilet (YMCA managed)	Community Toilet with disabled access	Map location 22
Picnic Area	Picnic benches with disabled access on hardstanding	Site wide
Shared Footpaths	Pathways across the site for both pedestrians and bikes	Site wide
Structures		
Heritage Sculpture Trail	A stunning trail of nine iconic pieces that you can enjoy from wherever you join it. Set against the backdrop of the park, with each art installation leading you to the next. The sculptures and their themes carry a significance to the community and local history.	Map location 1-9
YMCA Charters Day Nursery	OFSTED Rated Outstanding Nursery offers affordable full day care to children aged 3 months to 5 years. Open 7.30am to 6.30pm, Monday – Friday, 51 weeks a year, closed during Christmas week and on Bank holidays.	Map Location 20
YMCA Community Spaces for Hire	Two spaces for local community hire.	Map location 19
Woodlands Café (YMCA Hub)	Open all year round and accept private bookings and charity events. Accessible toilets available.	Map location 21

Leavesden Cycle Hub (YMCA Hub)	Provides coordinated social rides, bike maintenance, bike hire, bike sales and training.	Map location 34
Leavesden HIVE	A wildlife, classroom style training hub for the Park Ranger and a Heritage Hub for the Leavesden Hospital History Association along with a space of learning to hire for educational and heritage purposes only. The Garden, adjoining the facility is fenced and open for everyone to enjoy at all times.	Map location 12
East Lane Cemetery Lychgate	The lychgate forms the entrance to East Lane Cemetery which was in use 1905-1996, dated 1886 it is believed to have been moved from the old cemetery to the south across East Lane.	Map location 10
Orphanage Railings	Restored railings which have been built along the same line as and in the style of, the Orphanage which was on this site.	Map location 14
Font	Restored Hospital Font which was consecrated and used for the duration of the Hospitals on this site.	Map location 13
Play Areas		
Main Play Area	Contains a range of unique Minds, Machines and Movies themed play equipment for children aged 5–14years.	Map location 33
Tee Pee Play Space	Outdoor tree house type equipment with a hand carved Totem Pole, nestled in a small open area beside the woodland with a fire pit used by the outdoor Play Ranger project.	Map location 28
Langley Lane Play Area	A NEAP play area with a wide range of equipment to cater for ages 5-14 years, incorporates a sand pit, many pathways and large open free space.	Map location 35
Langley Lane Parkour Zone	Styled on free-running, this equipment provides alternative physical activity	Map location 36
Planted Garden Areas		
Remembrance Garden	Refurbished garden that now includes sensory, drought resistant planted garden areas, with seating for personal contemplation and is home to one of the Minds sculptures as part of the Heritage Trail.	Map location 16

The Garden	An all-weather, year round sensory garden with a bug hotel, bee totem pole, grasses, planted archway entrance, edible plants, pergola area with multi-colour roof, picnic seating area and mud kitchen station. Surrounded by Hazel fencing, it has accessible/raised beds on one side along with a tiered herb planting area and water butt collection point.	Map location 12 Next to Leavesden HIVE
Edwardian Garden	This garden boasts a fine collection of trees thought to have been planted in the early 20 th century. Included in the garden is a line of Lime trees, large Pines, a Magnolia, Copper Beech and a fine Indian Bean Tree. Both the Silver Queen & Golden King Holly varieties can be seen alongside magnificent Cherry trees, the Hungarian Oak and a Western Red Cedar together with two younger trees the Gingko and Dawn Redwood which were planted in 2018. The c1924 OS map indicates a line of trees along the southern boundary, which are probably the same pollarded lime trees that exist today.	Map location 17
East Lane Cemetery	Cemetery that is no longer an active burial site, but is a carefully managed blend of wildlife and an area for people to remember those who were buried there.	Map location 10
Biodiversity		
Heritage Orchard	Orchard planted in December 2016 with a mix of heritage fruit varieties.	Map location 11
Little Blossom Orchard	Apple Orchard planted in December 2019 with a mix of Brownlees Russet, Monarch, Queen's, Lanes Prince Albert and Warner's King varieties.	Map location 15
Woodlands	This area was planted up after the Hospitals on the site stopped managing this area as farmland. The woodland consists mainly of Sycamore. Where possible a variety of native species have been planted and Sycamore are coppiced to favour existing native and parkland trees.	North Side
Wildflower Meadows	Areas of grassland on the South Side of the park were recognised as being more naturally rich in wildflower species, including Bee and Common Spotted Orchids and are now managed under a cut and lift regime. Additional harrow and seeding has taken place on some of the areas and species such	South side

	as Yellow Rattle have been added to aid improvement for wildflowers.	
The Horses' Field	<p>The grassland within the Horses' Field has been worked on in thirds to bring it into a manageable condition. This has involved the clearance of rubble, cut and lift, Harrow, seeding and rolling. Bramble patches have been retained for nesting Linnets. The future plan is to manage this field under conservation grazing, which is the most environmental and ecologically sensitive method of management.</p> <p>Native mixed species hedges and gorse have been planted to increase wildlife benefits, especially for birds and invertebrates.</p>	
East Lane Cemetery	Native woodland bulb planting has taken place in various locations within the cemetery. These include bluebells and snowdrops. The perimeter of the cemetery has been left for native wildflowers, grasses and hedgerows.	
Rank Grassland	Areas of rank grassland are to be cut on a two year rotation to prevent the domination of scrub. These are mainly found in the margins of the site and amongst more recent tree planting such as the Heritage Orchard. These areas are important areas for wildlife including invertebrates, small mammals, birds, Hedgehogs, Common Frogs and Grass Snakes.	North side
Habitat Improvements	<p>Several hibernacula have been created in the north of the site for overwintering reptiles and amphibians, as Common Frogs and Grass Snakes have been confirmed on site, and these also benefit many other species.</p> <p>Bat, Kestrel and Owl boxes have been put up and we have had confirmed successful breeding of Kestrels and Tawny Owls on site.</p> <p>There are many other 'man-made' habitats to encourage diversity of wildlife, such as the bug hotel in The Garden with a variety of materials to encourage a wide range of invertebrates along with many bug hotels made out of felled trees with drilled holes to encourage insects such as Solitary Bees, which are dotted over the park.</p>	Site wide

	To preserve habitats, grassland and woodlands areas are managed to ensure that areas are left for nature to thrive.	
Trees	All felled trees will remain on site to create new habitats and improve biodiversity	Site Wide
Sports Facilities		
3G pitch (YMCA Managed)	YMCA bookable pitch with a surface that supports play of Football, Rugby Union, Rugby League, Lacrosse and American Football.	Map location 29
Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) (YMCA Managed)	Fenced court marked out for playing a variety of ball games and sports, such as Netball, Basketball etc.	Map location 30
Outdoor Gym	Outdoor gym equipment comprising of leg press, chest press, cross trainer and cycle.	Map location 31
Mini Sports Court	Goalmouth, Basketball Post and Shelter Equipment to provide either single play or small group play for football, basketball or netball, with a shelter.	Map location 32
Woodside Football pitch and Pavilion	Outside football pitch and changing room facilities on the site known as Woodside Pavilion. Used primarily for 'Sunday League' style of football groups.	Map location 27

How to find the park:

Leavesden Country Park, College Road, WD5 0NX (this postcode is the nearest postcode for the main car park entrance)

There are a several entrances if you are arriving on foot and the park has a number of cycle paths.

The park is located 4.8km north of Watford, on College Road, in Abbots Langley and is part of the grounds which was originally the site of the Leavesden Asylum and Hospitals.

By car: from the M25 exit at junction 19. Take the first exit (A41) signposted Hemel Hempstead. At the traffic lights turn right on to Bridge Road and continue on until it becomes Hunton Bridge Road and eventually Southway. At the roundabout take the first exit on to Langley Lane. At the next roundabout take the second exit on to College Road and the park entrance is on your left. Car parking is available next to Woodlands YMCA. The nearest postcode to the car park is WD5 0NX.

By bus: The 320 bus goes from Maple Cross through Mill End, Rickmansworth, Croxley green, Watford, Garston and Woodside to Abbots Langley. Ask the driver to get off at College Road, just after Tesco Metro.

By bike: Contact Leavesden Cycle Hub or SPOKES the South West Herts Cycling Group, for maps, directions and organised cycling trips to Leavesden Country Park.

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A. HERITAGE AND RESTORATION

Site Heritage

The park shares its rich heritage, social history and natural environment with the community. Original features of the park have been restored and conserved for future generations to enjoy.

Restoration work includes:

- Work to the 1866 Lychgate and East Lane Cemetery including uncovering and recording 510 grave markers, to mark the significance and pay homage to those who lived, worked and died there until as late as 1995
- The St Pancras Workhouse/Orphanage railings have been beautifully restored along College Road
- The Hospital Font has been restored, situated near the car park and first shown on an OS map in 1897
- The original vistas of the Edwardian Garden have been carefully restored to their former glory and includes important specimen trees, such as the Western Red Cedar and Chilean Pine
- The Victorian steps have been re-laid to lead to the newly designed Remembrance Garden
- A Remembrance Garden, has a special place in the park to pay respect to those who lived, worked and volunteered in the many hospitals of Leavesden
- Nestled in the quieter south side is the new Little Blossom Orchard, a small fruit orchard for the community to enjoy
- Tree planting and the establishment of wildflower meadows is across the site

Designations:

The park does not have any heritage designations; however, the area includes three Tree Preservation Orders - TPO 284, 285 and 286.

Heritage work:

The history of the Leavesden Asylum/Hospitals, Leavesden Aerodrome and Rolls-Royce factory and the Leavesden Film Studios have been recognised and respected within the park by:

- A Heritage Trail of nine statement sculptures sits within the park. These pay tribute to the site's history and the trail is known as: Minds, Machines & Movies
- Interpretation boards stand alongside much of the restoration and heritage work, explaining the context of the work

- The heritage of the wildlife and nature are celebrated throughout the site with additional interpretation boards. This include: Grasslands habitat, Woodland habitat, Edwardian Garden and Little Blossom Orchard
- The Covid-19 Snake, an art installation of painted stones created by the community of Leavesden and set in cement along the path adjacent to the car parks

Work continues throughout the park to build and enhance on these features. The management plan details the inclusion of the Horses' field. This area is reached at the end of the south side of the park and boasts a diverse and unique wildlife haven. Rich in biodiversity the grassland habitats include tussocky grass, wildflowers such as yellow rattle and areas of bramble, supporting Red Listed birds including linnet and skylark.

In addition, the Langley Lane play area and the Parkour Zone is located on the corner of Langley Lane and South Way within the Horses' Field.

Landscape:

The area sits within the 'Bedmond Plateau' Landscape Character Area, a gently undulating plateau area of small to medium sized fields, consisting predominantly of pasture with discrete woodlands.

The underlying geology is a combination of plateau gravel and river terrace drift. The soils are characterised by well drained flinty, coarse, loamy and gravelly soils with slowly permeable sub soils.

Archaeological Interest:

Much of the parish lies on high ground which slopes down westwards into the Gade valley. The village of Abbots Langley occupies one of these hilltops and now also the adjacent slope. The river valley, like many in the county, has yielded evidence in the form of flint tools from the upper Palaeolithic period (10,000BC) onwards. Tools of Mesolithic (8000-4000 BC) and Neolithic (4500-2500 BC) date have been recorded in the area.

Investigation at the old Leavesden Studios recorded a long sequence on the lower ground east of the river: an early Bronze Age (2500-1200 BC) ditch, later Bronze Age (1200-800 BC) pits and post holes, and an Iron Age and Roman farmstead (400 BC to AD 400).

No post-Roman or Anglo-Saxon remains have yet been recorded here. Historic Landscape Characterisation shows that the fields south of the village are 'ancient irregular fields' with boundaries which have apparently remained unaltered since the medieval period. The area includes post-medieval chalk pits and a chalk mine in the grounds of Hunton Park. Hunters Lane, which ran through the ancient fields, was removed with the establishment in 1940 of Leavesden aerodrome and aircraft factory. Several Second World War buildings survived when the aerodrome became Leavesden Studios in 1994, and were recorded before redevelopment in 2010-11.

The remnant of an ancient hedgerow or woodland runs along the north-western boundary of Horses' Field, including a wood or hedge bank and old coppice stools.

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B. CONSERVATION AND WILDLIFE

Leavesden Country Park and the Horses' Field offers a range of habitats, including parkland, grassland, woodland, wildflower meadows, scattered trees and scrub. Descriptions of the habitat types present along with dominant species compositions are provided below.

Parkland

The south side of the country park formally made up the grounds of the asylum. The area is largely open grassland with ornamental standards, most of which are specimen conifers alongside some native broadleaves. Whilst there is no obvious theme or link between the various plantings there is clearly diversity of form, size and colour of tree. New specimen trees have been planted in the parkland to replace older trees as they die off or to increase the number of trees within the park.

East Lane Cemetery is laid out with two paths in the shape of the cross with a small circular area in the centre and the lychgate forming the entrance from East Lane. The paths are lined with avenue trees with alternate plantings of horse chestnut, lime and London plane. A cedar tree was planted in each of the four corners and beech and lime trees along the frontage with East Lane.

In the north side of the park, a large Heritage orchard was planted by volunteers in autumn 2016 to the north of the playing field. This contains Heritage Hertfordshire species of 24 apples, seven cherries, six plums, ten pears and one mulberry.

Also in the north side of the park, an avenue of horse chestnut tree lines the edge of the playing field and an area of mature parkland trees are located in the area between the two car parks. Several of these show previous management work such as crown reductions.

In the south side of the park the small Little Blossom Orchard was planted in November 2019 with 15 apple trees of five varieties. The grassland within the area of the orchard will be planted with wildflower plugs or seeds, and seasonal bulbs, and managed under a cut and lift regime.

Scattered Trees (broadleaved and coniferous)

Both mature and immature scattered trees are present across the park, with a large variety of species. A mix of native and non-native species are present, as well as a mix of broadleaved and coniferous species. Commonly occurring species include Oak *Quercus species*, Ash *Fraxinus excelsior* and Lime *Tilia species*, whilst mature exotic species include Cedar *Cedrus species*, Monkey Puzzle trees *Araucaria araucana* and Magnolia *Magnolia species*.

Woodland

There are a number of small woodland areas across the site, including an area in the north of the park and borders within the north and south of the park. Within the Horses' Field there are woodland areas bordering the north and western boundaries.

The woodland structure is dominated by sycamore with occasional oak, cherry and silver birch. Thinning and coppicing has been undertaken in places, with cut material used to create brush piles, hibernacula and hurdle fencing. Halo clearance of Sycamore Trees occurs around native and parkland trees. To ensure the protection of breeding birds, felling operations will be completed outside of the recognised bird breeding season (end of February to the end of August).

The plantations are generally dark and as a result there is very little understorey. Where light conditions allow, there is some understorey developing in places, comprising mainly of hawthorn and elder. Recent natural regeneration mainly consists of sycamore, ash and holly, with occasional oak and yew.

The ground flora is dominated by bramble and nettle. Some interest does exist along the woodland edge where red campion and male fern persist. Wild garlic, snowdrop, bluebell and wood anemone have been introduced and are starting to establish.

Competitive species such as Bracken and Bramble are managed by regular cutting. Small patchy areas are left due to the benefits for associated species as well as providing cover for small mammals and a nectar source for a range of invertebrates. This technique also ensures that areas of sensitive ground flora and even individual plants such as ferns will be retained. Care will be taken to ensure any clearance takes place outside of the bird nesting period.

Broadleaved woodland (plantation)

Stands of young Broadleaved woodland are present in discrete areas throughout the Park, with the largest found to the north. These areas contain Silver Birch *Betula pendula* and Sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus*, with occasional Oak *Quercus* species. The understorey is sparse, containing occasional Hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*. The ground flora is dominated by Bramble *Rubus fruticosus* agg. The other areas of woodland are found along the borders of the southern part of the Park. These contain Hazel *Corylus avellana*, Pedunculate Oak *Quercus robur* and Field Maple *Acer campestre*, with occasional Silver Birch, Blackthorn *Prunus spinosa* and Bramble. Several Scots Pine *Pinus sylvestris* trees are also found on the south-eastern border. These areas of woodland were all quite young at a height of 6-7 metres with thin boles and as such are presently almost scrub like in structure but will mature to this habitat.

The Horses' Field - Woodland

Part of the western boundary of the Horses' Field includes a narrow strip of semi-natural broadleaved woodland, supporting features comparable with a remnant of old or ancient semi-natural woodland. The woodland has been subject to disturbance with very uneven ground in places. Internally, there is a remnant boundary hedge and bank feature running

the length of the wood that supports old coppice. A ditch along the eastern edge approximates the boundary between the wood and the adjacent scrub.

Hornbeam is a major component of the canopy along with ash, field maple, oak, willow and planted lime and sweet chestnut. The shrub layer is mostly hawthorn and elder, along with less frequent hazel, holly, ivy and blackthorn. Shade-tolerant vegetation, mainly common nettle and ivy are present on the ground. The ancient woodland indicator bluebell is locally frequent in the less disturbed part of the wood, with other species recorded including cow parsley, garlic mustard, nipplewort and wood avens.

Within the Horses' Field there are a large number of young trees growing, with the potential for some of these to be retained as feature parkland trees in the future.

Grassland

The majority of the grassland habitats on the north side of the Country Park are managed as amenity grass and are therefore of low ecological significance but important for recreation.

Amenity Grassland

This habitat comprised a large portion of the site. It was dominated by Perennial Ryegrass *Lolium perenne*, with frequent White Clover *Trifolium repens*, Daisy *Bellis perennis* and Dove's-foot Crane's-bill *Geranium molle*. This habitat appears to be managed regularly, and as such is a short sward.

The grass paths running through the woodland plantation in the North side of the park, act as small rides, and some botanical interest does exist along the ride edges where the vegetation is not regularly mown. Red campion and rose bay willow herb are abundant with grass species including cock's foot, false oat grass and Yorkshire fog present within the sward. Previous collection and dispersal of seeds, in particular red campion, has enabled some sward diversity to develop.

Poor Semi-Improved Grassland

There are several areas of this habitat located across the Park, which are dominated by Cock's-foot grass *Dactylis glomerata*. Other frequently and occasionally occurring forb species can also be found. This habitat is subject to less rigorous management than the amenity grassland, with the grass and occasional wildflowers allowed to grow longer.

There are also small areas of unmanaged rank grassland along the edges of the site, a valuable resource given how intensively the Country Park is managed.

Ruderal (Rank Grassland)

An area of ruderal grassland is present in the northern part of the Park, this area is dominated by Nettle *Urtica dioica*.

Wildflower Areas

A large percentage of the south side is managed as a parkland landscape, however there has been a concerted effort to create wildflower meadow areas towards the Langley Lane boundary. These areas were sown with yellow rattle and are managed through a cut and lift regime. These areas have established well and now present the opportunity to add further diversity to the sward. These meadows will be enhanced and expanded by scarifying both within the meadows and in adjacent areas and seeding with a diverse species mix to include:

Yarrow	Common Knapweed
Field Scabious	Oxeye Daisy
Birdsfoot Trefoil	Selfheal
Meadow Buttercup	Cowslip

Areas of existing botanical interest such as populations of Common Spotted and Bee Orchid will be avoided and protected.

Bulbs including Snowdrop and Bluebell have also been introduced in several locations. Further bulb planting will be initiated as part of this plan and will be completed in conjunction with the wildflower seeding. Bulbs will be planted in drifts along the edge of the new wildflower areas. This will provide colour and interest early in the season but will also mark the edge of the wildflower areas providing a natural barrier, preventing the Environmental Protection team unintentionally mowing the meadows early in the season.

Horses' Field - Grassland

Horses' Field historically supported a mosaic of species poor neutral grass and tall herbs which had developed from neglected improved grassland. A programme of grassland enhancement was completed in 2019 with wildflower seeds sown across much of the grassland area. Species diversity within the sward has been greatly increased, and future management aims to maintain species-rich tussocky grassland.

The Horses' Field is planned to be brought under conservation grazing management, following a period of engagement in January and February 2020 which demonstrated widespread support for the proposal. The fencing design is now under consideration and presented for comment in the mapping section.

Scrub and Hedgerows

Within the country park, scrub is largely confined to boundaries and field edges, with a good diversity of ages present. The perimeter of the country park is formed by mixed plantations

containing a variety of hedgerow species including field maple, guelder rose, hawthorn and hazel, with bramble and nettle beneath.

The western, northern and part of the eastern boundary of Horses' Field is bordered by wide bands of scrub dominated by bramble with scattered shrubs, consisting mainly of blackthorn with elder and hawthorn. To the west, in particular, cherry plum is common, and an area covered with aspen is present mid-way along the western strip of scrub. Other species present in the community include ash, sycamore, pedunculate oak, buddleia and honeysuckle. Along the northern boundary there are frequent trees and shrubs, including field maple, ash and pedunculate oak. Two large patches of bramble occur within the grassland.

Around 525m of hedgerow was planted in 2017 along sections of the perimeter around Horses' Field, which is establishing well. The hedgerow is made up of species including hawthorn, field maple, hornbeam, guelder rose and hazel, interspersed with oak standards.

In a number of areas, there is a good transition from scrub to rough grassland, before meeting amenity grassland. In places bramble and blackthorn are starting to encroach in to this rough grassland habitat. Rank Grassland is managed on a two year rotational annual cut, to prevent encroachment of scrub and minimise disturbance to wildlife.

Scrub and bramble patches are retained in some places and managed at the appropriate time of year to prevent disturbance of nesting birds.

Invasive Species, Pests and Diseases

Non Native Invasive Species (NNIS) are defined as:

'Species which have been brought into the UK that have the ability to spread, causing damage to the environment, the economy, our health and the way we live'

Three Rivers District Council (TRDC) will comply with all legal responsibilities relating to NNIS. There are several NNIS either already identified on the site, or within the local area, these are outlined below.

Invasive species

Japanese Knotweed

TRDC are taking a proactive approach to controlling this species. Japanese Knotweed has previously been found on site and is being monitored and treated twice a year under the instruction of Three Rivers District Council.

Cherry Laurel

Laurel is present in some established scrub and woodland areas.

Pests and Diseases

Ash dieback

The presence of ash dieback is monitored as part of tree health and safety surveys. There is relatively little ash within Leavesden Country Park.

Oak Processionary Moth (OPM)

OPM is an invasive species introduced into England in 2005. It has since become established in London and is now spreading into surrounding counties, with several cases found within Three Rivers District in 2019. While the moth is harmless, caterpillars pose a risk to public health through microscopic hairs which cover its body. Contact with hairs typically causes skin rashes, although symptoms can include eye irritation, sore throats and in extreme cases breathing difficulties and allergic reactions. If OPM is discovered in Leavesden Country Park, TRDC will work in partnership with the Forestry Commission and the correct procedure for removal will be followed.

Wildlife

Protected Species and UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Habitats and Species

There are a number of priority habitats and species as listed under the UK BAP and within the Hertfordshire BAP, 'A 50 Year Vision for the Wildlife and Natural Habitats of Hertfordshire' found within Leavesden Country Park. These can be summarised as follows:

Herts BAP

Song Thrush

Woodland

Urban Habitats

UK BAP

Hedgerows

Grass Snake

Hedge Accentor (Dunnock)

Common Starling

Noctule Bat

Hedgehog

Bullfinch

Song Thrush

There are six Red Data List Bird Species (Highest Level of Conservation Concern) recorded as using and breeding on site (Starling, Song Thrush, Mistle Thrush, House Sparrow, Skylark and Linnet).

Bats

Pipistrelle and Noctule Bat have been recorded from the site. The network of habitats including mature trees, hedgerows and a variety of grasslands types offer important feeding opportunities for Bats.

Bats will be considered when implementing all aspects of this management plan especially when considering the management of large trees and will include:

- A licensed bat ecologist will inspect trees that need managing that contain potential bat roosts.
- Trees containing bat roosts will be left intact where possible. Full licensing procedures will be followed if this is not feasible.
- The document '*Bats and Lighting in the UK*' produced by the Bat Conservation Trust will be followed in respect of any new lighting proposals.

The vision for the whole park is to create a biodiverse wildlife haven and beautiful landscapes.

THE PARK COMMUNITY

Three Rivers District Council's vision is that the district should be a better place for everyone, their neighbourhoods, health, employment and access to services. For Leavesden Country Park, this vision can only be achieved with the support of the public and its volunteers and is also underpinned by the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) Activity Plan.

The Activity Plan, which is tailored to meet the needs of the demographics in the area, covers both the current and target audiences. These activities within Leavesden Country Park reflect this ethos by promoting a healthier community and an active lifestyle, whilst respecting the environment and its setting. There are many opportunities and projects available through the volunteer programme; from maintaining the orchard to assisting with park events.

The Council aims to offer something for everyone and hope that people and the community will be inspired to be involved.

As part of the HLF funded project, a full-time Park Ranger has been employed until 2021. The objective of the post is to:

- Increase the number and range of people visiting Leavesden Country Park and work with key partners to deliver a programme of events and activities for local people and visitors to the area.
- Create and deliver a comprehensive programme of educational walks, talks and other outreach activities in line with the Activity Plan submitted as part of the Heritage Lottery Fund bid. The emphasis will be on developing relationships with schools, community groups and the public.
- Engage partners in developing, implementing and reviewing the site management plans at Leavesden Country Park.

Leavesden HIVE (Heritage, Information, Volunteers and Education) was built for the dedicated Park Ranger and Leavesden Hospital History Association to use as a base for learning, delivering a diverse and exciting activity programme.

The Leavesden Hospital History Association (LHHA) was started in 2008 for the purpose of preserving the history, heritage, memorabilia and memories of the doctors, nurses, staff, volunteers and residents who worked and lived at Leavesden Hospital (1870-1994) St. Pancras Orphanage (1870-1932) and the Canadian Hospital (1939-1947). They regularly host open days at the HIVE for the community to drop in, have worked on the East Lane Cemetery restoration, research hospital and family histories, and host guided heritage walks across the site.

Partner organisations across Leavesden Country Park include local police, Woodlands Cafe, Leavesden Cycle Hub, other departments from TRDC and the YMCA. These organisations have a collective responsibility for community activity and engagement within the park.

Under the management of the Park Ranger, a 'Friends of Leavesden Country Park' group has been established to engage the local community in site management and events. Their volunteer work includes planting spring time bulbs to keep colour throughout the year, recording some of the wildlife living throughout the park, maintaining the orchards, assisting with community events taking place in the park, and caring for the Remembrance Garden.

Their program of works is linked to implementation of the site management plan and community aspirations for the park. Mailing list includes 80 people with a regular group of 15 attending monthly. This group is the volunteer force leading on the annual visitor observation surveys.

Up until 2020, a probation group ran on a weekly basis, which unfortunately ended due to the Pandemic and lack of staff resources during this period. They mainly carried out conservation based tasks, including woodland and grassland management, tree planting, seed collection, bug hotels, reptile and amphibian hibernacula and Hedgehog homes.

The Park is covered by the local byelaws (<https://www.threerivers.gov.uk/eqcl-page/byelaws>) and it has regular patrols from the local Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs), with the YMCA hosting a Hub for PCSO's to meet with the local community. Three Rivers District Council Community Safety Partnership and Grounds team are linked with the PCSO's to review any anti-social behaviour. Each piece of outdoor leisure equipment is inspected by Three Rivers District Council Grounds team weekly, monthly for an operational check and by an external play inspector annually.

A number of these groups improve visibility in the park and offer the community ways to engage.

EDUCATION AND ACTIVITIES

The Country Park has received National Lottery Heritage funding for a three year activity plan running until October 2021. The activity programme is unique - engaging vulnerable groups in various workshops, including Young Carers, school groups, and health and wellbeing activities.

The programme is based from Leavesden HIVE, a centre for learning and is supported by a specialist historical association, dedicated to the site's history. The Leavesden Hospital History Association delivers historical walks and talks throughout the site, open drop in sessions, allowing access to historical artefacts from the Hospitals and facilitates a number of projects, including oral history recordings and archaeological surveying of East Lane Cemetery. Oral history recordings are available to be listened to within the University of Hertfordshire's Heritage Hub.

Opportunities for learning extend into The Garden – an inclusive eco-friendly space, which stimulates the senses, designed to invite the visitor to interact with nature and search for bugs in the bespoke bug hotel.

The Park Ranger uses the HIVE as a base for a diverse and exciting activity programme. Recent groups accessing the facility include the uniformed organisations for bat walks, Young Carers for scavenger hunts, U3A groups and most recently new partnerships with MIND and Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust. The programme is extensive and has the ability to grow to further embrace health and wellbeing, environmental issues and wildlife topics. The HIVE provides a safe learning environment which can be used for a variety of groups so that each visitor leaves the site having explored, discovered and learned.

The HIVE is home to an outdoor education programme, which links in with local schools, Home Schoolers and uniformed organisations such as Scouts. These sessions provide a springboard for outdoor learning and support schools in bringing to life the outdoor world, based around the national curriculum (KS1 and KS2) with enrichment activities. Examples could include: habitats and biodiversity, wildlife identification, lifecycles and twilight wildlife (bat walks).

Examples of events and activities and groups that take place throughout the park:

- Guided wildlife walks, including Butterfly Walks, Bug Hunts
- Health walks, including Nordic walking and Mindfulness walks
- Health and wellbeing activities e.g. parkrun, yoga and tai chi
- Play Ranger events
- History Walks and open event sessions with the Leavesden Hospital History Association
- Arts on Prescription (Social Prescribing for adults with mental health issues)

- MIND – Healthy Hub base
- Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust
- Ad-hoc seasonal and community events
- Photography classes
- U3A Historical and Environmental groups
- Targeted events e.g. work with Young Carers
- Outdoor Education Programme

Following full evaluation of the activities, the activity programme will continue to be developed to reflect the changing needs of the audiences and required resources.

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MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION

A strong marketing and communications programme has been in place since the National Lottery Heritage Funded project was launched in 2018. Its main focus is to increase the footfall into the park and raise the awareness of the visitor to the impressive historical, social and wildlife heritage of the site.

All marketing and communications carries the newly developed branding of the site which includes a colour palette, font and logo. The Country Park's logo has been inspired from the monkey puzzle tree, of which three stand in the Edwardian Garden in the south of the park. The branding has given the country park a sense of arrival and place. Site wide maps, site signage and information boards are all part of the new marketing and help to move the customer through the park seamlessly.

Of significance in the park are the partner organisations namely the Woodlands Cafe, Leavesden Cycle Hub and the YMCA, who have all adopted the guidelines and work within them to enhance the visitors' experience.

The park won the "Small Visitor Attraction" category as part of the Hertfordshire 2019 Tourism Awards (alongside Warner Bros. Studio Tours as Large Attraction). In addition the project also won the Hertfordshire Service to Sport Awards for 'Community Project of the Year (professional)'

Of significance, the recent work in the park has led to it being shortlisted under 'Community Involvement' as part of the Local Government Chronicle Awards.' This selection was from 700 applications.

The project continues to receive positive feedback and reviews on social media about the rejuvenated park.

There are several different marketing strands to reach targeted and general audiences. These include:

- Council website with bespoke Leavesden Country Park page **threeriversleisure.co.uk**
- Social media reach including local Facebook sites and twitter
- Monthly MyAbbots article featuring the park
- Regular press releases
- Regular updates to Councillors and Stakeholders
- Activities noticeboard in the Cafe
- General noticeboard on the HIVE wall
- Banners announcing the two award wins are on display in the park

Demonstrating the project's reach are the two specialist volunteer groups in the park: The Friends of Leavesden Country Park and the Leavesden Hospital History Association. These groups activity recruit and meet throughout the year and are focused on enhancing the park. The Friends of group take responsibility for the garden areas, whilst the historical association are focused on East Lane cemetery and carrying out historical research work.

The parks activities and high profile is an essential part of the growth in footfall and is essential for the ongoing success of the park.

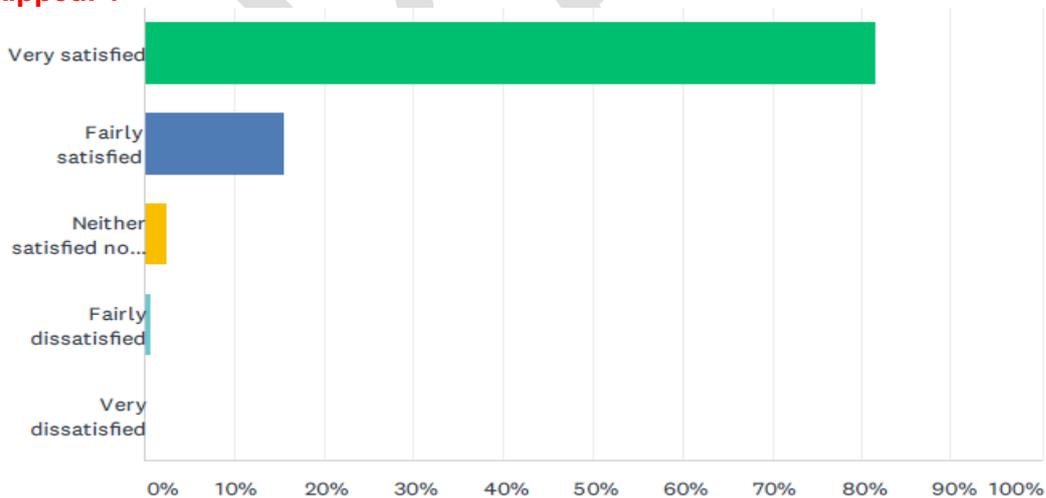
As part of the National Lottery Heritage Fund requirement, the park has undergone annual Visitor Satisfaction Surveys and Visitor Observations. These findings have proved important in monitoring the use of the park, its increased usage and its impact, particularly on health and wellbeing.

The key messages from the 2020 Visitor Satisfaction survey includes:

1. Please rate the following for the park: Answered: 175 Skipped: 14

	VERY GOOD	FAIRLY GOOD	NEITHER GOOD NOR POOR	FAIRLY POOR	VERY POOR	TOTAL
The design and appearance of the park	84.00% 147	12.57% 22	2.29% 4	1.14% 2	0.00% 0	175
The standard of cleanliness of the park	60.00% 105	36.00% 63	2.29% 4	1.14% 2	0.57% 1	175
The maintenance of the park	76.30% 132	21.39% 37	1.73% 3	0.00% 0	0.58% 1	173
The facilities and/or services that are provided for children and their parents	61.85% 107	29.48% 51	7.51% 13	1.16% 2	0.00% 0	173
Overall impression of the park	79.31% 138	17.82% 31	2.30% 4	0.57% 1	0.00% 0	174

2. Overall, how satisfied are you with Leavesden Country park: Answered: 174 Skipped: 1

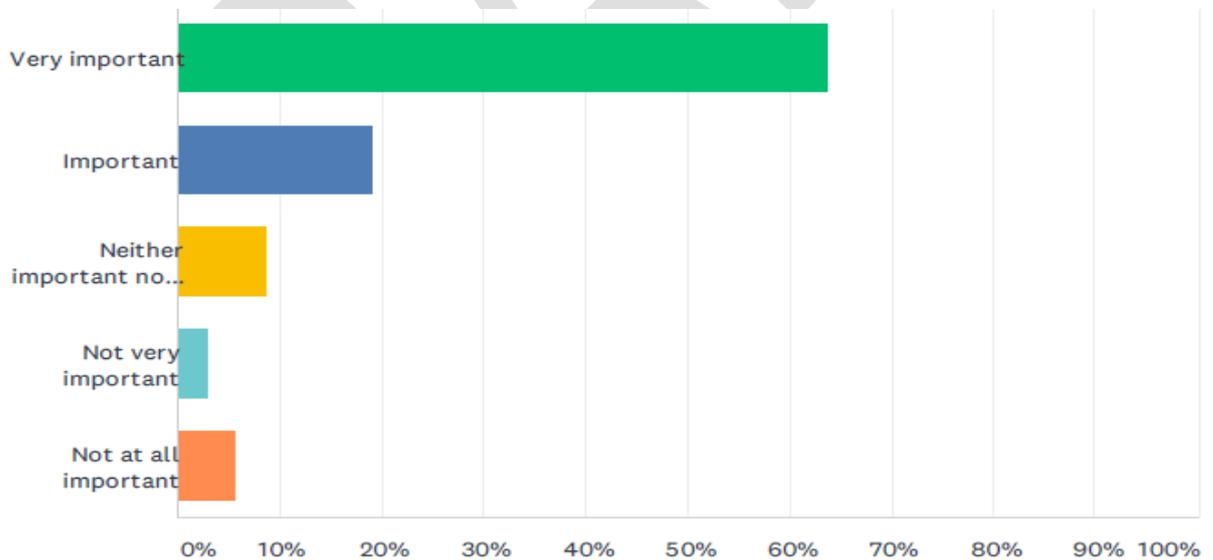


3. Do you feel that...(see points within the table): Answered: 175 Skipped: 14

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DON'T KNOW/NOT APPLICABLE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Your use of Leavesden Country Park enhances your quality of life	52.57% 92	41.14% 72	6.29% 11	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	175	1.54
You have a good understanding of the heritage value of Leavesden Country Park?	46.51% 80	40.70% 70	6.98% 12	3.49% 6	1.16% 2	1.16% 2	172	1.71
That Leavesden Country Park has a positive impact on the local community?	63.22% 110	31.03% 54	5.17% 9	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.57% 1	174	1.42

4. How important to your health and well-being is the park?

Answered: 174 Skipped: 15



Future of the Park

Through the National Lottery Fund Heritage project, the park has been fully rejuvenated and has received both county and national recognition in awards for tourism and community engagement. This needs to be preserved and built on in the following years and detailed in this management plan.

The project has thrived under the restrictions of Covid-19 and evidence shows that this open space is now more important than ever and needs to be cherished for future generations.

Alongside council investment in the park, it is essential that the park continues to become embedded into the community ownership of the park. This will be achieved by:

- Assisting the Friends Of to become a constitutional group and lead the volunteering work within the park, supported by the Park Ranger.
- A rolling review of the activity programme and a development plan to draw targeted audiences into the park on education and environmental activities.
- To ensure the council continues to meet the needs of the ever changing visitor to the park.
- To continue to create opportunities for people to learn about the story of the park as a place of exploration and learning, waiting to be discovered.
 - Including the introduction of a digital trail. This will provide an extension to the physical sculptures and further learning opportunities about the history of the site, including linking back to key websites, such as the Heritage Hub.

Continued investment in the park will also be required to continue to deliver the high quality visitor experience, currently achieved at the park. This will include a review of the current infrastructure and recommendations on improvements needed over the next ten years.

Highlights include:

- Review of entrances and exits across the park
- Improving walking and cycling routes
- Planning in the long term for key features in the park, including the Heritage Trail, play facilities and the Leavesden HIVE
- Developing a biodiverse haven within the Horses' Field and introducing cattle grazing on the site
- New in-keeping, branded signage and interpretation on the Horses' Field

The District Council has a strong commitment to the environment and environmental sustainability and recognises the impacts its operations have on the environment. Three Rivers District Council's dedication to protect the environment is reflected in Council policies, strategies, commitments and partnerships. Some of these initiatives include:

- A presumption against the use of peat.

- A presumption against the use of pesticides especially on designated landscapes such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).
- Only FSC timber is used across the district.
- All cleaning materials are phosphate free.

The trees across the site will also be managed through the Council's tree strategy and through this Management Plan, which will include the management of existing trees, the management of trees that need to be felled and the planting of any new or replacement trees.

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How will the 10 Ten Year Vision of the Park be delivered?

The vision for the park over the next ten years, will be achieved by delivering the following key elements via the objectives below:

- A. Welcoming Facilities
 - To Provide an Inviting Park
 - To Ensure the Park is Clean and Well Maintained
 - To Ensure the Park is Accessible for All
- B. An Award Winning Park
 - To Retain Green Flag Accreditation
 - To Monitor Visitor Feedback and Satisfaction Levels
 - To Apply for Relevant Awards
- C. Creating Biodiverse and Sustainable Environments
 - *This element includes conservation of natural, built and social heritage.*
 - To Ensure Robust Environmental Management
 - To Preserve the Biodiversity, Landscape and Heritage (natural, built and social)
- D. Friendly Park Community
 - To Understand and Engage the Community
 - To Develop and Promote Marketing and Communications
- E. Diverse and Educational Activity Programme*
 - *The programme is delivered and detailed in the Activity Plan document, please see Appendix G Essential Reading for more details.*
 - To Build On, Develop and Deliver a Diverse, High Quality Activity Programme Based on The National Lottery Heritage Fund Activity Plan Foundations
 - To Effectively Market and Promote the Activity Plan to All in the Community

Each of these elements will have a key aim and detail how it will be achieved with a set of sub-headings and key objectives and outputs.

These will link in with the overall Three Rivers District Council's Corporate Framework and the Local Strategic Partnership's Community Strategy.

In addition, a full evaluation of the delivery of the activity programme, will be carried out in Winter 2021, led by independent, external specialists as part of the National Lottery Heritage Fund requirements. The final evaluation report will be produced based on all the evidence collected at the end of the project, assessing the National Lottery Heritage Fund outcomes and project aims to judge the progress made. The report will serve as a milestone document for further planning of activities and resources as well as on the progress of the project.

Welcoming facilities

Overall Aim: Leavesden Country Park will be an inviting, clean and well maintained park for all to enjoy.

This aim will be to support the following Green Flag criteria:
A Welcoming Place, Well Maintained and Clean and Marketing and Communication.

To Provide an Inviting Park

Reference	Objective	Description	Department	When?
A1	To provide high quality internal signage across the park	To regularly inspect signage including interpretation boards, maps, way markers, finger posts, noticeboards and welcome signs and to ensure these are regularly cleaned.	Environmental Protection	Visual inspection weekly, cleaned monthly during spring and summer
A2	To provide brown tourism signs directing people to the park	Review existing brown signs and identify additional locations, costs and resources to install more if necessary.	Trees and Landscapes and Regulatory Services	Year 3
A3	To ensure the website is up to date	Review the website and ensure the information is current, refreshed and up to date.	Leisure Marketing Manager and Trees and Landscapes	Monthly
A4	Review signage across the park.	Review signage across the park, including way markers/finger posts and any other identifying signage, including markers for specimen trees.	Trees and Landscapes	Year 1
A5	Introduce interpretation and signage within the Horses' Field	To be in-keeping with the surrounding site, yet branded to ensure it links with the whole site.	Trees and Landscapes	Year 2

To Ensure the Park is Clean and Well Maintained

Reference	Objective	Description	Department	When?
A6	Litter will be cleared from the site	Regular litter picks and emptying of bins across the site.	Environmental Protection	3 times a week during autumn and winter and 4 times a week during spring and summer.
A7	To deliver a programme of maintenance across the site	The park will be maintained in accordance with the schedule of works, including grass cutting, wildflower management, woodland management and hedgerow management. This will also include maintenance and cleaning of the infrastructure across the park – benches, bins, pathways, signage etc.	Environmental Protection and Trees and Landscapes	Throughout the year
A8	To maintain outdoor leisure facilities and heritage trail	A programme of inspections and maintenance of facilities including the main play area, natural play spaces, outdoor gym, mini multi-use games area, the Covid-19 Snake, The Garden, Remembrance Garden and Heritage Trail.	Environmental Protection and Leisure	Throughout the year in accordance with the agreed schedule of works.
A9	To maintain East Lane Cemetery	Carried out in accordance with the programme of works detailed in the maintenance schedule.	Environmental Protection	Throughout the year
A10	To manage the installation of memorial plaques and benches.	To manage the process of installing memorial plaques at East Lane Cemetery, memorial plaques on benches within the park and memorial benches at agreed locations, following the requirements of the agreed policy.	Environmental Protection	As and when required
A11	Consistent street furniture across the park	Review dog bins, litter bins and park benches to ensure	Environmental Protection	In Year 14

		consistent street furniture across the park.		
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To Ensure the Park is Accessible for All

Reference	Objective	Description	Department	When?
A12	Improve pathways across the park	Survey pathways across the site, to include accessibility and opportunities for cycling. Identify a programme of works and resources to improve surfaces.	Trees and Landscapes, Regulatory Services, Properties and Leisure	Year 2 and Year 3
A13	Survey the main car park	Survey the main car park to review car parking, drainage issues and consider improvements and resources.	Trees and Landscapes, Properties and Leisure	Year 2
A14	Consider widening the main entrance to the park	Review the option to widen and enhance the main entrance to Leavesden Country Park. Identify resources for any suggested improvements	Trees and Landscapes, Properties and Leisure	Year 3
A15	Improve Access to East Lane Cemetery	Work with Hertfordshire County Council to clean and improve access on East Lane.	Trees and Landscapes, Properties and Leisure	Year 1
A16	Improve lighting across the site	Review existing lighting and consider alternative options to provide a consistent and streamlined approach to lighting across the park. Consideration to be given to sustainable lighting options.	Trees and Landscapes, Properties and Regulatory Services	Year 4
A17	Provide a wide range of facilities for the visiting public	Work in partnership with the YMCA to ensure the continued delivery of: - Café - Community Toilet - Cycle Hub	Leisure and Landscapes, Properties and YMCA	Review annually

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">- MUGA- 3G pitches- Community space for hire and delivery of activities		
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B. An Award Winning Park

Overall Aim: Leavesden Country Park will be a flagship destination, consisting of high quality facilities, sustainably managed formal parkland and wildlife habitats.

This aim will be to support the following Green Flag criteria:
Marketing and Communication

To Retain Green Flag accreditation

Reference	Objective	Description	Department	Season
B1	Green Flag Submission	To apply for Green Flag Award Status, ensuring all areas within the application are completed and updated.	Trees and Landscapes Leisure Marketing Manager	Winter – Annually
B2	Achieve Heritage Green Flag status	To apply for the Heritage Green Flag status ensuring all areas within the application are completed and updated.	Trees and Landscapes Leisure Marketing Manager	Winter – Annually
B3	Maintain Green flag standards	To regularly review the Green Flag and Heritage Green Flag standards and ensure the management plan implements these standards	Trees and Landscapes	Throughout the year

To Monitor Visitor Feedback and Satisfaction Levels

Reference	Objective	Description	Department	Season
B4	To complete an annual satisfaction survey for the park	Online survey to be set up and distributed to the local community and through social media	Trees and Landscapes and Leisure Marketing Manager	Annually – Spring

B5	Complete Visitor Observation Surveys	Friends Of to complete the visitor observation survey	Friends Of	Annually – Spring
B6	Provide a number of mediums for people to feedback	Online reporting, ad-hoc reporting to staff on site, complaints and praise process and through email	Trees and Landscapes	Throughout the year

To Apply for Relevant Awards

Reference	Objective	Description	Department	Season
B7	To review opportunities to apply for relevant awards	Submit application for awards including Visit Herts, Arts Awards, Community Awards and others that are relevant.	Trees and Landscapes and Leisure Marketing Manager	Monitored throughout the year

C. Creating biodiverse and sustainable environments

**This element includes conservation of natural, built and social heritage*

Overall Aim: Leavesden Country Park will conserve and enhance wildlife, landscape and heritage features and all aspects of site management are undertaken with sustainability as a guiding principle.

This aim will be to support the following Green Flag criteria: Biodiversity, Landscape and Heritage (natural, built and social), Environmental Management and Marketing and Communication.

To Ensure Robust Environmental Management

Reference	Objective	Description	Department	Season
C1	A sustainable and environmentally friendly park	Ensure all site activities adhere to TRDC sustainability and environmental policies, including all work undertaken by contractors.	Trees and Landscapes Leisure	Throughout the year
C2	Waste Minimisation	To support all partners within the park to reduce the amount of waste produced e.g. reusable bottles and cups. To support the water refill campaign.	Trees and Landscapes Leisure	Throughout the year
C3	Managing Environmental Impact	Not using peat or pesticides and only using FSC timber. All cleaning materials are phosphate free.	Trees and Landscapes, Environmental Protection and other partners.	Throughout the year

C4	Promote cycling to and within the park as part of an Active Travel scheme for the area	Marketing and communications available both online and within the site to promote walking and cycling.	Regulatory Services	Throughout the year
C5	Market recycling methods of public litter bins	Marketing on litter bins across the park to explain waste is separated and recycled once collected.	Environmental Protection	Year 1

To Preserve the Biodiversity, Landscape and Heritage (natural, built and social)

Reference	Objective	Description	Department	Season
C6	Enhance grassland habitats to benefit pollinators Establish bee friendly areas site wide, including signage for public education	Areas to be created and maintained across the park.	Trees and Landscapes Leisure	End of Summer
C7	Wildflower areas created across the park	Wildflower areas created within the park as detailed on the management maps. Long grass areas left around trees.	Environmental Protection	Throughout the Year
C8	Improve species and structural diversity of woodlands	To ensure the protection of breeding birds, felling operations will be completed outside of the	Trees and Landscapes	Autumn / Winter

		<p>recognised bird breeding season.</p> <p>Coppicing and Halo thinning to take place and retain deadwood for habitat purposes.</p>		
C9	Maintain range of scrub habitats, whilst preventing further encroachment into grasslands	Areas of rough grassland should be retained to provide habitat for small mammals and invertebrates.	<p>Environmental Protection</p> <p>Trees and Landscapes</p>	End of summer
C10	Enhance and maintain wildlife habitats	<p>Includes, but is not limited to: hibernacula, hedgehog houses and bug hotels.</p> <p>Retain deadwood to create spaces.</p>	Trees and Landscapes	Throughout the year
C11	Maintain parkland trees as detailed within the Council's Tree Strategy	<p>Managed with the aim of prolonging the life of trees.</p> <p>Where trees need to be felled, retain deadwood on site as far as possible.</p>	Trees and Landscapes	Autumn - Winter
C12	Review and replace parkland trees as and when required as detailed within the Council's Tree Strategy	The planting of new specimen trees to replace older trees as they age or die-off.	Trees and Landscapes	Throughout the year
C13	Investigate the feasibility to create a Wildlife Pond with Dipping Platform.	Review the option of installing a pond. Research costs and funding, location options, feasibility of drainage issues	Trees and Landscapes	<p>Year 3</p> <p>Late Summer- Autumn</p>

		and consider safety implications.		
C14	Areas of existing botanical interest such as populations of common spotted and bee orchid will be protected.	Identify locations where they are present and ensure future maintenance protects these species.	Trees and Landscapes Environmental Protection	Year 1 and throughout the year
C15	Establish conservation grazing on the Horses' Field.	Agree arrangement of fencing and gates and install, along with water trough. Initiate grazing.	Trees and Landscapes	Year 1 and then ongoing in summer-autumn
C16	Continue to develop Natural Heritage programme	Develop Wildlife Education programmes Planting schemes by volunteers such as Friends of Introduce tree markers within the Edwardian Garden	Leisure Trees and Landscapes Volunteers such as Friends of	Ongoing
C17	Maintain and conserve the Built Heritage	Deliver the maintenance programme Eg: Orphanage Railings, Font, Edwardian Garden Steps, East Lane Cemetery, Covid 19 Snake	Grounds team Facilities team	Ongoing
C18	Continue to develop Social Heritage	Deliver Education on history including walks & talks, open days etc Continue to collect oral history recordings, artefacts or memorabilia	Leavesden Hospital History Association Abbots Langley Leavesden History Society University of Hertfordshire – Heritage Hub	Ongoing

		relating to Minds, Machines and Movies	Hertfordshire Archives and Library Service Museum Service	
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D. Friendly Park Community

Overall Aim: Leavesden Country Park will engage and involve the local community

This aim will be to support the following Green Flag criteria:
Community Involvement and Marketing and Communication

To Understand and Engage the Community

Reference	Objective	Description	Department	When?
D1	Develop 'Friends of Leavesden Country Park' to increase community involvement in site management	Develop and grow the 'Friends Of' with training to be a self-sustaining organisation.	Leisure Trees and Landscapes	Monthly session Communication throughout the year Annual training session
D2	Leavesden Hospitals History Association (LHHA)	Continue to work with LHHA to encourage its continuity at the HIVE, promoting the sites heritage and delivering historical walks and talks.	Leisure Trees and Landscapes	Throughout the year
D3	Maintain and develop connections with community groups in the local area	Continue relationships with schools, uniformed organisations and others to continue engagement in the park and use of the HIVE. Implement site activity plan and education program.	Leisure Marketing Manager Trees and Landscapes	Ongoing

D4	Investigate working with Youth Offenders and Probation Service	Engage the Youth Offenders and Probation Service in maintenance works across the park.	Trees and Landscapes Environmental Protection	Throughout the year
D5	Continue to work in partnership with stakeholders to ensure a diverse and attractive range of activities is available	Regular meetings with site stakeholders. Continue shared marketing and branding across the site. Update communication to stakeholders, including Councillors.	Trees and Landscapes Leisure YMCA Woodlands Café Leavesden Cycle Hub Police Community Support Officers	Throughout the year
D6	Engage with all park users	Visitor and user surveys. Complaints and Praise Procedure. Encourage appropriate park usage with additional signage, including updated bylaws. Keep people informed of parks activities and works by ensuring noticeboards & social media are up to date.	Leisure Trees and Landscapes Environmental Protection Leisure Marketing Manager	Throughout the year
D7	Ad-hoc communication with park users	Park Ranger, Tree Officers and Environmental Protection staff to engage and speak to users of the park when on site.	Trees and Landscapes Environmental Protection	Throughout the year

To Develop and Promote Marketing and Communications

Reference	Objective	Description	Department	When?
D8	To ensure the website is up to date	Review the Council websites and other local websites and ensure the information is current, refreshed and up to date.	Leisure Marketing Manager Trees and Landscapes	Throughout the year
D9	Promote site activities and events	Keep people informed of parks activities and works by ensuring noticeboards & social media are up to date. Updating the HIVE noticeboard and café notice board.	Leisure Marketing Manager Trees and Landscapes	Throughout the year
D10	Implement site Activity Plan (Section E)	To promote awareness and interest in the park. Develop and establish an activity plan for all ages, groups and abilities.	Leisure Trees and Landscapes	Throughout the year

E. Diverse and Educational Activity Programme

Overall Aim: Leavesden Country Park will provide a range of educational and community based activities to explore, discover and learn about the site's environmental and historical heritage.

This aim will be to support the following Green Flag criteria:
Community Involvement and Marketing and Communication

To Build On, Develop and Deliver a Diverse, High Quality Activity Programme Based on The National Lottery Heritage Fund Activity Plan Foundations.

**The programme is delivered and detailed in the Activity Plan document, please see Appendix G Essential Reading for more details.*

Reference	Objective	Description	Department	When?
E1	To ensure that the activity programme meets the diverse groups in the community	To plan and develop the overarching programme to ensure that these targeted groups are engaged with and delivered to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education sector • Families • People with a disability • People with a mental health need • Older visitors • Special interest 	Trees and Landscape Leisure	On going
E2	To develop and deliver a community programme	Regular programme of activities to cover wildlife/art/wellbeing.	Trees and Landscape Leisure Development	Throughout the year including each half term, Summer and Easter holidays
E3	To deliver and engage with schools to offer an Education programme	Develop core subjects which can be delivered against the curriculum (inc Home Schoolers) and uniformed groups to include but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitats • Biodiversity 	Trees and Landscape, Leisure Development	Throughout the school year

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plant Identification • Bat Walks • Lifecycles • Conservation 		
E4	To maintain and develop the Friends of Leavesden Country Park	<p>To plan and deliver an annual programme of activities for the Friends of group so that the park is enhanced. The programme should contain elements of training.</p> <p>To nurture a champion within the group who can take on future leadership.</p>	Trees and Landscape,	<p>Monthly meetings</p> <p>Regular email contact</p>
E5	To ensure that the programme includes targeted activities for specific groups	Commit to reaching targeted groups with interesting and appropriate activities including Young Carers, SEN schools,	Trees and Landscape, Leisure Development	<p>Young Carers: each half term, summer and Easter holidays.</p> <p>SEN schools: to offer termly visits to the HIVE</p>
E6	To actively seek and nurture new Partners to hire or deliver from the HIVE and enhance the Activity Plan	<p>To develop the partnership with the Healthy Hub so that the HIVE is a base.</p> <p>To explore delivery models with the Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust.</p> <p>To welcome hosting U3A groups with specific interest in Heritage, History, Biodiversity.</p>	Trees and Landscape, Leisure Development	<p>Regular meetings to be arranged throughout the year with all partners.</p> <p>U3A: to host monthly meetings at the HIVE for relevant groups</p>
E7	Monitoring and Evaluation of all activities	To complete monitoring and evaluation of activities. To include user details, knowledge assessment and satisfaction.	Trees and Landscapes Leisure	Throughout the year

To Effectively Market and Promote the Activity Plan to All in the Community

E8	Maintain and develop the LCP website to reflect the exciting activity plan	Regularly updating the website to ensure a fresh look with all relevant materials. Should activities be forced to close due to unforeseen circumstances, the website must include online activities and links for interested parties	Trees and Landscape, Leisure Development Marketing Manager	Throughout the year including each half term, summer and Easter holidays
E8	Design appropriate marketing material for all sectors of the community	Regularly review and use different marketing style so that social media is used, printed material, email address groups and website channels are all used to reach targeted audiences	Marketing manager Trees and Landscape, Leisure Development	Throughout the year
E9	Adhere to the branding guidelines in all marketing messages	Follow the branding guidelines and encourage all onsite partners to do so	Marketing manager	Throughout the year
E10	Manage the Booking system for all activities	Adhere to the booking system for all activities	Trees and Landscape, Leisure Development	Throughout the year

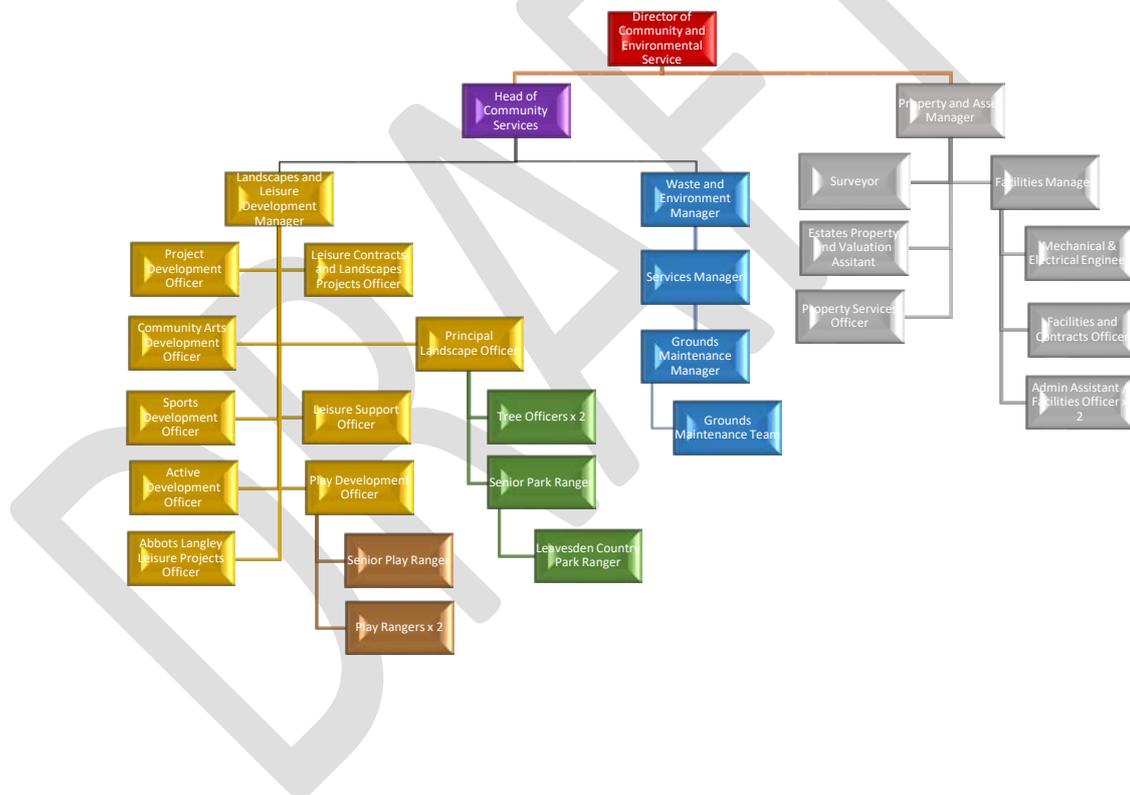
Resources and Funding

Resources - Staffing

The current staffing structure overseeing the management of Leavesden Country Park can be split into 3 sections:

- Conservation, tree management and biodiversity
- Maintenance
- Leisure and recreational facilities

All of these sections sit within the directorate of Community and Environmental Services and under the Head of Community Services and Head of Properties:



Existing staff resourcing is funded directly by Three Rivers District Council, with the exception of the Leavesden Country Park, Park Ranger, who is funded from the National Lottery Heritage Fund. This post ends on the 31 October 2021, however in order to continue the work around conservation, education and community involvement, there will need to be a plan in place to sustain this role for the future.

Posts within the remit of the Landscapes and Leisure Development Manager, along with the Principal Landscape Officer and specifically relating to Leavesden Country Park, are

responsible for the strategic management of the conservation within the park, developing the biodiversity of a variety of habitats, managing the tree stock as well as leading on an education programme for the local community.

Leisure Development Officers have been leading on the National Lottery Heritage Fund project to rejuvenate the park into a destination site. Over the next ten years, the Leisure Development team will review the existing infrastructure and recreational facilities to ensure they continue to meet the needs of the community as well as delivering a range of activities promoting health and wellbeing.

Staff within Environmental Protection are responsible for the day to day maintenance of the park and this will include roles such as:

- Inspecting play equipment and the Heritage Trail
- Grass cutting
- Litter picking
- Minor works and repairs
- Hedge and shrub cutting
- Cut and lift of meadow land where required
- Maintenance of the two key garden areas
- Cleaning and checks of Leavesden HIVE

Staff within Property and Facilities are responsible for the management of assets across the park. This includes the lease agreement with the YMCA (and subsequently the Leavesden Cycle Hub and Woodlands Café), car park area, lighting and Leavesden HIVE.

In addition, other departments across the Council support the work at Leavesden Country Park and will support the Management Plan over the next ten years. This includes links with the Council's Walking and Cycling Strategy, Community Partnerships and the establishment of a pop up Healthy Hub at Leavesden HIVE, working with MIND as well as Regulatory Services, where planning consent for works may be needed.

Funding

As with many areas in Local Government, the requirement is to focus on generating additional income to mitigate reductions in funding from Central Government, rather than impact any service delivery. With that in mind, funding for the management of Leavesden Country Park comes from, and will continue to come from, a variety of sources which includes capital and revenue funding from Three Rivers District Council's central budget supported by external funding.

A good example of funding to support the development programme of a park or outdoor space, was securing additional funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund and Warner Bros. Studios Leavesden. This meant that we were able to extend service delivery and enhance the site over a 3 year period. Alongside S106 funding from a recent housing development, ensured the delivery of an extensive heritage restoration, conservation and community education programme, including capital works and a three year activity programme through to Oct 2021.

The main elements of the funding bid were:

- Capital works to build a bespoke Heritage and Wildlife Centre, The HIVE, as a hub for the heritage (built, social and natural) and wildlife community education programme
- A Park Ranger to deliver the community wildlife education programme and develop the Friends of Leavesden Country Park
- A diverse Activity Plan to educate, train and engage the local community with the heritage and wildlife of Leavesden Country Park
- Restoration works to reflect the heritage of the park
- Conservation works to encourage biodiversity and create new and varied habitats for a wide range of wildlife

Enhanced Management and Maintenance

As a result of the project, increased investment is required in order to manage and maintain the park due to the improvements made. The following table details the uplift in Management costs over the next 5 years.

Expenses for the Park						
Item	Base	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Staff Management Costs	£16,749	£17,251	£41,769	£43,022	£44,313	£45,642
Landscape Maintenance	£62,510	£68,248	£70,295	£72,405	£74,576	£76,814
Leavesden HIVE	£0	£3,863	£3,978	£4,098	£4,221	£4,347
Heritage Trail	£0	£515	£530	£546	£563	£580
Street Furniture/Signage	£0	£515	£530	£546	£563	£580
Miscellaneous	£0	£1,545	£1,591	£1,639	£1,688	£1,739
TOTAL	£79,259	£91,937	£118,693	£122,256	£125,924	£129,702

Income to the Park						
Item	Base	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
TRDC Budget for the Park	£79,259	£81,637	£84,086	£86,609	£89,207	£91,883
TRDC Park Ranger * <i>(as a % of cost of the role for Leavesden Country Park only)</i>	£0	£0	£24,000	£24,720	£25,462	£26,225
TOTAL	£79,259	£81,637	£108,086	£111,329	£114,669	£118,108

Enhanced Maintenance Costs	£0	£10,300	£10,607	£10,927	£11,255	£11,594
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TOTAL Over 5 Years	£54,683
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The above table is based on estimates at this time and is subject to available resources and funding available moving forward.

Council Budgets

Funding for the conservation, tree management and biodiversity, including the staff management, are covered in the budget managed by the Landscapes and Leisure Development Manager. This is set and agreed at the Policy and Resources Committee meeting based on the upcoming year's programme of works.

The main Parks and Open Spaces Revenue budget covering maintenance, sits with the Environmental Protection team and this includes vehicle management, equipment and staffing of the Environmental Protection team to maintain the park day to day and maintenance or replacement of small value works.

Works to any buildings or assets within Park and Open Spaces such as pavilions, toilets or car parks and any associated utility bills, is catered for within the Property Management budget.

Any larger maintenance works, or works identified through the operational maintenance checks, are managed via the Capital budget, which is planned on a district basis rather than individual park or open space, and agreed at Leisure, Environment and Community Committee and subsequent Policy and Resources Committee. Match funding is sought wherever possible, which may be from partnership working with Parish Councils, utilising Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL funding, previously known as s106 funding) or seeking external funding from other stakeholders or funding bodies such as Public Health, Sporting bodies or National Lottery Funding.

Leisure and Recreational activities that take place in parks and open spaces, are funded from revenue budgets within the Leisure Development team, such as Community Arts, Play, Sport or Active Communities.

The Action Plan shows not only the required tasks, targets and responsibilities for the management of the site, but also the agreed budget. Where improvement of the site or its facilities are required, this is identified and the budget is agreed using the project management plans in place for Three Rivers District Council. Where there is no cost or the task requires no additional funding and is completed using Council staff and the staffing costs are covered using the above details on revenue budgets.

Any income generated within parks, e.g. activities, hire of grounds, filming, etc. and sports pitches and buildings fees, goes towards the budget stated above.

There are a number of volunteer organisations that work in partnership with the Council to deliver activities and support the work around the management of the park, such as the Friends of Leavesden Country Park, volunteers at parkrun and the Leavesden Hospitals History Association volunteers. Although materials, equipment and training costs are provided by the Council, the volunteer working hours offered, are considered to be a form of assisted funding as associated costs of volunteer management.

There remains the opportunity in the future for the Friends of Leavesden Country Park to begin fundraising to support their activities, as they become a more constituted organisation with the support of the Park Ranger.

The Council continues to face financial challenges and therefore needs to continue to seek external funding and generate additional income.

Reviewing and Managing

The new Leavesden Country Park Management Plan will follow on from the positive and successful work previously carried out on the site. It will be a simple, easy to read plan, accessible to interested members of the public and for use by Three Rivers District Council officers to help guide the work of Environmental Protection, contractors and volunteers.

The plan will include annual management maps to show the actions planned for each year with the resulting change represented on the map for the following year. The document will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains effective and relevant. The new plan process will assist in making decision and help to agree how Leavesden Country Park is managed. It will identify works, provide specifications and enable funding and resources to be allocated for improvements.

The Leavesden Country Park Management Plan 2021-2031, including the Horses' Field and East Lane Cemetery, will be reviewed annually between Trees and Landscapes, Environmental Protection and Leisure Development, during the autumn period. This review will consider the planned activities and associated budgets for the coming year, reflect on the previous year and make any necessary adjustments to ongoing maintenance regimes.

Additional capital expenditure for tasks will be identified and relevant funding procedures followed in order to deliver these projects.

Appendices

10. Appendices

- A. Mapping
- B. Maintenance Regimes
- C. Ten Year Capital Programme
- D. Wider context: Policies and Strategies that relate to the country Park
- E. Licences and tenants within the country park
- F. Health and Safety: building maintenance schedule and relevant risk assessments
- G. Essential Reading - National Lottery Heritage Fund Activity Plan and Conservation Plan

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