



Northumberland  
County Council

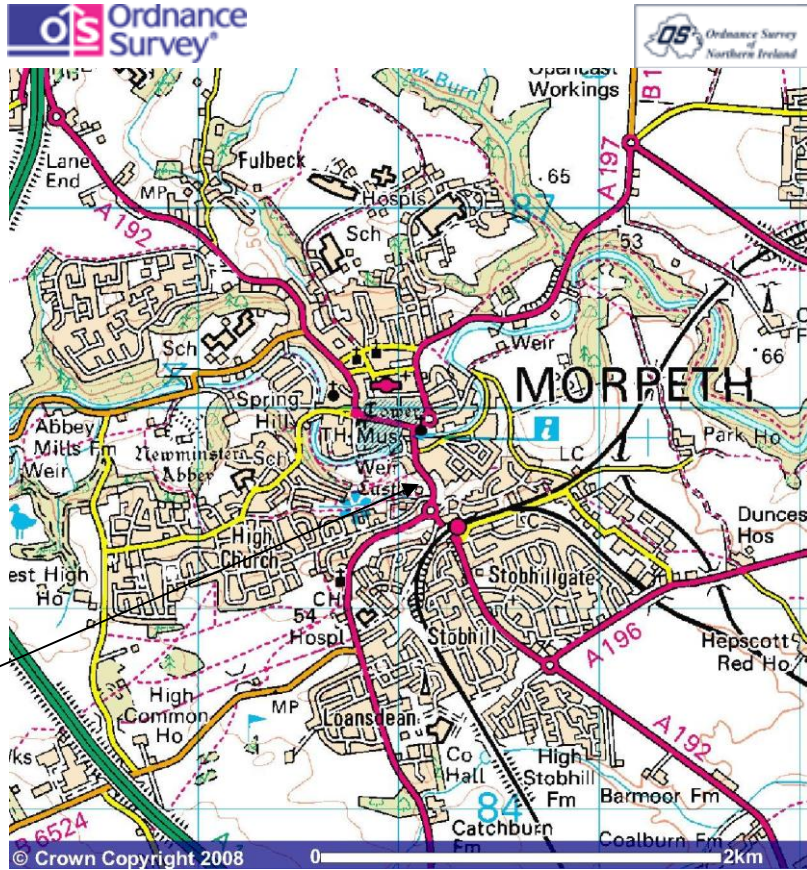


# Carlisle Park Management Plan 2021-2025



Northumberland  
County Council

[www.northumberland.gov.uk](http://www.northumberland.gov.uk)



Location of  
Carlisle Park  
Formal  
Gardens  
entrance.

© Crown Copyright 2008

[www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/getamap](http://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/getamap) Image produced from Ordnance Survey's Get-a-map service. Image reproduced with permission of Ordnance Survey and Ordnance Survey of Northern Ireland.

Carlisle Park  
Off Castle Square  
Morpeth  
Northumberland  
NE61 1YD

0345 600 6400

[www.northumberland.gov.uk/carlislepark](http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/carlislepark)



A map of Carlisle Park, also used in the leaflets and on the orientation panels within the Park.

### Local Government Structure

Carlisle Park management is part of Neighbourhood Services, the structure is shown in Appendix 6

Carlisle Park is located in the Northern region of Neighbourhood Services which extends from Stannington in the south of the county to Berwick in the north, across to the National Park Boundary in the west of the county.

The Carlisle Park and Green Spaces Officer now covers all urban green spaces in the North, which extends from Morpeth to Berwick. The site has no full-time officer

# Contents

## Introduction

Summary of the plan	8
The vision for Carlisle Park	8
General background	6
A brief history	6
Site details	7
Features within the Park	8

## Chapter 1

A welcoming place	11
1.1 Announcing the Park	11
1.2 Physical access	11
1.3 Social access	12
1.4 Aspects of design	12

## Chapter 2

Healthy, safe and secure	14
2.1 A sense of safety	14
2.2 Health and well-being	15
2.3 Equipment and facilities	15
2.4 Security	16
2.5 Towards a safer Park	17
2.6 Health and safety policies	17
2.7 Control of dogs	17

## Chapter 3

Well maintained and clean	19
3.1 Litter and waste management	19
3.2 Grounds maintenance	20
3.3 Buildings management and maintenance	20
3.4 Infrastructure and other facilities	21
3.5 Equipment maintenance - staff	21
3.6 Equipment use - public	22
3.7 Cleanliness	22

## Chapter 4

Sustainability	23
4.1 Environmental management	23
4.2 Pesticides	23
4.3 Materials	24
4.4 Resource conservation and waste management	24
4.5 Recycling	25
4.6 Horticultural and arboricultural management	25
4.7 Pollution reduction	25

4.8 Water efficiency	26
4.9 Energy efficiency	27
4.10 Air quality	27

## Chapter 5

Conservation and Heritage	28
5.1 Cultural landscape	28
5.2 Water management	29
5.3 Woodlands and trees	29
5.4 Grasslands	30
5.5 Other habitats	31
5.6 Fauna	31
5.7 Conservation of landscape	32
5.8 Conservation of the built environment	32
5.9 Maintaining historic character	33

## Chapter 6

Community Involvement	34
6.1 Patterns of use	34
6.2 Community involvement in green space management and development	35
6.3 Key stakeholders	36
6.4 Facilities	36
6.5 Children's play	36
6.6 Educational facilities	36
6.7 Open for all and Accessibility	37

## Chapter 7

Marketing	38
7.1 Information provision and interpretation	38
7.2 Events	39
7.3 Promotion	39
7.4 Using awards in marketing	40

## Chapter 8

Management	41
8.1 Management Structure	41
8.2 Personnel	42
8.3 Quality systems	42
8.4 Implementation	43
8.5 Local Strategic Context	45

## Appendices

1. Carlisle Park Work and project programmes	47
2. Budget information	51
3. Carlisle Park – Who does what	52
4. Play areas – operational and management information	56
5. Marketing plan	58
6. Structure Plan	61

7. 2019-21 Updates	62	11 Green Flag Feedback	81
8 Volunteer Guide	64		
9 Copy of Risk Assessment	74		
10. Proposed Works 2023	76		

# Introduction

## Summary of the Plan

This Management Plan sets out Northumberland County Council's aims for Carlisle Park, and what can be expected in terms of maintenance and development. It is intended to be a working document for all staff, volunteers and other stakeholders involved in the management and interpretation of the park.

This current plan was re-written in 2020 and updated in 2021 when the normal operating procedures and maintenance has been affected by the Covid –19 pandemic, and this will be reflected in some parts of the plan. Indeed, this is not a normal time for both staff and visitors alike and this is still uncertain times for all agencies involved in the park. However, it became apparent that Green Spaces and Parks were more than ever valued by all.

This plan is reviewed annually but contains 5-year Action Plans for maintenance and development. Northumberland County Council has written the plan and acknowledges the valuable contribution made by all stakeholders of the park. This plan is designed to complement and not replace the management procedures of other stakeholders.

The plan follows the guidelines set out by Cabe Space and The Civic Trust in 'Raising the Standard' (2004).

## The Vision for the Park

Carlisle Park is a vital element of a busy and thriving historic market town. The main purpose of Carlisle Park is to offer a clean and well managed green space which meets the needs of residents, workers and visitors to Morpeth as a place of calm or active and sociable activity. By involving Park users and the local community as the main drivers in its development and management, the aim of the park is to foster a sense of local pride and community cohesion.

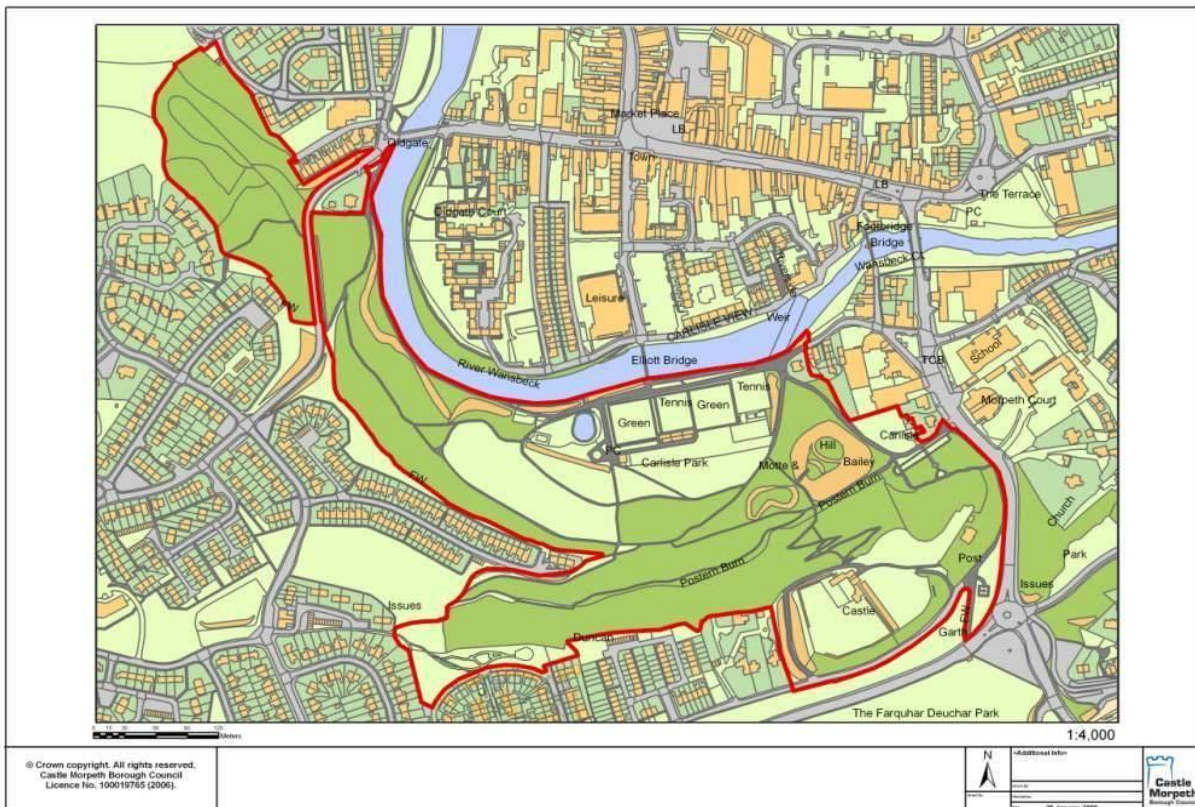
As such the vision for Carlisle Park can be summed up by the Mission Statement:

*'To maintain and develop Carlisle Park to a high standard, ensuring community involvement in its management, sustainable use of resources and making provision for recreation, education and healthy living in a safe and pleasant environment whilst providing and improving natural habitats for wildlife.'*

## General Background

Carlisle Park is situated in the centre of the busy Northumberland town of Morpeth, between the River Wansbeck and the remains of Morpeth Castle. The formal gardens form the eastern boundary near Castle Bank, the main route into Morpeth from the northbound A1. The western boundary of the park is the Oldgate Bridge, over the River Wansbeck with the Park forming an important part of the Wansbeck River Corridor.

The Park contains semi natural ancient woodland, formal gardens, bowling greens, tennis courts, a pavilion cafe, a river promenade, herbaceous and shrub borders, a greenhouse, an aviary and the William Turner Garden. There are two scheduled ancient monuments within the Park, which are the remains of Morpeth Castle and Ha' Hill, an 11<sup>th</sup> Century motte and bailey.



Map of the situation & boundaries of the park

## A Brief History

The earliest evidence of human activity within the current park boundaries date back to prehistoric times. However, the greatest evidence of settlement begins in the late 11<sup>th</sup> Century when the Castle and Ha' Hill were built to defend the south bank of the River Wansbeck.

Only the ruins of Morpeth Castle remain, following the siege of 1644 during the Civil War. The Earl of Carlisle, who owned the castle and the surrounding land, restored the gatehouse to a habitable state in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

In 1916 the Countess of Carlisle gave 33 acres of land to the town of Morpeth and the modern version of Carlisle Park was created. The laying out and planting of the gardens

cost the town £500, and the Park officially opened on September 13<sup>th</sup> 1929. The gardener's lodge house was built in 1929 with greenhouses and an aviary to the rear.

Four 'grassphalt' tennis courts were laid in 1926 and the bowling green was laid in 1927. The existing pavilion was built in 1951, replacing an earlier version that was moved into the park from Morpeth Common in 1925. The paddling pool was added in 1955.

The current southern boundary of the park was created in 1937 with the development of housing estates on land west of the castle and along the top of the ridge above the Postern Burn.

In 1996 Castle Morpeth Borough Council employed a consultant to prepare a report for the refurbishment of Carlisle Park. It was submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund which awarded Northumberland County Council £2.1million in 1999 to make a wide range of improvements. A condition of the funding included the appointment of a Park Manager and a Park Ranger. Work on revitalising the park was completed in 2002. Vast improvements to the accessibility and appearance of the entire park were made and the William Turner Garden was created. Management and ownership of Carlisle Park transferred to Northumberland County Council when the unitary authority for Northumberland was formed in 2009.

## Site Details

<b>Name:</b>	Carlisle Park
<b>Grid Reference:</b>	OS NZ196854
<b>Area:</b>	13 hectares
<b>Tenure:</b>	The site is owned by Northumberland County Council apart from the Bowling Green/Pavilion area which is owned by Morpeth Town Council and is managed by agencies working in partnership.
<b>Site Status:</b>	Urban Neighbourhood Park
<b>Legal Interest:</b>	Restrictive Covenant inherited by Northumberland County Council
<b>Designations:</b>	Site of Nature Conservation Interest (Northumberland Wildlife Trust, Northumberland County Council) Semi Natural Ancient Woodland (Natural England) Local Nature Reserve (Northumberland County Council, Natural England) Scheduled Ancient Monument – Morpeth Castle, Ha' Hill (English Heritage) Grade 2 Listed structures – gateposts at Castle Bank (English Heritage).
<b>Access:</b>	The Park is situated in the busy town of Morpeth in Northumberland and can be accessed from a number of main streets and over several bridges from the town centre. There are 12 entrances in total.
<b>Local facilities:</b>	There are public toilets (operated by Morpeth Town Council) in Carlisle Park, open from April 1 <sup>st</sup> until the end of October half term. The nearest year-round public toilets are Sandersons Arcade and in the Terrace car park off the junction of Bridge Street and Dacre Street.  Nearest public telephone: Morpeth Market Place



**Transport:****Buses**

The nearest bus stops are located near the formal gardens on the adjacent Castle Bank. Morpeth bus station is at Back Riggs, a five-minute walk to the north of the park.

**Train**

Morpeth train station is a fifteen-minute walk to the south of the park.

**Parking:**

The nearest car park is at The Terrace car park, just over the Telford Bridge in Morpeth Town Centre. Other car parking adjacent to the park is at Newmarket and Matheson Gardens. A disc system operates for all car parks. There are many other car parks in Morpeth, and space for coach drop-offs at Newmarket car park. A new car park is currently under construction near the Court House, started 2021, completed December 2022

## Features within the Park

Unless otherwise stated the Park features are managed by Northumberland County Council's Neighbourhood Services, part of the Local Services Directorate.

**Morpeth Castle and Gate House:** Owned by Northumberland County Council who are responsible for the remains of a section of the castle wall. The gatehouse is leased to Landmark Trust, who rent out the building as a holiday home and also maintains the internal garden and grassed/woodland bank areas.

**Ha' Hill:** Dating from the 11<sup>th</sup> Century and a scheduled ancient monument, this is one of only 16 remaining motte and baileys in the county. It would have formed part of the Castle's defence and is in the process of being reverted to a grassy mound at the request of English Heritage.

**Formal Gardens and Gates:** The formal gardens consist of lawn, annual flowerbeds and herbaceous borders. The baroque gate piers at the entrance to the formal gardens date back to 1929 and are Grade 2 listed structures. The gates to the park are the originals from 1929 and bear the Earl of Carlisle's heraldic inscription "*inter sylvas et flumina habitans*" 'between woods and rivers we dwell'.

**William Turner Garden:** Celebrates the achievements of William Turner the botanist, cleric and doctor and 16<sup>th</sup> Century son of Morpeth. This formal garden was built in 2001 and is a modern representation of a Tudor knot and physic garden. A version of the William Turner Garden was entered at the Chelsea Flower Show by Castle Morpeth Borough Council in May 2004 and won a bronze medal. This has been rebuilt in the grounds of Northumberland County Blind Association at Low Stanners, Morpeth.

**Herbaceous Borders:** There are planter beds or borders in several areas of the park including the formal gardens, between the Park Cottage and Elliott Bridge, on the path to the bottom of the 100 steps and at Oldgate Bridge.

**Aviary:** There has been an aviary in the park since the 1950s. It is very popular with visitors. All the birds are donated to the park by members of the public. The building was redesigned in 2001 and contains an inner unit heated to 72 degrees Fahrenheit as well as a sheltered corner to protect the birds from bad weather.

**Park Office and Greenhouse:** The office provides work accommodation for the park staff. The greenhouse is used for the maintenance of plants on occasion for the park and contains a 'mess room' for the gardeners and volunteers.

**Park Cottage and Lodge House:** The Park Cottage was occupied by a private tenant who paid rent to Northumberland County Council, currently this is vacant. The Lodge House is used as offices and was until Nov 2022 occupied by Greater Morpeth Development Trust, leased from Northumberland County Council.

**Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland:** There are remnants of ancient semi-natural woodland in the park, as well as secondary woodland, providing valuable habitat for protected species including badgers and bats.

**The Postern Burn:** This burn runs through the southern edge of the park and is a tributary of the River Wansbeck. The Environment Agency gave the Postern Burn Main River status in April 2006 and maintains the screens at the eastern end of the burn.

**Other Trees:** Trees are a very important feature with over 50 specimen trees in the park of a wide range of species. Of special value are the walnut and a stand of ornamental oaks near the tennis courts, the monkey puzzle trees in the formal gardens and the crescent of beech trees enclosing the sporting areas in the park.

**Play Areas:** There are three play areas in the park consisting of a paddling pool, swings, slides, and climbing multi units, as well as a toddlers' play area at Montrose Gardens Doorstep Green. These are managed by Morpeth Town Council. The paddling pool was refurbished in 2009 and 2019. The younger children's play area is fenced and accessible only to Guide dogs.

**Skate Park:** Installed in 2005 the skate park is managed and maintained by Morpeth Town Council. It is very popular with skaters, BMXers and bladers.

**Sports courts, bowling greens and pavilion:** All weather tennis is situated in the park. There are two bowling clubs based in the park, Morpeth Gents and Ladies have one committee to represent their interests. The sports facilities are currently managed by Morpeth Town Council, transferred freehold in 2020

**Trim Trail:** Installed with funding from the Northumberland Strategic Partnership in 2006, the trim trail is used by Morpeth Harriers and Morpeth Rugby Club as well as the general public for fitness training. The signage was installed as part of the 'Liveability' funded Castles, Woods and Water project.

**Outdoor performance area and amphitheatre seats:** A permanent performance space was added to the park in 2001. Previously, several temporary bandstands had been features in the park. The amphitheatre seating overlooking the bandstand was sculpted from the ground form to provide grass seats.

**Seats and Sculptures:** There are 40 seats in the park. There is now a new sculpture in the formal gardens commemorating the local Suffragette Emily Davison erected in 2018. A mural has been created by a local school in 2018 to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Right to Vote for Women, this is on the side of the office block.

**Floral Clock:** The old floral clock that had fallen into disrepair was renovated in 2018 and taken on by a local group, The Friends of Morpeth Floral Clock who fund and maintain this feature with a new floral display annually.

**Promenade:** Built in the 1930s, the promenade runs the length of the park and forms a pleasant and popular walk along the northern border alongside the River Wansbeck. It was re-laid in 2006 and repaired annually since to address issues of subsidence and drainage.

**Montrose Gardens Doorstep Green:** Created in 2005 with external funding and partnership working with High Church Action Group and Carlisle Park staff. It has transformed this neglected area into one with formal paths, street lights, seating areas, and a toddlers' play area. The Green is maintained by NCC staff and volunteers. The play area is maintained by Morpeth Town Council.

**War Memorial, known locally as the Cenotaph:** Used as the focal point for annual remembrance services.

**Bridges and Crossings:** Oldgate Bridge and Elliott Bridge cross the River Wansbeck directly into the park, forming entrance features from the northern part of Morpeth town. River Wansbeck crossings are maintained by Northumberland County Council Highways Department. There are several footbridges crossing the Postern Burn within the Park, installed or upgraded through the Heritage Lottery Fund and maintained by Northumberland County Council.

**Street Lights:** Lighting was installed along the southern bank of the River Wansbeck in the Park in 2001. The bulbs are now LED. There is also a light on top of the Aviary and a security light at the park office.

**Public toilets:** Maintained by Morpeth Town Council, open from April 1<sup>st</sup> until the end of October half term holidays. The toilets include a RADAR accessible toilet, changing facilities and baby changing space. The toilets were refurbished in 2019.

**Litter Bins** are provided and maintained by Morpeth Town Council. All litter bins are emptied by Neighbourhood Services.

**Dog Bins** are provided, maintained and emptied by Morpeth Town Council.

**Salt Bins** are provided and filled by Park Staff, who are also responsible for salting the paths in the park in icy weather.

**The Restrictive Covenant:** When the land on which Carlisle Park lies was given to the town by the Countess of Carlisle in 1916, a restrictive covenant was placed on the park. This forbids the charging of admission to the park, the use of the park for profit and drinking alcohol in the park.



Riverside Walk

# Chapter 1

## A Welcoming Place

*The overall impression for someone approaching and entering the site should be positive and inviting.*

### 1.1 Announcing the Park

There is a total of 12 access points to Carlisle Park, 5 of these are classed as main entrances.

The main entrances are well maintained and well signed, with entrance features containing the name of the park, orientation panels, interpretative panels and notice boards.

Orientation panels are located at the Formal Gardens, Elliott Bridge, Oldgate Bridge and the Hillgate entrance. Interpretation panels are located at the entrance to the Postern Woods. Instruction panels are located at each of the trim trail stations. Notice boards, for advertising events and other information, are included at Elliott Bridge and Formal Gardens.

Morpeth Town Council maintain the mandatory signage around the paddling pool, pavilion and play areas, as well as the signage at the public toilets detailing opening hours.

### 1.2 Physical Access

Many local people use the Park as a route to and from the town centre, and children from at least three nearby first schools and two middle schools use it as a safe route to school.

There are bus stops and a pedestrian crossing outside the formal gardens. Morpeth train station is a fifteen-minute walk to the south of the park. The Park is featured on the signage at car parks and on the finger posts within the town. Carlisle Park features in directional signage installed in the town.

Safe car parking is available in numerous car parks in the town with disabled bays. There is no parking within Carlisle Park due to the original design and layout of the park.

Some staff and maintenance vehicles require daily access to the park; these are restricted to the red tarmac paths and the entrance to the Postern Woods.

Pedal cycles are welcome in the non- woodland areas of Carlisle Park. There are two cycle parking facilities.

Many people use Carlisle Park to walk their dogs. Dog bins are provided, and NCC's Dog Warden patrols to monitor and encourage responsible dog ownership.

Carlisle Park forms a major part of Morpeth's Town Trail and The Emily Davison Trail. The trail is marked by fingerposts throughout the town and Park; at the Oldgate Bridge and Elliott Bridge entrances, as well as in the nearest car park to the formal gardens.

### **1.3 Social Access**

Community involvement is a key element in the management of Carlisle Park - one of the busiest and most well used parks in the County. This in itself improves the access in the park in terms of public safety and fear of crime. On site presence is important and park staff are friendly and helpful and able to understand and respond positively to park users.

Within the confines of the geography and topography of the park we have tried to ensure access for all. There are several steep inclines and major changes of level. Some steps are unavoidable, such as to the summit of Ha' Hill. Easy access paths have been installed in the wooded areas and up to the Castle from the Park. The William Turner Garden and Montrose Gardens Doorstep Green were designed to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 as far as practical with the change of levels. The play areas have a good mix of equipment and upgrades are carefully considered by Morpeth Town Council to ensure they meet standards for health and safety and inclusiveness. Installation of the skate park addressed some of the issues around play provision for 10–18-year-olds and in 2019 saw a multi climb unit being installed by the Town Council for older kids.

Lighting along the entire promenade contributes to the feeling of safety in this area. A CCTV camera has been installed to cover the skate park and formal play area which are used to provide evidence of antisocial behaviour. This is operated by Morpeth Town Council

The Park is patrolled by Northumbria Police's Morpeth Town Community Beat Manager who responds to notification of problems in the park and Police Community Support Officers

Northumberland County Council's Dog Warden and Enforcement Officer patrol Carlisle Park to tackle any reports of anti-social behaviour,

There are 4 park events run annually by Greater Morpeth Development Trust (Picnic in The Park), Morpeth Town Council (Easter Day Oranges), The Friends of William Turner and Morpeth Antiquarians (The Morpeth Gathering). None of the above events were delivered in 2020 and 2021 due to Covid restrictions. At present only Picnic In the park is proposed for this year 2022

Combined with the high volume of Park users, this helps to create a safe feeling in the park. Estimates show that 997,381 people used the park in 2008, making it the most visited attraction in Northumberland.

### **1.4 Aspects of Design**

Carlisle Park was originally designed in the 1920s and the layout of the park has been maintained as part of its heritage. However, there is opportunity for innovation to deliver

features and uses relevant to today's users, and to encourage a desire to explore and discover the features within the park.

The formal gardens, herbaceous borders and William Turner Garden provide space for good use of texture, colour and a mix of hard and soft landscaping. Plants which are most beneficial for wildlife are used wherever possible; those in the Emily Davison Bed and William Turner Garden are especially good for invertebrates.



**Picnic In The Park  
Event**

## Chapter 2

# Healthy, Safe and Secure

*The Park must be a healthy, safe and secure place for all members of the community to use.*

## 2.1 A sense of safety

The most sustainable solution to achieving a sense of security is by ensuring the park is a well-used and well-respected facility. With highly visible and well-trained on-site staff and careful planting schemes to ensure sight lines are kept open across the park, we can provide a safe and secure facility for local people. Involving local people together with other agencies is essential to ensure good and effective management and development of the park. These have included:

- Northumberland Youth Offending Service
- Northumbria Police Community Beat Manager and Police Community Support Officers
- The Friends of William Turner
- Morpeth Lions
- Friends Of Morpeth Floral Clock
- Morpeth Bowling Club

Over the past five years the agencies involved have changed due to different government funding priorities, and those listed above are likely to change in the future. However, Carlisle Park will continue to provide opportunities where possible for these groups.

The Friends of William Turner provide a regular presence through practical conservation tasks including weeding of their garden alongside Morpeth Lions who once a month in the growing season attend to help the gardeners.

Training agencies send placements to work in the park alongside the park staff. Northumberland Youth Offending Service uses the park for reparation work, where young people work one to one with a supervisor. There are currently placements available from the local college for the Level 2 Horticulture Course, currently suspended due to Covid concerns.

This increases the visible presence of staff and volunteers in the park and ensures essential daily maintenance work is done.

Park staff liaise with different agencies including Northumbria Police, young people's groups, and other NCC departments, including the Conservation and Archaeology team for advice on heritage and landscape projects. Involvement in these partnerships helps to ensure the park is well respected and well used and, therefore, safe and secure for all members of the community. No community volunteers were onsite during 2020, and 2021 has seen a slow introduction back when covid restrictions were removed, when staff resources allowed.

## **2.2 Health and Well Being**

The work done in Carlisle Park has contributed to many of the objectives set out in Northumberland County Council's Corporate Plan, including

- Pride of place
- Improve the natural and built environment
- Play a key role in tourism and culture
- People feel involved in the community
- Quality of life is improving
- Tackle disadvantage through support and intervention

The local sports clubs and Active Northumberland promote sports facilities and activities such as orienteering within the park. A trim trail is managed by Northumberland County Council and the Paddle Sport Club organises kayak training sessions and competition on the River Wansbeck between the Oldgate Bridge and Elliott Bridge.

A fixed orienteering course is maintained in the park, and Morpeth Gathering hosts an annual orienteering competition run by Newcastle and Tyneside Orienteers. The Park is a popular running route; Morpeth Harriers and non-affiliated runners regularly use the Park. The park now has a weekly Park Run on a Saturday morning, starting 2021 after covid restrictions were eased.

Morpeth Bowling Club has an active membership and provides the opportunity for members and visiting teams to take part in competition, practice and friendly matches of lawn bowls in a friendly and social environment.

A fitness programme called Buggy Fit aimed at new mums operates in the park on a regular basis. Another programme run by the Outdoor Fitness Company provides boot camp style exercise classes. Qualified fitness instructors co-ordinate and run the programmes under licence from Northumberland County Council.

## **2.3 Equipment and Facilities**

Different partners are responsible for maintaining and ensuring the safety of equipment and facilities in the park. External staff also makes additional checks. Appendix 3 outlines responsibilities in further detail.



**Toilets:** The public toilets are managed by Morpeth Town Council, who employs a contractor to provide an attendant service, keeping the toilets open every day from April 1<sup>st</sup> to October 31<sup>st</sup> annually. This ensures an excellent standard of toilets for the public.

**Play Areas:** Maintained, upgraded and installed by Morpeth Town Council. The Montrose Garden Doorstep Green play area was installed in 2005. They are annually checked by RoSPA and annually by Morpeth Town Council's insurer's Zurich Municipal.

Morpeth Town Council holds all records of inspections, and the reports provided by Zurich Municipal and RoSPA. Inspection sheets are completed for the weekly checks and for daily inspections only if the equipment is faulty.

The play areas are checked daily by a team under partnership with Morpeth Town Council, who carries out a routine visual inspection to identify any hazards and clean the play areas at the Doorstep Green, by the river in Carlisle Park, the paddling pool during its open season and the skate park. Operational inspections are completed weekly, checking the operational stability of the equipment and wear and tear. Any defects are isolated from use and repaired as soon as possible.

The play areas are located in safe areas of the park, with plenty of seating. The paddling pool play area is fenced and has signs stating that Guide Dogs only are welcome. The play area at Montrose Gardens Doorstep Green is fenced and fitted with a dog proof gate.

The paddling pool is open annually, operated by Morpeth Town Council, from the second May bank holiday until the end of the school summer holidays. It was completely refurbished in 2009 and 2019 and is maintained every winter. The paddling pool water is filtered constantly during the open season, however in the closed season the water is left in the pool unfiltered to prevent the pool being used as an area for skateboarding.

**Trim Trail;** the trim trail is maintained by the County Council and inspected weekly and recorded on the Total Mobile App

**Trees:** Park staff visually inspects trees at least once a week. Following stormy weather or gales staff check all trees to identify any at risk. Tree works in Carlisle Park adhere to Northumberland County Council's Tree Strategy guidelines. Neighbourhood Services staff are trained in chainsaw use so dangerous trees can be dealt with immediately.

**Lifebelts:** There are six lifebelts alongside the River Wansbeck which Carlisle Park staff are responsible for maintaining. These are checked on a weekly basis and checks recorded on Total Mobile.

**Hard Landscaping:** Hard landscaping is carried out as necessary by Park staff or Northumberland County Council staff. An annual inspection of footpaths is carried out by park staff in February, with the complete copies kept in the park office.

## 2.4 Security

Probably due to the high number of visitors, and partners working within Carlisle Park, there are no major security problems within the park, although there have been occasions when vandalism and nuisance have been a problem, especially during evening hours. As these activities usually occur outside of the normal working hours of Park staff, this has been tackled successfully through close liaison with Northumbria Police, CCTV cameras have been installed in 2019.

In addition to this, local people including the Friends of William Turner, Morpeth Litter Pickers and Morpeth Bowling Club take responsibility for the park and work closely with Park staff, reporting vandalism and anti-social behaviour.

Placement providers must ensure that any placements based in the park without a dedicated supervisor are DBS checked if needed.

## **2.5 Towards a Safer Park**

Many of the items discussed earlier contribute towards a safer Carlisle Park. Sight lines are kept open along promenades, with lighting along the river and from the formal gardens to the Cenotaph. The park is floodlit and is covered by CCTV in areas and this level of cover is being assessed and reviewed where needed

The agencies listed in Chapter 2.1 help to develop a sense of community ownership, and staff are trained, easy to identify and capable of dealing with security situations. Northumbria Police regularly patrol the Park.

Park staff and contractors employed by Morpeth Town Council monitor all aspects of health and safety and any dangerous situations are made safe quickly or secured from public use and recorded on the County Councils 'Near Miss' forms.

## **2.6 Health and safety policies**

As part of Northumberland County Council, Carlisle Park has a Health and Safety Policy which is displayed in the Park Office and all risk assessments are available on the council's internal website. Risk assessments are completed every time large scale maintenance such as tree felling, or tree pruning takes place by the responsible officer.

Copies of the NCC accident forms and Near Miss forms are kept online and all Park staff are trained to complete them. A copy of a risk assessment is in Appendix 9.

The first aid location is at the park office and greenhouse. Carlisle Park has all operational staff trained on emergency first aid.

The high level of positive use in the park creates a sense of security for lone working. Lone working cannot be avoided, and when it does occur staff carry a mobile phone and record their whereabouts on a white board in the office. Personal attack alarms are available for staff if they feel they need them.

Within Neighbourhood Services there is a rolling programme for training of staff, covering chainsaw use, pesticide use, and use of machinery, first aid, customer care, manual handling and dealing with difficult situations. All Park staff will be qualified to a recognised standard where applicable.

## **2.7 Control of Dogs**

Dog walking is a major activity in Carlisle Park. Dogs may be off-lead but the bylaws require dogs to be 'kept under control'. The Dogs Fouling of Land Act 1996 also compels owners to clear up dog waste.

The policy of Morpeth Town Council is to treat dog waste as separate rubbish. Park users will be encouraged to use a normal litter bin if no dog bin is nearby. Park staff provide guidance for visitors as necessary.

The play areas and sports areas are designated 'no dog' areas, with guide dogs allowed. However, this is not specifically monitored, these areas are Morpeth Town Council operated and not NCC, signage is visible and the compliance rate is high. This would be difficult to assess, but there have been no complaints on the issue raised with park staff

Northumberland County Council's Animal Welfare Officer is available to spend time in the park to educate dog owners about their responsibilities, as well as to enforce the law about clearing up dog waste and to deal with strays. The Animal Welfare Officer attends events such as Morpeth Fair, and Picnic in the Park to promote responsible dog ownership.



Formal Gardens

## Chapter

# 3

## Well Maintained and Clean

*For aesthetic as well as health and safety reasons issues of cleanliness and maintenance must be addressed.*

High standards of maintenance and cleanliness are the prerequisites of a well-used, healthy and safe park. Poor maintenance produces hazards for the public and staff, and leads to an overall feeling that the site is uncared for. This can lead to a downward spiral of misuse and neglect that deters genuine users. Lack of cleanliness can be a first sign of the failure of maintenance and a lack of care by the site owners.

### 3.1 Litter and waste management

The Park is very well used and does suffer from small scale litter and fly tipping problems. Park staff, volunteers and placements empty litter bins as required but are checked daily to see if they require emptying, and collect other litter on a daily basis, often more frequently in busy months. Collection and disposal of this waste is done by the park staff. All waste from the site is sent to an Energy from Waste Plant facility. NCC employ a sub-contractor who keeps the riverside area and parts of the park cleared daily of rubbish and checks other bins for emptying.

Other partners, especially Northumberland Youth Offenders Service (outside of Covid restrictions) and the Morpeth Litter Group, also regularly litter pick the Park. All litter waste collected in the park is stored in a trade wheeled bin in the formal gardens. This is an important topic in schools but with no park staff available for educational visits, picking equipment can be loaned/acquired from NCC to user groups, they are sent a copy of the risk assessment, groups such as Brownies/Guides etc and NCC will organise the disposal of the litter bags collected.

A recycling bin for public use was installed on the promenade between the Park Cottage and Elliott Bridge in April 2007. This has been successfully used and it contributes to Northumberland County Council's policy of waste reduction.

Morpeth Town Council provides the Park's litterbins and a programme for replacement has been put in place. There are four dog waste bins in the park along main routes.

The ancient woodland sections of the park are bordered by housing and some residents still use the Park as a dumping ground for large items and general household rubbish. Neighbourhood Services' Enforcement Officer targets the areas around Rutherford Place and Castle Close, and has issued fixed penalty notices where appropriate.

A significant amount of green waste is generated from the formal gardens, the William Turner Garden, the herbaceous borders and shrub borders. Permissions were obtained from the Environment Agency to construct composting bays at the entrance to the Postern Woods.

A composting site was created at the edge of the bowling green in 2008 to take the green waste generated from the greens and the herbaceous borders in that area.

Worm composting facilities was deemed to be inappropriate for the amount of suitable waste generated within the park. The composting facilities are not licensed to take green waste from anywhere outside of Carlisle Park.

Brushwood and tree waste from formal areas is chipped on site and recycled into the herbaceous borders as mulch. Green waste from the ancient woodland areas is usually left in-situ as valuable wildlife habitat.

## **3.2 Grounds Maintenance**

The Park is maintained to a high standard. After ensuring the Park is safe, clean and tidy, the Park staff carry out a range of maintenance and horticultural and arboriculture operations. These are shown in more detail in the Work Programme in Appendix 1.

Park staff are supported by the grounds maintenance team, volunteers and other partners.

Specialist contractors are used where it is impractical for Northumberland County Council to purchase the necessary equipment. Neighbourhood Services staff are trained in tree climbing and dealing with larger trees so more arboriculture work can be done in-house. There is a tree team that can tackle larger works, such as felling dangerous trees

## **3.3 Buildings management and maintenance**

Northumberland County Council's Strategic Property Services Team is responsible for maintaining the office, lodge, and the public toilets. Greater Morpeth Development Trust, and Morpeth Town Council are responsible for all other aspects of their buildings respectively. The Property Services Team are contacted by park staff to notify them of a problem, which they will respond to by sending out the relevant tradesperson.

Property Services maintain the whole of the Park Cottage, the Park Office, staff toilet, greenhouse and garage. Landmark Trust manages the Castle's gatehouse. The Property Services team are responsible for annual inspections on the security system,

annual inspection on the firefighting equipment, electrical PAT testing on equipment and ensuring all insurances are in place. All held on a central data base.

The greenhouse is over 25 years old and is showing signs of decay. This is cleared of vegetation and gutters cleared when needed. One greenhouse was removed in 2014 due to the decay. Plants are now brought in from outside suppliers but grown on by in house team at Stakeford Depot. All major defects are reported to the Property Services Team. Park staff are responsible for the aviary and maintain it to the specifications set out in the Aviary Policy, which is kept in the Carlisle Park Office.

As a result of the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 the Council carried out a survey of all buildings. The access around the bowling pavilions was improved with the installation of handrails in 2005-6. This has now been superseded by works in 2021. The park office and greenhouse are level to allow wheelchair access

### **3.4 Infrastructure and other facilities**

Northumberland County Council is responsible for the maintenance of the footpaths, castle walls and the boundary walls, hedges and fences of the park. Bridges over the Postern Burn are maintained by Neighbourhood Services and the bridges over the River Wansbeck are maintained by the Highways team, Bridges section.

Users and volunteers report any damage they see, and repairs that cannot immediately be made by Park staff are reported to the council's call centre for action by the relevant department. Paths and hard surfaces are checked and are regularly swept by hand and by a mechanical sweeper where accessible. Graffiti and fly tipping are removed within the council standard of 48 hours, and usually within 24 hours.

The seats in Carlisle Park, except in the William Turner Garden, have been available to be dedicated as memorial seats. A programme of varnishing them is undertaken on a rota basis

### **3.5 Equipment maintenance – staff**

All staff, including Park staff, undergo an intensive induction covering health and safety and safe use of machinery. Neighbourhood Services staff are included in the Northumberland County Council training programme.

Risk assessments for park staff, placements and volunteers are available on Northumberland County Council's intranet, or on file in the office. No vehicles are left in the park overnight.

Park staff are responsible for day-to-day maintenance and safety checks on small machinery, such as chainsaws and brush cutters. Machinery has an annual service done organised through Neighbourhood Services. Vehicles are maintained at the Neighbourhood Services Fleet depot and all staff are responsible for checking vehicles before driving them. There is a driver's handbook and relevant training is given to all users of Council vans

All vehicles and ride on mowers are fuelled at the Neighbourhood Services depot. The small amounts of fuel needed to operate small machinery is stored at the depot and brought to the park in secure containers as it is needed.

### **3.6 Equipment use – public**

All areas of the park containing equipment for public use, including the play areas, sports areas, trim trail, benches and signage are checked daily for litter, debris, graffiti and other potential hazards.

Litter, debris, graffiti and fly posting is dealt with straight away whenever possible by park staff or Morpeth Town Council contractors.

Lifebelts are checked weekly by Park staff. The trim trail equipment is checked weekly by park staff with an annual Zurich Municipal inspection of the trim trail equipment; records logged on Total Mobile. The trim trail is checked annually by an external RoSPA inspector.

Morpeth Town Council employ a team to inspect play areas and skate park daily and all equipment is checked annually by an inspector, and annually by Zurich Municipal.

Morpeth Town Council has subcontracted the regular checks and maintenance of the sports facilities including tennis courts, bowling greens and putting green to Neighbourhood Services under a Partnership Agreement.

Any major faults are reported immediately, and unsafe equipment secured from public use until repairs can be carried out.

### **3.7 Cleanliness**

Green space maintenance, and that of buildings, equipment and infrastructure within the park are guided by Best Value Ni195 (a litter, b detritus, c Graffiti and d Fly-posting) in conjunction with the District Local Environmental Quality Survey (Dleqs), within Neighbourhood Services' policies for cycles of maintenance.

There are specific Neighbourhood services policies for:

- Vandalism
- Needles and syringes Sharps
- Fly posting
- Fly tipping
- Graffiti

The varied ownership of the infrastructure within the park, and throughout the town, can result in delays in removing graffiti, so Neighbourhood Services' Enforcement Officer offers a Service Level Agreement to owners of non-council property to enable NCC to effect quick removal of any graffiti or fly posting.

Authorised officers can also give fixed penalty notices where they believe an offence has been committed.



## Chapter 4

***Willow weaving in the Postern Burn***

## **Sustainability**

*Methods used in maintaining the green space and its facilities should be environmentally sound, relying on best practice according to current knowledge. Management should be aware of the range of techniques available to them, and demonstrate that informed choices have been made and are regularly reviewed.*

Northumberland County Council is determined to make Morpeth a sustainable town where future generations will inherit a better environment. To improve the environment the Council will work with residents, visitors and businesses through the Community Partnership Initiative.

Carlisle Park provides a focal point for all members of the community. facilities and operations in the park demonstrate commitment to Northumberland County Council's environmental policies.

### **4.1 Environmental management**

An Environmental Standard for Carlisle Park was developed in 2008. It follows the core strategy of Northumberland County Council. Park staff and stakeholders have signed up to the policy and contractors are also made aware of it. A copy is kept in the Carlisle Park Office. There is a new Climate Change Action Plan that NCC has created in <https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Climate-Change/climate-faqs.aspx>. This will dictate future plans when discussions are to be held with the Climate Action Team.

### **4.2 Pesticides**

The use of chemical pesticides has been shown to reduce biodiversity, to cause adverse health effects and contaminate the environment. In the interests of protecting park users,



many of whom are children, and staff, pesticide use will be minimised and eliminated where possible.

Within Carlisle Park, the bowling greens are the area where most pesticides are used including fungicides and herbicides, but this is now owned/managed by Morpeth Town Council

Some herbicide was essential on Ha' Hill, to prevent regrowth of the trees that were first felled in 2005. English Heritage have stipulated that Ha' Hill be returned to a grassy mound. Limited staff resources prevent annual cutting back of any coppice but in 2013 a flexi graze scheme was initiated which saw Shetland Sheep brought in from May to November. This will happen annually to help with vegetation control instead of herbicide use. This has worked well with no problems re sheep in an urban environment, with new permanent signs placed on public entry points re dogs on leads to inform the public

All pesticides used within Carlisle Park are stored at the Neighbourhood Services depot, overseen by a BASIS trained stores operative. All pesticides are applied by appropriately trained staff.

An audit of the pesticides used in Carlisle Park between 2006 and 2008 is kept in the Carlisle Park office. The 2006 data forms a 'baseline' and an upper limit for pesticide use in the future.

No pesticides are used in The William Turner Garden. Regular use of the road sweeper, implemented from January 2008, around tarmac paths and the bandstand has reduced the need for pesticide application in those areas. The lawns in the formal garden are maintained by solid tining, spiking, hollow coring, Verti cutting and thatch removal during the growing season.

The crazy paving path in the formal gardens is treated with herbicide early in the season and when slippy, as all other forms of weed control are unsuitable. This part of the park is however due to be removed and replaced with a camomile lawn effect in 2023 under the Capital Investment Programme.

### **4.3 Materials**

No tropical hardwoods are used for timber products within the park, and where practical, all wooden materials are either reclaimed or Forest Stewardship Council certified. Benches and Picnic table ordered for 2016 will be recycled plastic.

All office paper used within the Park Office is recycled.

### **4.4 Resource conservation and waste management**

Northumberland County Council is committed to waste minimisation; this is a key target of Neighbourhood Services. Carlisle Park endeavours to help Northumberland County Council attain its waste minimisation targets by composting green waste on-site and providing recycling facilities for visitors. Unfortunately, compost is still used that contains peat until suitable viable alternatives are investigated.

Replacement Park furniture in the past was made from sustainable resources manufactured by prisoners at HMP Acklington. In 2015 new recycled plastic benches/picnic tables were installed. New benches when needed will be recycled plastic or other suitable green alternatives

## **4.5 Recycling**

Recycling has been covered in detail in Chapter 3. In summary, Carlisle Park has storage space for materials for re-use and recycling. A public-use recycling bin was installed near the bowling greens in 2007. The Park composts its own green waste, however the licence required for this from the Environment Agency prevents any green waste being composted here from any other locations. All staff, volunteers and placements within the park are encouraged to recycle.

## **4.6 Horticultural and Arboricultural Management**

The Formal Gardens, herbaceous borders and the annual bedding usually on a theme to commemorate anniversaries and events, are a major attraction, drawing in visitors from around the region on a regular basis. They are also in keeping with the heritage of the park and preserving them is vital to maintaining horticultural skills within the Council.

The carpet bedding for the floral clock allows local organisations to promote significant anniversaries or occasions, it featured the 500th anniversary of the birth of William Turner in 2008. In 2019 the 90th anniversary of the formal handing over of the park by the Countess of Carlisle and the County Council was created with a display using the colours of the family crest. In 2020 it celebrated the 75th Anniversary of VE Day, 2021 the Northumberland County Flag, 2022 there will be a celebration of the Queens Platinum Anniversary and 2023 the King's Coronation

Carlisle Park has won Northumbria in Bloom's 'Best Park in a Small Town over several years the latest being 2018, with Morpeth winning best town. The Bloom entries for the area are led by Morpeth Town Council with input from many partners, including Northumberland County Council. Morpeth Town won Gold at the Britain In Bloom in 2019. The town council has not in 2020 or 2021 submitted Morpeth or the park into the award scheme. No information is available yet for 2022 or 2023.

The woodland areas of the park are managed in accordance with the best environmental practice, with the aim of preserving and improving the species composition to maximise wildlife habitat. Standing dead wood is left in place when it poses no risk to public safety. Fallen dead wood, felled trees and brash are left as habitat piles for invertebrates, birds and small mammals. The woodland maintenance scheduled is included in the Work Programme, Appendix 1.

## **4.7 Pollution reduction**

Some machinery is noisy when used, however this is kept to a minimum where practical in terms of staffing levels. Ear protection is provided for all staff working with machinery.

All non-recyclable waste is kept within a marked trade waste bin near the aviary and emptied twice weekly if necessary.

Waste from the aviary is bagged and disposed of in the trade waste bin.

Street lighting is in place along the promenade, there is a light at the aviary and flood lighting at the skatepark. The benefits to security and positive use of the park by maintaining these lights are invaluable, which offsets any light pollution they may cause. The more 'natural' areas of the park are not artificially lit.

Water pollution in the Postern Burn can be a problem. Surface water from surrounding road drains empties straight into the burn, as does municipal waste water from several wrongly connected drains in nearby residential properties. A Northumbrian Water sewer pipe runs the length of the burn in the Postern Woods, crossing from the north bank to the south under the footbridge made from railway sleepers. Northumbrian Water have discharge consents for combined storm overflow drains to empty into the burn and into the woodland in times of heavy rain.

Park staff report sewage overflow into the Postern Burn to the Northumbrian Water and the Environment Agency. Northumberland County Council's Environmental Services department carry out a statutory check of pollution levels in the Postern Burn every six months. The burn was classified as a Main River by the Environment Agency in April 2006. The Environment Agency are now responsible for removing any flood hazards, including clearing the culvert grating at the formal gardens. In January 2008 the Environment Agency installed new screens at the culvert and upstream of the first footbridge over the Postern Burn, travelling upstream. In 2022 there will be further works to the secondary screen

## **4.8 Water efficiency**

The main areas for water usage within Carlisle Park are at the paddling pool and bowling greens, both operated by the Town Council from 2020. In very dry summers the annual bedding is watered, as this is preferable to losing the plants with associated waste and costs. The William Turner Garden is rarely watered, as most plants are adapted to dry conditions.

The Bowling Club were previously successful in obtaining a grant from SITA Trust in to install a sprinkler system to water the lawns. The tank can take grey water from the roof of the pavilion. The system is automated and more efficient than the previous hose pipe system.

The water used at the paddling pool has been metered and monitored by Morpeth Town Council.

The greenhouse in the formal gardens has water storage tanks inside, which are filled by rainwater from the roof. This is used whenever plants are watered with a can. However, staff limitations mean that most watering in the greenhouses and formal gardens is done using a hose from the mains.

From 2008 better management of the annual bedding was implemented to reduce the need for watering throughout the season. The bedding will be watered thoroughly when it is planted, then kept weed free, which should reduce the need to water later on. Pots in the formal gardens and William Turner gardens will continue to be watered and fed throughout the summer.

Outdoor taps are locked when not in use.

Any new building within the park will incorporate grey water recycling systems for toilet flushes and watering plants.

## **4.9 Energy efficiency**

The Park office and Park cottage have double glazing.

All computer equipment, lighting and heating is turned off when not needed.

Any equipment is replaced with electric plant options appliances where possible, to include sourcing renewable energy alternatives for heating, lighting and other energy needs.

All vehicles are maintained to ensure maximum energy efficiency and records kept at the Neighbourhood services depot.

## **4.10 Air quality**

Northumberland County Council has electric vehicles which are pool vehicles although the geographical area imposes limitations on use, this area will be closely monitored for future developments in longer battery life technology or developments in charge point infrastructure.

Future developments will be constantly monitored and assessed to set an example to introduce cleaner vehicles in our environment. A roll out programme is happening from 2021



# Chapter 5



*View of Front Entrance to Carlisle Park & Morpeth from the Castle circa 1930*

## Conservation

*Particular attention should be paid to the conservation and appropriate management of natural features, wildlife and flora; landscape features; buildings and structural features.*

### 5.1 Cultural landscapes

Cultural landscapes are particular landscapes that reflect the interaction over time between people and their surroundings.

Carlisle Park has a 1000-year history of cultural interaction between local people and landscapes, from Ha' Hill, built in the late 11<sup>th</sup> Century, through to the statue, installed in 2018.

Conservation of the distinct features of Carlisle Park is detailed below.

## 5.2 Water management

The River Wansbeck and the Postern Burn are the two natural water features in Carlisle Park.

The River Wansbeck, which forms the northern boundary of the park, is a clean river system and as such provides habitat for white-clawed crayfish, brook lamprey and otter. The river provides feeding ground for bats and birds.

The Environment Agency is responsible for most management of the river, and they stated that the Wansbeck may hold the world's largest population of white clawed crayfish.

Northumberland County Council is responsible for the maintenance of the fish pass and the infrastructure of the weir at Oliver's Mill. Current issues with holes in the weir are being advised by our Ecologist and the Environment Agency. The Environment Agency is responsible for keeping the river clear of large debris, such as fallen trees. Partnership working between Northumberland County Council, Morpeth Town Council and Greater Morpeth Development Trust contributes to clearing general litter from the river on an annual basis. There is also a new litter picking group in Morpeth who target litter hotspots and have held days within the park. The licence holder for the rowing boats is contracted by Neighbourhood Services to clear the riverbanks on a daily basis, which makes a huge improvement to the cleanliness of the river.

Morpeth Town Council employs a River Warden, who oversees the welfare of the wildlife on the River within Morpeth Town. There is also a member of park staff who keeps the river bed clear, picks litter and deals with grey squirrel control in conjunction with Morpeth & District Red Squirrels group who use volunteers.

The Postern Burn provides valuable open water habitat within the woodland on the southern edge of the park. The pollution problems discussed in Chapter 4.7 have precluded the development of a rich aquatic flora or fauna. Northumbrian Water and the Environment Agency have been engaged to address the problem of water pollution in the Postern Burn.

## 5.3 Woodlands and Trees

Carlisle Park contains patches of semi natural ancient woodland which provides extremely valuable habitat for local wildlife and flora, many of which are listed in Northumberland's Biodiversity Action Plan and are protected species, including:

- Pipistrelle, Noctule & Daubenton's bat
- Red Squirrel
- Spotted fly catcher
- Tree Sparrow
- Song thrush

The management of the wooded areas is carried out so as to cause minimum disturbance to the wildlife and to enhance the native woodland. No tree felling will take place during bird breeding season, badger breeding season or bat hibernation season unless the tree poses a risk to Park users.

Standing deadwood is left this is checked on a regular basis by Park staff to ensure that any risk to Park users is minimised.

Fallen deadwood is usually left on the floor of the wooded areas, again to provide habitat.

Dead elm and ash are assessed for risk and is felled when it is unsafe. Hazel has been coppiced on a seven-year cycle, especially using volunteers, to create woodland glades, to increase fruiting and to provide an extended habitat range.

New tree planting will use locally sourced stock as much as possible and the species selected comply with the National Vegetation Classification guidelines for woodlands.

Woodland ground flora is diverse in some areas, containing many native species including bluebell, wood anemone, and greater stitchwort. In contrast it is limited in other places, suffering disturbance through the creation of 'desire line' footpaths and areas used for adventure play by local children on steep bank sides. While opportunities for informal play are important, the compacted surfaces mean seeds and water run off easily. This has been addressed with the installation of woven screens reinforced with bramble and holly. These deter the use of the banks as desire lines and trap leaf litter and seed allowing soil accumulation and revegetation of the bank side.

There are many ornamental trees within the formal areas of Carlisle Park. An inventory of 'park' trees was conducted in March 2009, from which a programme of works or replacements will, take into account the wildlife value of Park trees.

Park staff work closely with the Tree Officer and the tree strategy kept in the Carlisle Park Office details how the maintenance of the trees in Carlisle Park will progress.

## **5.4 Grasslands**

While there are large areas of lawn and amenity grassland within the park, which provides space for passive recreation, wildflower meadows and areas of unmown grassland are also present. The amenity grassland near the bandstand was planted with a 'snowdrop' drift in 2005, as part of the Castle Woods and Water project in the town. To preserve the snowdrops the grass here cannot be cut until the snowdrops have died back. This has the added benefit of providing more undisturbed ground for invertebrate species such as mining bees.

The northern bank of Ha' Hill has been managed as wildflower meadow since 2005, providing excellent habitat for invertebrates, and a valuable educational resource for visiting school groups and events. This meadow must be cut in late August or early September, depending on weather conditions, and all arisings removed for composting.

Ha' Hill is listed as a scheduled ancient monument and English Heritage have stipulated that Ha' Hill be returned to a 'grassy mound', as it is one of only 16 remaining motte and baileys in Northumberland. The aim is to manage Ha' Hill as wildflower meadow, but over 30 years of limited maintenance has necessitated the removal of self-seeded trees, and is it proving difficult to reverse the extensive growth of bramble, blackthorn, rosebay willow herb and other scrub. However, these provide valuable habitat for birds and invertebrates such as the elephant hawk moth, for which rosebay

willow herb is a larval food plant. A detailed restoration and maintenance for the Hill (including the western spur) was developed in 2007 and kept in the Carlisle Park office. Extensive clearance of the invasive tree and scrub was undertaken in July 2009. Through the flexi graze scheme introduced in 2013 sheep have been introduced from May to November to graze the mound and will be grazed annually.

## 5.5 Other habitats

The William Turner Garden is a modern representation of a Tudor knot and physic garden and provides an area for the conservation of species plants, which would have been grown for medicinal and culinary use in the 1500s. It is a valuable seed bank for rare and non-cultivated plants, as well as an important area for education.

The herbaceous borders contain many tree and shrub species valuable to wildlife, including buddleia, holly and maples. Any improvements made to herbaceous borders and shrubberies throughout the park will be made to maximise value for wildlife, with planting suitable to the conditions at each location.

## 5.6 Fauna

Many visitors to Carlisle Park come to see the birds in the aviary, which is located in the formal gardens. All the birds in the aviary are donated by members of the public. The birds are checked by a vet and the capacity of the aviary is considered when new birds are donated.

Detailed specification for management of the aviary is held in the Carlisle Park office. In summary the aviary is cleaned out daily, disinfected weekly and the water is replaced daily. Improvement to the aviary was completed in 2008.

As the aviary has a solid roof and is away from the normal flight paths of the birds most associated with the Avian Influenza disease (which are ducks, geese, swans gulls and waders (RSPB 2007)) the risk to the birds here is very small. The owners of new additions to the aviary are required to have the bird checked by a vet before it is accepted and any birds that have lived in an aviary exposed to wild birds are not accepted in times of heightened awareness. A full risk assessment for the aviary is held in the Carlisle Park office.

Bird boxes and feeders were put up in 2002; however, the current policy is not to replace these. Changes to Health and Safety laws for use of ladders prevents easy erection of the boxes, as well as the annual checks and cleaning which is recommended by the RSPB.

Caution against the use of feeders for birds and squirrels has recently been highlighted by wildlife organisations including the Wildlife trusts and the RSPB through the rapid spread of squirrel pox and the *Trichomoniasis gallinae* virus affecting garden birds. Limited staff in the park means that the necessary maintenance of feeders could not be carried out so their use has been stopped.

There are numerous badger setts throughout the park, especially in the sandy soils behind the formal gardens, along the south bank of the Postern Burn and in Ha' Hill. Any work near the setts, especially footpath restoration on the Castle Path and brush cutting on the Ha Hill requires badger licences, respectively from the DEFRA and English Nature divisions of what is now Natural England. The setts are visually



monitored for signs of disturbance, and any suspicious behaviour reported to the Police and the Northumberland Mammal Group. The exact locations of all of the setts have been mapped and kept in the Park Office.

Park staff contribute to Northumberland County Council's red squirrel policy, taking calls for advice, reports of sightings by members of the public, providing information on reds seen and greys trapped to Save our Squirrels.

2010 brought the first sightings of grey squirrels in the park. Live tree traps are set and monitored by park staff and volunteers. Morpeth area is covered by a Group that are very active called Morpeth & District Red Squirrels which have funding streams that allow trapping to be done.

## **5.7 Conservation of landscape**

The wooded areas of the park are 'dene' woodland, being in valleys cut by the River Wansbeck and the Postern Burn. It is important to retain these, as many denes have been filled through landfill use for housing or for easy to maintain amenity grassland. It provides a valuable contrast to the formal areas of the park, and an insight into the historical landscape dating from the time of the last ice age. The wooded area called Castle Woods is classed as ancient semi-natural woodland.

The Ha' Hill motte and bailey provides evidence of activity in the park since the 11<sup>th</sup> Century, evidence of a prehistoric cairn was found towards the western edge of Ha' Hill in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Limited maintenance of the hill has resulted in the encroachment of trees (mostly sycamore) and scrub (mostly bramble, blackthorn and rosebay willow herb) on the motte and the bailey (the spur to the west of the hill).

The area is now grazed annually. As Ha' Hill is a scheduled ancient monument, any works on the Hill involving earth movement must be approved by English Heritage. The hill is also home to several badger setts, and a licence to work in proximity to them is required for any scrub clearance.

The formal gardens provide a very important horticultural landscape feature and should be preserved as such. This part of the park provides the opportunity to conserve horticultural practices including carpet bedding for the clock, which was introduced to the park in the 1950s by the then Park Manager.

## **5.8 Conservation of the built environment**

The remains of the curtain walls and the gatehouse of Morpeth Castle are the most important structural features in the park. The Gatehouse is maintained by The Landmark Trust as a holiday property. It is open to the public for one day per year.

Northumberland County Council is responsible for maintaining the curtain wall. Currently any view of this is obstructed by growth of trees and scrub, similar to that on Ha' Hill. Restoration of this area will be investigated with all stakeholders. Advice on maintenance is sought from the NCC inhouse conservation team.

The bowling pavilion is an important building and is well used during the bowling season. This was recently refurbished by the Town Council

The gate posts at the entrance to the formal gardens are a Grade 2 listed structure, and the gates are the originals from the opening of the formal park in 1929. They have been restored and repainted in 2018 alongside the rails along the prom.

## **5.9 Maintaining historic character**

The historic landscapes (Ha' Hill, Morpeth Castle, the ancient woodlands, the formal gardens) require active conservation, to provide opportunity to promote understanding of the value of historic environments and landscape design. Assistance is acquired from our in house conservation team when needed. Careful consideration of the history of Carlisle Park must be taken into account if any future developments are made, as a well thought out restoration can enhance civic pride and neighbourhood regeneration.



***Morpeth Gathering***

# Chapter 6

## **Community involvement**

*Park management authorities should actively pursue the involvement of members of the community, with representation of as many park user groups as possible.*

Community involvement is at the heart of the successful use, management and improvement of Carlisle Park. The support of local people, user groups, partners and other stakeholders is fundamental to its success. Community involvement in the park operates in many different ways and at many different levels.

### **6.1 Patterns of Use**

Visitor number surveys carried out during 2007 and 2008 show that almost one million people used the park between November 2007 and October 2008. These figures were submitted to One North East's Tourism Network North East's Visitor Attraction Data Collection and show that Carlisle Park is among the most visited attractions in North East.

There is a need to understand the hopes and wishes of the groups who have a stake in how the park develops as well as those who are not so easily represented. Monitoring attitudes to the park would ensure that management and future developments meet the needs and some expectations of the park users. Previously there was a Carlisle Park Forum however this has migrated into the Friends of William Turner Group.

Future development potentially of the infrastructure near the aviary could include consideration for market research within the park. Staff time is now fairly limited to undertake a full visitor survey at present but could become a future project for other park user groups. There is also an opportunity to allow online feedback from the public through the Northumberland County Councils website which would need further investigation

## 6.2 Community involvement in green space management and development

There are many stakeholders in Carlisle Park, and many elements of Park management are the responsibility of different stakeholders, often working in partnership:

There is the potential to develop further links with local businesses around maintenance and management of Carlisle Park and this will be investigated.

**The Friends of Carlisle Park** had been successful fundraisers for the park securing over £80,000 to fund the William Turner 500 project and improvements to Scotch Gill Woods Local Nature Reserve in 2008

**The Friends of William Turner** found funding to create a gazetteer in 2016. The Friends of William Turner have spent 7 days maintaining their garden, creating a new fern garden. Friends Of William Turner have also produced education worksheets based on the garden available on the NCC website and e-mailed round to all schools in the Morpeth area. Activities during the Covid pandemic have been curtailed and this is reflected in days worked onsite.

**Morpeth Lions** have created woodland bank area in 2019 with 11 volunteers working over 3 days to celebrate their 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary and undertake monthly weeding days

**Morpeth Litter picking group** operate through the park and were recognised in the Love Northumberland awards 2021 and 2022 hosted by Northumberland County Council

**The Morpeth Friends of the Floral Clock** were also recognised for all their work in fund raising to keep the clock maintained by the Love Northumberland awards. NCC work in partnership providing all labour and assistance

There is a Volunteer Co-Ordinator appointed by NCC in 2019 who has produced a Volunteer Code of Conduct (App 8) and co-ordinates risk assessments and keeps in communication with all registered volunteers. Any new volunteers if working under NCC supervision need to fill out the Volunteer Code of Conduct.

**The Friends of the Aviary** are two regular members of the public who have taken it on themselves to look after the Aviary and attend on a weekly basis providing additional food and toys for the birds.

A list of all stakeholders is in Appendix 3

The CPS have had 10 youths working over 3 days helping keep the park tidy and there are 2 regular volunteers who work weekly to help the gardeners. There has been a level 2 horticulture trainee from Kirkley Hall College. All volunteers were seriously affected by Covid in 2020 and 2021, with no input into site operations. Currently 2021 has seen the return of one volunteer.

## **6.3 Key stakeholders**

Several organisations have a role in the management of Carlisle Park and would be consulted if any major development is to take place in the park. Relationships between Park staff and all stakeholders are good enough to facilitate informal contact between meetings. Appendix 3

## **6.4 Facilities**

There are a great variety of facilities within Carlisle Park offering recreational opportunities for many sectors of the community, as have been discussed in earlier sections of this plan.

Carlisle Park is a popular venue for events run by Morpeth Gathering Committee, Morpeth Chamber of Trade, Greater Morpeth Development Trust and Morpeth Harriers and Park Run. All events in 2020-1 were not undertaken due to Covid restrictions. At time of writing the future of events in 2022 is still uncertain.

## **6.5 Children's play**

Morpeth Town Council are responsible for the play areas including the paddling pool, bowling pavilion/cafe, tennis court and skate park within Carlisle Park, including the toddlers' play area at Montrose Garden Doorstep Green. They also manage the signage in these play areas as part of the statutory requirements for the areas.

The play areas and skate park are visually inspected daily for litter and structural damage. Weekly maintenance checks are done on the structures to ensure they are of sound quality. All inspections are recorded and the forms held at the Town Council offices. Morpeth Town Council's Operational Management of Play Areas document is included in Appendix 4.

Morpeth Town Council have been proactive in the installation of new play facilities. They chair a skate park stakeholder group which involves young people and other members of the community to ensure the skate park meets the needs of its users. High Church Action Group were involved in the selection of the equipment for the Doorstep Green, alongside Morpeth Town Council's playground contractor, to make sure that the equipment was suitable and practical to maintain.

A detailed description of the management of the play areas, provided by Morpeth Town Council is included in Appendix 4.

## **6.6 Educational facilities**

An annual events programme comprising 4 small scale events has operated within Carlisle Park, with input from partners including the Friends of William Turner and Morpeth Town Council. There is limited capacity for NCC staff to operate events but would consider use of the space by other agencies.

The wildflower and rough grassed areas are maintained for educational value and used by local schools, as are the woodlands and river. There is currently no classroom facility in the park, but the bowling pavilion has been used for children's events,

however as it has been developed as a café it may be unlikely to be available for school groups, this would be at the discretion of Morpeth Town Council.

Every year opportunities for work experience could be a possibility offered to Northumberland College Kirkley Hall Countryside Management students and Northumbria University Environmental Management students. Eight students have taken this opportunity in the past, with three of them then securing employment as a Weekend Ranger. Those posts are no longer current. These opportunities are dependent on staff being available to host, and with current staff reductions in 2021 this be reviewed case by case following Covid restrictions easing

Adult education forms a major part of the community involvement of Carlisle Park, with work experience offered to New Deal placements, as well as other groups such as Castle Morpeth Disability Association. Park staff work with these groups to provide experience on horticultural, practical conservation and ecological aspects of park management.

## **6.7 Open for all and accessibility**

In line with the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 all improvements to Carlisle Park are designed to ensure maximum accessibility within the natural topography of the landscape, and activities promote equality of opportunity. The William Turner Garden knot and physic garden is fully accessible to wheelchair users. 2022 will see a successful bid to NCC's Capital Parks programme for funding to improve the visibility and access of the Turner Garder come into operation.

The public toilets in the park have a RADAR key accessible toilet available for use all year round.

Guidelines for visual impairment are followed for production of new panels and leaflets; however, Braille is not used on any panels because a very small percentage of the population can actually read Braille.



**Emily Davison Statue**

## Chapter 7

# Marketing

*A green flag park should have a marketing strategy which is used and regularly reviewed, good provision of information for users and effective promotion of the park as a community resource.*

Carlisle Park is open for use by everyone, and regular activities, staffing and the promotion of events held by partner organisations will encourage positive use of the park. Involving people in the park by providing accurate information about the park, events that take place here and how it is managed is important.

To effectively market Carlisle Park, park staff must have a detailed knowledge of the park, its history and its use and value to the local community. Public trust in the park can be built up by promoting the high standards that people can expect when they visit, as well as promoting beneficial activities.

A marketing plan for Carlisle Park was developed in 2008.

## 7.1 Information provision and interpretation

Information about Carlisle Park is recorded and presented in a variety of ways:

- The Northumberland County Council website hosts two Carlisle Park pages – [www.northumberland.gov.uk/carlislepark](http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/carlislepark) and [www.northumberland.gov.uk/williamturner](http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/williamturner)  
These contain background information and visitor information.
- Carlisle Park events, activities and successes are publicised by Northumberland County Council's Communications Team.
- Booklets available free or minimum cost are the Emily Davison Trail, Carlisle Park at 90 and a guide to the William Turner Garden are available either from the Park Office or Tourist Information Centre

- Park staff work with the Communications Officer to inform the local press, radio and TV about park events and activities, including social media.
- Flora and Fauna information is provided on the interpretation panels within the Park.
- The notice board in the park are used to update visitors about work plans and other information.

## 7.2 Events

As described earlier, Carlisle Park supports 4 established local events including Morpeth Gathering, Easter Oranges, Morpeth Fair and Picnic in the Park in conjunction with different groups in the local community. Other partners run sporting, arts and cultural events. The risk assessments for events led by Park staff are held on Northumberland County Council's intranet.

Opportunities for diversifying the scope of events provided by outside agencies will be monitored.

Battle re-enactments in Carlisle Park have formed part of the Morpeth Gathering since 2004, taking place at the castle and near the bandstand. Picnic in The Park is a highly successful free event organised by Greater Morpeth Development Trust for one day in July which is themed annually, 2020 and 2021 were to be on the theme of Environmental Issues, however these were cancelled due to the Covid Restrictions in 2020 and 2021

Neighbourhood Service's Park staff have responsibility for ensuring the park is cleared of litter after large events, this has formed part of the partnership working with the various organising groups. Extra bins are provided for large events.

All traders at events must enter into a formal licence agreement to ensure environmental health and health and safety standards are adhered to. There is specific risk assessments for traders/operators to deal with the Covid pandemic

## 7.3 Promotion

Carlisle Park has significant historical and ecological value that we endeavour to promote to visitors and local people. Excellent design is essential, and now routinely expected by park users.

Northumberland County Council has had an in-house design team, to produce promotional material, based on detailed briefs from Park staff. However, this is now outsourced

Interpretation and orientation panels were updated in 2007, replacing those at Elliott Bridge and the entrance to the Postern Woods with new panels installed at the Lodge, Hillgate and Oldgate entrances following feedback from visitors, Green Flag award schemes. Trim trail signs were also installed. All signs are inspected daily, and any graffiti removed immediately. Notice boards are included at Elliott Bridge and at the Lodge House in the Formal Gardens and where events happen are added. There were no events held in 2020 and in 2021. There were also no community volunteers



on site so no notifications are on the boards until a clear plan is in place for their safe return.

Park leaflets were also updated in 2015, with new promotional leaflets and William Turner Garden leaflets produced. These will be reviewed when they run out with a view to putting all online to cut down on paper usage. All relevant information is held on the website. A new updated Emily Davison Trail booklet and Carlisle Park at 90 were produced in 2019

## **7.4. Using awards in marketing**

All awards won by Carlisle Park and Park staff, including the Enjoy England Quality Assured Visitor Attraction, Northumbria in Bloom Awards and Green Flag are used to as promotional opportunities and have served to raise the profile of the park and its staff throughout the local community.

The Green Flag is flown in the formal gardens, visible from the A192 which is the main route into and out of Morpeth.

Both the Green Flag logo and the Enjoy England logo are displayed on Park leaflets and panels, at the notice boards and on the park pages of Northumberland County Council's website.

The Green Flag Award certificate occupies pride of place in the park office and the green flag proudly flies from the flagpole 365 days of the year.



**Morpeth Castle**

## Chapter

# 8

## Management

*A successful park must have a management plan. It is essential to set out a balance between priorities, partners and policies, while setting out a time scale for putting objectives into practice. It should identify the contribution the park makes towards the area's wider strategic aims and demonstrate sound financial management. The management plan must be regularly reviewed and actively implemented.*

The value of Carlisle Park has long been recognised by Northumberland County Council. Carlisle Park was one of the first in the country to be awarded a restoration and improvement grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund and success in the Green Flag Award has been a council objective, agreed by Full Council and the Corporate Management Team, since 2006.

### 8.1 Management Structure in Carlisle Park

Carlisle Park benefits from a robust, but essential staffing profile, with the equivalent of two full time staff, and support from other staff in the unit, including the tree officer, senior NEAT team leader and the Neighbourhood Services Area Manager.

The Park staffing structure is now as follows:

Unit	Post	Person	Hours
Neighbourhood services	Carlisle Park and Green Spaces Officer	Frances Povey	37 hrs Monday – Friday plus weekend events, permanent (not full time onsite)
Neighbourhood services	Gardener	Vacant	37 hours Monday – Friday, permanent

Neighbourhood services	Gardener	vacant	37 hours Monday – Friday seasonal (April – October)
Neighbourhood services	Trees and Woodland Officer (North)	Michael Armer	37 hours Monday - Friday, permanent
Neighbourhood services	Senior NEAT Team Leader (Central)	Anthony Bell	37 hours Monday – Friday permanent
Neighbourhood services	Neighbourhood Services Manager (Central)	Paul Lowes	37 hours Monday – Friday , permanent

The staffing structure currently works well as the grounds staff and Green Spaces Officer enable the continued improvement of Carlisle Park, working closely with other officers and partners including The Friends of William Turner. 2021, however has seen a staffing cut back with the reduction of the part time Green Spaces Officer post around 12 hours per week. Also there has been a reduction in gardener staff from 2 full time to now one full time and one seasonal, covering April to end October only. Currently the operational side of the park maintenance is being reviewed in light of the staffing reductions and will become clearer. A copy of the structure is in Appendix 6

## 8.2 Personnel

Carlisle Park staff must have skills which reflect the dynamic nature of green space management, including working with communities, volunteers and trainees, managing budgets, marketing, events management, community consultation, dealing with contractors, public enquiries as well as high quality land management skills. All Northumberland County Council staff must complete an annual performance appraisal review with their line manager, which identifies training needs as well as individual achievements over the year. Copies of all Park staff training certificates are held online, as well as with NCC's Human Resources department.

This management plan, especially the action plan detailed in Appendix 1, provides staff with a clear sense of direction and information relating to the improvement of the park.

## 8.3 Quality systems

The Carlisle Park action plan and work programme (Appendix 1) provides a means of monitoring and measuring improvements to the park and the effectiveness of overall management of the park.

The Neighbourhood Services unit is part of the District Local Environmental Quality Survey and the awards achieved by Carlisle Park are a means of self-assessment of performance. The importance of this is reflected in the inclusion of attaining or maintaining the Green Flag Award in Northumberland County Council's Corporate Plan.

Financial management for Carlisle Park includes:

- Budget management
- Forward financial planning
- Identifying future investment programmes
- Raising revenue for Park management

While every effort has been made to accommodate all eventualities for maintenance and promotion of the park, these budget predictions may change due to unforeseen occurrences, or in response to any external funding that is secured.

Park staff work in partnership with other stakeholders to identify funding for future park improvements such as Heritage Lottery funding, especially alongside the Friends of William Turner and Greater Morpeth Development Trust. There is a Capital Parks Improvement budget, operated by NCC that bids for funding that can be applied for, 2021 was a successful bid works to go ahead on the site around the Aviary, William Turner Garden and removal of the old garage to improve sightlines and safety. The bid was around £60,000 with £10,000 coming from local County Councillors. This work is hoped to start spring 2022, detailed in Appendix 10. There is also a bid in for 2022 to improve existing paths and to improve the aviary, this will be know from April 2022 whether this works are to go ahead

There is a Restrictive Covenant on the Park, set up by the Countess of Carlisle when she gifted the land to Morpeth in 1916. It states that no fees can be charged for entry into the park and that no alcohol can be consumed in the park.

Three licences are currently let in Carlisle Park, for a bouncy castle, a refreshments van and the rowing boats. The revenue generated from these is directed into Carlisle Park budget alongside the rent from the Park Cottage. There is no further capacity to increase revenue through concessions as we are at a limit, the new café in the pavilion operated by Morpeth Town Council is in its first year in 2021. There are also numerous other businesses within a short distance in the town. Events that are free to the public operated by outside agencies are not charged as they are often of charitable status

## **8.4 Implementation**

Carlisle Park management plan is written with support of, and is given to, park stakeholders and partners

The action plan forms the basis for the planning of work in the park, and is given to all park staff. From 2007 it has been included in the Individual Performance Reviews for all park staff and encompasses the corporate and strategic vision of NCC as defined below.

**“Everything we do in Northumberland is focused around our Vision, Promises and Values.**

Our Vision for Northumberland is

‘Leading Northumberland to a greater future’.

We deliver our vision through our Promise to be:

**Stronger Together.**

We do this by:

**Leading Locally** - respecting localness, recognising that one size does not fit all and that we must work with local people to develop local services

**Embracing Unity** - unifying as one but recognising, valuing and respecting differences, celebrating pride and integration

**Looking outwards** - being open, without walls and boundaries, a learning organisation that works in partnership, visionary and a champion of aspiration and ambitions

Our Vision and Promise are underpinned by our values which are embedded in all aspects of service delivery and partnership working:

**Strength** – we are confident and will ambitiously drive the change and development required for Northumberland to succeed.

**Fairness** – we are democratic in our actions, treating everyone individually but equally, and with consistency

**Approachability** – we are accessible to all and will listen and respond to the views and opinions of everyone

**Innovation** – we recognise the need for continuous improvement and are creative in seeking new or improved ways of working

Providing excellent, value for money services to the people of Northumberland, those that live in, work in or visit our County is at the heart of everything we do.”

## 8.5 Local Strategic Context of Carlisle Park

Parks sit within the Neighbourhood Services division of Local Services Directorate of Northumberland County Council. It is important for parks to be recognised strategically by Northumberland County Council to ensure they remain visible and valued in all sections of the council. Carlisle Park contributes to a number of policies including :

### 1. Northumberland County Council Corporate Plan 2018-2021 (Updated 2020/21)

The corporate plan sets out the council's vision, strategic aims and policy priorities for economic growth, places and environment, stronger communities and families, health and wellbeing and developing the organisation. Castle Vale Park and Coronation Park contribute to:

- 'Places and Environment – our aim is to maintain and further improve the quality of our towns, villages and countryside.
- Stronger Communities and Families – our aim is to ensure that all residents genuinely feel safe, belong, and have a say in how the county is run, and to provide a range of quality community and cultural services and facilities which inspire creativity and participation.

The link is <https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/About/Policy/Corporate-plan.aspx>

### 2. Neighbourhood Services Service Statement

The importance of well managed and maintained parks, country parks and green spaces are acknowledged in the 2018-21 service delivery plans, and the attainment of the Green Flag Award every year is a Key Performance Indicator. The link is;

<https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/NorthumberlandCountyCouncil/media/About-the-Council/Performance/Service%20statements/Neighbourhood-Services-Service-Statement-2019-21.pdf>

### 3. Northumberland Local Plan Document

As public open space, Castle Vale Park and Coronation Park fit into the council's Local Plan Delivery document, specifically in the following areas:

- 'Policy 45, Recreational Open Space - include policies for the protection and enhancement of open space, sport and recreation facilities relevant to the Delivery area.
- Policy 46, Green Infrastructure - identify local green infrastructure assets to be protected and seek opportunities to create new green infrastructure.'

**Other strategic areas that the parks contribute to include:**

- Northumberland Sustainable Communities Strategy to 2021
- Northumberland Biodiversity Action [https://www.nwt.org.uk/sites/default/files/2018-10/Nland Biodiversity Action Plan.pdf](https://www.nwt.org.uk/sites/default/files/2018-10/Nland_Biodiversity_Action_Plan.pdf)
- Northumberland's Master Climate Change Action Plan 2021-23 was published on Feb 10<sup>th</sup> 2021 <https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Climate-Change.aspx>
- 

**For further policy documents -**

<https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/About/Policy.aspx>

# Appendices

The following information is essential to the management and improvement of Carlisle Park.

## Appendix 1: Carlisle Park Work Programmes and Project Programme

### Work programme

Key; D=daily W=weekly AR = As Required GSO = Green Spaces Officer NEAT =park staff

What	Who	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<b>General</b>													
Open/close gates	NEAT	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D
Record rainfall	NEAT	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D
Check lifebelts	NEAT	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W
Check trim trail	NEAT	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W
Grey Squirrel control	Vols	AR											
<b>Ground Maintenance</b>													
Cut grass	NEAT			1	2	5	4	5	4	2	1		
Edge paths	NEAT						2		2			1	
Remove weeds	NEAT				1		1		1		1		
Cut back Vegetation	NEAT				1					1			
Empty bins	NEAT	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D
Litter pick	NEAT/ Vols	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D
Footpath inspections	GSO			1							1		
Footpath repairs	GSO	AR											
Clean signage	NEAT				1								
Grit footpaths	NEAT	AR											



Repair tarmac areas	Highways	AR											
Repairs site structures	NEAT	AR											
<b>Horticulture</b>													
Prune shrubs	NEAT			1									
Strim borders	NEAT			1	2	2	2	2	2	2	1		
Apply mulch	NEAT		1										
Plant spring bedding	NEAT										1		
Remove spring bedding	NEAT						1						
Plant summer bedding	NEAT						1						
Remove summer bedding	NEAT									1	1		
weeding	NEAT					2	2	4	4	4	4		
Prune Hedges	NEAT											1	
Tree inspection	Tree officer											1	
Tree Works	NEAT	AR											
Greenhouse maintenance	NEAT	AR											
<b>William Turner Garden</b>													
Sweep paths	NEAT	2	2	2	3	3	4	4	4	2	2	2	2
Prune roses	NEAT												1
Mulch beds compost	NEAT	AR											
Prune yews	NEAT						1						
Cut knots	NEAT						1						
weeding	NEAT				1		2		2		2		
Spray paths	NEAT			1						1			1
Water pots	NEAT				10	20	30	30	31	20			
<b>Aviary</b>													
Clean & check, water, feed	NEAT	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D
Disinfect	NEAT	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W
Vet Inspection	Vet						1						
Change bedding	NEAT				1				1				1
<b>Ha Hill</b>													
Sheep onsite	GSO					1							
Check/feed sheep	NEAT					D	D	D	D	D	D		
Sheep Offsite	GSO											1	

# Projects Programme

	Activity	Lead	To be done	Year					
				20	21	22	23	24	25
<b>1</b>	<b>Herbaceous Border/Rockery</b>								
	Trim Shrubs	NEAT	Annually	Y	Y	Y			
	Lift & Divide plants	NEAT	Annually	Y		Y			
	Strim grass areas	NEAT	Annually	Y	Y	Y			
	Re design planting scheme	GSO	From 2022			Y			
	Plant plants/bulbs in rockery	GSO	Annually		Y	Y			
	Re design steps and old rockery	Contractor	From 2023						
<b>2</b>	<b>Formal Gardens</b>								
	Winter bedding for Floral clock	NEAT	Annually	Y	Y	Y			
	New signs for notice board on Floral clock	GSO, FOFC	Spring 2022			Y			
	Re-do all levels to Turner Garden	Contractor	From 2023						
	Re-design aviary roof	Contractor	From 2023						
	Remove garage/replace with container	Contractor	From 2023						
	Manuring all beds	NEAT	Spring 2022			Y			
<b>3</b>	<b>Woodland Bank/William Turner Garden</b>								
	Strim around trees	Morpeth Lions	Annually	Y	Y	Y			
	New plants for Turner Garden	FOWT	From 2022			Y			
	New labels for Turner Garden	GSO	From 2021		Y	Y			
	Repairs to surfaces	Contractor	From 2021		Y	Y			
	Mulch beds	NEAT	Annually			Y			
	Cut beech hedge to lower height	NEAT	From 2022			Y			
<b>4</b>	<b>Butterfly Garden</b>								
	Re design the bed	GSO	From 2023						
<b>5</b>	<b>Entrances</b>								
	Widen postern burn entrance	EA	From 2022			Y			
	Improve Oldgate Bridge	Contractor	From 2023						
	Tidy/renew panels boards	Contractor	As needed						
<b>6</b>	<b>Doorstep Green</b>								
	Remove derelict steps	Contractor	From 2022			Y			
	Repair the block paving	Contractor	From 2022			Y			
<b>7</b>	<b>Woodlands &amp; River</b>								
	Thin invasive sycamores/poplar	NEAT/Volunteers	From 2023						
	Replant native trees	GSO	From 2022			Y			

	Repairs to paths	NEAT	Annually	Y	Y				
	Repairs to Weir	Ecologist/EA	From 2023						
	Inspect trees	GSO/Tree Officer	Annually	Y	Y				
	Cut back over growth	NEAT	Annually	Y	Y	Y			
<b>8</b>	<b>Trim Trail</b>								
	replace old grass mats	NEAT	From 2023						
	Replace damaged signs	Contractor	From 2022			Y			
<b>9</b>	<b>Ha Hill</b>			y					
	Remove overgrown shrubs	NEAT	From 2023						

## Carlisle Park Management Activities

TASK	RESPONSIBILITY	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
Update Carlisle Park Management Plan	Green Spaces Officer	1											1
Coordinate Green Flag Award application	Green Spaces Officer	1											
Coordinate VAQAS Application	Green Spaces Officer				1								
Support Friends of William Turner	Green Spaces Officer												
Collate Annual report on park usage	Green Spaces Officer	1											

## Appendix 2: Budgets

The following information is taken from the 2020/21 staffing budgets for Northumberland County Council's Neighbourhood Services Green Spaces Team.

<b>GROUP</b>	LOCAL SERVICES	<b>BUDGET HOLDER</b>	Paul Jones
<b>DEPARTMENT</b>	Neighbourhood Services	<b>BUSINESS SUPPORT CONTACT</b>	Debbie Haefner
<b>COST CENTRE</b>	222500		

Post Designation	Grade	Fte	Min Point	Max Point	Spinal Point	Total Salary
CARLISLE PARK AND GREEN SPACES OFFICER. Permanent	CM Grade 7	1.00	30	34	34	32,234
GARDENER. Permanent	CM GRADE 4 SCPT 13 - 17	1.00	18	21	21	21,748
GARDENER. seasonal	CM GRADE 4 SCPT 13 - 17	0.5	18	21	21	12,686

2.50

## Appendix 3: Carlisle Park Partners - Who Does What

For the purpose of this management plan stakeholders of Carlisle Park are those agencies who have a contractual obligation to the management of the park.

### Purpose of this document:

This table has been produced in order to show which stakeholder is responsible for particular maintenance and management tasks within Carlisle Park. The involvement of so many different stakeholders can seem confusing to staff and other park user groups and partners, such as the Friends of Carlisle Park. It is intended this information will be a useful tool for all who are involved in care of Carlisle Park. The information in this document will be updated if and when any changes to management obligations are made.

All stakeholders will receive a copy of the management plan, and partners will be given a copy of this document.

Partner	Activities	Contact details
NCC Neighbourhood services – NEAT Team	Litter pick throughout park (except sports areas, play areas, skate park), including Postern burn and woodland areas	Carlisle Park and Green Spaces Officer/ Senior NEAT Leader NEAT operatives
	Trim trail checks and maintenance	
	Provision of 2 on site staff	
	Supervision of work placements	
	Park seats checks and maintenance	
	Sculptures checks and maintenance	
	Entrance features checks and maintenance	
	Footpath checks and maintenance	
	William Turner Garden checks, maintenance and planting	
	Formal Gardens checks, maintenance, planting and design	
	Gritting of formal areas	
	Cenotaph checks and maintenance	
	Street lighting checks and repair	
	Aviary maintenance	
	Annual check of birds	
	Emptying 'trade' bins	
	Emptying litter bins throughout park	
	Fly tipping removal	
	Checks for and removal of graffiti	
	Weekly life belt checks and replacement if necessary	
Grass cutting throughout park (except bowling greens and putting green)		
Opening up park in morning		
Open up and check park on Saturdays and Sundays - subcontractor		

Morpeth Town Council with TC employees and contractors	Provide attendant for public toilets from April - October	Morpeth Town Council 01670 514314
	Maintenance of flower beds in pavilion by TC employees	
	Maintenance of public toilets building	
	Play area seating and equipment provision, maintenance, checks and litter picking (including paddling pool)	
	Skate Park equipment provision, maintenance, checks and litter picking	
	Provision and maintenance of litter bins	
	Provision, maintenance and emptying of dog bins	
	Removal of debris from fish pass	
	River warden	

	Maintenance of bowling greens, putting greens and tennis courts (currently done through contract by Neighbourhood Services)	Transferred to Morpeth Town Council 2020
	Bowling pavilion maintenance (except structural and weather tightness)	
	Provision of attendant for sports area during bowling season	
	Bookings and facilitation for sports areas	
NCC Neighbourhood services - Countryside	Coordination of Green Flag Award application	Carlisle Park and Green Spaces Officer 01670 623033 HR Specialists – Health & Safety Public Protection- dog fouling
	Assisting in the In Bloom Awards with Town Council if applied for (no applications since 2019)	
	Liaising with all partner agencies involved in Carlisle Park	
	Securing external funding to develop Carlisle Park, sponsorship, CIP	
	Management of licences and rents	
	Restoration plan, surveys, policies	
	Events planning and facilitation with outside providers including Morpeth Gathering, Picnic In The Park (GMDT) and Park Run	
	Interpretation of new features, 2023 Queen Elizabeth Park feature	
	Promotion and marketing	
	Website	
	Friends of William Turner support & Morpoeth Lions – action conservation tasks	
	Education	
	Budget setting for Capital programme	

NCC Assets Management	Full maintenance and repair of Park office, greenhouses, garage and staff toilet (under Neighbourhood services budget)	Corporate Property Manager 0845 600 6400
	Maintenance and repair of Statue	
	Full maintenance of Park Cottage and Lodge	
	Structural and weather tightness of Pavilion	
	Structural and weather tightness of public toilets	
	Collect rent for park cottage	
Landmark Trust	Morpeth Castle - holiday lettings and all maintenance	Di Newton Regional Organiser 01748 850603
NCC Environmental Health	Enforcement of responsible dog ownership	0845 600 6400
Environment Agency	Pollution control in Postern Burn or River Wansbeck, report incidence to.	Incident hotline 0800 807060
	Clearance of debris likely to cause flood risk from River Wansbeck	
	Provision and maintenance of screens in Postern Burn	
Northumbrian Water	Pollution in Postern Burn, report incidences to	Incident hotline 08457 171100
	Sewer pipe on south bank of Postern Burn	
	Storm overflow drain in Postern Woods	
NCC Highways	Maintenance of bridges over the River Wansbeck	0845 600 6400
	Maintenance of retaining walls and barriers along highways	0845 600 6400
NCC Facilities Management	Cleaning Park office, greenhouse and staff toilet (under Neighbourhood Services Budget)	07824 472653
Contractor – John Stewart	Closing William Turner Garden and Formal Garden gates, all year round. Cleaning of buildings	07730307543

## Licences

Licence	Licence Holder and details	Contact Details
Bouncy castle	Appointed on a 3-year basis by advertising by Green Spaces Manager and appointing successful applicant. Runs to 2024  Two bouncy castles and other fairground rides, May – October annually . All H&S and RA's checked by Green Spaces Manager and HR Team	Tommy Boyd 07721 720945

Refreshments Van	Appointed on a 3-year basis as above. Runs to 2024 Doughnuts, hot and cold drinks April – October annually. All checked with Public Protection re Food Hygiene	07904399292
Boat hire	Mr T. Donnelly Summer months and weather permitting. All RA's checked through Public Protection and HR team	01670 517709 07774 715745
Buggy Fit	Debbie Donaldson Year-round fitness class for new mums and pushchairs, Monday afternoons	01670 514774 07846 237855
Watersports Provider	Lui Perez – annual licence to provide all watersport activity on the river within park boundaries. Checked by HR Team and Ra's. Runs to March 2023	07540 412087



## **Appendix 4: Play Areas – Operational Management Information**

### **Information provided by Morpeth Town Council**

### **OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT OF PLAY AREAS**

#### **Introduction**

Morpeth Town Council operates the management of the following play areas and facilities:-

- Carlisle Park Play Areas
- Pavilion – tennis courts and bowling greens
- Montrose Gardens Play Area
- Carlisle Park Skateboard Park
- BMX Track

Morpeth Town Council are responsible for the management and maintenance of the play areas within the Morpeth Town Boundary in accordance with the **Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 section 19** which gives the power to a parish council to provide recreational facilities.

#### **Insurance**

Morpeth Town Council has all of the above sites covered by insurance with Zurich Municipal.

#### **Inspection and Reporting**

An inspection and reporting regime is in place to ensure they comply with Health and Safety legislation and that there is no risk to death or serious injury. The nature of play areas will present a number of obstacles which are purposefully included to encourage child development e.g. – steps, jumps and moving items.

The inspection and reporting regime will also help to get the best value of the equipment for its serviceable life through identified maintenance.

EN1176-7 European Safety Standards advises that each play area should have the following inspections:-

- Routine Visual Inspection
- Operational Inspection
- Annual Main Inspection

Morpeth Town Council exceeds this recommendation through the following arrangements:-

#### **Daily Visual Clean up and Inspection**

MTC under a partnership agreement with NCC routinely carry out litter and debris removal from play areas daily. This will include glass, wood, general debris and any dog fouling. Any damage or defects are reported to Morpeth Town Council.

### **Weekly Visual Inspection**

MTC under the partnership agreement routinely inspects the play areas on a weekly basis.

Church Walk and Carlisle Park are inspected daily during the summer months.

This inspection is logged on a report form. Any damage or defects are reported to Morpeth Town Council.

This identifies any obvious hazards that can result from vandalism, use or weather conditions.

### **Weekly Operational Inspection**

Bothalhaugh Gardens, MTC Contractors routinely carry out a more detailed inspection to check the operation and stability of the equipment, especially for wear. Routine maintenance is also carried out in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Any damaged equipment which cannot be repaired immediately is immobilised and appropriate warning notices displayed. Any damaged items are reported to Morpeth Town Council. This inspection includes all site equipment, surfacing perimeter fencing and access gates. This inspection is logged on a report form.

### **Ad hoc Inspections, Accident and Complaint Investigations**

The Deputy Clerk of Morpeth Town Council is responsible for ensuring that the work of the Morpeth Town Contractors -NCCis being carried out in accordance with the contract. The Deputy Clerk looks for service improvement and to ensure Health & Safety compliance. The Deputy Town Clerk will investigate any accidents or complaints and liaise with the appropriate contractor to ensure necessary improvements are actioned. The Deputy Clerk liaises with the independent RoSPA Inspector and the Insurance Inspector. The Deputy Clerk will maintain the appropriate documentation including the receipt of reports from all contractors and inspectors.

### **Annual Main Inspection**

All play areas are inspected once per annum by ROSPA. This inspection is to establish the overall level of safety of equipment, foundations and surfaces. The annual inspection is carried out by a competent ROSPA qualified inspector. A detailed report is provided to Morpeth Town Council at the end of the inspection which highlights any failings with key recommendations.

### **Annual Insurance Inspections**

All play areas are inspected at least once per annum by Zurich Municipal. Carlisle Park and Church Walk Play Areas are inspected twice per annum. This inspection is to establish the overall level of safety of equipment, foundations and surfaces. The inspection is carried out by a competent qualified insurance inspector. A detailed report is provided to Morpeth Town Council at the end of the inspection which highlights any failings with key recommendations.

# **Appendix 5: Carlisle Park Marketing Plan**

## **Introduction**

### **Northumberland County Council Formal Parks**

#### **Communications and Marketing Plan**

##### **Background**

Northumberland County Council wishes to promote its formal parks to residents and visitors to the county, as well as local businesses, schools and community groups, highlighting the unique features of each park, and the availability of activities, events, volunteer activities and Friends of groups, enabling visitors to make informed decisions about how to plan a trip to the park, to attract new visitors and to encourage multiple repeat visits.

The council also wishes to obtain the views of people who do and don't visit the parks, and use this information to inform the management decisions for our formal park sites.

This work will be led by the Neighbourhood Services Green Space Officer responsible for each park.

##### **What we need to do – our objectives**

Our communications and marketing plan aims to do three things:

- ❑ Raise awareness of our formal parks to residents, visitors, community groups and businesses to encourage first and repeat visits.
- ❑ Encourage people, groups, schools and businesses to get involved in the parks through events, volunteer activities, Friends of groups.
- ❑ Find out what people think of our parks and use ideas, suggestions, comments and complaints to inform our management decisions.

##### **Where we are now – the current situation**

Northumberland County Council has eleven parks which hold Green Flag Award status in 2022. The council is committed to increasing the number of Green Flag Parks by one each year.

Currently each park is promoted independently of the others.

Very few surveys have been carried out for any of the parks.

We have the opportunity to combine the best of each of the park's current means of promotion and to create a countywide communication and marketing plan for all of our formal parks, ensuring a consistency in delivery of service across the county.

## What we need to say – our key messages

Our communications and marketing work will say:

- ❑ In Northumberland we are committed to valuing and improving our parks.
- ❑ Our parks provide free access to nature, floral displays, events, walks, play and sporting activities and much more.
- ❑ Our parks are important places as, according to annual access to the countryside surveys done by Natural England, public parks are the most visited green spaces in the country.
- ❑ Access to the natural environment improves health and wellbeing, prevents disease and helps people recover from illness.
- ❑ We want more people to enjoy our parks, especially through events and activities
- ❑ We want people, groups and businesses to volunteer in our parks
- ❑ We want to know what you think of our parks, you can do this by contacting the parks teams directly or by completing our parks survey.
- ❑ Providing information is quick and easy
- ❑ There are a number of ways you can contact us:

Contact the Green Spaces Officer for your area

South East – Jimmy Reith 01670 620048  
jimmyreith@northumberland.gov.uk

West – Sam Talbot 01670 625583 sam.talbot@northumberland.gov.uk

North – Frances Povey 01670 623033  
frances.povey@northumberland.gov.uk

- Contact us via the website [www.northumberland.gov.uk](http://www.northumberland.gov.uk)

## Who we need to say it to – our publics

Initial groups to target include:

- ❑ Internal audiences: staff at the council, schools and children's' services, adult services and healthcare providers, councillors and board members, customer service staff within the council
- ❑ Residents.
- ❑ Visitors to the county.
- ❑ Businesses and community groups, including scouts, guides, U3A, gardening clubs, etc.

## **How we will say it – our media**

A variety of communication methods will be used as follows, but the main medium we wish to use is web based:

- ❑ Northumberland Life Events listings
- ❑ Northumberland County Council website and partner websites.
- ❑ NCC Social networking profiles (facebook, Twitter, etc.)
- ❑ Site specific leaflets for parks where suitable, at the minimum to include Carlisle Park, Hexham Parks, Hirst Park, Ridley park, Castle Vale Park, Coronation park
- ❑ Site based interpretation, information panels and noticeboards for parks where suitable, at the minimum to include Carlisle Park, Hexham Parks, Hirst Park, Ridley park, Castle Vale Park, Coronation Park
- ❑ Targeted local poster campaigns (for events, Friends of groups and activities) in libraries, shops, tourist accommodation and Tourist Information Centres
- ❑ North East based radio station with good coverage of Northumberland
- ❑ Northumberland News.
- ❑ Press release to local press and media.
- ❑ Staff room and internal communications channels for staff and members.
- ❑ Relevant and targeted online advertising.
- ❑ Relevant parish and local magazines.

## **How we will measure it – our targets**

Detailed performance measurements will be produced. We will use these to judge the overall success of our communications and marketing plan. This will include:

- ❑ The number of people completing our Parks surveys.
- ❑ Number of people attending events, activities, volunteer tasks and Friends of meetings.
- ❑ Evaluation forms from events, activities, volunteer tasks.
- ❑ Calls or emails to the Green Spaces officers.
- ❑ Media monitoring.
- ❑ Website traffic.
- ❑ Leaflets required per site per year.

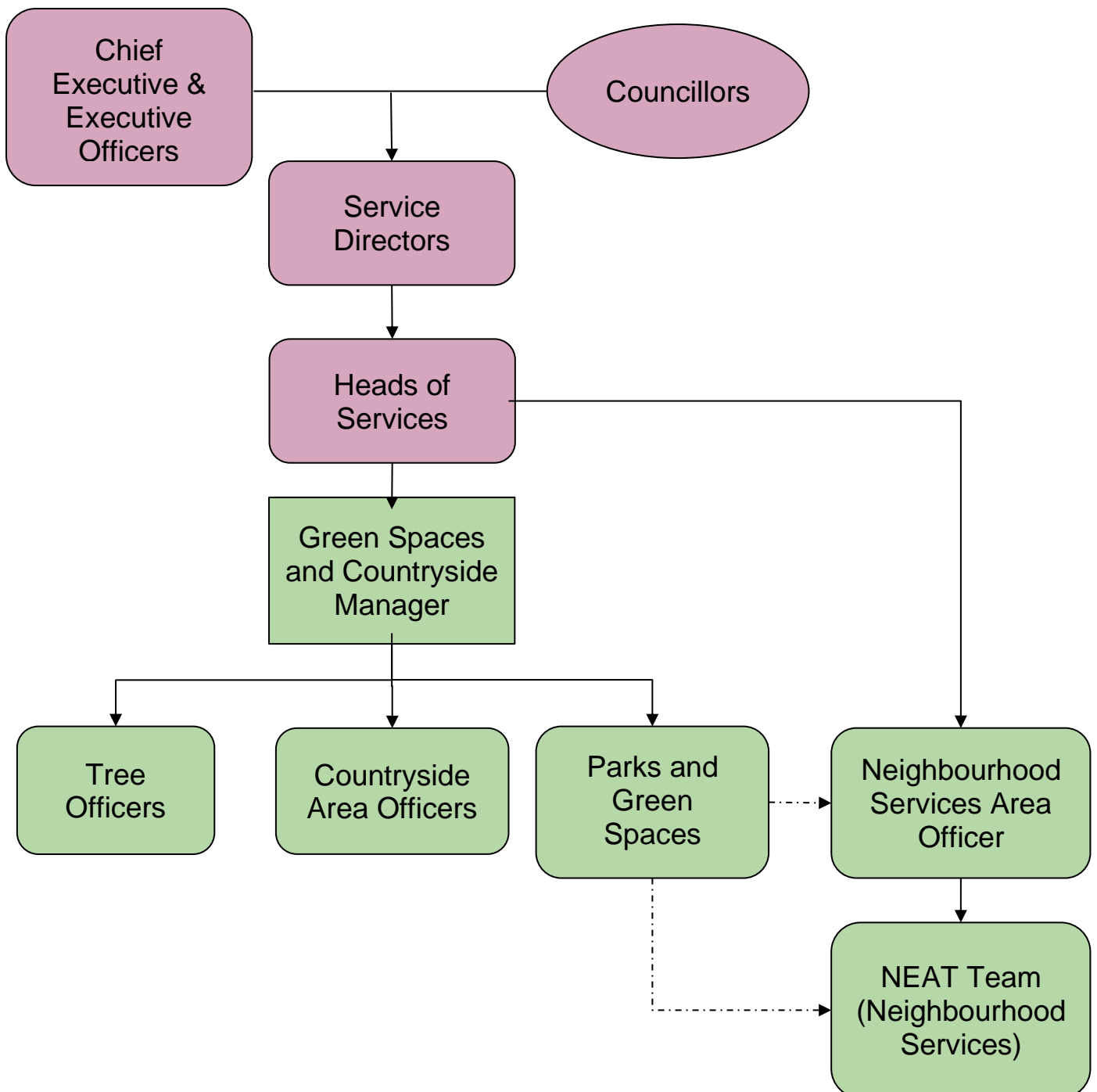
## **What we need to do the job – our resources**

To complete the plan we will need to:

- ❑ Create and publicise a web based parks survey.
- ❑ Develop an evaluation form for events, activities and volunteer tasks.
- ❑ Analyse findings from surveys and evaluation forms and use them to inform park management decisions.
- ❑ Ensure all parks are listed on Northumberland Life to promote events and activities.

- ❑ Compile relevant local lists for advertising parks events through posters and leaflets.
- ❑ Develop plan and style for production of park promotional leaflets and interpretation panels.
- ❑ Identify content for the website and liaise with the web team.
- ❑ Cost any photography, design and production of leaflets or panels needed for the plan.
- ❑ Secure budget for graphic design for Parks brand and publicity material.

## Appendix 6 Northumberland County Council Structure Plan



## Appendix 7: Updates



### *Planting of the 90th Anniversary Tree Sept 2019*

#### **2022 Achievements**

- Parks Awarded Green Flag Status since 2007
- Delivery of 1 large scale event attended by in excess of 4,500 people organised by Greater Morpeth Development Trust in partnership with NCC
- 50 volunteer days given to the parks -through individuals, Friends of William Turner Group & Morpeth Lions
- Successful set up of the weekly Park Run event
- Floral Clock displaying the royal colours for the Platinum Celebration of the Queen
- The William Turner Garden beds redesigned
- Successful bid to the NCC Capital Investment Programme for 2023
- New play equipment and Christmas Lights installed by Morpeth Town Council

## **2020/2021 Achievements**

2020 and 2021 were a very difficult couple of years where the Covid pandemic has seriously affected all aspects of the park works, staffing and programmes. Park staff were held off site for 3 weeks initially at the outbreak in March and the Parks Officer was shielding for a total of 9 months and then asked to work from home. Working from home is still a policy (2022) unless a safe return can be made to normal work places.

Volunteers were not allowed to operate for their own safety after being risk assessed with 2021 seeing a very slow return for the Friends Group and individuals in still very uncertain times after being risk assessed to return. All events have not been re-instated with concerns over Government Guidelines ever changing and uncertainty about operating them safely by their organisers. The Northumbria In-bloom award for Morpeth & the park was not applied for by Morpeth Town Council for 2020 and 2021. Green Flag award was achieved in 2020 and 2021



## **Appendix 8 Volunteer Good Practice Guide**



**Northumberland**  
County Council

9

**Northumberland County Council**

**Parks, Countryside Sites and  
Local Nature Reserves**

**Volunteer Good Practice Guide**

**October 2018**

 **Northumberland**  
County Council

[www.northumberland.gov.uk](http://www.northumberland.gov.uk)

## Contents

	<b>Page</b>
1. Introduction.....	3
2. Volunteers.....	3
3. Definition.....	3
4. Role Descriptions.....	3
5. Code of Conduct.....	3
6. Capability, Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures....	4
7. Volunteers Grievance Procedure.....	4
9. Health and Safety.....	4
10. Safeguarding and Child Protection.....	6
11. Use of Photographs.....	7
12. Site Security.....	7
Appendix A. Volunteer Agreement.....	9
Appendix B. Ten Steps to Grounds Maintenance Safety.....	10

## **1. Introduction**

Northumberland County Council greatly values and encourages the contribution that volunteers make to the management of parks and countryside sites across the county. This document outlines the Council's approach to working with volunteers and is a summary of the procedures in place for volunteers and voluntary groups working on Northumberland County Council's parks, countryside sites and Local Nature Reserves (LNRs). It is designed to guide both staff and volunteers and to ensure the safe operation of a site for volunteers and visitors.

## **2. Volunteer Agreement**

All volunteers will be supplied with a copy of this document.

A Volunteer Agreement Form (Appendix A) must be completed by all volunteers, which confirms that the volunteer agrees to adhere to the guidance contained in this document.

Completed and signed forms for all registered volunteers should be returned to the relevant Council officer and will be kept on file and in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation.

## **3. Definition**

A volunteer is a person who carries out voluntary work and does so by choice and is unpaid. The Council must be satisfied that all volunteers are appropriately trained, organized and managed on site.

Volunteers may be under the direct supervision of a council officer, or alternatively "Friends of" and other independently constituted community groups may have their own "Volunteer Coordinator/supervisor" for their volunteer activities. They will be the point of contact for the Council's site officer/manager for work related issues.

## **4. Role Descriptions**

Tasks to be undertaken by volunteers will be clearly defined and the volunteer given a role description for each of the sites and individual tasks that may be undertaken.

Independently constituted groups must have an agreed work program in place before commencement of any tasks on site. Any tasks or projects undertaken that are not on this agreed program must be identified and agreed with the Council's site manager/officer before commencement.

## **5. Code of Conduct**

The conduct of persons on the site falls under the Council's jurisdiction and where relevant, Standard Site Operating Procedures (SOP's), codes of conduct, and safe working practice must be followed at all times.

The public are entitled to expect the highest standards of conduct from all volunteers and staff of any organisations operating from any park, countryside site or LNR.

- Volunteers should be polite and courteous at all times.
- The use of strong or discriminatory language is not acceptable

- Volunteers should aim to assist the members of the public wherever possible, or if they cannot, to take details and to aim to follow up after consultation with staff or other volunteers.
- Volunteers will be subject to NCC respect policies in relation to other volunteers and staff.
- Violent behaviour, or the threat of violent behaviour will result in immediate exclusion from the volunteer activity.

Members of independently constituted groups will be expected to adhere to their groups own code of conduct and policies, with disputes between members settled by their group.

## **6. Capability and Disciplinary Procedures**

Northumberland County Council expects the highest standards of performance and conduct from all employees and volunteers delivering its services.

Standards of performance and conduct should be established from the onset with each volunteer. Normal day to day supervision should be enough to determine whether standards are being maintained. Any fall in standards needs to be communicated to the volunteer and a solution agreed between the supervising officer and the volunteer, clearly communicated and recorded. Should performance issues continue, then the Council's site officer/manager will investigate and advise the volunteer of any action required. If evidence of misconduct or capability is evident, a warning and/or coaching may be the appropriate outcome. In the worst cases, the services of the volunteer may be terminated.

If the volunteer is part of an independently constituted group working on a site, the group will be advised of the situation and asked to investigate. The supervising volunteer of any group working party is expected to monitor the standards of work and conduct of the members of their working group. Their group may have their own procedures to deal with any issues that may arise; the Council accepts this and will support the group's findings and conclusions, unless their resolution falls below what would be expected from the Councils procedures.

## **7. Volunteers Grievance Procedure**

If a volunteer feels aggrieved with a situation at work, they should bring it to the attention of their supervising officer. The majority of situations can be resolved through an informal discussion. If the issue is with the Council's supervising officer, then the issue should be raised with their line manager. The person hearing the grievance should provide a response to the volunteer within one week of the discussion.

Grievances between members of independently constituted groups should be dealt with by their respective group committees. Grievances regarding Council staff should be brought by Group members or committee to the Countryside and Green Spaces Manager.

## **8. Health and Safety**

Parks and countryside sites can be difficult to manage, and all volunteers should be aware of the potential hazards presented by the site's physical attributes and the potential risks involved in the tasks they will be performing. The site manager/supervisor is responsible for ensuring that volunteers are appropriately briefed in respect of the potential hazards and risks involved in undertaking an activity and the control measures in place to manage these.

In the case of an independently constituted group, the group's activity coordinator should provide this briefing (unless otherwise agreed with the site manager/supervisor.)

### Controlling risks

Generic risk assessments for most day to day tasks will be provided by the Council, and specific risk assessments should always be carried out for tasks falling outside of normal procedures.

Independently constituted groups should have their own generic risk assessments in place.

### Safe Working Procedures

A safe working procedure will be put in place for any activity that presents a risk of harm. The SWP must be followed, and if training is required to ensure compliance with the SWP it will be provided by the Council.

### Training and safe use of equipment

Groups or individuals should ensure that they have received appropriate training to allow them to undertake the tasks they are delivering and in the use of any hand tools they are using. If volunteers consider any activity may put their health and safety at risk, they should not undertake the activity, but should first consult with and seek advice from the Council's site manager.

Should a group or individual wish to operate any mechanical hand tools or plant on site it is essential that appropriate training has taken place and recognised accreditation is in place for all those operating the machinery. No mechanical tools should be used by any volunteer on a council site until such training and accreditation has been completed, evidence provided to the site manager, and suitable risk assessments are in place.

Any necessary protective clothing will be provided for the volunteer.

### Lone working

There may be instances where staff or volunteers are on site alone. Where possible, especially in the case of volunteers, this should be avoided through careful planning of activities. Most countryside sites are exposed sites, and persons working at them should be mindful of their own personal safety. If, through unavoidable circumstances, lone working occurs, then the following steps should be taken:

- The volunteer should nominate an appointed person before working on site alone. This may be the site officer/manager, another volunteer, or a family member.
- The volunteer should notify the appointed person that they will be on site alone in advance and should arrange to “check in” once safely off site.
- If the volunteer has not “checked in” by within 30 minutes of the specified time, then the nominated person should first aim to contact the volunteer, and then contact the police.

### Reporting accidents and incidents

An accident/incident report log will be maintained by the Council’s site manager and any instances of injury to staff or volunteers should be logged immediately. Also any incident involving members of the public should be logged, including any action taken, notes on any incident involving the police or emergency services should be written up as soon as possible to avoid inaccuracies on the log sheets and signed and dated by the volunteer and site manager. If more than one volunteer or member of staff were involved, every person should complete a log sheet.

Independently constituted groups should also maintain an incident log for their own volunteers, as well as reporting incidents to the site manager.

### Insurance

Volunteers working on behalf of, and under the direct supervision of a Council officer on sites are covered by the Council’s public liability insurance.

Independently constituted “Friends of” groups working on sites would be similarly covered by the Council’s public liability insurance when working under the direct supervision of a council officer but would be required to take out their own public liability insurance cover when working on a site independently, and not under the direct supervision of a council officer. Such groups may also wish to consider employers liability insurance.

### Ten Steps to Grounds Maintenance Safety

The ‘Ten Steps’ Guide (see Appendix B) is a summary of the Council’s Neighbourhood Services ‘Health and Safety at Work Codes of Practice’.

## **9. Safeguarding and Child Protection**

Safeguarding is a term used to describe measures to protect the health, wellbeing and human rights of individuals, which allow people – especially children, young people and vulnerable adults – to live free from abuse, harm and neglect.

Safeguarding is everybody’s business. We all need to know what to do if we are worried that someone may be at risk of harm.

If you believe an individual is at immediate risk of harm, you must contact the police then inform the site manager/supervisor. If your concern is non-urgent, you must inform the site manager/supervisor at the earliest possible opportunity and your concern will be dealt with in line with the Council's safeguarding policy

All staff, volunteers and people undertaking either paid or unpaid work at a park, countryside site or LNR should adhere to following guidelines. Failure to do so may result in action being taken under the disciplinary procedures.

You should:

- Treat all children, young people and vulnerable adults with respect
  - Provide an example of good conduct you wish others to follow
  - Approach any child who is in apparent distress and ask if you can help
  - Be aware of the possibility of dangers from others, and question any situations that you find suspicious
  - Avoid any situations which might appear compromising
  - Be aware that any physical contact with a child can be misinterpreted
  - Recognise that special caution is required when discussing sensitive issues with children
  - Challenge unacceptable behaviour and report all allegations or suspicions of abuse
  - Report any suspicious adult, especially if you are aware of them photographing children without their knowledge.
- 
- You should never
  - Allow yourself to be drawn into inappropriate behaviour or make any suggestive or derogatory remarks to or in front of children
  - Engage in any "rough and tumble" or horseplay
  - Use foul or abusive language
  - Physically restrain a child, except in exceptional circumstances, e.g. to prevent injury to themselves or others or to prevent theft.
  - Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any kind
  - Do things of a personal nature for a child that they can do for themselves or that a parent/leader can do for them, including taking a child to the toilet
  - Avoid working alone with a child wherever possible, make sure you can be clearly seen and observed by others.
  - Travel in a vehicle with an unaccompanied child
  - Invite a child to contact you off site or when you are not working for the site.

Any volunteers working with children as part of an Education or Events Programme may be required to undergo a Disclosure and Barring Service check

## **10. Use of Photographs**

Photographs and film footage of activities at Parks, Countryside sites and LNRs may be taken for recording and promotional purposes, and may be reproduced in print, in displays, or digitally.

Permission to store and use such images must be sought from any individual who is identifiable in a still or moving image. Permission does not need to be sought when individuals are not identifiable, for example images of the back of an individual's head. If images include children or young people, permission must be sought from the parent/guardian or person responsible for the child. Permission should be recorded on a Consent Form, preferably prior to any event or activity where photography or filming is likely to take place. Completed Consent Forms will be stored securely by the site manager. No volunteer should take photographs or make moving images without the prior permission of those in the pictures/film, and the prior consent of the site manager. Noncompliance with this could result in serious action being taken, and police involvement.

## **11. Site Security and Security of Buildings**

As site volunteers you may be entrusted with keys for buildings and gate/barriers. As a key holder you will be responsible for the buildings and site security when you are lone working or acting as key holder on site.

Volunteers must ensure that all procedures for site and building security and safety are correctly followed.

## **12. If you do not want to continue Volunteering**

If you no longer want to volunteer it is important you let your site manager know. We wouldn't want you to go without showing our appreciation for your contribution and would be interested in your views and any opinions you can offer on your experience.

The completion of Feedback and Equal Opportunities Forms is optional, but your answers will help in the future management of volunteers. All data will be used in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation.



**Appendix A.**

**Volunteer Agreement**

Name.....

Address.....

.....

.....

Postcode.....

Date of Birth.....

Contact telephone numbers

Home: ..... Mobile:.....

Email address.....

Preferred method of contact      Email / Postal

Organisation/Friends of Group (if applicable): .....

Interest in the site and its activities:

Do you have any health problems that may affect you volunteering on site?

Training required (to be completed in conjunction with the Site Manager):

DBS Check in place    Yes/No    Date.....

I have read the Council's Volunteer Policy, and agree to adhere to the procedures outlined in the Northumberland County Council 'Parks, Countryside Sites and Local Nature Reserves Volunteer Good Practice Guide'.

Signed..... Date.....

Print.....

Date Received.....signed.....

Site Manager/Officer

## Appendix B

### TEN STEPS TO GROUNDS MAINTENANCE SAFETY

It is the responsibility of every NCC employee and volunteer to take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and others.

- Always ensure you are working safely and that you feel safe.
- Always ensure that co-workers and members of the public who may be affected by your work are protected.
- Always ensure that you and your colleagues are aware of site hazards and their controls. Report any unsafe operations or methods to the site Manager. (You have a duty in law to do so).
- Always follow the risk control procedure. Read all appropriate risk assessments and comply with all recommended precautions.
- Always read and adhere to the NCC Safe Working Procedures relevant to your work

- Always wear the appropriate or required Personal Protective Clothing and Equipment.
- Always be aware of the location of the First-Aid box and know your First-Aider.
- Always use the correct tools and equipment and have received appropriate training for the job.
- Always report any accident or near miss to your site Manager who will complete the accident form ACC1. Remember: you have a duty in law to do so.
- Be safe not sorry. When in doubt ask.

The 'Ten Steps Guide' is a summary of Northumberland County Council Neighbourhood Services 'Health And Safety at Work Codes of Practice'. The guide does not replace or supersede any certificated training which may be required as a prerequisite of carrying out an operation.

## Appendix 9 Copy of Risk Assessment

### Copy of Risk Assessment

Directorate: <i>Local Services</i>	Service: <i>Neighbourhood Services/Countryside</i>	Reference: <i>CA23</i>
Activity: <i>Use of hand tools</i>	Site: <i>Various countryside sites throughout the county</i>	
People at Risk: <i>Field Teams, staff, trainees and volunteers</i>	Additional Information:	
Contact Person: <i>Mike Jeffrey</i> Job Title: <i>Countryside and Green Spaces Manager</i> Date: <i>July 2019</i>	Review Date: <i>July 2024</i>	

### Risk Evaluation

Hazard	Risk	Initial Rating (L, M, H,)	Existing Control Measures	Final Rating (L, M, H,)	Additional Action Required (action by whom and completion date)
Use and handling of hand tools	Injury from blows, cuts, worn and	L	Tools stored safely and correctly.	L	

	damaged tools		<p>Site staff are experienced and are cascade trained in tool use, care and maintenance.</p> <p>Volunteers are given demonstration of correct usage and supervised as required.</p> <p>First aid training and first aid kits provided</p>		
Loose hammer heads	Eye & limb injuries	M	Tools are inspected before use by competent user, faulty tools are repaired or replaced.	L	
Chisels with mushroom	General cuts & bruises	M	As above	L	
Screwdrivers with split handles or damaged/worn blades Files with loose or missing handles	Hand/arm injuries from damaged tools	M	As above	L	
Blunt cutting tools	Hand/arm injuries from damaged tools. Cuts Muscular skeletal injuries	M	<p>Tools are inspected before use by competent user.</p> <p>Only use tools that are sufficiently sharp.</p> <p>Cascade training in storage, use, sharpening of general care of hand tools.</p>	L	
Sparks	Fire if flammable materials are present.	M	Remove flammable materials.	L	
Tools used for wrong purposes	General cuts & bruises	M	Staff training.	L	

## Appendix 10 Proposed Development 2023



Northumberland  
County Council

Capital Strategy Group

Date: 7<sup>th</sup> January 2022

---

### Parks Enhancement Capital Programme – Carlisle Park Morpeth

#### Proposed improvements to the Formal Gardens

##### Background

Carlisle Park is a multi-award-winning park in the heart of Morpeth, Northumberland

Situated on the south bank of the River Wansbeck, it contains [the William Turner Garden](#), formal gardens, an aviary, play areas, a paddling pool, ancient woodland, picnic areas, toilets, tennis courts, bowling greens, a skate park and much more.

The Park and its assets are managed through a partnership between Northumberland County Council and Morpeth Town Council.

There are numerous entrances to the park but the Castle square entrance is the more formal and decorative entrance. This section of the park contains the following features:

##### William Turner Garden

A charming herb and knot garden created to celebrate the achievements of William Turner; the botanist born in Morpeth around 1508.

##### Emily Wilding Davison statue

Carlisle Park is home to a statue of Northumberland suffragette, Emily Wilding Davison which was unveiled in September 2018.

The statue was commissioned by Northumberland County Council and created by internationally renowned sculptor Ray Lonsdale from County Durham.

##### Formal Gardens

A mixture of lawns, annual bedding and herbaceous borders, with trees such as monkey puzzle, ginkgo biloba and maple provide a beautifully colourful place to relax. A small aviary is located here, which houses birds rehomed by people who no longer want them.

##### Morpeth Floral Clock

Morpeth Floral Clock was restored in 2018 and, as one of just four working floral clocks in the country, takes pride of place in Carlisle Park.

The clock was restored by the council after The Friends of Morpeth's Floral Clock raised funds, enabling it to be restored with the traditional carpet bedding.



These areas attract large numbers of visitors and are the showpiece attractions in the park, however it has been identified that the area between the Aviary and the entrance to the Turner Garden needs updating to ensure that it provides an attractive and inviting place for visitors.



Within the area between the aviary and Turner Garden the garage used by the parks team to store equipment looks dated and in poor repair and is out of keeping with other features in this area; also, the path between the Aviary and the Turner Garden (which provides a useful and convenient parking space for NCC works vehicles) does not provide visitors with an obvious and convenient route into the site.



The council has an agreed annual capital programme of £150,000 pa. to invest in parks and green spaces to allow the implementation of capital improvement projects that will not only address an identified community need but will also reduce the council's ongoing future maintenance costs.

To allow the procurement process to be taken forward CSG is now asked to consider the following improvement project at Carlisle Park, Morpeth

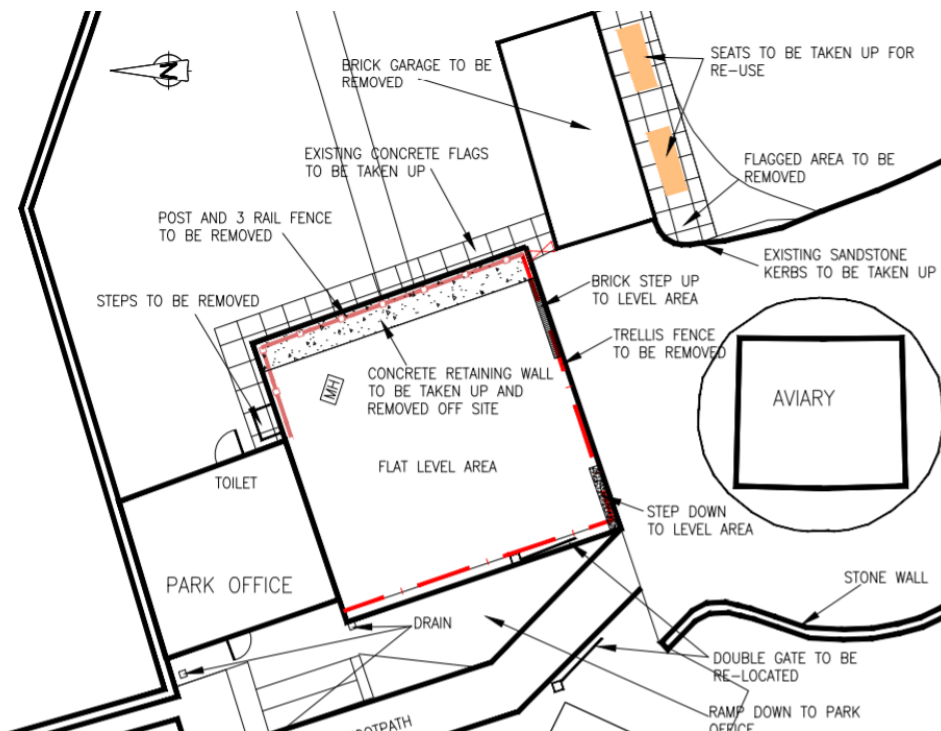
### **Proposed improvements**

It is proposed to demolish the storage garage and replace it with an 18ft shipping container clad in timber to soften the appearance and blend into the park setting. This will be sited to the Northern corner of the garden space in an area behind the existing garage.

Example of wood clad container

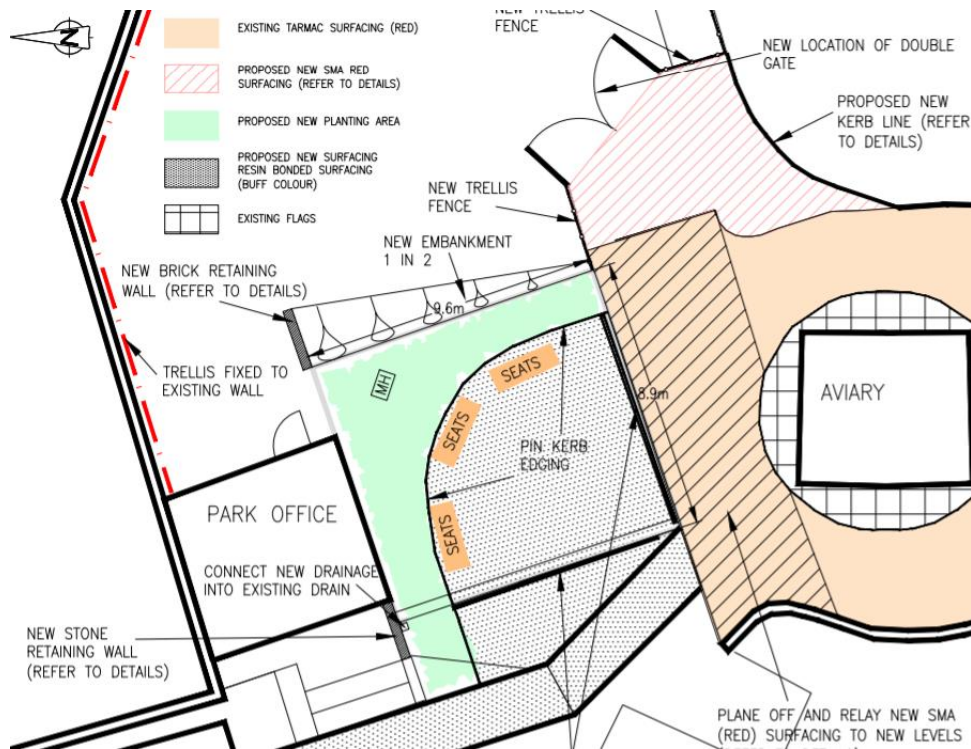


It is proposed to remove several hard landscaping features such as paving and walls as set out in the plan below.



The proposed new design provides for the installation of new hard surfacing, new soft landscaping and additional seating, as shown below.





The benefits:

- Safer and more convenient access to site for visitors
- Working area segregated from public access
- More aesthetically pleasing to visitors
- Better flow for visitors between formal gardens, aviary and Turner Garden
- Reduction in future maintenance costs

The costs of materials, plant and labour are estimated to be £41,596 (based on current contractor quotes).

A funding contribution of £10,000 towards the scheme has been agreed by the following members:

Councillor Richard Wearmouth contribution of £3,333.33

Councillor John Beynon contribution of £3,333.33

Councillor David Bawn contribution of £3,333.34

**Agreement is now sought from CSG to recommend approval to the Cabinet of capital expenditure of £31,596 from the Parks Enhancement Capital Programme in respect of the above proposed improvement within Carlisle Park.**

For further information contact Jimmy Reith on 07808572907 or email:

[Jimmy.Reith@mnorthumberland.gov.uk](mailto:Jimmy.Reith@mnorthumberland.gov.uk)

Report prepared by Jimmy Reith Parks and Green Spaces Team Leader Tel 07808572907, email [Jimmy.Reith@mnorthumberland.gov.uk](mailto:Jimmy.Reith@mnorthumberland.gov.uk) on behalf of:

Paul Jones, Director of Local Services

Tel 01670 623432 [paul.jones01@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:paul.jones01@northumberland.gov.uk)

## **Appendix 11 Response to Judges Feedback Mystery Shop 2021 and Full Judging 2022**





## GreenFlag Award Mystery Shop

### Assessment

<b>Name of Site</b>	Carlisle Park	<b>Managing organisation</b>	Northumberland County Council		
<b>Weather Conditions</b>	Sunny periods and rain				
<b>Date of assessment</b>	29.10.21	<b>Time (from – to)</b>	13:00 – 14:30		
<b>Result:</b> (✓)				<b>Is the site of Green Flag Award Standard?</b>	
	Green	Amber	Red		
<b>Grading</b>			<b>Comments and Recommendations</b>		
Please mark each section as Green, Amber or Red If there is no evidence or the section is not applicable mark as NG (not graded) and provide an explanation			Comments should be provided to support each grading  *Please include photographs to support your grading where applicable  **Please refer to Raising the Standard manual if necessary		
<b>A Welcoming Place</b>					
1. Is the site welcoming?	N G				Yes, there are a number of entrance points which are welcoming. The main entrance provides a magical display of autumn colour, there is an entrance leading from the river and various others. Most provide views into the site, announce the park and some have a notice board.
		✓			
2. Is the site easy to find?	N G				Yes the site is easy to find through Google maps. There are various locations for parking and good pedestrian links. Entry points are appropriately signed with bespoke Timber Park signage.
		✓			
3. Is signage in good condition?	N G				Yes signage is in a fair condition, finger posts are a little weathered, notice boards are good, point of entry signage is good and a location map is present on some. There are various interpretation points located around the park which create interest and the new café signs are clear and provide contact numbers for booking the facilities and contacting the bowling club.
		✓			
4. Is the site accessible to all users?	N G				The topography of the park makes complete accessibility impossible, however, it would appear most of the areas of the park could be accessed by wheeled chairs / buggies via perhaps a longer route. Some of the steeps would be steep but access appears to have been maximised into most areas.
		✓			


Healthy, Safe and Secure					
5. Are facilities on site in good and safe condition?	NG	G	A	R	<p>The majority of the facilities were in good condition, play surfaces appeared adequate but difficult to judge due to recent leaf fall. The play equipment surfacing outside of the main play park looked tired and was ripped in places. The refurbished bowls pavilion / café has become a real asset to the park.</p> <p>Response – grass mats are already to be placed out; however staffing has been an issue due to retirement, these mats will be actioned over the winter/spring</p>
		✓			
6. Did you feel safe during the visit?	NG	G	A	R	<p>Yes very safe. Despite the weather there were many park visitors / users some passing through, others using it as a destination. Good sightlines in the main body of the park and CCTV around the play area provides an enhanced feeling of security. There is lighting along the river path too.</p>
		✓			
7. Are dogs being controlled and the site free of dog fouling?	NG	G	A	R	<p>There were many dog walkers, all dogs were under control and there was zero evidence of dog fouling. I saw a number of users picking up after their dog. The column which originally had a dog waste bag dispenser attached was defunct. No bags were available. There was much dog legislation signage around the park.</p> <p>Response – we are going to have the dog bags dispenser removed as there have been no bags put out for a while and there would seem to</p>
		✓			

be no increase in fouling as a consequence

Well Maintained and Clean					
8. Is litter, waste and recycling managed?	NG	G	A	R	Litter and waste are clearly managed. There was minimal amounts of litter around the site. The majority had recently been dropped with the exception of a few areas in the outlying areas of the woods. There was an ample number of litter bins provided and signs requesting people to take their rubbish home when bins are full during the peak summer periods.
		✓			
9. Is there a good standard of horticulture maintenance?	NG	G	A	R	Yes, formal borders had been tended, hedges have been clipped, winter bedding had been planted. Some shrub borders were in the process of being replanted. Wildflower areas had recently been cut back. The park was well tended.
		✓			
10. Is there a good standard of arboriculture maintenance?	NG	G	A	R	There was evidence of tree maintenance, fallen trees in the woodland are made safe and left lying. Young trees were establishing well, there were no noticeable trees planted within this year. There did not appear to be deadwood near footpaths in trees that caused concern.
		✓			
11. Are buildings and infrastructure such as walls, paths, steps and structures in good condition?	NG	G	A	R	Overall yes, but there was one path edge in the woodland that was starting to collapse and needed attention and in addition timber steps beside the slide outside of the play site required replacing as the steps had completely gone leaving a slippery muddy slope. One path edge (next to the water
		✓			

				<p>treatment) requires the drainage improved and planted up as it looked quite unsightly. The refurbished bowling pavilion looked excellent.</p> <p>Response –The slide steps are managed by Morpeth Town Council this is their reponse</p> <p>‘ The steps are still visible, although more worn than usual which will be looked at as part of our maintenance programme’.</p> <p>NCC will action the other areas of concern</p>	
12. Is equipment used by the public and staff in good condition?	NG	G	A	R	
		✓			All the equipment looked in a good useable condition with the exception of the previously mentioned play surface and steps beside the slide

Environmental Management					
13. Is there evidence that the site is managed to have a positive impact on the environment?	N	G	A	R	Yes, a truly excellent site for wildlife and managed accordingly. The superb mature woodland and the adjacent river maximises the potential for wildlife on the site. The management of the habitats is good, leaving deadwood where possible and mixed specie broadleaf woodland. In addition, there were areas of long grass and established wild flower areas
	G	✓			
Landscape and Heritage					
14. Are heritage and/or landscape features in good condition?	N	G	A	R	Yes the heritage is appropriately interpreted, protected and managed. The Park has lots of heritage features and these create a lot of interest within the Park.
	G	✓			
Community Involvement					
15. Is there evidence of community involvement and engagement?	N	G	A	R	<p>There does not appear to be a Friends of Group when searching social media and the noticeboards promote events external to the Park with the exception of football in the MUGA. It would appear though the park is used for events including the Park Run. However, evidence is very difficult to locate within the Park!</p> <p>Response – there is a Friends Of William Turner Group, mentioned on the website, that has not been active due to Covid fears. Hopefully when we return to better times this group will become more active again. The MUGA is owned by Morpeth Town Council. The only event current in the park is the Park Run which is advertised on social media. There are limited events due to no staff to undertake them. We are still waiting to see if Partner organisations feel confident to run future events in 2022, none were undertaken in 2021</p>
	G	✓			
16. Is user feedback positive?	N	G	A	R	Yes feedback is very positive about the Park, the paddling pool is enthusiastically discussed (although closed now). People speak highly of the park and its facilities.
	G	✓			
Marketing and Communication					
17. Is there evidence of marketing and promotion, including events? e.g. notice boards, in buildings, website & social media.	N	G	A	R	<p>This appears to be a weakness for events, I could find very little information. However the NCC website provides a better than normal amount of information for this Park. Noticeboards were not being used to provide information about events in the park, user groups, facilities etc. This needs to be addressed.</p> <p>Response – as stated above events are limited and have not been undertaken in 2021 due to Covid fears by our partner organisations therefore we could not promote</p>
	G	✓			

					either events or Volunteers. This will be re-assessed in 2022
18. Is the correct year flag flying and certificate on display?	N G	G	A	R	Yes a new flag is flying and the 25 year certificate is prominently displayed on the noticeboard opposite the bridge crossing the river from the Leisure Centre
		✓			
<b>Overall Result</b> (✓)	 <b>Is the site of Green Flag Award Standard?</b> Green Amber Red				
Additional comments:  The toilets were closed but there was no notice attached to say where the closest toilets are located. This needs addressing as the toilets are close by (leisure centre and café for users) and could lengthen an individuals stay during the winter months when the Park toilets are closed. <b>Response from Morpeth Town Council who manage the toilets 'We have never displayed a notice to state where the closest toilets are, we have only ever stated that the public toilets are either open or closed for the winter period. We could not advertise that the toilets can be used without the consent of the manager of the leisure centre. I can confirm that the toilets within the cafe are for the use of customers only'</b>  Overall a great park and a pleasure to visit.					

## FEEDBACK REPORT: 2022-23

<b>Name of Site</b>	Carlisle Park
<b>Managing Organisation</b>	Northumberland County Council
<b>Date of Assessment</b>	29/05/2022

<b>OVERALL RESULT</b>	<b>Pass</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Fail</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
-----------------------	-------------	-------------------------------------	-------------	--------------------------

## DESK ASSESSMENT (Management plan and supporting documentation)

Criteria	Strengths	Recommendations	Actions
<b>Presentation</b>	Good overall presentation with history of site , photographs , site plans and maps Good use of Green flag categories to detail site management	Chapter 5 check photo titles for alignment and title of section missing "Biodiversity, Landscape and Heritage"	Actioned in plan



		Repetition in 5.4 and 5.7 in relation to Ha Hill	
<b>Health, Safety &amp; Security</b>	<p>Good health and Safety systems and training in place for staff and volunteers</p> <p>Risk assessments in place</p> <p>DDA assessments have been completed and used in improving access to all users</p> <p>Support from the Police and Council enforcement officers</p> <p>A range of sporting opportunities available on site to promote health initiatives</p> <p>Good safety inspection procedure in place for parks infrastructure, trees and play areas</p> <p>Public toilets available during spring and summer season, CCTV cameras installed , First aid trained staff , Dog control measures in place</p> <p>Radar key accessible toilet available throughout the year`</p>	<p>Contractors and Licence holders, who monitors them in relation to health and safety, risk assessments , the CC is responsible for contractor's and Licence holder activities on site</p> <p>Would be good to see a site specific risk assessment which identifies specific site based risks</p> <p>Include details of toilet availability in notice boards at main entrance points with alternatives locations and distances</p>	See Appendix 3
<b>Maintenance of Equipment, Buildings &amp; Landscape</b>	<p>Detailed work programme</p> <p>Annual and routine maintenance of plant and vehicles</p> <p>Grounds maintained by on site staff (NEAT) volunteers and contractors.</p> <p>Buildings inspected and maintained by NCC property services</p> <p>Daily inspections of all public areas</p>	<p>Need more detail on what maintenance items and areas (possible plan) are maintained on behalf of the TC,</p>	See Appendix
<b>Litter, Cleanliness, Vandalism</b>	<p>Good systems in place to manage litter with regular collections and bin emptying including support by volunteer groups</p> <p>It is good to see that the park is inspected under NI195 environmental cleanliness indicator</p> <p>Timely intervention to manage litter ,Graffiti, Fly tipping and other hazards</p>	<p>Would be good to see actual figures for NI195 instead of the targets and for the park as opposed to the service as per service statement 2019</p> <p>What level of fixed penalties have been issued on site</p>	

	Use of fixed penalties if required		
<b>Environmental Management</b>	<p>LED lighting fitted</p> <p>Green waste composted on site Tree and shrub arising's chipped and used as mulch, Recycling bins available on site</p> <p>Grey water usage systems in place and Bowling Green watering system fed by it</p> <p>Reduced Pesticide use on site</p> <p>Sheep grazing to control vegetation in selected areas</p> <p>Forest Stewardship products used</p> <p>Recycled plastic benches and picnic tables</p> <p>Electric fleet vehicles in use</p>	<p>Peat use is still an issue and should be addressed, there are lots of alternatives available and suppliers who can grow bedding without peat</p> <p>Consider electric plant and grounds machinery</p> <p>Consider bowser for watering from water harvesting systems</p> <p>What happens to general waste and Dog waste how is this managed and is any recycled or used via energy recovery</p> <p>Update chemical usage , Is COSH managed alongside</p> <p>Investigate Electric Fast chargers (Grant Funding was available)</p>	<p>All machinery , where practical is being replaced with battery operated alternatives.</p> <p>All park waste is sent to Suez then to an Energy from Waste plant. All recyclable waste sorted at a Material Recovery Facility then recycled</p>
<b>Biodiversity, Landscape &amp; Heritage</b>	<p>Woodland management systems in place to maintain ancient woodland</p> <p>Standing dead wood and fallen trees left to benefit and improve biodiversity</p> <p>Historic features (Ha Hill) Motte and Bailey being managed by sheep grazing to return to a grassland cover</p> <p>Wildlife conservation measures in place</p> <p>Historic features are being maintained and conserved sympathetically</p>	<p>Site Bio diversity survey results for the site results would be useful , How is this collected by whom and how often</p>	<p>Due to staff limitations these are not collected at present, a birds survey is being undertaken during 2022-23 by volunteers</p>
<b>Community Involvement</b>	<p>Good understanding of the sites users and their participation in community usage of the Park and their involvement with a wide range of events and activities undertaken</p> <p>Good volunteering on site by a range of organisations</p>	<p>Include list of stakeholders</p> <p>No detail on management of licence holders and no detail within the plan of these activities</p> <p>Be good to show appreciation to Friends and volunteers in some way</p>	<p>See App 3</p>

	<p>Good range of events on site prior to the pandemic which should return</p> <p>Good to see a Volunteer Good Practice Guide and a Volunteer coordinator in post</p> <p>Established friends groups with successful fund raising ,Established user groups</p> <p>Support for the site by litter picking groups, Community payback on site</p> <p>Work experience opportunities are available and been used successfully in the recent years</p> <p>Links with New Deal and a Disability association</p>	<p>Some form of event could be used to kick start the volunteering after the pandemic</p>	
<b>Marketing &amp; Communication</b>	<p>Marketing strategy in place 2008</p> <p>Consultation and visitor surveys undertaken</p> <p>Goods social media and website presence. Good range of onsite interpretation and site leaflets. Support from communications officer</p> <p>Profile of the site is promoted through local press as a way of celebrating the multiple awards won by the park</p>	<p>Would be good to see results of satisfaction surveys and consultation to see how they feed into the action plan</p> <p>Review Marketing strategy</p>	
<b>Overall Management</b>	<p>Good management systems and practices in place.</p> <p>Good policies' strategies and vision in place to guide management of the site</p> <p>Site based staff a real asset</p> <p>Good financial management in place and an example of funding id include as an appendix</p> <p>Work and Projects programmes included as an appendix</p>	<p>Some confusion in management and ownership responsibilities for the land owned and controlled by the Town Council V the County Council and what agreements are in place to maintain Town Council assets By NCC staff</p> <p>It would be good to identify funding costs or estimates and funding sources against future projects along with timescales for completion this can then be used as a measure of success.in the future</p>	<p>Addressed in the appendices</p>

# FIELD ASSESSMENT

Criteria	Strengths	Recommendations	Actions
<b>A Welcoming Place</b>	Good attractive entrances to the site with site plans and direction finger posts	Disc parking may be a barrier to visitors from outside the area and disc dispenser was not I use on Leisure Centre car park	States on car park disc machine that a disc can be acquired from reception of Leisure Centre. There is a new car park at GooseHill near the formal gardens that is now 24 hours to help long term visitors to the park. Park staff have no control over the use of parking discs in the town centre
<b>Healthy, Safe &amp; Secure</b>	Well used site with lots of people making the best of the sunshine Toilet and Café facilities available onsite and in the town close by	Didn't see and signs warning of inclines or suitability for less mobile visitors	
<b>Well Maintained &amp; Clean</b>	Formal areas and main activity areas very clean with no evidence of dog fouling Infrastructure well maintained	Work with environment agency to improve water quality of the Postern Burn as this was looking polluted during visit	This issue has been reported to the EA on a regular basis for over 5 years, we continue to report it
<b>Environmental Management</b>	Green waste composted General waste goes to energy from waste steam Reduced Peat and Chemical use Mulching of beds and Grey water system in place and use for plant watering	Could look at recycling of general waste or recycling bins Investigate Peat free compost which is successfully used by other authorities	No capacity at present to recycle waste more than we do.
<b>Biodiversity Landscape &amp; Heritage</b>	Good biodiversity on site in particular the woodland area	Consider GF heritage award submission	Addressed above

	Good maintenance of historic landscape features Excellent heritage on site supported by Friends groups	Biodiversity of Postern Burn could be improved following clean-up which is or should be a priority for the Environment agency and the CC	
<b>Community Involvement</b>	Very good community involvement and large scale events which will be back this year after the Pandemic Volunteers and friends work is to be commended	Encourage volunteering following Pandemic	The NCC volunteer co-ordinator has put out a post on social media and contacted a list of County wide volunteers, but no one came forward. We will re-do that post in Spring 2023. I have contacted the Friends Of William Turner and Lions to progress this
<b>Marketing and Communication</b>	Good signage and information available on site Good leaflets and booklets available Good online presence and promotion Good social media networks		
<b>Management</b>	Good management systems in place and practice on site	Staffing issues have been a problem during recent times which have caused difficulties in winter maintenance , recruitment and training of suitable staff needs investigating Seems to be issues with relationship with Town Council and their attitude to Green Flag which would be good to resolve	Ongoing. Not sure what we can do about the Town Council if they do not wish to engage with Green Flag, they have previously, before they took over the area Freehold in the park

**Summary and additional comments:**

(Highlighting the result, and the main areas of strength and recommendation)

Very good site which is well used and maintained  
A wide range of heritage features on site

