



Castle Park Management Plan 2010 — 2015

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1.0 Executive Summary

1.1. Introduction

This plan assesses the current condition of resources and facilities within Castle Park, and in the context of national, regional and local policy frameworks provides an action plan for the next 5 years to deliver the following vision and aims for the site:

1.2. Vision and Aims

Castle Park is the most important park in Colchester serving not only the needs of an expanding local population, and those visiting the adjacent Town Centre and Cultural Quarter, but it is also visited by people from across the UK and beyond, by those primarily wishing to experience Roman Colchester. The restoration and development of Castle Park is vital so that it plays its full part in delivering the aims and objectives set out in the Green Strategy. To this end the vision for Castle Park is to:

- Conserve and improve the heritage value of Castle Park;
- Increase the number and range of audiences involved with and using Castle Park;
- Increase community involvement and opportunities for volunteering;
- Optimise the formal and informal educational opportunities; Enhance both physical and intellectual access to the resources of Castle Park; and
- Enhance the ecological value of the Park through management and maintenance.
- Support regeneration and enhance the quality of life of those people who live, work and visit Colchester.

1.2.1. Vision:

The vision is for Castle Park to be the jewel in the crown of Colchester's Parks and Open Spaces and to be a focus of civic pride. It will offer safe facilities for enjoyment of the park reflecting on its significant historical resource, formal and informal recreation. It is desired that Castle Park will perform as a key link between the adjacent town centre and the wider network of open spaces. The Management and Maintenance Plan for Castle Park will enhance wildlife habitat, encouraging and preserving flora and fauna. It will foster public interest, involvement and ownership through improved access, allowing the development of recreation, interpretation and education. It will foster improved consultation and liaison with support groups, partners, stakeholders, the police and local community.

1.2.2. Aims:

- To positively welcome people into Castle Park in terms of both physical and social access
- To ensure a healthy, safe and secure experience for park users.
- To provide a well maintained and clean park
- To improve the environmental quality and sustainability of all practices carried out in the park
- To conserve the historic landscape character of the park while ensuring provision for contemporary uses, better and communicate the historical importance of site to all users.
- Provide opportunities to increase community use and involvement, particularly through events, education and interpretation.
- Ensure effective promotion of the park as a community resource
- Ensure all those involved in the management and maintenance of the park effectively use the Management Plan as a working document.
- Improve the parks integration with adjoining areas of green space.
- Improve accessibility to the park.
- Develop it as a forum for events.

2.0 Introduction

2.1. Overview of the Management and Maintenance Plan

The 5 year Management and Maintenance Plan (MMP) for Castle Park has been prepared by LDA Design in partnership with the Parks and Recreation Service, a division of the Life Opportunities Service within Colchester Borough Council. The plan's development commenced in March 2009 as a management plan for Green Flag Ward applications. The plan set out herein has been completed following detailed assessment of the Green Flag Award criteria and a comprehensive internal review of the management plan format. As part of the development of the plan, a comprehensive review of the existing management plan of 2003 has been undertaken. Consultation has taken place with Parks and Recreation Service officers, site staff, maintenance staff, other officers within the council and a number of stakeholders who have cause to directly or indirectly determine or influence activities within the Park. This has informed the development of the plan and ensured that proposals meet specific identified local needs. It is intended that officers and members, stakeholder groups, Park users and the general public will use the plan. It is made up of principal documents: The Management and Maintenance Plan and the Appendix, containing various plans and documentation that illustrate and support the plan.

2.2. Purpose of the Management and Maintenance Plan

The purpose of the MMP is to:

- Set out policy and direction for the Park within the context of Colchester Borough Councils vision and corporate priorities
- Identify all issues that affect the management and maintenance of the Park and assist with their resolution
- Provide a clear vision and cultural setting for the Park and its development
- Ensure ongoing member, stakeholder and community involvement in the Park
- Raise the profile of the Park and develop audiences
- Guide future management and ensure continuity of development
- Develop a sense of achievement and pride in the Park
- Provide a basis for identifying priorities within the Park
- Establish the resources required to achieve and sustain improvement

In order to be a user-friendly and useful reference document, this plan will:

- Be accessible and easy to understand, written in plain English Ensure clear objectives are set and include an action plan with specific and measurable targets
- Establish the resources required to achieve and sustain improvement
- Include timescales which allow progress to be monitored
- Allow flexibility in its approach and evolve with time

The management and maintenance plan has been prepared within the guidelines of CABI Space's recommended framework for the development of management plans. This approach has enabled the development of a comprehensive and useable plan, which will provide then focus for work planning by the Parks & Recreation Service and ensure production of a best practice MMP. The Action Plan in Section 7 shows the key actions that have been extrapolated from the vision statements and issues analysis and will allow staff teams and local people to work together towards a sustainable future for the Park.

2.3. Evaluation Mechanism and Review Process

It is intended that the plan will be reviewed on a regular basis and amended over time to take account of future developments and opportunities. A key role for the Parks & Recreation Service will be to implement, review and update the plan to ensure that it remains a valid and

contemporary document for the effective management of the Park throughout its lifespan. The Action Plan in Section 7 identifies the necessary actions and the resources required to deliver them; it also indicates the method for monitoring the outcomes. In this manner, each of the actions contained within the plan will be monitored against a pre-determined anticipated output.

2.4. Relationship between the 2009 Management and Maintenance Plan and the 2009 Restoration and Development Plan:

The 2009 Restoration and Development Plan was prepared by LDA Design on behalf of, and in close cooperation with Colchester Borough Council. It was prepared to form the basis of an application for a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) under the HLFs Parks for People 2009-2013 programme. The 2009 Restoration and Development Plan sets out a series of proposals as part of a comprehensive and coordinated approach to restoring and developing Castle Park for current and future Park users. It identifies many of the management and maintenance issues facing Castle Park which have been incorporated into this management and maintenance plan. The 2009 Restoration and Development Plan is the overarching document guiding the sympathetic restoration, enhancement and development of Castle Park. Should capital funding not be secured from the HLF this year, the management and maintenance of Castle Park should remain guided by the proposals set out in 2009 Restoration and Development Plan, and alternative funding mechanisms secured to deliver the restoration and development proposals.

3.0 Policy Context

This section of the management plan aims to draw attention to the relevant aims and objectives within national, regional, and local strategies and policy statements. It will also provide statements about how the management plan will support and contribute to these aims and objectives.

3.1. National Context and Priorities

The increasing concern with Central Government for the future of parks and open spaces is reflected in more than a decade of policy making. A number of discussion papers and conferences have focused attention on the state of urban parks and green spaces. The Future of Urban Parks conference held in 1994 identified two main problems: firstly, the lack of political support and policies for the development of parks and open spaces; and, secondly, the lack of funding which was identified as a persistent problem due partly to the non-statutory nature of parks and open spaces. Since 1994 there has been a great deal of discussion and review of legislation regarding the future of parks. At the forefront of the debate has been the establishment of national standards for the contexts for park management and protection in order to provide a framework for local authorities to harness the potential of parks and green spaces as key economic regenerators. The following national policy documents have been reviewed and consulted during the drafting of this management plan:

- Planning Policy Statement 9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation (PPS 9), ODPM, August 2005
- Planning Policy Guidance 15: Planning and the Historic Environment (PPG15), DOE, September 1994
- Planning Policy Guidance 16: Archaeology and Planning (PPG16), DOE, November 1990
- Planning Policy Guidance 17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation (PPG 17), ODPM, July 2002
- Planning Policy Guidance 20: Coastal Planning (PPG20), DOE, September 1992

Other national policy documents of relevance to the management and development of Castle Park include the following:

- Green Spaces, Better Places (DTLR, 2002)
- Living Places - Cleaner, Safer, Greener (ODPM, October 2002)
- Green Flag Award Scheme

And regionally:

- The Draft South East Plan

3.2. Local Context

The national policies and strategies listed above feed into the local plan and corporate strategies which at a more detailed level can be interpreted into the Castle Park Management Plan.

Colchester Borough Council's Corporate Strategy has three levels of statements: 'Colchester: A place where people really want to live' is the overarching vision for the Borough. Three Objectives:

1. We will listen and respond
2. We will shift resources to deliver priorities; and
3. We will be cleaner and greener in order to improve the quality of life.

And nine priority areas for action:

1. Addressing older people's needs
2. Addressing younger people's needs
3. Community development
4. Community safety
5. Congestion busting
6. Enabling job creation
7. Healthy living
8. Homes for all
9. Reduce, reuse, recycle

These priorities are all encompassing and can feed directly into the Castle Park's Management Plan Work Action Plan.

3.2.1. Local Plan

The current local plan, the Adopted Review Colchester Borough Local Plan (March 2004), provides a framework for the development of the Colchester Borough. It is saved until 2011, or until it is replaced in whole, or part, by the Local Development Framework (LDF) documents as they are produced. In December 2008 the Council adopted the Core Strategy document which provides the overarching strategy and policy direction for the growth of the Borough up to 2021, including provision for green links, of which Castle Park is an integral part.

An extract from the Spatial Vision document (CBC Adopted Core Strategy 2008) states that: 'By 2021, Colchester will be a prestigious regional centre. The historic Town Centre will be the cultural and economic heart of the borough, surrounded by thriving suburbs, villages and countryside. New cultural, retail, office and mixed use developments will be delivered through regeneration of the Town Centre and its fringe. Urban Gateways to the Town Centre will be regenerated to present attractive entry points to Colchester and stimulate sustainable development.'

'The natural environment, countryside and coastline will be conserved and enhanced and strategic green spaces will be secured to meet the recreational and health needs of Colchester. Sustainable development will also help protect the biodiversity, cultural and amenity value of the countryside and coast and will minimise use of scarce natural resources.' The following is a summary of the Core Strategy Objectives which are consistent with the aims of the Management Plan for Castle Park: Sustainable Development:

- Provide the necessary community facilities and infrastructure to support new and existing communities.

- Provide excellent and accessible health, education, culture and leisure facilities to meet the needs of Colchester's growing community.

Public Realm:

- Improve streetscapes, open spaces and green links to provide attractive and accessible spaces for residents to live, work and play.

Environment and Rural Communities:

- Protect and enhance Colchester's natural and historic environment, countryside and coastline.

3.2.2. Green Space Strategy

The Colchester Parks and Green Spaces Strategy was adopted in 2008 and is a strategy to influence the delivery of parks and green spaces within the borough for the benefit of residents and visitors. The vision is 'Colchester's parks and green spaces are provided to enhance the quality of life of those people who live, work and visit the town and its surroundings. We aim to develop the range, quality and accessibility of public open space to support regeneration, encourage social inclusion, improve community health and enhance biodiversity.' The Green Space Strategy will:

- Create a comprehensive framework for the protection, enhancement, accessibility and use of parks and green spaces;
- Create a framework for the protection and enhancement of biodiversity in parks and green spaces;
- Contribute to the development of the Local Development Framework (LDF) and PPG17 requirements;
- Ensure green spaces enhance the quality of life of local communities;
- Identify how green spaces can promote civic pride and social inclusion;
- Ensure that green space networks meet current and future needs;
- Generate internal and external support for parks and green spaces;
- Develop a shared vision by members, officers, key partners and stakeholders;
- Create a framework for participation by the community and volunteer groups in park and green space management; and
- Build on previous playing pitch and play area strategies to provide a coordinated approach to the development and provision of outdoor recreation provision

The Green Space Strategy recognises that the planning and management of parks and open spaces should be done strategically to maximise the value of investment and revenue expenditure. The Parks and Green Spaces Strategy will offer an opportunity to improve parks and green spaces including the following aims which are relevant to the Castle Park Management Plan:

- protecting and enhancing levels of biodiversity and ecological habitats;
- providing a wide variety of cultural, social and community facilities, including seasonal activities such as fairs, festivals and concerts;
- protecting the historical, cultural and archaeological heritage;
- reinforcing local identity and enhancing the physical character of an area, so shaping existing and future development;
- maintaining the visual amenity and increasing the attractiveness of a locality to create a sense of civic pride;
- boosting the economic potential of tourism, leisure and cultural activities;

- illustrating the contribution to health agendas e.g. reducing stress levels, by providing formal and informal recreational facilities;
- providing popular outdoor educational facilities for schools and academic institutions;
- improving physical and social inclusion including accessibility, particularly for young, disabled and older people;
- offering alternative routes for circulation, including networks for walking and cycling and safer routes to school;

3.2.3. Other Relevant Local Strategies

Culture

The two museums (Castle Museum and Hollytrees Mansion) within Castle Park are very important to the success of the park as a whole. The Colchester and Ipswich Museum Service Development Plan 2008 is a comprehensive document which sets out their visions and values which includes the aims;

'We believe in playing an active part in managing and caring for the wider human and natural heritage of the area.'

'We believe that supporting and working with the wider cultural community is not only our duty but also adds to the well-being of the organisation.'

'We believe that collections, and the buildings in which they are displayed, are central to our purpose and it is our duty to care and preserve them for the benefit of current and future generations.'

It is important that the Castle Park Management Plan recognises the objectives of Museums Service and that a coordinated approach to their development is achieved. There are mutual educational benefits which can be linked between the Park, the Castle Museum and Hollytrees Mansion Museum located in the Park, and the Natural History Museum which is located close by.

Transport

Transport Proposals is the latest transport strategy that will be of benefit to Castle Park by allowing pedestrians to easily access the park without being held back by heavy traffic. Cyclists would also be able to access the link with the Sustrans network to the north of the Park with greater ease. This will allow improved accessible connections to the town centre encouraging the use of the Park at times where previously it may not have been a quick or easy place to get to.

Proposed cycle routes to the south east of the Castle will also open up the park to more people. Also, by improving rail and bus links Colchester will become more accessible to a wider area.

Community

Colchester 2020, a local strategic partnership in cooperation with CBC, launched Colchester's Community Strategy at the first assembly meeting in 21 January 2004. Their vision is for Colchester to develop as a prestigious regional centre. The Community Strategy produced by Colchester 2020 and CBC includes a Cultural Strategy as a key part of the document. A website www.colchesterforpeople.co.uk was set up to explain all parts of the Cultural Strategy and community involvement.

"Colchester a place for people" was adopted in May 2003. The aim of this strategy is to make Colchester an attractive and enjoyable place in which to live, work and visit, and to be recognised as a leading cultural centre in the east of England and an important visitor destination. Castle Park, located at the heart of the city can be viewed as an integral part to help fulfil these aims.

Regeneration

The town centre has recently become the focus of several regeneration projects. Projects include plans for a new cultural quarter, retail development, magistrate's court, residential area, multi-storey car park and town square. A Public Realm Strategy is also currently being undertaken. These are all in close proximity to Castle Park and their development can only increase the importance of this key public open space, with opportunities increasing to link such important areas and features.

Tourism

There are more than 40 visitor attractions (including Castle Park) in and around Colchester. Tourism policy formation and implementation is the responsibility of Leisure Services. In the next decade place making in Colchester will continue to develop and improve as a visitor destination. The Colchester Destination Development Plan 2006-2009 raises several key issues which need to be addressed if the town is to realise its tourism potential. Key issues which are directly relevant to Castle Park are:

- Interpretation of the area's key natural, contemporary and historic assets to improve the quality of the visitor experience and foster local pride.
- Transportation infrastructure improvements to improve access into the town centre and encourage new ways of travelling around the area.
- Street environment improvements to enhance the visitor experience, foster local pride and create a sense of place.

4.0 Site Description

4.1. Site Overview

Ownership: Colchester Borough Council

Management: Colchester Borough Council

Site Area: Approximately 11 hectares

Grid Reference: The Castle Park study is contained within the following X/Ygrid references

- South West: 591791 / 221022
- North West: 591791 / 229489
- North East: 604212 / 229489
- South East: 604212 / 221022

Ward: Castle

Councillors: Councillor Henry Spyvee and

Portfolio holder: Councillor Martin Hunt

Community forum: Friends of Castle Park (FOCP)

Refer to Figure 4.1 in Appendix 01 for the Park Location Plan.

Castle Park is an historic park located in the heart of Colchester. The Park covers approximately 11 hectares and extends north from High Street to the banks of the River Colne.

Castle Park became an official public park in 1892 and is owned and managed by Colchester Borough Council. Its name is derived from the presence of a Norman Castle (currently the home of the Castle Museum) which lies in the south west corner of the Park.

The Park is effectively divided into two sections by the Roman Wall and public footpath that traverses it east to west. The Upper Park contains the Castle Museum and Hollytrees House immediately adjacent to the Town Centre, whilst the Lower Park sweeps down to the River Colne.

It is also adjacent to Kings Head Meadow, the Cricket Ground and the Riverside area, and therefore links into a wider green network of open space.

The park is listed Grade II in the English Heritage Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Importance. The Norman Castle, the Roman Town Wall and Duncan's Gate, and Hollytrees House are Grade II* Listed Buildings/Structures. The main gateway to the Park, the Roman Temple enclosure wall, Grey's Rotunda (garden temple) and Summerhouse, the Roman Pavement, and the Hollytrees House exterior railings are Grade II Listed Buildings/Structures.

The majority of the Park is a Scheduled Ancient Monument; specifically, the Roman Town Wall, Duncan's Gate and the Town Ditch are Scheduled Ancient Monuments. The Upper Park falls within the Town Centre Conservation Area.

The Lower Park, riparian to the River Colne, is a locally important Site of Importance for Nature Conservation.

4.2. Purpose and Use of Castle Park:

Castle Park plays an important and unique role in the life of Colchester at a local, regional, national and international level. It is enjoyed for its pleasant gardens and horticultural interest in the Upper Park and its parkland landscape in the Lower Park.

The Park provides a range of facilities to satisfy contemporary needs including café, children's play ground, crazy golf and putting greens, and two bowling greens. During the summer there are boats for hire on the boating pond, music at the band stand, and a series of events are held in the Lower Park.

The two listed Museums within the Park offer excellent destinations for visitors who have the opportunity to enjoy the Park. The significant historical and archaeological resource draws visitors including school parties and students from across the UK and abroad. Castle Park is located adjacent to the town centre. The Parks strategic location at the centre of an open space system based on the River Colne provides links to the wider area of Colchester.

4.3. Character Areas

Castle Park comprises a variety of interesting landscape characters in the Upper and Lower Park. The Character Areas plan (Figure 4.3 in Appendix 01) shows the general layout of the 11 distinct areas that comprise the park. These are described below:

4.3.1. Area 1) Hollytrees Meadow, Area 2) Putting Green, and Area 3) Maintenance Depot

In circa 1727, Charles and Sarah Gray moved into Hollytrees Mansion. Through the mid and latter part of the 18th century Charles Gray repaired the Castle and reworked the layout of the grounds east of Castle, of which Hollytrees Meadow formed part. Hollytrees Meadow covers the eastern side of the Upper Park from the northern edge of Hollytrees lawn down to Duncan's Gate and the Roman Town Wall.

The meadow is contained to the east by the red brick boundary wall and line of mature deciduous trees, and by the Norman Castle Rampart to the west. The key design principle for Charles Gray in his reworking of the Castle Grounds was to preserve views from Hollytrees House across the landscape to the River Colne and beyond. This he did by creating Hollytrees Meadow as uncluttered open grassland. However, over the years, this design principle has been eroded by the introduction of the children's play ground, the putting green (Character Area 2) and the maintenance depot (Character Area 3) in the northern half of the meadow.

The southern half of Hollytrees Meadow consists of open amenity grass within which is the children playground screened by a large hedge on its southern side. Adjacent to the playground, but hidden below ground, is the Roman Mithraeum. A small section of the Roman Drain is visible through metal grating laid flush in the meadow.

Standing over the northern half of the original Hollytrees Meadow is the existing maintenance depot. Within the depot is a collection of buildings. A small single storey brick building provides a

cramped and unsatisfactory base for the Rangers which is shared with the Gardeners and the Security Staff. A large timber shed has recently been converted for use as a meeting room and a timber barn provide the principle storage facilities for equipment and vehicles. Behind the barn is an ecologically sensitive area at the base of the Roman Town wall. A number of other structures are redundant and derelict. The ground is bare or locally surfaced with compacted gravel. The remaining areas are grass and form a temporary nursery for potted shrubs waiting to be planted out. The depot is fenced and secured and bounded by hedging.

Adjacent to the maintenance depot is the putting green area contained within sections of domestic timber close board fencing and chain link fencing and screened with hedging around its perimeter. A small domestic shed located at the entrance is used as the kiosk. Several of trees of inappropriate species speckle the putting green area.

Adjacent to the western boundary of the putting green area is the crazy golf course sunken terrace and café. The crazy golf course and sunken terrace nestle at the base of the extended Norman Rampart. The crazy golf course is enclosed with hedging. Access into the café is from the top of the Norman Rampart. The rear elevation of the café faces east across Hollytrees Meadow and extends down to the sunken terrace at lower ground floor level at the base of the Rampart. The lower ground floor toilets which face out onto the terrace were closed in the mid 1980s and remain closed.

4.3.2. Area 4) Hollytrees Lawn

Hollytrees lawn also formed part of Charles Grays' reworked layout to the grounds east of the Castle and provides the setting for the north elevation of Hollytrees House. The lawn was first created in response to Charles Grays design principle of preserving views from Hollytrees House across the landscape to the River Colne and beyond. However, over the years, this design principle has been eroded by the introduction of the badge bed to the western side of the lawn, and the Sensory Garden which encroaches into views at the eastern side of the lawn.

The badge bed is relatively small and is planted out each year with annual bedding plants to create the 'badge' of a particular charity, institution or business. The Sensory Garden was constructed in 1995 on the site of the 'Garden of Fragrance' opened in 1953 to celebrate the Coronation of Queen Elisabeth II. The Sensory Garden was designed by a collaboration of artists and planted with 200 species of plants within a series of raised planters. In addition there is a timber pergola structure and a number of features made with mosaics. At the northern end of the Sensory Garden is small brick open shelter known as the Sensory Garden Pavilion. The formal Wetzlar Garden is found to the eastern side of Hollytrees House (now Hollytrees Mansion Museum) and public toilets adjoin Hollytrees Mansion on its western elevation.

4.3.3. Area 5) Castle Inner Bailey

The Norman Castle (standing on the site of the original Roman fort) dominates the Park. It is set within attractive grounds created as part of Gray's reworked garden layout and is closely associated with the Norman Ramparts which are equally dominant when viewed from the rest of the Park. The grounds between the northern side of the Castle and the Rampart form a well defined space sheltered by the Castle and the avenue of trees planted as part of Grays layout. A memorial to Sir Charles Lucas and Sir George Lisle (who were shot after the siege of 1648) is located in the grounds where the men were thought to have been executed. The main entrance into the Castle Museum is on the south side via a bridge link over the ruins of the Saxon Chapel. The Rose Gardens provide a formal display within a lawn area located between the Castle and the southern boundary of the Park. The Roman embankment is a well tended sloping lawn area with tree and shrub planting behind it along the western Park boundary.

4.3.4. Area 6) Norman Ramparts

The Norman Ramparts are a large defensive earthwork to the north and east of the Castle. A wide tarmacadam avenue runs east- west along the top of the northern earthwork framed by and avenue of mature lime trees set in lawn areas. Grays Summerhouse acts as a focal point at the western end of the avenue. The steep grass covered embankments are less manicured. The eastern earthwork is informally planted with mature tree canopy and loose arrangement of shrub planting creating the Woodland Walk. The outer bailey ditch is located at the bottom of the

northern earthwork and now contains the Avignon Garden. This is a formal garden of symmetrical annual planting beds set within a lawn. A formal tarmac terrace backed by a brick wall encloses the northern side of the Garden. A broad set of steps are located centrally and lead down to the recently refurbished Bandstand. The Bell Gardens are located at the western end of the Avignon Garden. Colchester has a long and proud history as a Garrison town. This formal garden of symmetrical annual planting beds set within a lawn forms a focal point of remembrance of those involved in conflicts over the centuries, most recently in the Gulf and Afghanistan. The Imola Garden nestles at the base of the southern end of the eastern earthwork. A formal rectangular pond lies at the centre of the garden within a paved area that is surrounded by mature shrubberies. Adjacent to the Imola Garden is Gray's Rotunda, an exquisite and significant historical remain surviving from Grays layout.

4.3.5. Area 7) Parkland

The gently sloping parkland between the Avignon Gardens and the Roman Town Wall consist of amenity grass and scattered mature trees. Several tarmac paths bisect the parkland. The Park Lodge built in mock Tudor vernacular in 1924, is located at the western edge of the parkland. It is currently let to tenants via a housing authority.

4.3.6. Area 8) Events Area

The events area occupies the level ground of the flood plain between the River Colne to the north and the Roman Town Wall to the south. The events area consists of open amenity grassland. Trees are restricted to the eastern edge and the northern boundary with the River Colne. The public footpath running east west is sandwiched between the Roman Town wall and a set of metal railings and associated hedgerow forming part of the secure boundary to the events area.

4.3.7. Area 9) Boating Pond

The boating pond is located in the north western part of the Park adjacent to the Middle Mill park entrance. It is a concrete lined pond with hard edging surrounded by a circular path. The pond is surrounded by an informal structure of mature trees set within amenity grass. A small hexagonal timber shed located on the concrete landing stage performs the function of boat concessionaire ticket office, backed by incongruous metal railings. The toilet block overlooking the boating pond is open to the public. It is functional and of no particular architectural merit. Adjacent to the toilet block is a former WWII gun emplacement strategically positioned in sight of the potential crossing point of the River Colne at Middle Mill.

4.3.8. Area 10) River Colne

The southern bank of the River Colne forms the northern boundary of Castle Park. The river bank is riparian and lined with mature trees. Several WWII concrete tank traps remain guarding the potential crossing point adjacent to the Middle Mill entrance. A tarmac footpath is set back several metres from the bank and links the north western and north eastern park entrances. Pedestrian foot bridges are located opposite the cricket pavilion and also adjacent to the north eastern Park entrance.

4.3.9. Area 11) Bowling Greens

The eastern side of the events area is characterised by the upper and lower bowling greens and associated club houses. The upper bowling green sits uncomfortably within parkland setting and the associated club house appears ramshackle. Both bowling greens are contained behind fencing and clipped hedges. The boundary of this character area is defined by the mature tree structure over a tarmac path which separates it from the open space of the events area. The Roman Town ditch is sandwiched between the southern side of the upper bowling green and the Roman Town wall. It is currently managed as a wild flower area.

4.3.10. Other Local Green Spaces:

There are a number of other local green spaces connected to Castle Park which are open to the public. These green spaces form part of the strategic green link into the centre of Colchester and are illustrated in Figure 4.2 appendix 1 and include the following:

Area 01-Cymbeline Meadows TBC by CBC Area 02-Hilly Fields TBC by CBC Area 03-High Woods Country Park TBC by CBC

Area 4 – Bull Meadow

The 1.4 hectare wetland area was declared a Statutory Local Nature Reserve (LNR) in 1994. Most of the site consists of a damp meadow on the north bank of the river Colne between Castle Park and Leisure World. It lies within the rivers floodplain, is enclosed by a mature hedge to the north and separated from the river along its southern boundary by a 30 year old flood defence embankment. The site has free, open access throughout for pedestrians only, who are encouraged to use the managed grass path. The area receives relatively few visitors owing to its small size, wet nature terrain and lack of amenities. Its main uses are walking and fishing (though this not officially permitted). The hedge with its oak, sycamore, hawthorn blackthorn and willows was part coppiced in 1999 and is backed by a ditch that is dry for most of the year. It is important for winter rushes. The flood defence supports a small plantation of coppiced and pollarded crack willows which are breaking up and alders that overshadow the riverbank. Flocks of siskin's feed along this margin in the winter. There is significant invasion of the meadow by willow and blackthorn suckers. The meadow, once grazed marshland, contains wet and dry areas. In the drier parts to the west it is dominated by common ruderal species such as great willowherb, creeping thistle, hogweed and stinging nettles. Dragonflies and damselflies forage amongst this tall vegetation in the summer. Other plant species, more typical of damp meadows, include purple loosestrife, amphibious bistort, gypsywort and soft rush. Old ditches run through the meadow and though silted up contain water through the early spring. Associated with these ditches are wetter areas to the east that support larger patches of loosestrife and a wide variety of wetland plants such as cuckoo flower, reed, skullcap and marsh woundwort. In the centre of the meadow is an area rich in sedges with greater and lesser pond sedge, and hairy sedge dominant. Toads and frogs have been seen here recently. Warblers and whitethroats use the meadow for nesting and feeding, and it is important for invertebrates including many species of spiders and butterflies.

Area 05- Cricket Ground:

The Cricket Ground is located opposite Castle Park on the north bank of the River Colne and consists of closely mown pitches within the open outfield of mown amenity grassland. All-weather practice pitches and the club house are located to the south western side of the ground. A pedestrian footbridge over the River Colne into Castle Park is located adjacent to the club house. In contrast with the flat and open nature of the cricket ground, the southern boundary along the bank of the River Colne is lined with mature trees

Area 06- Lower Park and Area 07- Upper Park

Refer to Section 4.4 Character areas of Castle Park above.

Area 08 – Land Lane Open Space

The L-shaped open space links Land Lane with Castle Park and Riverside Estate. It occupies the site of the Roman town ditch and follows the course of the Roman town wall along the north east corner. At the foot of the wall and forming islands within the space are wildflower areas cut annually in contrast with the amenity grassland which makes up the rest of the area. Avenues of trees run parallel with the eastern Roman wall and also alongside pathways which cross the north side by a bank covered with rough grassland and trees or scrub. The only boundaries of the open space which don't lie adjacent to housing are the corner of the wall behind which lies the quaker burial ground and the western limit which meets with the meadow of Castle Park. Only metal railings separate these areas.

Area 09- Riverside and Riverside Lake

This area includes a river margin, dual use path, lake with island and tree avenues. This open space acts as a linear corridor adjacent to the river Colne with a wildflower margin maintained on the riverside along the public right of way. Also planted within this area is an avenue of Willows and Black Poplars, Sweet Chestnuts and other tree species. The Riverside Lake was created by the Environment Agency in the 1970's in conjunction with the flood defences, on the site of a brickworks. It has an island at its centre which is inaccessible to the public and is covered in

dense tree cover and scrub. Visits have been made to the island with a few sightings of nesting birds or other wildlife inhabitants. The Lake suffers intermittently from poor water quality. It is hoped that with continual monitoring and improvements that the water quality and in turn the prospects for wildlife on this lake will improve reducing the imminent necessity for a wildlife pond within Castle Park. The river margin cutting regime allows a more wildlife friendly habitat to develop. This area is now cut in October with a flail and the cuttings are collected. The tree stock in this area is gradually being replaced with native species appropriate to this location. These trees will favour native wildlife species and cope better close to the river and during drought conditions.

Area 10 – Kings Head Meadow

This large area of open grassland lies across the river to the north of Castle Park. The River Colne runs along the entirety of its southern edge while the northern boundary is dominated by urban development. North Station Bridge is situated at the furthest westerly point with Colchester Cricket ground laying to the east. There is a footpath running westerly along the river edge from Middle Mill to North Station Bridge, which is often used as a short cut by people travelling either to the Park or to the Town Centre. There are a further two footpaths running Northerly towards Catchpool Road. There is a semi native hedge bordering part of the northern edge of the area, which acts as a buffer zone between the meadow and the urban development. There is an area of tarmac which is used by the cricket ground and fishermen as a car park and a further stretch of grassland adjacent to the cricket ground which is often used as an overflow car park when organised events are taking place in the park. Central to the area is a formal railed children's play area equipped with static play items.

Due to the nature of its use and the amenity grass cutting regime in place in this section it currently has little in the way of wildlife value. Unfortunately, the area is frequented by drinkers and is often subjected to the dumping of large amounts of litter.

River Margins (Middle Mill to North Station Bridge)

These narrow strips of land run either side of the Colne between Middle Mill and North Station Bridge. The northerly section lies adjacent to Kings Head Meadow while the southerly section is dominated by residential and business premises. The margins comprise a mixture of marginal wetland plants including Yellow Flag Iris, Reedmace, Teasel and Willow Herb. The southerly section is subject to the growth of Japanese Knotweed. There is an abundance of overhanging trees along both sides of this section of the river, predominantly Willow but also some Alder and Sycamore. Due to the catchment area at Middle Mill this section of the river suffers from a frequent build up of litter.

Area 11- East Bay Recreation Ground Open Space

An area of 1.5km² this open space is bounded in the east by River Colne, East Street to the south, residential and commercial buildings to the west and a school playing field to the north. It has a drainage ditch running along its northern edge which feeds into a sluice to the north. There is a metalled pathway running diagonally through the open space which is a link between the east of the town and Castle Park. There are avenues of amenity trees either side of this path consisting predominantly of cherries. Trees can be found along all boundaries; to the south is a cultivated shrub border. The open space consists of amenity grassland with a few scattered trees. A strip of rough grassland is left uncut along the riverbank which is held behind a retaining structure, a remnant of the port facilities linked to the former Marriage's Mill buildings on the opposite bank. Flood defences running along its north and western margins are cultivated with spring bulbs. A large residential development is currently under construction in this area. Other recent developments consist of a new children's playground and the clearance and landscaping of the river's edges. This area is maintained as an amenity space for public recreation and dog walkers. It is used regularly throughout the day and lies adjacent to East Street. This regular use by the public and dogs combined with its current management regime gives it limited scope as an area for wildlife. Only the eastern margin with its uncultivated ground cover provides any real value for wildlife. Possible sightings of otter have been made on the river along this stretch. The river is a Local Wildlife Site due to its importance as the core of a wildlife corridor running through urban Colchester. This has helped to draw coastal bird species into the heart of the town. As with the other section of the river these river margins are an important resource for wildlife with nesting birds and wildlife often frequenting the riverbanks.

4.3.11. Summary of Significant Features

Heritage Features: The Park contains approximately 10% of the first Roman Town of Roman Britain, the largest keep ever built by the Normans, as well as a number of other outstanding features. Its importance in heritage terms is reflected in the designation of the Upper Park as a scheduled Ancient Monument and the scheduling of the main standing remains as Grade I and II* Listed Buildings.

Standing Features:

- Duncan's Gate. The northeast gate of the Roman town, now in ruins, located in the northeast corner of the Park.
- Roman Town Wall and Rampart. (Grade I Listed Building – dated AD65/80). Located in close proximity to Duncan's Gate, and viewed as the most impressive and best preserved section (approx. 114m long, 1.8-2.7m high) of the internal rampart in Colchester. a section of the original town ditch can be seen on the northern side of the Roman town wall.
- Roman Town Houses – foundations and pavements. (Grade II Listed Building). Located in Upper Park to the west of the Bandstand; excavated in the 1920's by Sir Mortimer Wheeler.
- Roman Temple Outer Precinct Wall. (Grade II Listed Building – dated c.AD54 [Temple to Emperor Claudius]). Located in Upper Park to the northwest of the castle; only partially exposed.
- Norman Castle Keep and Ramparts. (Grade I Listed Building and Scheduled Ancient Monument – dated 1076-1100). Located near the Museum street entrance to Upper Park, and includes the foundations of outer bailey buildings in the ditch to the southern face of the castle. Castle built on top of foundations of Roman temple.
- Norman ramps and ditches. Visually dominant features of Upper Park.
- Outer Norman Bailey Ditch. Shallow earthwork that separates the higher ground level of Upper Castle Park from the lower level 'Old nursery' site.
- Middle Mill. Located at northeast entrance into Lower Castle Park. A mill has been recorded on this site since 1101. Mill demolished by the Borough Council in 1950's.
- Hollytrees House. (Grade I Listed Building - built 1718). Garden and Castle grounds laid out by Charles Gray c.1729. Garden to south from enclosed by original 18th century railing (Grade II Listed)
- Summerhouse. (Grade II Listed Building). Garden building built by Gray in 1731 as part of original landscape design.
- Rotunda. (Grade II Listed) Garden building built by Gray in 1747 as part of original landscape design. Now a ruin.
- Lucas-Lisle Memorial. First memorial in Castle Park, dedicated to two Royalist Officers shot during the siege of 1648. Constructed in 1892 on the site where the men are thought to have been executed.
- Model Boating Pond. Integral part of original park layout, completed 1893.
- Bandstand. Integral part of original park layout, completed 1896.
- World War II defences. Anti-tank barriers located in the northeast corner of Lower Park. Remains of the Eastern Command Line that was built along the River Colne.
- Railings and Gates (Grade II Listed – late 19th century) Cowdray Crescent, Museum Street and Rye Gate entrances.
- East Boundary Wall (Grade II Listed) Hollytrees Meadow, Upper Park. 18th century.

Buried Archaeology:

- Hollytrees Meadow. A Roman shrine (possibly the 'Mithraeum') and other associated Roman buildings believed to be here. Location of Roman north-south street and drain.
- Hollytrees Lawn. Inner Norman bailey ditch. Likely remains from the Roman and Medieval periods covered by a significant layer of topsoil.

- Inner Bailey. Roman occupation level 1.2 to 2.85M below current ground levels. Norman remains disturbed.
- Upper Park – Avignon Gardens to Roman Town Wall. Remains of the partially exposed Roman Town Houses.
- ‘Old Nursery’ site and Putting Green. Roman buildings and outer Norman bailey ditch located here.
- Lower Castle Park. Unknown but likely to contain Roman, Anglo-Saxon and Medieval artefacts.

4.4. Site History

There is an extensive recorded history to the Castle Park site which goes back to Roman times. There is a significant overlay of phases of development of the area now occupied by Castle Park from the establishment of the Roman Fortress and Town, Norman Ramparts with the largest Norman Keep in Europe, to the setting out of Grays Pleasure Grounds and the eventual founding of the Public Park in 1892.

Castle Park stands over the north east part of the former Roman colony and includes the site of the Temple (now under the Norman Castle). Parts of the Roman Town Wall, Duncan’s Gate and the Roman Drains form part of the visible archaeological resource within the Park. Many Roman Streets are also found within the Park boundaries but form part of the rich buried archaeological resource.

The Norman Castle was built in 1076 for William I (The Conqueror) on the ruins of the Roman Temple. The building of the Castle including the construction of the Ditch and Rampart represents the second major change in ground level in the Park since the construction of the Roman Temple. In the 13th century the Castle was the seat of the Sherriff of Essex and contained the County Gaol until the 17th century. The Castle fell into decay between the 16th and 18th centuries.

In 1726 the Castle was left to Charles Chamberlain Rebow. Mary Webster purchased the Castle and the Bailey Grounds from him a year later. The land was then conferred to her daughter Sarah who was married to Charles Gray. The Grays lived in Hollytrees Mansion built to the east of the Castle in 1718. Charles Gray repaired the Castle and reworked the layout of the Castle Grounds through the mid and latter part of the 18th century until his death in 1782.

Grays layout is of great significance and continues to provide a unified structure to Castle Park. He integrated the ramparts into the garden by constructing paths, he introduced ornamental buildings to vary the focal points, provided viewpoints to the wider landscape and created dramatic views to the Castle all contributing to an extraordinary landscape.

Following the death of Charles Gray, the land was inherited by the Round Family. In 1891 the Council set up a special committee to open negotiations with James Round regarding land they wished to purchase in order to establish a public park. The Council employed the professional experience of Messrs. Backhouse & Co. to make the changes necessary for the area to become a public park. The Park was opened by the Lord Mayor of London on 20th October 1892 coinciding with the local ancient traditional Oyster Feast.

Castle Park remains the management and maintenance responsibility of the Parks & Recreation Service of Colchester Borough Council.

4.1. Chronology of Castle Park:

Date	Event
AD43	Roman Conquest of Britain
c.AD44	Roman Fortress built at Colchester and used as a base for Roman army
AD49	Colchester converted to Colony for retired veteran soldiers. Caste Park lies within an annex to the main town and is surrounded by a ditch.

c.AD54	Colchester (Camulodunum) becomes capital city of the Roman Province of Britain. Construction of Temple to the Emperor Claudius begun in Castle Park. Ditch around annex was filled in. Street between Insula 14 and 22 built
AD 60/61	Boudicca rebellion and the sacking of Colchester. London becomes the provincial capital
AD 65/80	Building of the Roman Town Wall and extension of the town to the east into Castle Park. New Streets and Insulae 6, 7, 14, 15 set out.
AD250	Saxon and European Invasions begin in Britain. During 3rd Century Colchester falls into disrepair, street system is lost, and town shrinks in size.
4th century	Coming of Christianity
8/9th century	Occupation of town is centred round St Runwald's Church on west side of town.
917	Edward the Elder expels Danes from Colchester town, and takes steps to re-establish it – he repairs defences and new streets are laid out. Royal Council or 'witan' held at Colchester
1066	Battle of Hastings – Norman Invasion (William I - The Conqueror)
1071	Danish attack on town
1076 – 1100	Norman Castle built at Colchester on top of Foundations of earlier Roman temple.
1085	Threatened invasion by Cnut of Denmark
1087	William II comes to power
c. 1100	Creation of rampart and ditch to castle. The building of the south wall of the bailey diverted course of High Street.
1120	Eudes the sewer dies, Castle escheated to the Crown
1132	Henry I visits Colchester
1135	Stephen I comes to power
1154	Henry II comes to power
1173-4	Castle strengthened, garrisoned and victualled
Late 12th Century	Outer Bailey defences constructed.
1199	John I comes to power
1215	French force occupied the castle
1216	King John places castle under siege and forces a French surrender
1242	Henry III visits Colchester
1622	Castle falls decay and bairly buildings are lost
1637	Roof of Hall known to have collapsed
1650	Reported that castle no longer worth cost of repair
1649	Demolition of large sections of the castle earthworks, removal of stone and large quantities of sand started by Charles Lord Stanhope.
1685	Wheeley granted building leases for lean-to houses or sheds against the west wall of the Castle.
1709	Bowling Green depicted on estate plan. Thought to have been constructed by Wheeley – would have involved much earth moving to render it flat.
1726	Hollytrees (built 1718), and Castle given to Charles Gray . c.1729 - Charles Gray laid out Castle grounds creating raised walk on castle earthworks, a canal, summerhouse dated 1731 and rebuilt rotunda on terrace 1747. Gray also planted trees during this phase of improvements.

1748	West wing added to Hollytrees by James Deane
1748	- Morant's map shows Hollytrees, layout of grounds, avenue of trees on west of castle and trees planted on sides of the rampart. In addition to the garden buildings described c.1731 another summerhouse is depicted by Morant overlooking the canal. The gardens to the north and south of Hollytrees, and along the canal are shown in a formal arrangement.
1767	Sparrow's map shows a change to the layout of the garden adjacent to Hollytrees. The rectangular arrangement north of the house has been abandoned in favour of a curvaceous lawn flowing towards the castle and integrating the two sites which are now linked by a path leading up to the rampart walk.
1782	Gray died and the estate passed to Round family.
1830	Sketch after Turner shows Gray's trees mature.
1853	Duncan's Gate discovered by Dr. PM Duncan
1876	1876 - Edward Round, Wilson Marriage, JJ Cross and Joselin hired land to front of Castle. Used by military bands but not a success and abandoned by 1882. Joselin continued to suggest the Corporation should provide a public park. Bathing place shown on 1876 OS.
1892	Catchpool legacy.
A Special Committee began negotiations with James Round with a view to acquiring land suitable for a Public Park.	
Councillor Laver requested permission to build a memorial to Sir Charles Lucas and Sir George Lisle on the spot where they were shot during the 1648 siege.	
The Park was laid out by a firm from York, Backhouses. Between 1892 and 1912 the Cant family, local rose growers, donated substantial quantities of roses for the park. There were also gifts of bulbs from RW Wallace.	
The opening was arranged to coincide with the annual St. Dennis' Fair & Colchester Oyster Feast.	
1893	Flood bank built during winter 1892/93 location not specified. Drinking Fountain donated by Miss Catchpool. Model Boat Pond completed. A sundial was introduced to the park (removed 1970). Sundial brought to park from Brantham Rectory, by Deputy Mayor. Paxman Bequest of land on north side of Colne.
1894	A Pavilion was erected although in many ways it was unsuitable for the purposes for which it had been designed and subsequently alterations occurred. Demolished c.1930
1895	Bandstand, built by McFarland & Co.
1897	First Green house built for Castle Park.
1899	Litter bins installed in the park.
1901	Bell to ring at closing time installed in Bell Beds
1902	Oak presented by Hearts of Oak Benefit Society to mark the Coronation of Edward VII.
1906	Outer row of trees removed from Catchpole Avenue.
1907	Wilson Marriage bequest of land referred to as King's Mead or King's Head Meadow.
1911	New bridge built.
1912	A site was allocated for the playing of bowls
1922	Holly Trees Estate purchased by the Council.
Rose walk planted Castle bailey ditch.	
Playground built	
1923	1923 OS shows 8 tennis courts in lower park.
1924	Park keepers lodge built
1929	Lily pond built
1930	Drinking fountain donated by Miss Catchpool. Maybury Seat built.
1940	Second World War Defences constructed along River Colne as part of the Eastern Command Line. Anti tank barriers located in Lower Castle Park

1929	Lily pond built
1930	Drinking fountain donated by Miss Catchpool. Maybury Seat built.
1940	Second World War Defences constructed along River Colne as part of the Eastern Command Line. Anti tank barriers located in Lower Castle Park.
1943	Four bombs landed in Castle Park
1953	Shelter and Garden of Fragrance opened
1967	Putting Green on site of tennis courts.
1979-	Badge Bed relocated to east end of Lily Pond.
1979	Wetzlar Gardens Opened
1980	Heather Bed replaced Rhododendron Bed
1982	Avignon Garden laid out
1985	1985 - Crazy Golf course built.
1988	Armada Beacon built in Castle Park
1989	Cants Beds and Charter 800 beds laid out
1992	Centenary of Castle Park celebrated.
1995	Sensory Garden completed. UN beds built.VE & VJ Beds and Burma Star Beds laid out.

4.5. Site Description

4.5.1. Landscape

Trees: Castle Park has a large collection of trees, which contribute greatly to the landscape character of the Park. There is currently an imbalance in the age structure of the tree stock. Many date from the Victorian and Edwardian periods and are now becoming over-mature. The oldest trees in the Park are considered to be the yews and hollies immediately north of Hollytrees House. The avenues of trees along Mayors Walk and Catchpole Avenue were planted in the year of opening in 1892.

A tree survey was carried out in the late 1990's and is updated on a regular basis allowing the stock to be monitored. A phased programme of replacements is now in place. The tree planting strategy has had to rely on like-for-like replacements as much of the Park is scheduled as an Ancient Monument and consent has to be obtained from English Heritage who tend to resist new plantings within the scheduled area. The 'unrestricted' events arena area in the Lower Park is kept relatively tree-free to allow space for events to take place. The strategy is 'arboretum' based thereby ensuring interesting tree stock remains for future generations. In light of the Restoration and Development Plan 2009, trees will be replanted in accordance with historical precedent.

- A formal line of mature lime trees runs the length of the eastern boundary of Hollytree Meadows
- An avenue of mature lime trees runs the length of the east- west path on top of the Norman Rampart from Grays Summerhouse towards the Café
- Several semi mature birch trees are scattered over the putting green area

Shrubs/ borders: Mature shrubberies are managed along the:

- north western park boundary adjacent to the Boating Pond
- western park boundary at the edge of the open grassland of the Upper Park

Annual Bedding: Annual bedding displays are planted in:

- the Avignon Gardens

- Wetzlar Garden
- Bell Gardens
- Badge Bed at the edge of Hollytrees Lawn

Amenity Grass: Grass areas are closely mown on a regular basis and include:

- Hollytrees Meadow
- the Inner Castle Bailey
- the maintenance depot
- Open Grassland of the Upper Park
- Events Area in the Lower Park
- The Norman Ramparts
- Putting area (except for the greens)

The slopes of the Norman Ramparts are challenging to maintain. The slopes are steep and sunlight is restricted due to the tree canopy making grass cover less consistent. Consequently the cutting regime on the slopes is less intensive than in other areas. Gardens:

- Hollytrees Lawn,
- The Rose Garden,
- Wetzlar Garden
- Avignon Garden
- Bell Gardens.

Note : areas of grass in the gardens are maintained as lawn: The bowling greens and the putting greens have specific management regimes to ensure a good and consistent playing surface. Wild Flower Meadows:

The Roman Town Ditch is currently managed for biodiversity, particularly for flowers and insects. The grass is cut once annually in late summer and the arisings removed to reduce nutrient content in order to improve the meadow.

Area of Ecological Significance

- in the Maintenance Depot

Riparian Areas:

- The southern bank of the River Colne

Ponds:

- Boating Pond
- Imola Garden Pond

The boating pond is concrete lined and is drained down annually. Consequently there is no permanent aquatic vegetation in the pond. The Imola Garden Pond is a small ornamental feature and contains aquatic plants including lilies. It is drained down annually and unwanted aquatic vegetation and weed removed.

4.5.2. Furniture

Seats: There are four types of benches within Castle Park which overall are in good condition. They include black cast iron benches with hardwood timber slats, standard hard wood timber benches, painted hard wood timber benches, and recycled black plastic benches. Litter Bins:

Large park green plastic litter bins are provided across the Park that are generally in good condition. There are no dog waste bins or recycling bins within the Park. Lighting: There is street lighting along the public footpath but nowhere else within the Park. The Castle and Hollytrees Museum are up lit and is the responsibility of the Museum Service. Drinking Fountain: The drinking fountain adjacent to the Ryegate Entrance currently does not work. The drinking fountain located by Hollytrees Mansion Museum is in working order.

4.5.3. Signage

There are four type of signage found in Caslte Park as follows:

- Entrance
- Directional/ Way finding
- Information
- Interpretation

Entrance Signs:

- Information boards are located at all the entrances it. There is a Black post mounted entrance sign with white lettering at the entrance into the upper park from the public footpath by the Park Lodge

Directional/ Way finding Signs:

- There is limited way finding signage in Castle Park

Information Signs:

- New display boards have recently been provided next to the café and communicate Council and Friends Group information.

Interpretation:

- There are two rather old interpretation boards. One board is for the Castle located adjacent to the Castle Museum entrance. The other interprets a a section of Roman Wall in the south west corner of the Park

4.5.4. Infrastructure

Hard Surfaces and Footpaths: All paths are surfaced in tarmacadam. The majority of paths are edged with precast concrete pin kerbs. There are places where the path treatment differs and this is listed below;

- An unmade desire line has been created from the tarmacadam path by the upper bowling green across the events area to the river edge footpath by lower bowling green.
- A concrete apron forms the Boating Pond landing area.
- The tarmacadam path within the Sensory Garden is dressed in gravel
- The crazy golf course holes are set within an area of loose gravel
- The playground is surfaced with a full depth of bark chip safety surfacing edged with timber sleepers.
- The Imola Garden is surfaced with natural stone paving in a random coursed pattern
- The Sunken terrace to the rear of the Café is surfaced in concrete paving slabs and gravel
- The threshold to Hollytrees House is paved

The Maintenance Depot area has a mixture of unmade ground along with areas of gravel and chippings locally deposited to address key areas of wear.

4.5.5. Boundaries: (Fencing/ walls/ railings)

- There are black metal railings along eastern boundary to the Wetzlar Garden and Hollytrees Lawn
- A relatively new high brick wall forms the southern boundary of Hollytrees Meadow. Victorian Terraced Houses and associated tall brick wall back on to the eastern boundary of Hollytrees meadow down to Duncan's Gate
- Metal railings form the eastern boundary to the Lower Park from Duncan's Gate to the north east Park entrance
- The River Colne forms the (unfenced) northern boundary of Castle Park
- Black metal railings run along the western boundary of the Lower Park
- The western boundary of the Upper Park is bounded by a variety of styles of wall
- The southern boundary of Castle Park fronting on to the High Street comprises of the ornamental railings associated with the Park entrance from Cowdray Crescent and railings in front of Hollytrees Mansion museum

4.5.6. Entrances:

The main entrances into Castle Park are as follows: Southern entrances:

- Cowdray Crescent Entrance
- Museum Street Entrance Ryegate Road Entrance

Western entrances:

- Middle Mill Entrance by the River Colne
- Middle Mill
- Ryegate Entrance
- Public Right Of Way- Western Entrance

Eastern entrances:

- Public Right Of Way- Eastern Entrance
- Castle Road Entrance

Northern entrances:

- Pedestrian Footbridge over River Colne by the Cricket Pavilion
- North East Park entrance by River Colne

The Park is open from dusk until dawn. The park is secured at night.

4.5.7. Buildings and Structures:

Grays Rotunda

Grays Summerhouse

the Norman Castle

Roman Temple/ Saxon Chapel remains in front of Castle

The Roman Town Wall

The Norman Ramparts

The bandstand

The Sensory Garden Pavilion

The toilet block by the Boating Pond

The Café

The toilets to the lower ground floor of the café

the Toilets by Hollytrees House

Duncan's Gate

Upper Bowling Green Pavilion

Lower Bowling Green Pavilion

Footbridge across River Colne

Boat Concessionaire Kiosk

Cottage in Depot shared by the Rangers, Gardeners and Security Team

Storage Barn

Storage Shed Gardeners shed

putting green kiosk shed

4.5.8. Sports Facilities

Within the Park, there are informal recreation areas in Upper and Lower Park which provides open grass for use as a football kick-about area. There are numerous paths around the Park for walking or jogging. Other formal facilities include:

- Two bowling greens
- Putting greens
- Crazy golf
- Boating on the boating pond.

4.5.9. Children's Play

There is a formal children's play area in the southern end of Hollytrees Meadow. The main surface is bark to a 300mm depth, with some areas of rubber tiles and wet-pour rubber surfacing. It contains standard play equipment such as swings, slides and climbing apparatus which is dated, showing signs of wear but serviable.

4.6. Significance of the Park

Castle Park plays an important and unique role in the life of Colchester at local, district, regional, national and international levels. The Park is indeed unique and fortunate in many ways; its location adjacent to the Town Centre provides excellent access and communications; the two listed museums within its boundaries offer excellent destination points and opportunities for cross-utilisation; its archaeological heritage is second to none and affords many opportunities for education and interpretation; its strategic location at the centre of an open space system based on the River Colne provides links to wider areas; and, its existence as a physical record of landscape change and design through time is fascinating. It also provides a variety of facilities and environments that satisfy contemporary needs.

4.7. Visitor Surveys

Colchester Borough Council is committed to carrying out customer surveys in Castle Park every two years. The last customer survey was conducted in 2008 and complies with the 'Green Stats' customer survey format produced by Green Space and recognised as best practice by the Heritage Lottery Fund. The results of the 2008 survey provide a useful community and visitor information base. The results have been instrumental in shaping the management and maintenance plan and recognise and to accommodate the diversity and range of community needs. The 2008 survey results are available on request are available on request from Ian Balham, Parks and Recreation officer.

5. Management Arrangements

The Borough of Colchester is made up of 27 wards, with 60 locally elected ward councillors throughout the borough. Eight of these ward councillors form a cabinet who meet regularly to make decisions on service issues, and make recommendations to the Council on policy issues and the budget. Each member of the cabinet has an area of responsibility called a portfolio. Decisions made by the cabinet can be called in by the Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel for further consideration.

The portfolio responsible for Castle Park is Councillor Martin Hunt

Parks and Recreation Services in Colchester form part of the Life Opportunities Group of Colchester Borough Council. An Organisation Structure is included at Appendix.....

The Parks and Recreation Service is responsible for allotments, parks, open spaces, countryside sites, playgrounds, sports grounds, trees, closed churchyards and water recreation.

5.1 Park Staff

5.1.1 Park Managers

The Parks and Recreation Manager is supported by four Parks and Recreation Officers and a Countryside Sites Officer. One Parks and Recreation Officer has specific responsibilities for Castle Park and oversees the team of Park Rangers which equate to 2.5 FTE.

Due to the overlap of contracts and the variety of facilities provided in Castle Park, other Parks and Recreation Officers and a Parks Development Officer assist in the overall provision and management of public facilities. The Parks and Recreation Service has developed a substantial knowledge base for Castle Park principally through:

- Considerable combined experience from actively managing Castle Park over a number of years
- Through regular meeting forums with management partners such as the museums service, Friends Groups local residents groups, community police and other stakeholder groups
- Studies including the 1998 and 2009 Restoration and Development Plans, interpretation plans and wildlife plans

5.1.2 Park Rangers

The Park Rangers are part of the Parks and Recreation Service and are directly responsible to the Parks and Recreation Officer. They work on a shift system, providing a constant presence in the park from 9 am to 5pm, 7 days a week, 363 days a year (the park is closed on Christmas Day and Boxing Day).

Park Rangers provide some informal enforcement but their prime role is engagement with the public and developing programmes for schools and other groups to interpret the natural and built heritage of the Park.

Main duties and responsibilities are:

- Health and Safety inspections and patrols
- General maintenance and repairs
- Development of Community Projects, Events and Activities
- Liaison with Friends of Castle Park and other Community Groups
- developing educational and volunteering programmes
- Event Organisation and Management
- Development of Educational Programmes
- Liaison with service and maintenance contractors

The Rangers role of engagement with the public and using the resources of Castle Park should be enhanced. Delivery of this expanded role will be more effectively achieved when facilities such as the proposed Education Resource and Volunteer Base are delivered through the restoration of Castle Park.

It is important that the Rangers become more visible and approachable on a day to day basis in partnership with the security team to foster a more welcoming atmosphere, and to further embrace the policy that visitors to the Park matter.

The role of the Park Rangers should be expanded so that they become the day to day face or point of contact for the public in Castle Park.

5.1.3 Park Ground Staff

A new 10 year partnering agreement commenced in April 2006 with Serviceteam Ltd who were subsequently taken over by Veolia Environmental Services Ltd. The same staff and contract management arrangements are in place. There are six ground staff based and working exclusively at Castle Park. The grounds maintenance contract for Castle Park included all aspects of park maintenance with the exception of play area maintenance (CBC Small Works team), bowling green maintenance (Elmy Landscapes) and tree maintenance (various local contractors).

The grounds maintenance partnering agreement sets out the detailed delivery of the maintenance of Castle Park. The conservation and maintenance of the Roman Town Wall, Roman Drains and other standing archaeology, listed buildings and structures is not part of the grounds staff remit under the partnering agreement.

5.1.4 Park Security Team

Park security is provided through a private contractor (Oakpark Security) and this has proven to be a successful and effective arrangement due in part to the personalities of the security staff and their approach to those causing a disturbance in the Park. The allocated Park Security Officer also shares messroom and office facilities with the Park Rangers and Grounds staff helping to create a shared understanding and delivery of services.

Main responsibilities are

- Security Patrols of Castle Park
- Enforcement and issuing of fixed penalty notices where appropriate
- Liaison with Town Centre Policing Unit

At Present there appears to be no significant skill gap, with the staff in the Park providing a well balanced range of skills

5.2 Concessions

The Castle Park Café, Boating Lake, Putting Green and Crazy Golf facilities in Castle Park are operated by Johnsons Catering and Leisure Ltd. The Concession is operated on a 7 year Lease with Colchester Borough Council, which commenced in 2009.

5.3 Byelaws

Castle Park has a set of published byelaws concerning all aspects of required behaviour in the Park and relating to animals and visitors

5.4 Event Management

Events are provided both directly and indirectly in the Park by Colchester Borough Council in accordance with the Council's 'Outdoor Events Policy' and the Policies and Procedures as defined by the Castle Park Premises License.

The Council directly funds and facilitates some events (e.g. Bandstand Concerts, Children's activities), while other events are organised directly by charities and commercial event organisers. Applications to stage major events in the Park are assessed, using a two-stage application process. All event organisers are required to comply with General Conditions of Hire and are required to submit an Event Safety Plan and details of public liability insurance. Smaller events and activities are controlled by license.

Hire fees and service charges are levied for all events in the Park, although Hire fees are regularly waived for Charitable and non-profit organisations.

5.5 Monitoring of Performance by Maintenance Contractors

The Parks and Recreation Officer is responsible for the contract management of the grounds maintenance service agreement in Castle Park and also for monitoring compliance by waste management contractors and the café and boat concessionaire.

The compliance of specialist contractors in relation to conservation of listed buildings and archaeology in the SAM is the joint responsibility of the Parks and Recreation Officer and the Museums Service.

5.6 Buildings

All buildings are regularly surveyed by the Building Services Manager in accordance with the model as outlined within the Department of Communities and Local Government and the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors. All current Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) changes are covered within these surveys making all publically accessible buildings fully DDA compliant. New legislation is monitored for further improvements.

Daily inspections are undertaken of buildings a part of the Park Ranger inspection programme. Faults are recorded and repairs undertaken in accordance with a timed programme

6.0 Assessment and Analysis

6.1. Green Flag Award and Green Heritage Award Status

Maintenance of the Park continues to be delivered to a high standard. The Council works hard to retain both the Green Flag award and Green Heritage Award for Castle Park these being national recognition for the quality and maintenance of facilities and the successful engagement with the local community. The section which follows uses the Green Flag Award Judging Criteria to help identify the main issues and concerns currently confronting Castle Park, allowing for their resolution within the Action Plan that follows in Section 07 of this document.

6.2. A Welcoming Place

The assessment and analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the Park as a welcoming place is a key indicator of quality under the Green Flag Award Judging Criteria. The main issues and concerns for the park as a welcoming place are identified and their resolution is set out within the Action Plan that follows in Section 07.

6.2.1. Good and Safe Access:

The strengths of the existing access and circulation characteristics in the park are as follows:

- The park enjoys a central location within Colchester and lies within reasonably close proximity to neighbouring residential areas and the town centre
- There is an informal dropping off point in Cowdray Crescent for visitors to Colchester arriving by coach.
- Disabled Parking bays are located adjacent to the park entrance at Museum Street

- Cycle racks are provided near to Park entrances at Middle Mill, Riverside and Museum Street
- The Park is close to the regular bus routes operating within the Town Centre
- Car Parking is available at Town Centre Car Parks, in Catchpool Road and at Leisure World
- There is a good network of tarmac paths allowing ready access and circulation around the majority (but not all) of the Park

The weaknesses of the existing access and circulation characteristics in the park are as follows:

- Sustrans National Cycle Routes 51 and 01 run in close proximity to Castle Park. However, cycling is not permitted within the Park, resulting in no direct route east-west or to the town centre for cyclists .
- Access into and through the Park by large vehicles to the events area in the Lower Park is difficult and constrained.
- There are some weaknesses in the current tarmac path network. There is a desire line cutting across the eastern part of the grass events area from the Upper Bowling Green to the path along the River Colne, and there is no footpath in the Lower Park running east-west from the upper bowling green to the Ryegate entrance.
- Access and circulation is also restricted along the eastern side of the Upper and Lower Park as Duncan's Gate is currently closed off to Park users
- Delivery and maintenance vehicles use the path network to access the Park. This frequently brings park users and vehicles into close proximity with each other

Bearing in mind the above, the following analysis is made:

- Seek to separate Park users and vehicle movements within the Park
- Seek to enhance the footpath circulation network where there are clear inadequacies, subject to the Parks historic design precedence set out in the 2009 Restoration and Development Plan.
- Improve access routes alongside the River Colne and towards the Town Centre for Cyclists

6.2.2. Good Signage to and in the Park:

The Parks and Recreation Service and Green Flag judges have recognised that there is scope to improve the signage and interpretation at Castle Park. The limitations of the current signage and interpretation have been reviewed and addressed through The 2008 Castle Park interpretation Plan which builds on the findings and recommendations of the following:

- 1998 Castle Park Restoration and Development Plan
- 1999 Public Consultation on the Restoration and Development Plan proposals
- 2008 Castle Park Customer Survey
- Parks and Recreation Service Staff Knowledge of the Park
- 2008 feedback from Green Flag judges

The aim of the Castle Park Interpretation Plan 2008 is to set out the best ways in which to provide information and interpretation in Castle Park. The Plan sets out aims and objectives for interpretation, the main interpretative themes and stories to be developed and the resultant action plan.

The strengths of the existing signage characteristics in the Park are as follows:

- New display boards have recently been provided next to the café and communicate Council and Friends Group information. Funding has been secured for additional interpretive panels which are being produced and will be installed in 2009.

The weaknesses of the existing signage characteristics in the Park are as follows:

- There is no directional signage to the park in place from the adjacent green open spaces or nearby Sustrans Routes 01 and 51
- There is no directional signage at the entrances into the Park to help orientate Park users
- Entrance board signage is out of date and is not welcoming
- Interpretation signage is very limited throughout the Park

Bearing in mind the above, the following analysis is made:

- Seek to implement the recommendations for enhancing signage and interpretation set out in the 2008 Castle Park Interpretation Plan. Ensure that the locations, themes and stories for interpretation are coordinated with the proposals set out in the 2009 Restoration and Development Plan, and the Castle Park and Associated Open Spaces Wildlife Enhancement Plan 2009.
- Seek to provide new directional signage within the Park at key locations.
- Seek to improve directional signage to Castle Park from the town centre, adjacent open spaces and nearby Sustrans Cycle Routes 01 and 51.

Note: Funding has been secured to replace all the existing entrance boards in 2009. These entrance boards may require updating with new plans should the 2009 Restoration and Development Plan be approved by the Heritage Lottery Fund and the proposals implemented accordingly.

6.3.5. Appropriate Provision of Facilities

Note: There is no specific data currently available to measure the levels of use and demand for facilities within the park. However the results of the Castle Park Customer Survey 2008 indicate generally high levels of satisfaction with the Park, its facilities and the level and type of staffing in the Park. As part of the Castle Park Customer Survey 2008, 88% of respondents thought that the range of visitor facilities available was good or very good. However 13% of respondents commented on the range of facilities as follows:

- Café should be open in the winter months
- The standard of cleanliness of the public toilets should be improved
- Baby change facilities should be provided in the Park
- More benches are required
- The playground needs to be updated, made larger and accommodate equipment for older children; the playground should be fenced and resurfaced, and more seats provided (for supervising adults).

The strength of the existing facilities and opportunities offered by Castle Park to promote healthy living through physical activity and healthy lifestyles is as follows:

- Opportunities for passive and active recreation in Castle Park are numerous..
- The opportunities Castle Park offers play an important role in Colchester Borough Council's strategy to promote healthy living through physical activity and healthy lifestyles
- The provision of facilities in the Park are enhanced by a comprehensive event and activities programme, which provide a range of opportunities for community involvement in physical activities
- A Health walk has been devised and publicised

The weakness of the existing facilities and opportunities offered by Castle Park to promote healthy living through physical activity and healthy lifestyles is as follows:

- There is not a programme of classes such as yoga or tai chi held in Castle Park
- The volunteer programme of activities is limited in terms of its contribution to the promotion of healthy living through physical activity and healthy lifestyles

Bearing in mind the above, the following analysis is made:

- seek to encourage additional activities, classes, or volunteering opportunities which promote active and healthy lifestyles

63.6. Quality of Existing Facilities

The following management mechanism in relation to monitoring the quality of facilities to ensure they meet relevant standards is as follows:

- Quality of facilities are identified through the monitoring of public enquiries, surveys conducted in the park every two years and customer feed-back forms provided at the Café. The FOCP also report on issues affecting quality of facilities at their monthly meetings, which are attended by Park Rangers.
- All external enquiries and complaints regarding facilities in the Park are recorded on the Council's Case Tracker System with allocated response times.
- The quality of facilities is monitored on a daily basis by the operator and by Park Rangers as part of their daily patrols of the Park.
- Issues affecting the quality of facilities are discussed as appropriate by the Parks and Recreation Officer at weekly meetings with the Grounds Maintenance Contractor and at monthly meetings with the operator of the Café, boating lake, crazy golf and putting facilities. More urgent matters are dealt with on an ad-hoc basis.

The strengths of the existing management mechanism for managing the quality of facilities for Park users are as follows:

- A robust system of quality control and management is in place
- The lease for the Café and other concessions in the Park requires the management and implement of a quality control system
- Specifications for the maintenance of toilets and the playground require a high frequency of operational visits, with the capacity for additional visits when required to deal with specific problems

The weaknesses of the existing management of health and safety in relation to the quality of facilities for Park users are as follows: To be confirmed following discussion with CBC

- The age and general condition of some facilities, in particular the Putting Green, Crazy Golf, Children's Play Area and toilets make them expensive and difficult to maintain. The Café facilities are inadequate for the volume of visitors and modern public perceptions of quality.

Bearing in mind the above, the following analysis is made:

- A programme of upgrading these facilities needs to be implemented as part of the Restoration and Development Plan for the Park

6.2.3. Equal Access for All Members of the Community

The strengths of the existing facilities, resources and open space in relation to equal access for all are as follows:

- There is a comprehensive network of tarmacadam footpaths throughout the Park which are in generally sound condition but showing signs of wear. There is level access through all the entrances into the park
- There is good access for Park users with impaired mobility into Castle Museum, Hollytrees House Museum, the Ranger Station and the park Café all of which comply with the DDA 1995 regulations
- Disabled toilet facilities are provided at the Lower Park Toilets and Hollytrees Mansion
- Castle Park is blessed with a large and diverse range of facilities and spaces including the Castle museum, the Norman Ramparts; Hollytrees Mansion Museum; the café; crazy golf; putting greens; boating pond; internationally significant standing and below ground archaeology from the Roman and Norman periods; parkland landscape; the River Colne and the various gardens and areas of horticultural interest of the Upper Park; seasonal music events at the bandstand; and, seasonal events held in the Lower Park

The weaknesses of the existing facilities, resources and open space in relation to equal access for all are as follows:

- Some steeper paths in Upper Park may preclude some Park users with impaired mobility
- There are no disabled toilet facilities at the Park Café toilets
- Baby change facilities are not provided in the public toilets or Café.
- Access to the sunken terrace and adjacent crazy golf area is challenging for some Park users with impaired mobility as the steps do not have a hand rail and the crazy golf area is surfaced in loose gravel
- Access to the Imola Garden is made difficult for some Park users with impaired mobility due to a series of steps at the entrance with no hand rail
- The Sensory garden, on the eastern edge of Hollytrees Lawn is only accessible from the north near to Hollytrees Mansion
- Park users with dogs are currently precluded from the Café area meaning this user group may find it difficult to use the Café
- The provision of benches along certain main circulation paths is sparse which may limit the ability of some Park users with impaired mobility to make full use of the Park and its facilities
- The children's playground has a timber upstand retaining the bark safety surfacing. The play equipment is dated. The combination of timber upstand and older equipment means that the play ground is not as inclusive as newer play facilities designed to the latest inclusive playground standards.

Bearing in mind the above, the following analysis is made:

- Seek to improve toilet provision for Park users
- Seek to provide baby change facilities available to both parents. Reconsider the location of baby change provision pending the approval of the 2009 Restoration and Development Plan by the Heritage Lottery Fund which includes proposals for baby change facilities as part of a new events building linked to the café
- Seek to improve distribution of seating through the Park to allow better access and circulation for more elderly park users and those with limited mobility
- Seek to enhance children's playground facilities to make them more inclusive
- Seek to enhance access to gardens as part of future refurbishment programmes

5.3. Healthy, Safe and Secure

The Green Flag Awards judging criteria also merits matters relating to personal health, safety and security. Castle Park endeavours to be healthy, safe and secure environment for all park users.

Health and safety in the Park is reviewed on a daily basis through a system of monitoring and inspection carried out by the Parks and Recreation Officer, Park Rangers, Café and Concessions Operator and Veolia Grounds Maintenance Manager.

6.3.1. Safe Equipment & Facilities

The general appearance of the café, crazy golf, putting green, boats and boating lake and children's playground, appear tired but remain in a usable condition for use by the public.

Generic Risk Assessments have been undertaken for all facilities and are included on the Park Rangers daily health and safety inspection programme. On-site Risk assessments are undertaken by the operator when the Café, Crazy Golf Course, Putting Green and boating lake are in operation. These risk assessments are regularly reviewed by the Parks and Recreation Officer as part of monthly meetings with the operator.

The playground is also inspected on a daily basis by Park Rangers, and every 10 days by a ROSPA qualified inspector. An annual inspection is also carried out by an external inspector

Toilets are inspected and cleaned on a regular basis and are patrolled by security staff.

The strengths of the existing management of health and safety in relation to equipment and facilities for Park users are as follows:

- The boating pond is not fenced. However it is subject to continued review and risk assessments. Colchester Borough Council is currently comfortable with the level of risk presented by the boating pond not being fenced as this is balanced against the loss of amenity and aesthetic value if it were to be fenced
- A repair and maintenance programme is in place for boats used on the boating lake
- The playground is subject to regular inspection and maintenance by qualified staff
- A robust system of risk assessment is in place for all facilities and equipment

The weaknesses of the existing management of health and safety in relation to equipment and facilities for Park users are as follows:

- The playground is not fenced which raises the perception of risk to parents of smaller children and toddlers. There is bark surfacing under the play equipment but this can become muddy in places of wear.
- Play equipment is old and is difficult to repair and maintain
- Contact details for reporting faults to park rangers and security staff are not in place at the toilets

Bearing in mind the above, the following analysis is made:

- Replacement of the existing play area needs to be given a high priority
- Signs need to be installed at the toilets, giving contact details for Park Rangers and indicating frequency/time of cleaning operations

5.3.2. Personal Safety

Considerable effort is made to encourage park users' perceptions of personal safety. The strengths of the existing management strategy for personal safety and security in the Park are as follows:

- Park security is provided through a private contractor (Oakpark Security) and this has proven to be a successful and effective arrangement due in part to the personalities of the security staff and their approach to those causing a disturbance in the Park. The allocated Park Security Officer also shares messroom and office facilities with the Park Rangers and Grounds staff helping to create a shared understanding and delivery of services
- The Park Ranger and Security Service are members of COLBAC (Colchester Business Against Crime) and liaise closely with Police, Street Crime Officers and Street Wardens to reduce crime in the Town Centre. Security Officers and Rangers are in close contact with these other agencies through Town Link radio network. Regular liaison meetings are held with the Police and a PCSO is assigned to the Park area.
- Park Rangers and Security Staff have been trained and are members of the Community Safety Accreditation Scheme, implemented by Essex Police. As part of this scheme, they have access to intelligence relating to anti-social behaviour and are entitled to attend Daily Police Briefings.
- The Park is open from dawn until dusk. Specific opening times depend on the time of year. The park is locked at night. The park is patrolled by the park security staff and Park Rangers from 363 days of the year
- Consumption of alcohol is prohibited in the park which has had a positive impact in reducing incidents of anti social behaviour. Minor problems with antisocial behaviour remain but are occasional and dealt with swiftly by parks security
- The Events Policy and General Conditions relating to events in the Park requires organisers to employ suitably qualified stewards for their events. Security Industry Accredited (SIA) Staff are required to be in attendance at all events where alcohol is to be consumed.
- Park Ranger staff are trained in basic first aid. the first aid point is based in the ranger building but information to this effect is not on obvious display within the park to park users
- A site wide Park inspection is undertaken on a daily basis by Park Rangers
- The outcome of inspections are recorded on an inspection form. Health and safety issues of immediate concern are dealt with on the same day. Less urgent issues are recorded on a task list, with timescales identified for rectification of the problem.
- All accidents relating to staff or park visitors are recorded on the Council's Accident Reporting database. This electronic system notifies the Council's Health and Safety Advisor of all recorded incidents, who advises the Parks and Recreation Officer of any remedial action that needs to be undertaken.
- Generic risk assessment have been carried out for the whole park and staff conduct on-site risk assessments for specific tasks and activities as required. These include:
 - litter picking and sharps
 - slopes
 - use of chemicals
 - vehicle and trailer use
 - grass cutting
 - using hand tools
 - working with the public and volunteers

Educational and event activities also assessed for risks and reviewed as activities change e.g:

- Events in the Lower Park
- Visits by school groups
- Childrens events
- Guided Walks attended by the public and guided by Parks and Recreation Service Staff

Note: The Castle Park Visitor Survey 2008 reported that 40% of respondents stated that they were visiting the park alone.

The weaknesses of the existing management strategy for personal safety and security in the Park are as follows:

- Whilst there is not an overwhelming sense of threat, the main entrances are not as welcoming as they could be to engender an improved sense of personal security.
- The Sensory garden to the east of Hollytrees Lawn and the Sensory Garden Shelter are too enclosed, which encourages anti-social behaviour

Bearing in mind the above, the following analysis is made:

- Seek to improve the perception of personal safety by addressing aspects of quality of park entrances
- Seek to enhance entrance sign board information and directional signage
- Seek to ensure view lines are clear at entrances
- Review whether the incorporation of feature lighting at key entrances would be appropriate
- Improve access points and visibility into the Sensory Garden as part of planned improvements
- Seek to publicise the location of the first aid point
- Seek to publicise contact numbers for the Rangers and security team in Castle Park
- Seek to maximise staff presence and visibility to Park users
- Seek to ensure all facilities on site comply with relevant health and safety regulations
- Seek to regularly review and monitor effectiveness of health and safety reporting systems

6.3.3. Cycling

There have been previous accidents involving cyclists and pedestrians in Castle Park resulting in injury to one or both parties. The strength of the existing management strategy for cycling in the Park is as follows:

- Cycling is not permitted in any part of Castle Park.
- No Cycling signs are provided at all entrances to the Park
- Park Rangers and Security Staff are authorised to issue fixed penalty notices for cycling

The weakness of the existing management strategy for cycling in the Park is as follows:

- Some members of the public ignore or are not aware of the no cycling policy in Castle Park and enforcement by the Park Ranger team or Security team is dependent upon their presence at the time the infringement occurs.

Bearing in mind the above, the following analysis is made:

- Seek to promote awareness by the public that cycling is not permitted in the Park
- Seek to enhance Park Rangers and security staff's powers of enforcement
- Seek to provide an alternative route for cyclists around the perimeter of Castle Park

6.3.4. Dog Ownership

The strength of the existing management strategy in relation to personal safety and dogs in the Park is as follows:

- Dogs are not allowed into Upper Castle Park and dogs in the Lower Park must be under control

The weakness of the existing management strategy in relation to personal safety and dogs in the Park is as follows:

- Only two dog litter bins are provided in the Lower Park

Bearing in mind the above, the following analysis is made:

- There does not appear to be a significant issue in relation to Park users' sense of personal safety in relation to the presence of dogs, largely due to the requirement for dogs to be under control in the Lower Park.
- There does not appear to be a significant issue with dog fouling even with limited provision of dog bins, however bins should be provided near to all entrances into the Lower Park.

6.3.7. Health & Safety of Staff

Park Rangers and Park Security Staff

Park Ranger operations are subject to the Council's own Health and Safety Policy for staff. Generic risk assessments have been undertaken for all Park Ranger operations and daily task related assessments are carried out.

The security contractor, Oak Park Security, have their own health and safety policy and risk assessments, which cover their operations in the Park. A copy of these risk assessments are held in the Park Ranger Office. This health and safety policy is regularly reviewed by the Oak Park Security Manager and the Parks and Recreation Officer.

Park Rangers and Security Staff maintain communications through the use of mobile phones and the COLBAC radio network with direct links to Colchester Borough Council's Helpline and CCTV service, local police and town centre security staff.

A 'panic' button is installed at the Park Ranger Office with a direct link to staff at the Castle Museum

All Security Staff are Security Industry Accredited and trained. Park Rangers have been trained in conflict management techniques by the local police.

Grounds Maintenance

The grounds maintenance contractor, Veolia Environmental Services, have their own Health and Safety policy and risk assessment to which all of their works are carried out. A copy of these risk assessments are held in the Ranger Office.

This health and safety policy is regularly reviewed by the Veolia Grounds Maintenance Manager through regular industry updated and on-site inspections. The Policy is also reviewed on an annual basis by the Parks and Recreation Officer as part of the Grounds Maintenance review process. Health and Safety is included on the agenda at weekly meetings between the Grounds Maintenance Manager and Parks and Recreation Officer

All vehicles and machinery are regularly maintained to ensure that they are run as efficiently and safely as possible. All vehicles are serviced twice a year and are changed every 5-6 years on a schedule. All other equipment used on the site is regularly maintained according to manufacturer's recommendations.

Café and Concessions Operator

The Operator, Johnsons Catering and Leisure, have their own health and safety policy and risk assessments, which cover their operations in the Park. A copy of these risk assessments are held in the Park Ranger Office. This health and safety policy is regularly reviewed by the Café and concessions operator and the Parks and Recreation Officer.

The strengths of the existing of management of health and safety for staff are as follows:

- A comprehensive health and safety policy and system of risk assessments is in place for the Park

The weaknesses of the existing of management of health and safety are as follows: To be confirmed following discussion with CBC

- Further training for monitoring staff is required, particularly in relation to playground inspection and the identification of trip hazards
- Bearing in mind the above, the following analysis is made:
- Ensure staff are appropriately trained in the production of Risk Assessments and identification of hazards

6.4. Well Maintained and Clean- grounds maintenance, landscape, standards of presentation

A further key criterion of the Green Flag Awards is that the Park should be well maintained to a reasonable high standard.

6.4.1. Grounds Maintenance

A new 10 year partnering agreement commenced in April 2006 with Serviceteam Ltd who were subsequently taken over by Veolia Environmental Services Ltd. The same staff and contract management arrangements are in place.

There are six ground staff based and working exclusively at Castle Park. The grounds maintenance contract for Castle Park included all aspects of park maintenance with the exception of play area maintenance (CBC Small Works team), bowling green maintenance (Elmy Landscapes) and tree maintenance (various local contractors).

The partnering agreement sets out the detailed delivery of the annual maintenance works which addresses the complex balance for the management and maintenance of Castle Park. The key characteristics of the grounds maintenance for Castle Park are as follows:

- The annual works programme is made up of monthly work programmes for the Grounds Staff
- The works are monitored during weekly inspections with reactive maintenance projects arising from problems or defects noted
- The specification of the grounds maintenance set out in the 10 year partnering agreement emphasises the quality of the end product
- The annual works programme is not as yet supplemented by a volunteer works programme

The landscape characteristics of Castle Park are as follows:

- The majority of trees date back to the Victorian and Edwardian periods and have a strong influence on the character of the park. The trees in the Upper Park are protected under the Conservation Area designation of the town centre. The Upper Park is also designated as a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM). Reference should be made to the Local Plan for the extent of the Park covered by SAM and Conservation Area.
- Figure 5.1 appendix 1 identifies soft landscape types within the Park. The Upper Park is the area of gardens and horticultural interest, whilst the Lower Park is much more a landscape setting with mature trees and amenity grassland.

The strengths of the existing grounds maintenance regime for the soft landscape is as follows:

- The Parks and Recreation Service has carried out a basic tree survey which is updated on a regular basis. Trees are monitored on an annual basis via the DCLG tree health survey

undertaken by the Park Rangers. Trees of historic significance are identified within the survey. The tree survey plan is shown in Figure 5.2 in appendix 1 for an indication of the tree cover in Castle Park.

- Trees are surveyed annually by the Parks and Recreation Service. Tree maintenance work is undertaken by a number of qualified arboricultural contractors

The weaknesses of the existing grounds maintenance regime for the soft landscape are as follows:

- There is not a long term strategy for safeguarding the tree stock in Castle Park. Many of the trees are reaching maturity or are over mature. There is a policy of replacing trees as required. The Upper Park is designated as a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) so that any tree removal or replacement involving works to the ground requires consent from English Heritage on an individual basis. This is an onerous process and the Parks and Recreation Service wish to engage in dialogue with the Museums Service and English Heritage to develop a protocol for obtaining consent in a more efficient manner.
- The Parks and Recreation Service recognises that horticultural quality and interest of the gardens and shrub areas is gradually declining

Bearing in mind the above, the following analysis is made:

- Seek to secure the tree stock for future Park users through the development of a strategic tree replacement strategy and management plan in line with historic design precedence and the aspirations of the 2009 Castle Park Restoration and Development Plan submitted to the Heritage Lottery fund in February 2009.
- Seek to maintain and improve the horticultural quality and interest of the gardens and shrub areas in line with historic precedence, the aspirations of the 2009 Castle Park Restoration and Development Plan submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund in February 2009.
- Seek to ensure that improvements in horticultural quality and interest do not conflict with the recommendations of the Castle Park and Associated Open Spaced Wildlife Enhancement Plan 2009, any specific management and maintenance plan in relation to the standing or below ground archaeology and its legal status as part of the SAM, or to the Listed buildings and structures.

6.4.2. Building and Infrastructure Maintenance

The strengths of the existing arrangements for maintenance of the buildings and infrastructure of the Park are as follows:

- Footpaths are monitored as part of daily Park Ranger site safety inspections, with any problems or necessary repairs noted. Annually, paths are inspected by qualified inspectors and repair works are scheduled.
- Boundary walls, gates and railings within the curtilage of Castle Park are monitored as part of Park Ranger site safety inspections with any problems or necessary repairs noted and works are scheduled to remedy the problem.
- Garden structures are monitored as part of Park Ranger site safety inspections with any problems or necessary repairs noted and works are scheduled to remedy the problem.
- The following buildings are inspected Annually by CBC Building Services Manager as part of programme of building inspections for all CBC owned buildings
 - The Café and toilets
 - Rangers building in the maintenance depot
 - Large storage barn in the maintenance depot
 - Timber shed in the maintenance depot
 - Public toilets by Hollytrees Mansion Museum
 - Public toilets by the boating pond

- Sensory Garden Pavilion
 - The bandstand
 - Grays Summerhouse
 - The two bowling club houses
 - Park Lodge
- Problems with these buildings are reported to the Parks and Recreation Service and remedial action instructed to be carried out by approved contractors
 - Boiler servicing, fire alarm testing, fixed electrical testing, portable appliance testing is arranged by the Building Services Manager at defined periods set out in the XXXX agreement
 - the Café and Rangers building are subject to weekly fire alarm testing and monthly emergency light testing
 - Public toilets are cleaned on a minimum of four occasions per day April-October and daily November-March by Veolia Grounds Staff
 - The Café is cleaned daily by the operator when in use
 - Windows are cleaned and sanitary bins within the toilets emptied at the Café, Rangers building and public toilets
 - Pest control within the buildings is managed by the Parks and Recreation Service under an internal service agreement
 - A Programme of internal decoration and improvements have been identified and agreed as part of the a new Café lease which commences in 2010
 - Gray's Summerhouse and Rotunda have recently been restored as part of a major repair and refurbishment project.
 - The Bandstand has been partly restored in the past 5 years and railings removed during WWII have been replaced.

The weaknesses of the existing arrangements for maintenance of the buildings and infrastructure of the Park are as follows:

- Maintenance to the park buildings and structures are largely carried out on an ad-hoc basis, when the need for repairs are identified. Maintenance programmes relating to painting of buildings and railings, resurfacing of paths etc. are not in place.
- Toilet facilities are outdated and are difficult to maintain and clean
- The Cowdray Crescent and Rye Gate gates are in a poor condition and require refurbishment.
- Park paths are generally in a poor condition and require resurfacing
- Some park railings are in poor decorative order and require repainting

Bearing in mind the above, the following analysis is made:

- A condition survey of all park buildings and structures is required and a cyclical programme of repairs and maintenance need to be identified and costed for inclusion in annual budget
- Toilets need to be refurbished with modern materials to bring them up to modern standards and make them easier to keep clean

6.4.3. Conservation and Maintenance of Standing and Below Ground Archaeology

The Parks and Recreation Service works in partnership with the Colchester and Ipswich Museum Service, who have overall responsibility for the conservation and maintenance of standing and below ground archaeology within Castle Park.

These are subject to separate specific management and maintenance plans approved by the local planning authority and English Heritage in consultation with the Curator of Archaeology. Various approved specialist contractors are employed to carry out work as required.

The strengths of the existing arrangements for Conservation and Maintenance of Standing and Below Ground Archaeology are as follows:

- A significant amount of field and desk based research has previously been undertaken of these features and there is a good understanding of their significance and location within the Park.
- The whole of the Upper Park is a Scheduled Ancient Monument and many of the structures are Grade I and Grade II listed in their own right
- Procedures are in place for protecting these structures and the condition of these structures is regularly

The weaknesses of the existing arrangements for Conservation and Maintenance of Standing and Below Ground Archaeology are as follows:

- Much of the below ground archaeology is at a shallow depth and vulnerable to damage from landscape operations
- The entrance points to the Roman drains at Hollytrees Meadow and Duncan's Gate are in a poor condition and access for maintenance is problematic.
- The children's playground is situated on top of and is potentially damaging to an important area of archaeology within the park.
- There is currently limited public access to and interpretation of some of the Park's important archaeological features.

Bearing in mind the above, the following analysis is made:

- Any proposed landscape construction and development work in the Park needs to be undertaken in close consultation with English Heritage and the Museum Service. Assessment and protection of the below ground archaeology needs to be carefully considered as part of any future development plans.
- The recommendations of the Castle Park Interpretation Plan need to be implemented
- Access to the Roman drains needs to be improved as part of future development work at Hollytrees Meadow

6.4.5. Dog Mess, Fly Tipping Vandalism and Graffiti

- Dog Mess is not a significant problem within Castle Park
- Fly tipping is not a significant problem within Castle Park
- Vandalism and graffiti are not significant problems within Castle Park.

This is in part due to the patrolling carried out by the Park Rangers and the security team, and that the Park is locked at night. Response times and appropriate methods in dealing with dog mess, fly tipping, graffiti and vandalism are set out within the grounds maintenance service agreement.

Bearing in mind the above, the following analysis is made:

- Seek to maintain the current management focus on preventing dog mess, fly tipping, vandalism and graffiti.
- Seek to monitor any change in significance or frequency and adjust the management response accordingly.

6.5. Sustainability – ecology/ biodiversity, environmental management

The Green Flag Award judging criteria also focus upon sustainability matters generally and their application and incorporation within Castle Park.

6.5.1. Environmental Policy and Management Strategy

The Parks and Recreation service is guided in its operations by the following Council Policy Documents:

- 2008 Core Strategy (Local Development Framework)
- Local Agenda 21 Strategy
- Waste Strategy
- Pest Control Review and associated Committee report
- Feedback from Green Flag judges

The core strategy has set a corporate objective of being the cleanest and greenest borough in the country. In order to achieve this priority the Council has set targets within the following areas:

- Reducing and recycling waste
- Improving accessibility and reducing traffic congestion
- Street scene: the improvement in the environmental quality of the street and public open spaces

This strategy forms the framework for all waste services provided by the Borough. Its principal aim is to indicate how the Council will achieve the recycling targets set out in the Corporate Strategy. The Council have adopted an approach known as the 'High Diversion Strategy', which seeks to divide the waste stream into:

- Material for recycling
- Biodegradable materials for composting
- Residual materials for landfill disposal

The Local Agenda 21 Strategy uses the Waste Management Hierarchy as a framework for minimising waste outputs, with the aim of avoiding all waste:

1. Zero Waste (avoidance)
2. Reuse
3. Onsite Recycling
4. Offsite Recycling
5. Waste Treatment
6. Waste Disposal

6.5.3. Waste Management and Recycling

The strengths of the existing arrangements for waste management and recycling in Castle Park are as follows:

- The existing grounds maintenance service agreement sets out specific targets for the reuse and recycling of biodegradable materials arising out of maintenance operations. Organic matter (grass arisings, annual bedding and other green waste) is recycled via composting off site. The compost is reused in maintenance operations in Castle Park and at other locations in the Town. Residual waste is disposed of at traditional landfill sites
- Office stationary, waste paper and rubbish produced by the park rangers, security team and ground staff is separated and recycled at the Ranger Office.

- Grass arisings from amenity mowing operations are not collected, partly due to the quantity of arisings but also due to the need to keep nutrient levels up in order to maintain a rich sward.
- Small amounts of timber have been recycled from tree surgery operations to create dead wood habitats in the Roman Town Ditch wildlife area
- Brash and timber arisings are chipped and where possible the chips are reused in the park as mulch.
- A Pilot scheme was introduced in 2008 to provide recycling centres at all major events staged in the Lower Park. This scheme is set to be expanded during the 2009 events programme
- Aluminium cans, bottles, paper and card arising from litter picking and bin emptying operations are currently not separated and recycled and there are currently no on-site recycling facilities for use by the public.
- There is currently no capacity for composting on site or for the storage of useful timber arising from tree surgery operations.
- The Café currently lacks recycling facilities. The café should be encouraged to reduce non recyclable waste through the products it sells

6.5.4. Resource Conservation:

Procedures for the conservation of efficient use of various resources within Castle Park are presently as follows:

Water Efficiency:

- Building Services monitor water bills and water efficiency issues within the Park. Leaks in ponds or toilet fixtures are noted and/or monitored by Rangers on daily inspection. Leisureworld (café) and Serviceteam (toilets) staff have a duty to report any leaks to the contract manager. These are dealt with within a 24 hour period. The lily pond and Hollytrees toilets have been subject to a water wastage assessment resulting in a reduction in daily water consumption. This exercise has now been extended to the café and boating lake toilets.
- Colchester has a dry climate with rainfall below the national average. The planting strategy in the Park is evolving to extend the use of drought-tolerant plants. In particular herbaceous perennials and bedding plants are chosen where possible in relation to their tolerance of dry conditions. In addition, water retention granules are incorporated into the soil as part of all bedding and shrub planting operations as a water retention/irrigation reduction method.
- The watering of plants within the Park is kept to a minimum. Only summer bedding displays, containers and new plantings get regular irrigation in dry weather conditions as specified in the grounds maintenance contract. The putting green and areas of fine grass receive irrigation only as and when necessary. The water source for irrigation is mains water taken from standpipes.
- Water from the River Colne is used to top up the boating lake through a linking feed pipe. Rainwater is not currently reused onsite for irrigation.
- There is no water management plan for Castle Park specifically.

Energy Efficiency:

- With reference to the Local Agenda 21 Strategy: Energy management, the Council's goal is to use less energy, promote the use of more renewable energy sources and strive to achieve best energy practices within its operation.
- A 'turn-off' strategy is in operation within Council buildings whereby lighting, heating and machinery is turned off when not in use. This applies to the buildings in Castle Park. Low energy appliances and light bulbs are used where possible. Energy consumption is considered in the purchase of new machinery.

Transport:

- With reference to the Local Agenda 21 Strategy: Transport, the Council's goal is to promote renewable energy transport options, reduce Councils impact on emissions through vehicle fleet improvements, and promote the wider use of alternative fuels such as LPG and hybrid technology vehicles.
- Two electric operated vehicles are currently in use within the Park, and have replaced petrol driven vehicles. Veolia Environmental Ltd are committed to replacing all petrol and diesel driven road vehicles in use in the park with electric vehicles as they become due for renewal in the next 5 year period.

6.5.5. Pollution Reduction Measures

- Storage and pollution measures for fuels and chemicals within Castle Park are set out in the grounds maintenance service agreement and within the grounds maintenance contractors Health and Safety Policy Section: control of substances hazardous to health.
- There is a minimum amount of fuel stored on site which is kept in a metal lockup. Containers are checked on a regular basis for leaks and refuelling machinery is undertaken in accordance with the relevant grounds maintenance contractors risk assessment summaries and safe working practice sheets. There are no chemicals stored on site.
- Bonfires are not permitted within the park under the grounds maintenance service agreement.
- Regulations and specifications regarding the maintenance of equipment and noise control are set out in the grounds maintenance service agreement. All machinery used within the park is relatively new and fitted with noise reduction measures such as mufflers as standard
- Rock salt free zones to all plant are specified under snow clearance in the grounds maintenance service agreement. This consists of 300mm clear to all grass and plantings and 500mm to trees.
- The boating pond is fed from the River Colne. No chemicals are used on the boating pond water. An ultrasonic device is used to control algae. The Wildlife Enhancement Plan 2009 states that there is no evidence to suggest that this has any adverse effect on any other forms of life living within the boating pond.

6.5.6. Peat Use

Under the current grounds maintenance service agreement, peat or products containing peat are not used within the Park. Contracts for the supply of annual bedding and shrubs require these to be planted into peat free products.

6.5.7. Herbicide and Pesticide Use

Under the terms of the grounds maintenance contract, pest and disease control is not carried out as a routine operation. An instruction from the Parks and Recreation Service to the Grounds Staff is required for any pesticide application and only when a pest or disease infestation exceeds the maximum acceptable percentage specified.

6.5.8. Ecology/ biodiversity

The Castle Park and Associated Open Spaces Wildlife Enhancement Plan 2009 (by Colchester Borough Council) builds upon the findings and recommendations of the 1998 Wildlife report and the 2003 Management Plan which incorporated a number of wildlife related improvements and specific Park wide wildlife enhancements as part of the five year plan. The Wildlife Enhancement Plan 2009 has been written to meet with the requirements of the Green Flag judges comments.

The remit of the previous wildlife plan (Castle Park Management Plan and Biodiversity Assessment Report 2002) only extended to the enclosed area of Castle Park. The Wildlife Enhancement Plan 2009 has been extended to cover the associated open spaces as wildlife does not acknowledge human boundaries. To make the wildlife enhancements in Castle Park effective they need to link and to compliment the management of adjoining council land.

Full details of the wildlife and ecological resource, and recommendations and objectives for enhancement are set out within The Wildlife Enhancement Plan 2009.

The ecological and wildlife resource characteristics of note are as follows:

- There are four local Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) species found as residents or as users of the park, namely Otter and Water vole in the River Colne and Lesser Calamint (member of the mint family) and Stag Beetle in the Upper Park.
- The south facing bank of the Roman Wall in the maintenance depot is of considerable botanic interest particularly for the Lesser Calamint (*Clinopodium calamintha*) and largest northeast Essex Colony of Wild Clary (*Salvia verbenaca*).
- The south facing bank of the Roman Wall is also of major importance for its invertebrates being the only British site for a small solitary wasp called Hymenoptera (*Cerceris quadricincta*) which is an endangered species and a Red Data Book listed species
- The significance of the south facing bank of the Roman Wall has been recognised through its designation as a wildflower reserve
- The Castle walls are an ideal habitat for all kinds of wildlife, particularly bats

Bearing in mind the above, the following analysis is made:

In 2008, the Green Flag judges recommended that the park needed to incorporate wildlife improvement plans into a new management Plan. Therefore the Castle Park and Associated

Open Spaces Wildlife Enhancement Plan 2009 is to be incorporated into this management plan for the period 2009-2014. In addition, the following identified:

- Seek to implement the recommendations for enhancement of the wildlife value of Castle Park coordinated with the proposals set out in the 2009 Restoration and Development Plan
- Seek to update the 2009 Castle Park and Associated Open Spaces Wildlife Enhancement Plan on a regular basis to reflect any changes that may occur with regard to the potential continuing changes in maintenance contracts.
- Seek to review The 2009 Castle Park and Associated Open Spaces Wildlife Enhancement Plan on a regular basis

6.6. Conservation and Heritage- Character, History, Views and Setting

This is a further criteria that forms part of the Green Flag Award and is particularly pertinent to Castle Park.

The main character areas of the Park are set out in Section 4 of this management plan. The historical and cultural significance of Castle Park is documented in detail in the 2009 Development and Restoration Plan. Proposals for the conservation and enhancement of the heritage and character of Castle Park are clearly set out and should be used to guide the maintenance and management of Castle Park through this document

6.6.1. Conservation of Heritage and Character

Views and Setting: Key historic views (that are important to the quality setting and experience of the Park.) are identified in the Development and Restoration Plan 2009 Views from Hollytrees Lawn north over the River Colne. These include:

- Views north from the Norman Rampart over the River Colne
- Views from Middle Mill entrance east incorporating the River Colne and Lower Park
- Views from the north west entrance west incorporating the Cricket ground , River Colne and Lower Park
- Views of Castle Park from the northern footbridge entrance over the River Colne

The historic long distance view from Hollytrees Lawn north over the River Colne is particularly compromised in the foreground by the children's playground, putting greens and maintenance depot located on Hollytrees Meadow.

The River Colne has its own management plan and is managed in partnership between the Environment Agency (EA) and Colchester Borough Council (CBC). CBC is responsible for the river bank in the park and the occasional removal of debris on behalf of the EA as they are able to mobilise more immediately.

Bearing in mind the above, the following analysis is made:

- Seek to secure and enhance the landscape features of historic significance to the park including key vistas, the tree canopy, gardens and horticultural interest as set out in the 2009 Restoration and Development Plan

6.7. Community Use and Involvement

The council continues to endeavour to encourage public engagement with Castle Park and its various amenities through dialogue with the various stakeholders and interest groups.

6.7.1. Stakeholders and Interest Groups:

There are a considerable number of stakeholders and interest groups associated with Castle Park. These include: CBC to confirm the following:

- Colchester Borough Council
- Friends of Castle Park
- Twinning Society
- Bowling clubs
- Boat and Café Concessionaire
- Colchester and Ipswich Museums Service (Hollytrees House Museum, Castle Museum, Natural History Museum)
- Colchester History Alive Group.
- Archaeological Society
- Community Police
- British Army
- Bands (series of musical events on bandstand)
- Local residents
- Visitors/ park users
- English Heritage
- Grounds maintenance contractor/ Grounds Staff
- Local residents groups (Riverside Residents Assoc and Dutch Quarter Residents)
- Castle Neighbourhood Action Panel

6.7.2. Community Involvement in management and development:

Community involvement with the Park is seen as being crucial to its long term. The 2009 Restoration and Development Plan provides the platform from which to confirm resident and visitor support for sympathetic management and development of Castle Park. Friends of Castle Park Group:

The Friends of Castle Park Group (FOCP)

The FOCP is an important feature of local representation for the Park. A variety of events are delivered by the Friends and the profile of the Group is raised by regular newsletters and the

Friends notice board by the Café. The FOCP communicate information about Castle Park to raise awareness of its resources and the activities and events held within it.

The FOCP regularly provide stalls and exhibitions at events organised by the Rangers and Museums Service. The Lower Bowls Pavillion has been allocated to the FOCP for the staging of meetings and activities and a club for children 'Mini Friends' has been formed

There is scope to develop the role of the FOCP as a consultative body to further develop the strategies for expanding inclusivity and of wider audiences. The role of the FOCP as the link between Colchester Borough Council and the wider community should be developed further. The FOCP should be encouraged to facilitate the running of more events in the Park.

Support is given to the FOCP by Colchester Borough Council Staff and further work is needed to raise the profile of the Group and broaden the level of representation. through enhanced profile and contact with the local community it is conceivable that more individuals would be identified and encouraged to volunteer in one of the range of opportunities in the Park

Other Community Involvement in the Park

- In addition to the FOCP the Council engages the community in the management of Castle Park in a number of separate ways:
- Staging of community and charitable events in the Park involving local event organisers, charities, clubs and associations
- Provision of free events and activities in the Park including Ranger led walks, activity days, bandstand concerts and children's educational activities during school holidays
- Involvement of local groups including scouts, girl guides and local schools in art projects and task groups associated with the summer badge border display in upper castle park.

A volunteer programme was launched in 2009, and a small number of volunteers are due to commence work in 2010. These volunteers will be working as volunteer gardeners, event stewards, and as conservation task volunteers.

Educational programmes have been developed in 2009, and there are a few local school bookings for 2010.

The strengths of the existing arrangements for community involvement in management and development of the Park are as follows:

- The membership of FOCP continues to expand and this group are playing a key role in the consultation process and implementation of the Restoration and Development Plan.
- The current programme of events, ranger led activities and task groups provide participation opportunities for a wide variety of potential user groups

The weaknesses of the existing arrangements for maintenance of the buildings and infrastructure of the Park are as follows:

- There is scope for developing closer working relationships with visitors and the local community with regards to the future park development
- On-site facilities and resources are currently inadequate for the provision of volunteer and education services

Bearing in mind the above, the following analysis is made

- Seek to identify particular stakeholders and interest groups for enhancement of role in management and development of the park
- Seek to identify particular stakeholders and interest groups for management and development events in the park

- Seek to enhance volunteer programmes and opportunities in the Park
- Seek to set targets for increasing involvement and methods of monitoring success of increasing involvement
- Seek to improve facilities for on-site volunteer and education programmes

6.7.3. Community Consultation

The Parks and Recreation Service is committed to carrying out customer surveys for Castle Park every two years. The last survey was carried out in 2008. The survey allows the Parks and Recreation Service to increase its understanding of the user community, its diversity, and levels and patterns of use. The survey allows data comparison with previous surveys to identify trends eg: Park users perceptions of the quality and appropriateness of facilities.

The findings of the customer surveys can influence the strategic direction of the Park. Some of the findings of the 2008 customer survey have been directly translated into the Restoration and Development Plan Proposals 2009, for example, the objective to enhance the historic character of Hollytrees Lawn and Meadows historic views through the relocation and replacement of the children's playground and putting greens.

Similarly the review of the customer survey by the Parks and Recreation Service identifies management and maintenance issues which are translated into objectives to be addressed via the grounds maintenance service agreement or via specific management and maintenance plans for listed buildings and structures or archaeological elements covered by the SAM.

Bearing in mind the above, the following analysis is made:

- The Parks and Recreation service should continually review and enhance appropriate methods for public consultation to generate useful feedback for consideration as part of the continuing review process of the aims and objectives for the management and maintenance of Castle Park

6.7.4. Appropriate provision for the community

The results of the 2008 Castle Park Customer Survey clearly demonstrate that Park users consider that there are generally appropriate levels of recreational facilities in the park. However feedback from the 2008 visitor survey clearly demonstrated park user's dissatisfaction with the current children's playground facilities.

Colchester Borough Councils aspirations for the future development and management of Castle Park far exceed Park users current levels of expectation. A number of opportunities to enhance the provision of facilities and opportunities for all sectors of the community are set out in detail as part of the 2009 Restoration and Development Plan to address the following limitations:

- There is currently no suitable accommodation within the Park to host functions and events in order to increase the number of Park users and the number of audiences.
- There is currently no suitable accommodation to act as a base from which to increase use of the Park as a teaching and learning resource and a centre for volunteering.
- The existing small building in the maintenance depot currently shared by the Rangers, Grounds Staff and Security Team is inadequate for their respective current and future roles and operations. There is no formal point of contact such as a reception desk within the current accommodation to allow Park users to communicate with the Rangers in particular.
- The Café is in need of refurbishment. The menu is limited due in part to the catering equipment. The café is not open all year round, the toilets are inadequate and there are no baby change facilities.
- There are currently two separate bowling clubs based at the upper and lower bowling greens respectively. The current combined membership of both clubs is approximately 40 and does not justify the provision of two bowling greens with respective club houses. The upper bowling green club house provides adequate facilities for members but is temporary and ramshackle in appearance. The lower bowling green club house has a period character

more in keeping with the Park but is currently too small to provide the necessary facilities for the combined membership.

- The Sensory Garden appears underused and does not appear to contribute as a useful facility due to the limitations of its design with raised planters which prevent some users gaining access to the plants. The planting scheme appears over mature and lacks horticultural interest and sensory stimulus.
- The boating building is presently inadequate and does not service the park and the needs of the boating lake users.
- Endeavour to upgrade and improve children's play facilities.

Bearing in mind the above, the following analysis is made:

- Seek to deliver approximately located and upgraded children's play facilities.
- Seek to provide accommodation to facilitate involvement of local people and increasing the range of volunteers and volunteering opportunities, knowledge and skills, and to facilitate use of the Park as an education resource linked with national school's curriculum, the museums service and other study programmes.
- Seek to provide enhanced accommodation for the Rangers, Grounds Staff and Security Team
- Seek to enhance opportunities to deliver an expanded programme of functions and events
- Seek to enhance the Café
- Seek to address the provision and management of the bowling clubs
- Seek to enhance the quality of the experience offered by the Sensory Garden in line with proposals set out within the 2009 Restoration and Management Plan
- Seek to improve amenity services around the Boating Lake

6.8. Marketing and Events

In order to devise maximum benefit from the Council's on-going Commitment to Castle Park the council recognises the need to improve and build upon it's existing marketing approach.

6.8.1. Marketing

Castle Park features in a number of tourist publications produced by Colchester Borough Council. These include:

- Visit Colchester Brochure
- Visit Colchester Web Site

In addition to the above, the Park is regularly featured in local newspapers and as part of advertising campaigns by event organisers

The Park is used regularly as a venue by film producers, regional and national television programmes

There is not currently a marketing plan in place for Castle Park

Bearing in mind the above, the following analysis is made:

- A marketing Plan for the Park is considered to be a priority
- The design of a specific logo for Castle Park should be given consideration to 'brand' the park as a unique location and experience as part of the marketing strategy.

6.8.2. Provision of information to Park users

The strengths of the current provision of information in the Park are as follows:

- New display boards have recently been provided next to the café and communicate Council and Friends Group information. Funding has been secured for additional interpretive panels which are being produced and will be installed in 2009.

The weaknesses in the provision of information in the Park are as follows:

- Generally the provision of signage and information to Park users is inadequate
- There is no dedicated information point/ desk within the Park to assist Park users
- The 2008 Interpretation Plan sets out the strategic aims and objectives for provision of interpretative information which has yet to be implemented, pending the success of the application for funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund. Refer to Section 5.2: Good signage to and in the Park.
- The location of the first aid point at the Ranger Base is not publicised in the Park
- Contact phone number the Ranger Base is and Security Team not published in the Park
- There is no dedicated web page for Castle Park

Bearing in mind the above, the following analysis is made:

- Seek to provide a dedicated information point in the Park
- Seek to provide a dedicated web page for Castle Park
- Seek to further promote Castle Park its facilities and events through the media
- Seek to implement the 2008 Interpretation Strategy in coordination with the proposals set out in the 2009 Restoration and Development Plan should it receive capital funding from the HLF, or pursue its implementation by other funding mechanisms
- Seek to publicise the location of the first aid point, The Ranger Base and pertinent contact phone numbers to the Rangers and Security Team

6.8.3. Market Research

The Parks and Recreation Service are committed to carrying out customer surveys for Castle Park every two years. The last survey was carried out in 2008. The survey allows the Parks and Recreation Service to increase its understanding of the user community, its diversity, and levels and patterns of use. The survey allows data comparison with previous surveys to identify trends eg: Park users perceptions of the quality and appropriateness of facilities.

The Castle Park Customer Surveys is the primary source of customer feedback. however it may not be sufficient on its own on which to base future management and marketing decisions for Castle Park

Bearing in mind the above, the following analysis is made:

- seek to continually review and enhance appropriate methods for public consultation to generate useful feedback for consideration as part of the continuing review process of the aims and objectives for the marketing and management of Castle Park
- Seek to monitor feedback from park users attending events to:
- gauge the popularity and appropriateness of events:
- to assist in determining the nature of future events in efforts to attract current non Park users, infrequent users, underrepresented and hard to reach groups.

6.8.4. Events

The following events take place annually in Castle Park including:

- Series of music events at the Bandstand
- Guided Walks
- Heritage Open Days with plays and re-enactments from Colchester History Alive Group.
- Events organised by Park Rangers, guided walks, bat walks, tree trails, to raise awareness of the local habitats
- Food and Drink Festival
- Queens Birthday Gun Salute
- Military events- memorials
- Oyster Festival

Events are publicised via the following:

- Councils web site
- leaflets distributed throughout the region via Leisure-Target
- On noticeboards in the Park
- Banners at Cowdray Crescent
- Local newspaper

Bearing in mind the above, the following analysis is made:

- seek to enhance the number and variety of events within the Park
- seek to identify additional partners to develop the events programme
- seek to enhance the events delivered via existing partners such as the museums service and Friends of Castle Park

6.9. Management

All Parks need effective, efficient and focused management and this applies equally to Castle Park. The following sets out the existing arrangements.

7.0 Vision and Aims

Castle Park is the most important park in Colchester serving not only the needs of an expanding local population, and those visiting the adjacent Town Centre and Cultural Quarter, but it is also visited by people from across the UK and beyond, by those primarily wishing to experience Roman Colchester. The restoration and development of Castle Park is vital so that it plays its full part in delivering the aims and objectives set out in the Green Strategy. To this end the vision for Castle Park is to:

- Conserve and improve the heritage value of Castle Park;
- Increase the number and range of audiences involved with and using Castle Park;
- Increase community involvement and opportunities for volunteering;
- Optimise the formal and informal educational opportunities; Enhance both physical and intellectual access to the resources of Castle Park; and
- Enhance the ecological value of the park through management and maintenance.
- Support regeneration and enhance the quality of life of those people who live, work and visit Colchester.

7.1. Vision:

The vision is for Castle Park to be the jewel in the crown of Colchester's Parks and Open Spaces and to be a focus of civic pride. It will offer safe facilities for enjoyment of the park reflecting on its

significant historical resource, formal and informal recreation. It is desired that Castle Park will perform as a key link between the adjacent town centre and the wider network of open spaces. The Management and Maintenance Plan for Castle Park will enhance wildlife habitat, encouraging and preserving flora and fauna. It will foster public interest, involvement and ownership through improved access, allowing the development of recreation, interpretation and education. It will foster improved consultation and liaison with support groups, partners, stakeholders, the police and local community.

7.2. Aims:

- To positively welcome people into Castle Park in terms of both physical and social access
- To ensure a healthy, safe and secure experience for park users.
- To provide a well maintained and clean park
- To improve the environmental quality and sustainability of all practices carried out in the park
- To conserve the historic landscape character of the park while ensuring provision for contemporary uses, better and communicate the historical importance of site to all users.
- Provide opportunities to increase community use and involvement, particularly through events, education and interpretation.
- Ensure effective promotion of the park as a community resource
- Ensure all those involved in the management and maintenance of the park effectively use the Management Plan as a working document.
- Improve the parks integration with adjoining areas of green space.
- Improve accessibility to the park.
- Develop it as a forum for events.

8.0 Work / Action Plan

This action plan will be carried out to satisfy the vision and meet the management aims identified above. It responds to the issues facing Castle Park and identifies the management objectives, how they will be achieved and who is responsible for achieving them. Where appropriate a timescale is given. The programme will be reviewed annually, and targets monitored to ensure timescales have been achieved.

A Welcoming Place				
Aim: Positively welcome people into the gardens in terms of both physical and social access				
Objective	Implementation/task	Timescale/Frequency	Responsibility	Cost/Budget
Ensure that the park is accessible to all and act upon the DDA (1995)	Develop an Audience Development Plan and access plan	2009	Parks and Recreation Officer	£2,500
Provide Baby Changing Facilities	Provide and improve Baby Changing facilities for both parents at Public Toilets. Initially to be installed in disabled toilet facilities in Lower Park and at Hollytrees Mansion	Restoration and Development Plan 2009 To be included in Plans for future toilet refurbishment plans 2010	Park Rangers	£500
Improve experience for elderly or those with impaired mobility	Provide more benches across the park and reduce distances between benches Replacement/repair of existing benches	Ongoing – funded by public donation as part of memorial benches scheme Complete by 2011	Park Rangers Park Rangers	£8,000
Make Children's Play area more inclusive	Replace and install new equipment to DDA standards and current best practice.	Restoration and Development Plan 2009 New equipment to be installed as part of relocated play area		£200,000
Maintain and enhance park signage;	Keep clear of graffiti Update information when necessary and ensure consistency in design	Removed within 48 hours of report Information on forthcoming events put up no later than 2 weeks before the event and removed within 48 hours of the event ending	Ranger staff Ranger staff	Revenue budget and staff time Revenue budget and staff time
Interpretation Signage	Implement interpretation signage strategy as per Castle Park Interpretation Plan 2008.	In accordance with Action Plan	Parks and Recreation Officer/Park Rangers	£25,000
Entrance Signage	Provide new entrance signage at key locations to assist park user's access and circulation	2010	Parks and Recreation Officer	£16,000

Objective	Implementation/task	Timescale/Frequency	Responsibility	Cost/Budget
Directional Signage	Improve directional signage to Castle Park from town centre, adjacent open spaces, and cycle routes for example	2010	Parks and Recreation Officer	£8,000
Maintain existing entrances to ensure they are visually clear and promote sense of arrival.	Carry out vegetation management in accordance with maintenance schedule.	Ongoing	Rangers, contractors and volunteers	Staff time and grounds maintenance contract
Improve Entrances to the Park	<p>Repair listed Ryegate entrance</p> <p>Remove central gate onto middle mill</p> <p>New gates at Middle Mill entrance</p> <p>New gate and fence and signage to lower park at junction to East-West public footpath</p> <p>New gate, hard surfacing and interpretation signage at Duncan's Gate</p>	<p>2010 - Works to be determined following condition survey</p> <p><i>Restoration and Development Plan 2009</i></p> <p><i>Restoration and Development Plan 2009</i></p> <p><i>Restoration and Development Plan 2009</i></p> <p><i>Restoration and Development Plan 2009</i></p>	Building Services Manager/ Contractors	<p>£6,000</p> <p>£3,000</p> <p>£5,000</p> <p>£20,000</p> <p>£35,000</p>
Improve the footpath and circulation network where there are clear inadequacies	<p>Allow access from Hollytrees lawn into Hollytrees Meadow by opening up the sensory shelter as a 'Gateway'</p> <p>Install new connecting footpaths where there are clear desire lines and it is compatible with the parks existing footpath network and historic/archaeological constraints.</p> <p>Improve access and circulation between east side of upper and lower park by installing new connecting footpath from castle road entrance to Duncan's gate.</p>	<p><i>Restoration and Development Plan 2009</i> 2011</p> <p><i>Restoration and Development Plan 2009</i></p> <p><i>Restoration and Development Plan 2009</i></p> <p>Start date 2010</p>	Parks & Recreation Officer	£4,500

Objective	Implementation/task	Timescale/Frequency	Responsibility	Cost/Budget
Improve Vehicle Access to Lower Park for Events only.	Remove footbridge east of cricket ground and install new vehicle bridge west of cricket ground	<i>Restoration and Development Plan 2009</i>		£257,000
Upgrade and repair Park Boundaries	Remove hedge and replace railing along east-west public footpath.	<i>Restoration and Development Plan 2009</i>		£39,400
Improve Access for those arriving on foot, or by public transport, or by bicycle and those with impaired mobility.	Improve secure cycle parking facilities at entrances for park users	<i>Restoration and Development Plan 2009</i>		£3,000
Improve and coordinate Park furniture	Establish a clear furniture strategy for the park to improve and co-ordinate all park furniture. Install new benches along route from Cowdray Crescent entrance down Western side of Hollytrees Meadow.	2011 2011	Parks and Recreation Officer Parks and Recreation Officer/ Park Rangers	Revenue budget and staff time £2,500
Ensure toilets are clean and pleasant to use.	Extend and refurbish existing toilet block to include a Café kiosk, boat concessionaire shelter and store.	<i>Restoration and Development Plan 2009</i>	PARKS AND Recreation Officer/ Park RANGERS	£210,000
	Redesign and refurbish toilet block adjacent to Hollytree House Museum.	<i>Restoration and Development Plan 2009</i>	Park Rangers	£60,000
	Carry out short term improvements including replacement of floor surfaces, decoration etc	Ongoing programme from 2009		£23,000
	Provide signage giving contact numbers, details of last time cleaned etc	2010		Revenue Budgets

2. Healthy, Safe and Secure

Aim: To ensure a healthy, safe and secure experience for park users.

Objective	Implementation/task	Timescale/Frequency	Responsibility	Cost/Budget
Ensure all facilities and equipment are safe to use	Checks and site safety inspections	Daily and Monthly	Rangers/Contractor	Revenue budget and Staff time
Ensure Health and Safety policies and risk assessments are in place, in practice and reviewed	Carry out health and safety risk assessment for the site.	Annual	Park Rangers	Revenue budgets and staff time
	Computerize site safety inspections/reports	2010	Park Rangers	Revenue budgets and staff time
	All staff to be trained appropriately to understand their responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work Act and COSHH regulations	Ongoing	All	Revenue budgets and staff time
Have procedures in place for emergencies, fire procedures and first aid	Review staff emergency action plan training	2009 ongoing	Parks & recreation Officer	Revenue budgets and staff time
	Ensure that a person qualified in first-aid is on site at peak periods and that system is in place to inform others		Parks & recreation Officer	Revenue budgets and staff time
Maintain the sense of safety and security in the park	Park Rangers to provide a public face.	Ongoing	Park Rangers	
	Ensure the Grounds Maintenance contractors provide staff with training (public liaison, first aid, security measures) and career development	Ongoing	Veolia Grounds Manager	
	Communicate important telephone numbers (Ranger base/Security staff/police) to the public in the park.	Ongoing	Park Rangers	
	Maintain clear sight lines at entrances and other key areas of the park.	Consider as part of landscape improvements - ongoing	Parks and recreation officer	£3,000

Objective	Implementation/task	Timescale/Frequency	Responsibility	Cost/Budget
Forum for security staff , park rangers, council officers to liaise with local police to address crime issues and problems at the local level	Regular monthly meetings with PCSO's, attendance at Police briefings and through COLBAC,	Ongoing	Parks and recreation officer, park rangers, security staff	Revenue budgets and staff time
Promote the role that Castle Park plays in improving the quality of life of local residents (e.g. health / contact with nature)	Develop through Friends group, Castle Park Museum, Natural History Museum activities, walking, model boating, concerts and events	ongoing	All staff	
Create sense of local ownership by involving the local community in management	Achieve through engagement with FOCP and schools activities	ongoing	Park Rangers	
First aid station to be more accessible	Signage to be clearer – location at Ranger Station	2010	Park Rangers	£2,500
Ensure all facilities on site comply with relevant health and safety standards	All facilities to be checked regularly and condition monitored.	Ongoing	Park rangers, grounds staff, café operator	Revenue budget and staff time
	Repairs to be requested of relevant contractor and recorded on maintenance task list	ongoing	Park Rangers	Revenue Budgets and staff time
	Crazy golf and putting green concessionaire to continue to maintain the course and equipment in line with relevant standards to avoid risk of injury to public.	Daily recorded inspections when in use	Concessionaire/operator	
	All toilets are to be clean and meet relevant standards.	Ongoing – frequency of maintenance in accordance with specification – regular quality control inspections	All staff	
	The Café should meet all relevant food hygiene standards.	Ongoing – inspection and cleaning	Concessionaire	
	The Boat concessionaire should maintain boat stock, equipment and safety devices in line with relevant standards.	Ongoing	Concessionaire	Revenue budgets and staff time

Objective	Implementation/task	Timescale/Frequency	Responsibility	Cost/Budget
Maintain and Enhance comfort and accessibility for visitors	Provide information point within new Park Building.	To be included in new plans for café and ranger station Temporary information point to be opened at Ranger Station, possibly staffed by Volunteers	Restoration and Development plan 2009 Feasibility study – 2009/ implementation 2010	 £2,000 set up, £1,000 p/a
Encourage responsible dog ownership and good practice in the park	Include information about dog control and byelaws on park signage Enforcement of Dog Fouling of Land Act and Cleaner Neighbourhoods Act	Ongoing Ongoing – issue of fixed penalty notices	Rangers/Security Team Rangers/Security team	Revenue budget and staff time Revenue budget and staff time
Ensure enforcement of no cycling policy in castle park.	Install new alternate shared cycle/pedestrian path on North Bank of River Colne connecting the national Sustrans cycle route to the local cycle path network. Enforcement of bylaw – issue fixed penalty notices	Restoration and Development Plan 2009 Ongoing – issue of fixed penalty notices	Rangers/Security team	£55,000
Make existing and future Children's Play Area more secure	Consider options a part of new playground design	Planning 2010	Parks and Recreation Officer/Playground designer	

3. Well Maintained and Clean

Aim: To provide well maintained and clean park

Objective	Implementation/task	Timescale/Frequency	Responsibility	Cost/Budget
Ensure the park is kept clean and litter free	Routine litter picking and Target response times as per GM contract Publish standards for the service on the internet – include on Castle Park Web page Adhere to standard for emptying bins	Daily. Fly tipping removed within 48 hours of report. Glass removed within 4 hours of report. 2009 Daily emptying in winter, min 4 occs in summer plus additional visits when full	Rangers and Contractor Park rangers Park Rangers/contractor	Revenue budget and staff time Revenue budget and staff time Revenue budget and staff time
Have procedures in place to deal with vandalism and graffiti	Respond to acts of vandalism/graffiti promptly when reported	48 hour response to graffiti to remove Immediate response to vandalism when reported	Rangers	Revenue budget and staff time
Grounds maintenance to be delivered to the highest standard throughout the park with consideration to specialized items of grounds maintenance	Carry out all maintenance in accordance with the maintenance schedule and agreements	Ongoing	GM Contractor	Revenue budgets
Ensure buildings are maintained to a high quality	Carry out maintenance as required following annual inspection	Ongoing	Contractors	Revenue budgets
Maintain/conservse/Enhance standing and underground archaeology	Undertake maintenance in accordance with the law and status as scheduled ancient monument and procedures governing scheduled ancient monuments. Create separate management plans for specific heritage aspects of the park.	Ongoing ??	GM Contractor/Rangers Curator of Archaeology	
Maintain/conservse/enhance listed buildings and structures	Carry out any work in accordance with law and governing procedures	ongoing	Park Rangers/contractors	

Objective	Implementation/task	Timescale/Frequency	Responsibility	Cost/Budget
Ensure active Tree Management	Draw up a management plan and tree replacement strategy	2011	Parks & Recreation Officer	Staff time
	Secure relevant permissions from EH for replacement trees.	ongoing	Parks & Recreation Officer	Staff time
Improve horticulture displays	Introduce relevant training to maintenance staff or other staff/volunteers	Ongoing	All staff	£
	Develop refurbishment programme for existing shrub planting	Condition survey and refurbishment programme/action plan to be completed 2010	Parks and Recreation Officer	Staff time
	Investigate and implement new planting in accordance with historic precedent	Research 2010	Park Rangers	Staff time
Ensure the grounds maintenance contractors provide staff with training and career development in horticulture and landscape management	Staff appraisal	Apprentices appointed 2009	Veolia contract manager	
	Training development plan	NVQ 2 Training – ongoing		
Foster a sense of community ownership thereby increasing respect and care of the park	Involve Friends groups in 'on the ground' projects			
Maintain consistency in site furniture design	Ensure replacements match existing and fit in with defined standards.	Standard design Specifications for furniture to be prepared 2010	Parks and Recreation Officer	£1,500
		Memorial benches scheme – review and revise information leaflet 2011	Park Rangers	
Actively manage boating pond and Imola Garden Pond	Monitor condition and undertake maintenance/repair works promptly as necessary	Daily inspection and cleaning when required	Park Rangers/gardeners	Revenue budget and staff time
		Boating pond – empty and clean 2 x per year January and June	Gardeners	Revenue budget and staff time
		Imola Garden – empty and clean May each year	Gardeners	Revenue Budget and staff time

Objective	Implementation/task	Timescale/Frequency	Responsibility	Cost/Budget
Strive to attain and maintain Green Flag Award	Complete application Monitor and amend MMP 2009-2013 Draft Management Plan	January Review annually November Consultation Jan 2010 Final Plan adoption April 2010	Parks and recreation officer/park rangers Parks and Recreation Officer/Park Rangers/FOCP FOCP/CBC Officers, Councillors, stakeholders, councillors	Revenue Budget and staff time Revenue Budget and staff time Revenue Budget and staff time
Complete all site management and maintenance tasks as outlined in the Annual Action Plan. Update on an annual basis	Produce and revise Annual Action plan Include in plan, actions from Management Plan, Wildlife Enhancement Plan, Interpretation Plan	January – ongoing Review monthly – ongoing Prepare new action plan Dec each year - ongoing	Parks and Recreation Officer, Park Rangers	Revenue budgets and staff time

4. Sustainability

Aim: To improve the environmental quality and sustainability of practices carried out in the park

Objective	Implementation/task	Timescale/Frequency	Responsibility	Cost/Budget
Formalise and implement environmental policy and waste minimisation	Minimise use of pesticides	Ongoing through GM Contracts	Parks and Recreation Officer/Veolia Contract Manager, Gardeners	
	No peat or products containing peat to be used within the park. All specifications for plant supply to require peat free products	Monitoring ongoing	All staff	
	Encourage waste reduction, re-use and recycling – clauses included in GM Contract and Concessionaire Lease.	Monitoring ongoing	All staff	
Employ and develop management and maintenance practices to promote biodiversity	Maintain Roman ditch as conservation grass area – one cut per annum.	Ongoing	Park Rangers/Gardeners	Revenue budget and staff time
	Maintain Roman rampart at rear nursery area as wildflower resource	Ongoing	Park Rangers	Revenue budget and staff time
	Create deadwood habitats at rear of shrub borders, in wildflower meadow etc Plant and sensitively maintain a diversity of species with varying height structure in the Shrubberies	Ongoing	Park Rangers	Revenue budget and staff time
	Consider putting bird boxes in trees Identify areas for bulb planting	Winter 2009	Park Rangers	£1,000
Ensure sustainability in management	Ensure Waste management strategies continue to be reviewed and improved to comply with current best practice	ongoing	Parks and Recreation Officer	
Ensure staff are trained to understand environmental issues, principles of sustainability and management practices to increase biodiversity	Identify training needs, identify through Personal Development Reviews. Produce Training Plan	Winter 2009 2010	Parks and Recreation Officer/Park Rangers	
	Ensure familiarity with the Associated Open Spaces Wildlife Enhancement Plan 2009 (CBC)	Presentation to Rangers and Park Staff 2010	Parks and Recreation Officer/Park Rangers Park Rangers	

Objective	Implementation/task	Timescale/Frequency	Responsibility	Cost/Budget
Set out targets for the reuse and recycling of biodegradable materials arising out of maintenance operations	Recycle organic matter through composting off site and reuse in maintenance operations within the park.	Ongoing – Veolia to confirm volume to be returned to Park Annually – applications of mulch in early spring	Parks and Recreation Officer/Veolia Contracts Manager, Gardeners	Revenue budgets and staff time £1,500
	Composting bins to be included in new Yard Layout as part of development plans for Nursery Area (See Restoration and Development Plan)	2010	Park Rangers	
	Aluminum cans and glass to be recycled and sorted offsite.	Carry out review with Veolia and CBC Waste Services to determine achievable targets - 2009	Parks and Recreation Officer/Veolia Contracts Manager	
	Introduce Recycling bins at Ranger Station and Park Café	2010	Park Rangers	
	Store and reuse useful timber from the park. Chip timber with no value for use on site as mulch.	Storage area for wood chips to be included as part of new nursery layout 2010	Park Rangers	
Ensure efficient use of Water across the Park	Reduction of non-recyclable waste and use of disposable cutlery and plates from the Cafe.	Targets to be included in new lease 2009	Parks and Recreation Officer/Café Concessionaire	
	Plant more drought-tolerant plants	To be implemented as part of refurbishment plan for horticultural features	Parks and Recreation Officer	
	Use of water retention aids within the soil	On-going as part of planting programme	Gardeners	
	Watering of plants and irrigation of lawns kept to a minimum.	Ongoing	Gardeners	
	Water butts to be installed to all buildings at Ranger Yard for watering of plants in this area	2010	Park Rangers	
Ensure efficient energy consumption across the Park and its facilities	Use energy efficient technology wherever possible	Ongoing as part of building maintenance/refurbishment works	Park Rangers/Parks and Rec Officer	

Objective	Implementation/task	Timescale/Frequency	Responsibility	Cost/Budget
To successfully incorporate the Castle Park and Associated Open Spaces Wildlife Enhancement Plan 2009 in to the Castle Park Management Plan	Coordination of wildlife enhancement recommendations with proposals set out in the Restoration and Development Plan 2009. Documents to be reviewed and updated on a regular basis to work with changing maintenance contracts.	Actions to be included in annual action plans for Park and implemented	Park Rangers	

5. Conservation and Heritage

Aim: To conserve the historic landscape character of the park while ensuring provision for contemporary users.

Objective	Implementation/task	Timescale/Frequency	Responsibility	Cost/Budget
Protect the fabric and historical integrity of the park	Refer to Restoration and Development Plan 2009	Restoration and Development Plan	Various	
	Ensure appropriate maintenance of remnant structures within the park and that historic views and landscape character are maintained and enhanced.	On-going	Parks and Rec Officer/ Gardeners/Park Rangers	
	Maintain involvement in discussions with any development relating to the Castle Museum or Hollytrees Museum, and wider town heritage.	As required	Parks and Recreation Officer	
Maximise opportunities for ecological enhancement	Ensure appropriate maintenance of grass and lawn areas. Retain wildflower meadow area in the town ditch area.	Ongoing	Park Rangers/Gardeners	
Maintain Trees to retain character of the park	Tree survey and regular inspection required. Draw up a replacement tree strategy and undertake priority replacement tree planting having secured necessary approvals	Annually, more frequently for some trees	Parks and Recreation Officer/Tree inspector	
Renew and refurbish existing historical horticultural displays and trees to create areas of distinct character within the park	Refer to Restoration and Development Plan 2009			
Enhance Woodland Walk	Incorporate additional trees, shrubs, and bulb planting to strengthen character.	Restoration and Development Plan 2009		

Objective	Implementation/task	Timescale/Frequency	Responsibility	Cost/Budget
Enhance Boundary Planting	Plant new trees and shrubs to filter views of the new residential development, and add trees to soften corner of park by Castle Road entrance. Add screen planting on eastern boundary of lower park.	Restoration and Development Plan 2009		
Develop protocol with English Heritage and Museums service for obtaining efficient agreements for replacement of trees in Scheduled Monument area.	Discussions/Meeting with EH and Museums Services	2010	Parks and Recreation Officer, Park Rangers, Museum staff	

6. Community Use and Involvement				
Aim: Provide opportunities to increase community use and involvement, particularly within the parks management and development, through events, education and interpretation.				
Objective	Implementation/task	Timescale/Frequency	Responsibility	Cost/Budget
Assess the number and profile of users, the pattern of use and users, perception of safety, and enjoyment	Continue to carry out user surveys and household surveys (to assess views of people who do not use the park). Use survey information to guide and support management objectives. Set targets for increasing community involvement and monitoring success	Ongoing/biannual 2010	Park Rangers/Parks Development Officer	
Strengthen involvement of the Friends Groups, and other user groups in long-term decision making, activities and events (including educational)	Continue to develop programme of events. Provide support for work experience placements, training schemes and explore opportunities to develop other programmes Education Feasibility study Monthly meetings with FOCP Committee Stakeholder meetings for Sensory Garden Refurbishment Stakeholder Meetings for Hollytrees/Playground Development	2009 Volunteer appointments 2010 Trident Student Placement July 2010 Education programme with local schools/home education group 2009 2010 Ongoing Jan-Sept 2010 Jan-Oct 2010	Park Rangers/FOCP PARK rangers Park Rangers Park Rangers Park Rangers Park Rangers/FOCP Park Rangers/FOCP/ Museums Park Rangers/FOCP	
Improve education resources, especially Environmental within the Park	Provide dedicated education resource building and volunteer base to host education programmes in partnership with the Natural History Museum and local schools for example.	Restoration and Development Plan 2009		

Objective	Implementation/task	Timescale/Frequency	Responsibility	Cost/Budget
Make information and interpretive material available about the historic, landscape, and ecological value of the park – and also environmental management of the park.	Update information and make available in park buildings, internet, museums, local libraries and leaflets	ongoing		

7. Marketing and Events					
Aim: Ensure effective promotion of the park as an urban green space resource					
Objective	Implementation/task	Timescale/Frequency	Responsibility	Cost/Budget	
Ensure a clear Marketing Plan is in place to inform management and promotion of the Park to the community.	Create/review and update a marketing plan	2010	Park Rangers	Staff time/Revenue budget	
Ensure Market Research is up to date	Continue to undertake visitor surveys, and obtain feedback from any events held in Castle Park to enable future events to be improved if necessary.	Ongoing – negotiated with event organisers annually	Park Rangers		
Ensure information and interpretation is available and kept up to date (activities, features, ways to get involved).	Update relevant website pages, events calendar, park history information, Friends and User Groups, leaflets. Ensure that park signs, website and promotional material promote all the resources that Castle Park offers.	ongoing	Park Rangers		
Park Staff should be kept well informed	Briefing between contractor staff and client/contractors	Weekly Meetings	Parks and Rec Officer, Veolia Contracts Manager		
Promote the park as part of the wider town centre heritage and green space resource	Discussions with the wider community and businesses to identify collaboration opportunities.	VisitColchester Website, Town Centre Marketing	VIC		
Improve interface between Park staff and the Public	Creation of information point within new Park building. Park staff to be approachable and engage with the park users.	See above Ongoing			

Objective	Implementation/task	Timescale/Frequency	Responsibility	Cost/Budget
Expand activities, cafe and catering, retail and income generating operations on site	Construct new contemporary Park building to contain information desk, toilets, displays, function room for events, and link with existing cafe.	Restoration and Development Plan 2009	All staff	£520,700
	Construct a new Education Resource centre and Volunteer base.	Ongoing, dependent on successful HLF funding		£250,000
	Refurbish and extend existing toilet block in Lower Park to include a cafe kiosk			£210,000
	Construct new play area beside the existing Cafe.			£200,000

8. Management				
Aim: Ensure all those involved in the management and maintenance of the gardens effectively use the Management Plan as a working document.				
Objective	Implementation/task	Timescale/Frequency	Responsibility	Cost/Budget
Make Management Plan available to staff at all levels and by different park user groups	Make copy available on site, and ensure all other on-site staff have copies. Make it accessible digitally as well as by hard copies	Ongoing	Parks and Recreation Officer	
Ensure effective monitoring of the Management Plan. Identify priorities, timescales and responsibilities for tasks within the action plan	Implement monitoring process by meetings between client/contractors/user groups thereby continually reviewing and updating the Management Plan	Ongoing – Quarterly Review	Parks and Recreation Officer/stakeholders	
Ensure management is financially sound	Follow Best Value aims to provide excellent quality of service and relevance to local people. Budget setting process, income generation	Ongoing – as and when for specific projects	Parks Manager/Parks and Rec Officer	
Ensure Park staff are fully engaged in the management of the Park.	Define specific roles for Park staff and provide the necessary training to deliver their responsibilities.	ongoing	Parks and Recreation Officer	

8.0 Finance and Resources

8.1. Maintenance Costs

The current maintenance costs for Castle Park are £366,500.00 per annum (as of 01 April 2009).

Employee Costs		
1000	Salaries-Basic	47,700.00
1030	Salaries - N I	3,300.00
1040	Salaries-Superannuation	3,500.00
Premises Costs		
2000	R&M Response-General	12,200.00
2121	Ppm-Alarms (Fire/Secur/Emer)	100
2126	Ppm-Fire Extinguishers	100
2127	Ppm-Hygiene	300
2129	Ppm-Legionella Testing	1,000.00
2130	Ppm-Pat Testing	200
2134	Ppm-Hand Washer/Dryers	800
2400	Grnds-R & M General	11,700.00
2410	Grnds-Programmed Works	157,500.00
2411	Grnds-Schedule Of Rates	15,900.00
2500	Electricity	4,300.00
2560	Water-Metered	5,500.00
2562	Water-Sewerage & Env. Charges	2,000.00
2710	Toilet Cleaning	4,400.00
2740	Security-General	38,000.00
Supplies and Services		
4030	Materials-General	9,000.00
4040	General Equip,Tools,Materials	49,600.00
4108	Vending-Water Coolers	800
4306	Marketing-Printing Etc.	5,700.00
4612	Telephones-Rentals	600
4613	Telephones-Calls	100
4618	Telephones-Mobile Phones	400
4853	Licences-Performing Rights	5,100.00
4930	Other-General Services	3,900.00
4936	Musicians/Performers Fee	2,900.00
4936	Musicians/Performers Fee	4,600.00

Customers and Client receipts		
9241	Sales-Products, Goods & Mats	-1,500.00
9272	Fees-Licenses	-1,000.00
9349	Hire-Equipment	-7,200.00
9452	Rents-Commercial Premises	-9,000.00
9454	Rents-Ground, Way Leaves Etc	-6,000.00
Total		£366,500.00

8.2. Management Structure for Castle Park

This diagram identifies the structure of the staff that have a direct input into the management of the Park,

8.2.1. Staff Resources

Name of Post	Employed by	Main Duties	% time dedicated to park	Based in Park Yes/No
1 x Parks and Recreation Manager	CBC	Management of Parks and Recreation Service, delivery of Green Spaces Strategy	Less than 10%	NO
1 x Parks and Recreation Officer	CBC	Management of Park Ranger Service, GM Contract, Concessionnaire, Security Contract, Events Management	50%	Ad-hoc basis
2 x Parks Development Officer	CBC	Grant applications, Restoration and Development Plan, Customer Surveys, Green Flag Applications	10%	NO
1 x Parks and Recreation Officer		Playground management, Bowling Green maintenance	Less than 10%	NO
2.5 x Park Rangers	CBC	Visitor welfare, education and volunteers, walks and activities, health and safety inspections, events management	100%	yes
6 X gardeners	Veolia Ltd	All grounds maintenance duties except for maintenance of the children's playground, tree stock, standing and below ground archaeology and listed buildings and structures	100%	YES
Café operator (approx 10 staff)	Johnson Catering and Leisure	Provision of Café facilities, boat hire facilities, putting green, crazy golf	100%	YES
1 X Security Officer	Oak Park Security	Security patrols, byelaw enforcement, issue of fixed penalty notices	100%	YES

8.3. Financial Plan

8.3.1. Revenue budget

Revenue budget is set each year, driven by corporate Policy and Annual Action Plan for Castle Park

8.3.2. Income Generation Potential

Income generation achieved through Events Hire Charges, Lease on Café, boating Lake, Putting Green and Crazy Golf Course.

Further income generation possible through sponsorship opportunities, memorial benches and trees

8.3.3. Charging Policy for events and venue hire

Colchester Borough Council Policy is to charge a hire fee for all commercial events in Castle Park, including filming. For Charitable events the park is provided free of charge. In 2009 £300,000 was raised for good causes as a result. All events incur service charges for electricity, water, security services etc.

9.0 Monitor and Review

9.1. Introduction

This Management and Maintenance Plan (MMP) includes an action plan which sets out a series of objectives and specific actions, in addition to the aspiration statements contained in Section 6 which have informed the action plan. The Parks & Recreation Service will be responsible for the delivery of this plan. A small review team will be set up from within Parks & Recreation Service to ensure full ownership of the monitoring and review mechanisms. The purpose of this section is to set up the principles of the monitoring and review mechanisms and identify the range of issues which need to be considered in relation to both monitoring and evaluation – key components to the success of the scheme.

9.2. Overview

In order to establish an appropriate mechanism for the monitoring and review of the Management and Maintenance Plan for Castle Park, it is necessary to establish the most important considerations for the plan and those that will be indicators of its success, or failure. There are four broad indicators which can be measured in a variety of ways and which give a sound footing for the development of a monitoring and review methodology. These are:

- Achievement of identified outputs
- Cost and cost management (budgets)
- Quality measures
- Timescale and programme delivery

9.3. Implementation

Monitoring and evaluation activities will take place on a daily, weekly, bi-monthly and annual basis. Monitoring and evaluation will take place in two ways. Certain routine works will be assessed daily and weekly as part of the contract specification to ensure that grounds maintenance standards are being met and that the standard meets that set out in the contract Service

Output Standards. Park Rangers will carry out this form of monitoring. Any shortfall between the written standards set and the work carried out on the ground will be discussed and evaluated at that time with the contractor and remedies applied to ensure that it does not reoccur.

The contract quality will be reviewed on a regular basis and an assessment made to see whether overall the contract and on-site works are meeting required standards and expectations. If standards achieved are consistently falling short of those required, then action will be carried out to rectify the problem. This action may have implications on budget and contract. The Parks & Recreation Service will continue to be fully appraised of contract operational standards through provision of a written monthly report from the Contracts Team/ Grounds maintenance contractor and attendance at quarterly meetings. The second form of monitoring that will take place relates to the Action Plan and will be carried out by the appropriate Parks and Recreation Officer and a small review team formed within Parks & Recreation Service. The items that have been identified and set out in the monitoring method of the Action Plan are SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timed) or have specific identifiable outcomes that can be recorded. It will be the responsibility of the appropriate Parks and Recreation Officer and review team to develop a timetable and ensure that each item identified is 'measured' at the appropriate time. In some instances, this form of monitoring is more straightforward as the action has either been done or it has not, whereas other items need to be broken down into constituent parts to ensure that the SMART consistent components are delivered. On a six-monthly basis, the Action Plan will need to be reviewed and updated with new outputs, actions and methods of monitoring evaluation being identified as items are completed. On an annual basis, it is intended that the entire Action Plan will be updated following complete review of the achievements identified and an assessment made of the year's successes and/or failures. Items not completed, or those that through the monitoring were found to be not as successful as first thought, will then be reassessed to see where changes can be made. In addition to the above, individual action points will be allocated to officers and progress will be monitored at monthly meetings with line managers and formal six-monthly performance appraisal meetings. This will ensure full accountability within the team for implementation and achievement of overall and specific objectives.

10. Appendices

10.1. Appendix 1- Figures

- Figure 4.1: Castle Park Location Plan
- Figure 4.2: Castle Park and Associated Open Spaces
- Figure 4.3 Castle Park Character Areas
- Figure 5.1: Castle Park Soft Landscape Plan
- Figure 5.2 Castle Park Tree Survey Plan

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No dimensions are to be scaled from this drawing.
All dimensions are to be checked on site.
Area measurements for indicative purposes only.

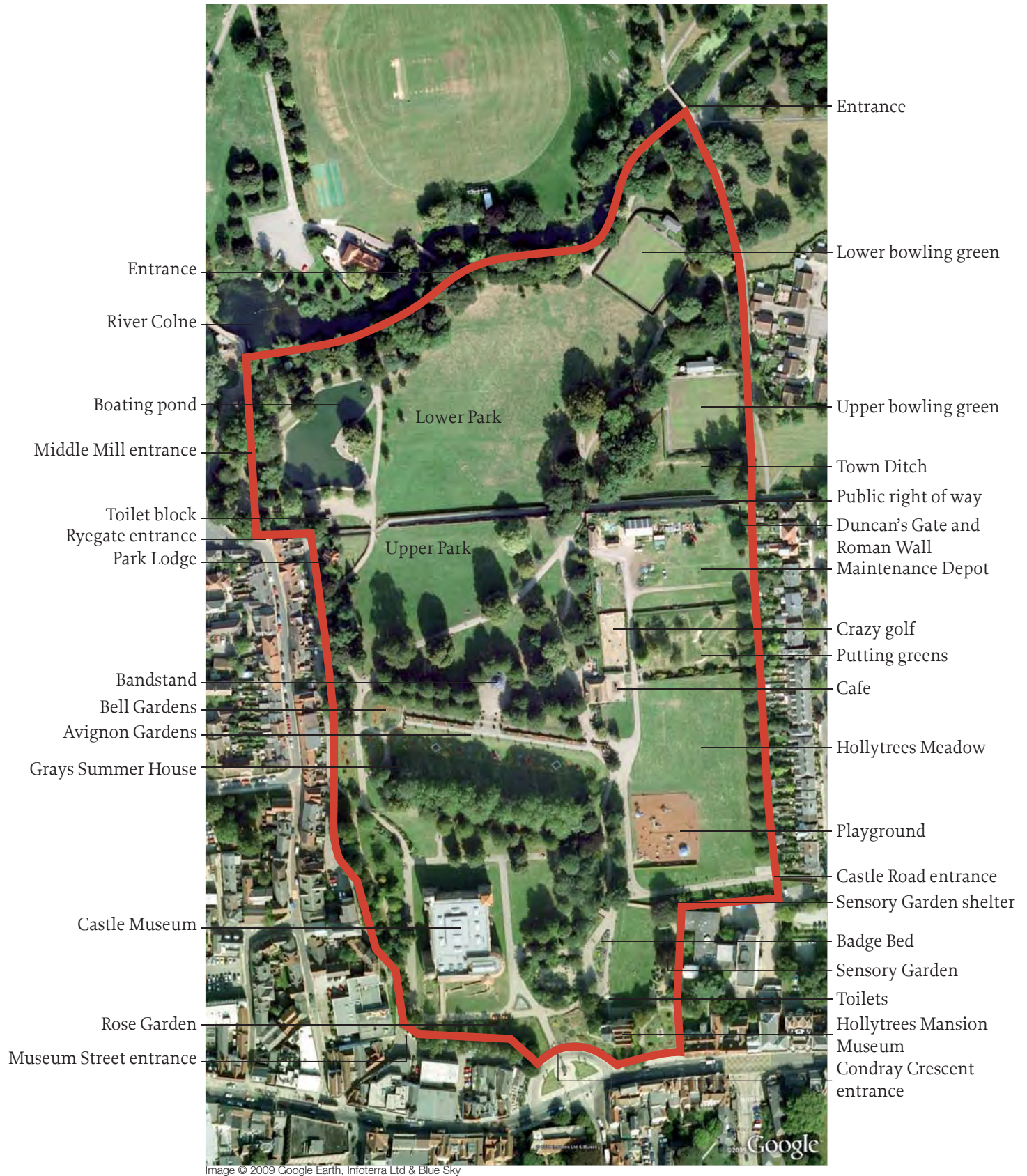
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PROJECT TITLE

CASTLE PARK
MANAGEMENT PLAN

DRAWING TITLE

Castle Park Location Plan



ISSUED BY **Oxford** T 01865 887050

DWG.NO 2766_4.2

DATE 20/03/2009

DRAWN LJ

SCALE@A4 NTS

CHECKED RC

STATUS DRAFT

APPROVED WW

No dimensions are to be scaled from this drawing.
All dimensions are to be checked on site.

Area measurements for indicative purposes only.

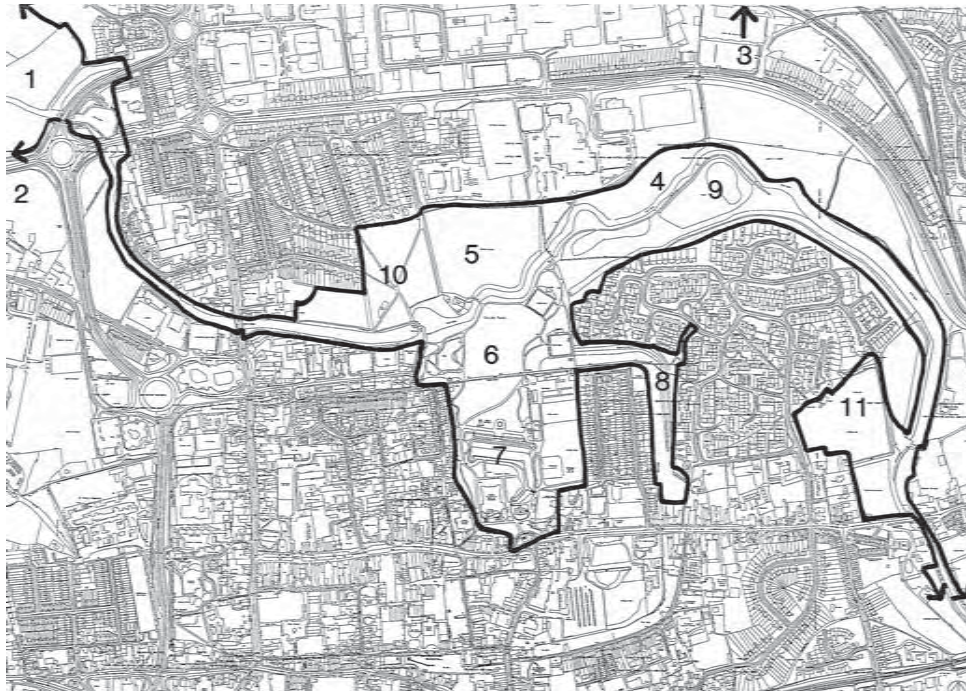
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PROJECT TITLE

CASTLE PARK
MANAGEMENT PLAN

DRAWING TITLE

Local Green Spaces



1. Cymbeline Meadows
2. Hilly Fields
3. High Woods Country Park
4. Bull Meadow
5. Cricket Ground
6. Lower Castle Park
7. Upper Castle Park
8. Land Lane Open Space
9. Riverside Open Space
10. Kings Head Meadow
11. East Bay Recreation Ground

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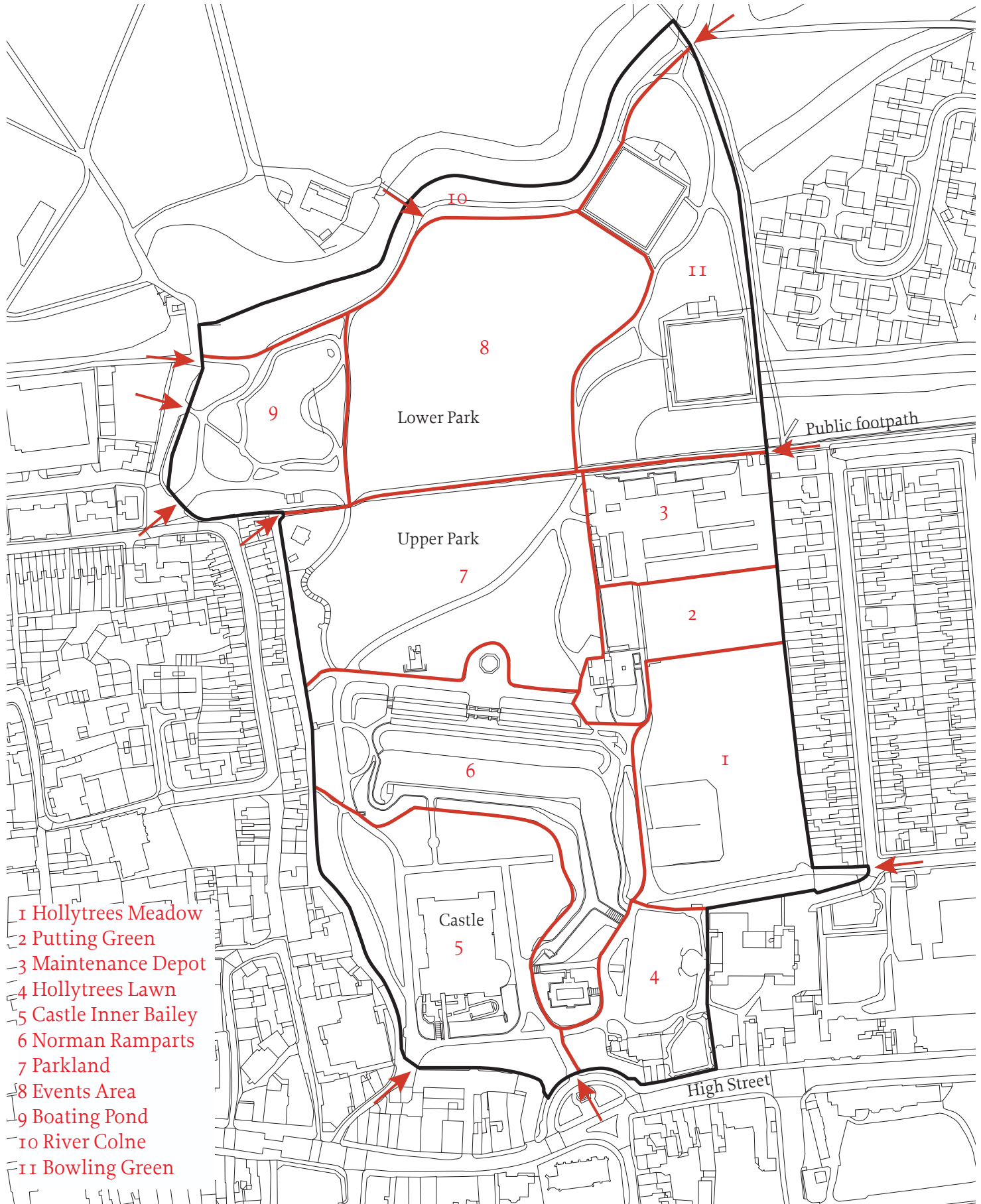
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PROJECT TITLE

CASTLE PARK
MANAGEMENT PLAN

DRAWING TITLE

Character Areas



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PROJECT TITLE

**CASTLE PARK
MANAGEMENT PLAN**

DRAWING TITLE

Soft Landscape Plan



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PROJECT TITLE

CASTLE PARK
MANAGEMENT PLAN

DRAWING TITLE

Tree Location Plan



To be read with Tree Survey Schedule.

