



**Colliers Wood Recreation Ground
Management Plan
2008 – 2015
(2014/2015 Edition)**



*This document was produced with assistance from the
Friends of Colliers Wood Recreation Ground*



Foreword

This application for Colliers Wood is the sixth submission from the London Borough of Merton for the Green Flag Award.

Central Government, the Greater London Authority and partner agencies are placing an increasing emphasis on the role of open spaces in creating safe, healthy and sustainable communities in the 21st century. The London Borough of Merton has been committed to investing in our open spaces and related facilities through the implementation of our Merton Open Space Strategy. We are striving to ensure we are responsive to our communities and provide the highest quality of service. The Green Flag Award is recognised as the quality benchmark for our open spaces.

The Members of Merton Council and the Colliers Wood Residents Association are pleased to submit this application. Colliers Wood Recreation Ground has been a good example of co-operation between the Council and the community. This application is submitted with the full support of the Council and the Residents' Group.

Should you require any further information with regards to this application please contact Doug Napier our Greenspaces Manager on 020 8545 3657 or doug.napier@merton.gov.uk

Councillor Andrew Judge

Cabinet Member for Environmental Sustainability and Regeneration

Merton's Parks Vision

"To encourage healthier lifestyles, strong inclusive communities and an appreciation of nature through the provision of an attractive, high quality space with facilities that are modern, safe, clean, sustainable and accessible to all".



Photograph: Colliers Wood Recreation Ground

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1 Introduction

Colliers Wood Recreation Ground is one of the London Borough of Merton's community green spaces that combine a mix of activities in an attractive facility for local people. Situated in Colliers Wood, off Merton High Street, in the London Borough of Merton, the 2.93-hectare recreation ground has ornamental gardens, a paddling pool, children's playground, one football pitch and two tennis courts.

The Recreation Ground, was acquired by the now London Borough of Merton in 1924 and is an important community asset and forms part of the wider structural open space network of Greater London. Merton Council recognises that our open spaces are an important community asset. They contribute to healthier lifestyles, social cohesion and safer communities. The park provides for a variety of active and passive leisure activities and organised sports. The space is popular and highly valued by local residents.

This document summarises the present condition of Colliers Wood Recreation Ground and its importance to the local community. The aims and objectives for the sustainable management and future development of Colliers Wood Recreation Ground are structured around the eight key criteria used to assess the Green Flag Award:

1. Creating a Welcoming Space
2. Providing a Park that is Healthy, Safe and Secure
3. A Park that is Clean and Well Maintained
4. Sustainable Management of Resources
5. Appropriate Management of Conservation and Heritage Features
6. Encouraging Community Involvement
7. Marketing the Facility Effectively
8. Implementation of Effective Management Strategies



Action Plan Progress Summary

Progress against the action plan projects in Section 6 of this Management Plan is summarised below. Projects are added to this list upon completion.

| # | Description | Objective | Date Completed | Funding Source | Value (£000) |
|---------|--|-----------|----------------|----------------|--------------|
| 1 | Clarendon Road Entrance Replant Entrance Install Knee rail fencing Separate pedestrian and vehicle access by removing and replanting vegetation to open site lines Planting around substation Remove shrubs on corner of bed to open views across the Recreation Ground and into car park New entrance gate & welcoming archway New bollard lighting from entrance to car park | 1 | 2009 | S106 | 1 |
| | | | | Capital | 8 |
| | | | | Capital | 0.5 |
| | | | 2012 | Capital | 1 |
| | | | | Capital | 10 |
| Capital | 5 | | | | |
| 2 | Cavendish Road Entrance Tarmac improvements Paint motor cycle barrier and railings New planters | 1 | 2009 | Capital | 10 |
| | | | | Capital | 2 |
| | | | | Capital | 10 |
| 3 | South Gardens Entrance Replant corner Separate pedestrian and vehicle access; Reduce hedge along football ground to shoulder height to open views and improve safety. | 1 | 2009 | Capital | 20 |
| 4 | Install interpretive panels at South Gardens and Cavendish Road entrances | 2 | 2009 | Capital | 5 |

| | | | | | |
|----|---|----|-----------|---------|--------------|
| 5 | Rationalise signage in park. Remove old signs and replace with consistent dog area, information and interpretive signage | 2 | 2009 | Capital | 2 |
| 6 | Install directional signage in local neighbourhood (Part of the Public Realm Strategy) | 2 | 2010 | Capital | 5 |
| 7 | Tarmac works to increase safety of surfacing for people with mobility difficulties | 3 | 2009/2010 | Capital | 10 |
| 8 | Car Park: Paint barrier rails black, top of wooden posts white or visibility Mark out disabled bay Improve shrub planting | 4 | 2009 | Capital | 3 |
| 9 | Children's Club: Remove green netting and replace with wire mesh | 4 | 2009 | Revenue | 0.5 |
| | Re-let building | 30 | 2011 | Revenue | Officer time |
| | Upgrade electrics | 5 | 2011 | Capital | 1 |
| 10 | Tarmac works: Tree root corner of dog free picnic area Along Cavendish Road side, safety works Wear pads for bench seating | 5 | 2009 | Capital | 3 |
| 11 | Dog Run Area: Clear brambles Improve horticultural maintenance Install Dog Free Area sign Install picnic tables | 8 | 2009 | Revenue | NA |

| | | | | | |
|----|--|----------------------|------|---------|-----|
| 12 | Memorial Gardens: Install litter bin Eliminate herbicide usage along boundary | 4, 11, 12, 16, 19 | 2009 | Capital | 0.5 |
| 13 | Play Area /Paddling Pool: Remove self-seed sycamore New bins and seats Repaint high visibility gates for vision impaired children Plant beech hedging along Rec Ground boundary; Mixed shrub planting Consultation with youth groups to install additional play equipment | 4 | 2010 | Capital | 3 |
| | New play equipment installed | 4 | 2011 | Capital | 3 |
| | Refurbish paddling pool | 4 | 2011 | Capital | 15 |
| | Replace play bark areas with rubber safety surface | 4 | 2013 | | |
| 14 | Football Pitch: Tarmac wear pad at entrance to Recreation Ground by Memorial Gardens; More seating Remove Chestnut pale fencing along Western boundary Reduce height of hedge adjacent Primary School to open views Perimeter hedge shaping | 4, 5, 11 | 2009 | Capital | 5 |
| 15 | Toilets: Refurbish toilets, new signage; replace windows, shrub planting and seating | 3, 5 | 2009 | Capital | 10 |

| | | | | | |
|----|---|-------|------|----------------|-----|
| 16 | Nature Conservation: Plant 500 native whips in Recreation Ground along boundaries. | 1, 20 | 2010 | Capital | 1 |
| 17 | Nature conservation: Planting of "edible hedgerow" to screen concrete wall between the Memorial Garden and the tennis courts | 1 | 2013 | Woodland Trust | .25 |

2 Strategic Context

2.1 Introduction

This management plan articulates the vision for the improvement and management of Colliers Wood Recreation Ground and provides detailed objectives and action plans to direct Merton Council to achieve this vision for a 5 year period, reviewed and updated annually. The objectives of the management plan are aligned to the criteria for the Green Flag Award administered by Keep Britain Tidy.

Significantly, the objectives for all of the management plans for LB Merton's open spaces have been developed with the wider strategic objectives across the borough in mind. These objectives are defined in the Merton Community and Business Plans.

At a higher level there are a number of national and regional policies and strategies that influence parks and open spaces. The Mayor of London and the Greater London Authority have been key players in the London context and the current Mayor is a keen supporter of parks and urban greening projects. The London Plan, the overall strategic Plan for London, recognises the contribution that open and green spaces make to the city. Merton's Core Planning Strategy, a key component of the Local Development Framework, and adopted in July 2011, performs a similar role within the local context. Key policies include CS13 (Open spaces, nature conservation, leisure and culture) and CS14 (Design) that have replaced a raft of relevant open space and environmental policies contained within the Unitary Development Plan (UDP).

2.2 Merton's Community and Business Plans

Merton's Community Plan 2009-2019, has been developed and implemented by the Merton Partnership (the Local Strategic Partnership), which sets out what will happen over the next 10 years to improve the quality of life for everyone in Merton. It covers a range of issues about living and working in Merton, such as housing, the environment, the economy, transport, safety, health, culture and the needs of particular groups like carers, disabled people, older people, children and young people. The key themes of the community plan are:

- Sustainable Communities
- Safer and Stronger Merton
- Healthier Communities
- Older People
- Children and Young People

The Community Plan 2009-19 includes such relevant actions as E10: Manage parks and green spaces to protect and enhance local biodiversity by integrating biodiversity management methods into parks management regimes.

For further information go to: <http://www.merton.gov.uk/community/communityplan>

The Merton Business Plan 2010-2013, developed following consultation with residents, aims to make "Merton - a great place to live, work and learn" by directing the overall improvement of local services. The Council's broad ambition is: "To be excellent in the delivery of the services that matter most to our residents, and to provide leadership to the community through effective citizen engagement and partnership working". The 5 key priorities for the business plan reflect the themes of the Community Plan. The day-to-day work of the Council and the key targets for services are addressed in the separate

service plans of each service division. The current corporate business theme is “service transformation” and is being developed and refined through a “Target Operating Model” process at the time of writing. The current transformation exercise in Greenspaces focuses on achieving a reduction in operating costs of some £700k over the period to the financial year 2017/18, whilst maintaining or improving resident and customer satisfaction levels with its services”. Performance measures include satisfaction data gathered from the annual Residents’ Survey and the number of Green Flag Awards secured.

For further information go to <http://www.merton.gov.uk/community/businessplan>

2.3 Cultural Strategy

Our parks and open spaces are central to the variety of cultural activities offered by the Council. Merton’s Cultural Strategy 2007-2010 supports and directs the Merton Partnership on the value of culture in achieving the objectives of the Community Plan as well as being a key driver in ensuring a range of local cultural aims and ambitions are delivered.

Although the original Cultural Strategy document has now expired, and there are no plans to update it at the present time, many of the principles and aims of the Strategy remain valid and have been enshrined within the approach that both the local authority and its partners have adopted in respect of the local cultural offer.

A corporate Cultural Framework document was developed in 2013 and will replace the Cultural Strategy from its implementation during 2014.

The primary benefits of cultural services are:

- Bringing together diverse communities to participate in sports, arts, learning, heritage, events and activities
- Developing a greater understanding of each other
- Showing mutual respect, recognising different customs
- Heritage and beliefs and ensuring we live in harmony with each other
- Contributing to personal growth and the quality of life

For further information go to
<http://www.merton.gov.uk/leisure/culturalstrategy.htm>

2.4 Merton Open Space Strategy (MOSS)

Below the Community and Business Plans and the Cultural Strategy, under the “sustainable communities” theme, sits the Merton Open Space Strategy (MOSS). The range of sub-strategies can be viewed in Table 2.1 below. The MOSS was developed from detailed studies of the borough’s open spaces and after consultation with local residents. First released in 2004, the MOSS identified the key open space issues and defined a vision for the future.

The MOSS was revisited in 2010-11 in order to provide a more up to date audit of Merton’s open space facilities and their spatial distribution. Unlike the 2005 study, the refresh included publicly accessible private land and was undertaken in the context of revised demographic and population predictions This refresh study

was published in 2011 and comprises an action plan that will enable the local authority to deliver a network of accessible recreational spaces that will meet the Borough's future needs.

The MOSS will be delivered by a number of means, including the Merton Local Development Framework, and corporate strategies such as the Climate Change Action Plan and sub-regional open space partnership aspirations such as the proposed Wandle Valley Regional Park and the All London Green Grid (Area Framework 8).

For further information on the MOSS go to:

<http://www.merton.gov.uk/living/environment/openspaces/moss.htm>

The 2010/11 refresh of the MOSS can be found at:

http://www.merton.gov.uk/environment/openspaces/moss/2010-2011_moss_final.pdf

2.5 Significance of Colliers Wood Recreation Ground

Colliers Wood Recreation Ground is an important feature of the overall Merton Open Space network and has an essential and individual role in meeting the Council's wider strategic objectives. Merton's Community and Business Plans articulate the key social, environmental and economic themes around which Merton Council is trying to improve the quality of life for our residents.

The table below illustrates how Colliers Wood Recreation Ground contributes to Merton's wider strategic objectives.

Table 2.1 Colliers Wood Recreation Ground & Merton's Strategic Objectives

| Sustainable Communities | Safer, Stronger Merton | Healthier Communities | Older People | Children & Young People |
|---|---|---|---------------------------|--|
| Lawn management improving local water, soil and air quality | Accessible facilities for people living with disabilities | Sports facilities including football and cricket with changing facilities | Accessible car parking | All weather floodlit sports surface |
| Accessible by public transport | Inspected and well-maintained facilities | Good quality toilets | Quality site furniture. | Play Area & paddling pool |
| Protecting local urban amenity | Good policies and facilities for safe dog walking | Good pedestrian access to all parts of the site | Safe and accessible paths | Sports opportunities including football and tennis |
| Good links to adjacent private open spaces | Engagement with the local community & police | | | Pavilion playgroup |
| Active friends group | | | | Youth group and new funding for older children's play area |

3 Colliers Wood Recreation Ground

3.1 Site Details

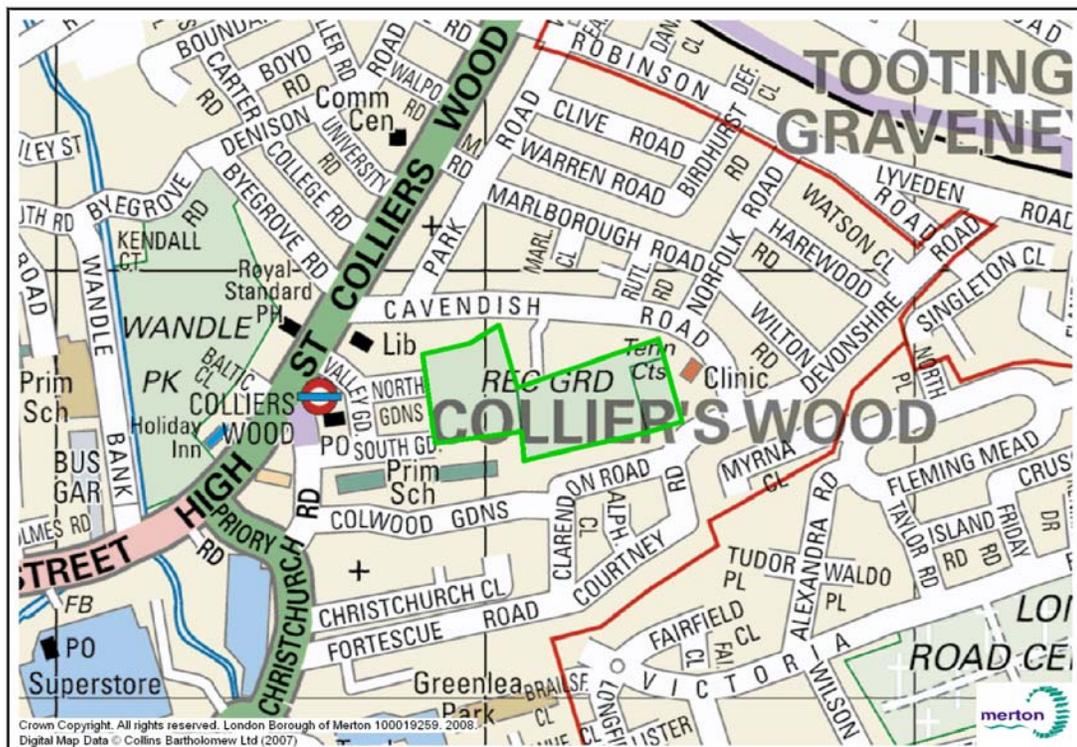
| | |
|------------------|---|
| Name | Colliers Wood Recreation Ground |
| Address | South Gardens, SW19. |
| Contacts | General enquiries: 020 8545 3677 or leisure@merton.gov.uk Friends Group: Keith Spears, keithaspears@hotmail.com |
| Web | www.merton.gov.uk/leisure/parks |
| Grid Reference | Easting and Northing 527030,170334 |
| Designation | Public Open Space |
| Ownership | Leisure Services, London Borough of Merton |
| Size | 2.93 hectares |
| Type | Recreation Ground |
| Legal Interest | Acquired 1924/28 |
| Byelaws | See Appendix 6. |
| Access | Opening hours: Monday - Friday: 08.00 hrs to dusk Saturday, Sunday & Bank Holidays: 09.00 hrs to dusk |
| Local Facilities | Ornamental memorial garden Paddling pool Play area Football pitches 2 tennis courts (goal ends) – multi-sport area. Pavilion Children's play Centre Public toilets, store shed, mess room. |
| Transport | Tube: Colliers Wood Station (Northern Line), 5 mins walk. Buses: 57, 152, 200, 219, 495, N155. |
| Parking | Unmarked parking for 8 vehicles inside main South Gardens entrance. (0 marked dedicated disabled spaces). |

4 Description

4.1 Location

Colliers Wood Recreation Ground is located in a dense residential area off South Gardens near the town centre of Colliers Wood to the east of Colliers Wood High Street. The main entrance to the Recreation Ground is to the west of the site on Clarendon Road. There are also entrances at South Gardens and Cavendish Road.

Figure 4.1 Location of Colliers Wood Recreation Ground



4.2 Soils

At the eastern end of the Recreation Ground the underlying geology is the gravels of the second level terrace, laid down by the River Wandle over the London Clay some 150,000 years ago in glacial times. At the western end the Rec. lies on a slope of London Clay that runs down to the River Wandle at Colliers Wood Bridge. This London Clay slope was cut by the River Wandle at the end of the last glaciation some 10,000 years ago at a time when sea levels were substantially lower than today.

4.3 Hydrology

The site is flat and fairly well drained. In winter the football pitches can become waterlogged after heavy rain due to the deep clay content.

4.4 Flora

The majority of the borders are planted up with ornamental shrubs including Mahonia japonica, Fatsia japonica, Cornus, sp. Sarcococca sp. Prunus 'Otto luyken', Lonicera sp, Pachysandra "Green Carpet", Vinca minor. There are native hedges around many parts of the site.

The Memorial Garden, replanted in 2006, is planted with a variety of ornamental shrubs.

4.5 Fauna

Following a period of neglect in the early 1990s many areas within the park were deserted. This had a positive impact on wildlife. Now that the park is being restored and some major planting has been carried out to the hedgerows and borders there had been some complaints that visiting birds had declined. To combat this, new hedgerow planting was carried out in winter 2009. This should have a positive effect on the bird population in the area that includes blue tit, long tailed tit, goldfinch, greater spotted woodpecker kestrel and magpie.

4.6 Trees

The Greenspaces arboriculture section aims to inspect all parks trees on a rolling cycle with associated works on a whole-site basis where resources allow. The frequency of inspection is partly based on the level of risk (target areas, occupancy) and partly upon other factors such as species mix, nature conservation value, etc; The tree data, history and works are recorded on a computer based system, with mobile electronic data collection becoming the norm. Residents are welcome to request information on the tree stock and individual specimens. All tree surveys including species & locations are held on the council database.

The survey for Colliers' Wood Recreation Ground includes 132 survey items, most of which are individual specimens but several of which refer to groups or parcels (of land) or hedgerow features such as the hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna* hedge on the boundary with Singlegate School. The last full tree survey took place in June 2009.

Several clear divisions of tree stock and type are recognisable:

The western field has only perimeter hedges and scattered ornamental cherries *Prunus* spp.

The garden of remembrance, the paddling pool area and the central formal lawn contain various common ornamentals - cherries, birches *Betula pendula* and *B. nigra*, apples *Malus* spp., Amelanchier, thorn, manna ash *Fraxinus ornus* and whitebeam *Sorbus aria*.

The northern and eastern boundaries including the entrances on these sides of the ground have suffered from a period of neglect, now ended. The result was a loss of many mature shrubs, in particular yew *Taxus baccata* and *T. baccata* 'Fastigiata' and their temporary replacement by an invasion of sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) and the spread of false acacia *Robinia pseudoacacia* suckers from a number of seed trees. This problem is partly solved but the eradication of sycamore and false acacia and to a lesser extent horse chestnut *Aesculus hippocastanum* is neither feasible nor desirable.

The latter species provides many of the largest trees in the Recreation Ground along with poplars *Populus regenerata* and silver maple *Acer saccharinum*, Indian bean *Catalpa bignonioides* and

hornbeam *Carpinus betulus*, concentrated in a distinct 'wild' and non-formal area in the south-west corner.

In nature conservation and biodiversity terms this is also the most varied and valuable part of the Recreation Ground with the exception of Tree Sequence 54.00, a mature English Oak *Quercus robur* of some antiquity located in the south-east corner of the park.

Constraints for the future are: 1) the above mentioned possible spread of invasive species, 2) the need (as with most parks and recreation and sports grounds) to concentrate scarce resources on boundary line trees which overhang neighbouring sites, 3) vandalism, particularly against newly planted trees and especially in the formal centre.

New hedgerow planting took place in winter 2008 in the field adjacent to Singlegate Primary School. Further planting was carried out along the boundaries of the field in winter 2009 and again in 2010. The planting was undertaken in partnership with local residents, volunteers, Council officers and the Tree Wardens.

Details of which are displayed below:

| Species | Height | Root (bare root, pot grown or cell grown) | Quantity | % |
|--|---------------|--|-----------------|----------|
| <i>Acer campestre</i> | 60-80 | BR | 200 | 24% |
| <i>Corylus avellana</i> | 60-80 | BR | 150 | 18% |
| <i>Crataegus monogyna</i> | 60-80 | BR | 150 | 18% |
| <i>Viburnum opulus</i> | 60-80 | BR | 50 | 6% |
| <i>Cornus sanguinea</i> | 60-80 | BR | 50 | 6% |
| <i>Amelanchier lamarckii</i> | 60-80 | BR | 50 | 6% |
| <i>Euonymus europaea</i> | 60-80 | BR | 50 | 6% |
| <i>Ilex aquifolium</i> | 3L | pot | 50 | 6% |
| <i>Prunus spinosa</i> | 60-80 | BR | 50 | 6% |
| | | | 850 | 94% |
| Hedge trees (1 every 20 meters of hedge) | | | | |
| Species | Height | Root (bare root, pot grown or cell grown) | Quantity | % |
| <i>Prunus padus</i> | 60-80 | BR | 20 | 2% |
| <i>Betula pendula</i> | 60-80 | BR | 15 | 2% |
| <i>Cornus mas</i> | 60-80 | BR | 15 | 2% |
| | | | 850 | 6% |

4.7 Facilities and Features

Colliers Wood Recreation Ground provides a range of facilities and services for formal and informal play, sport, recreation and educational opportunities for all ages.

Car Park

There is a free car park available for up to 8 vehicles.

Recycling

Recycling bins were introduced into the Park in 2009. These bins cater for cans, paper and plastic bottles. These are emptied by Merton's Waste Services three times per week.

Public Telephone

Colliers Wood High Street, 0.2 miles away.

Signage

New signage was introduced in 2009 at the three park entrances. There are also new welcoming gates and planters.

Toilets

There is currently a toilet block near the tennis courts inside the Cavendish Road entrance. The block has male and female toilets. There are fully accessible toilets within the pavilion and another one that is accessible from inside the pavilion and externally from the park. The toilets are routinely opened during the summer months when the paddling pool is open and at other times when the park is staffed.

4.8 Youth Facilities

The recreation ground is very well used by local people of all ages. The Colliers Wood Residents' Association successfully applied for funding to set up Little League Football in 2003. Up to 180 girls and boys aged 7 to 13, play football in the park on Saturday mornings. They supported a group of local young people to successfully apply to the Youth Opportunity Fund to set up a bigger league for 13 to 16 year old boys and girls. The funding has enabled them to pay for coaches from Fulham Football in the Community. The coaches arrive at 12am each Saturday to provide coaching and organise matches. The Residents' Association have also set up tennis coaching in the park with funding from Awards for All and have organised basketball coaching for 13 to 19 year olds with funding from the Youth Service.

Free Community Play Ranger Service

During 2009/2010 there operated a Free Play Ranger Service; a team of three play workers, provided supervised play opportunities and encourage the positive use of parks and open spaces for children/ young people aged 8-14 years. The service was co-ordinated by Groundwork London and funded by the National Lottery through the BIG Lottery.

The service ran at Colliers Wood Recreation Ground on Wednesdays between 3:30pm – 5:30pm & Saturdays 2pm-4pm. In 2011 this service ceased.

A Pathfinder/Playbuilder bid was submitted in November 2008 for improving play facilities in up to 22 parks and open spaces across the Borough. The bid was successful and over £1.2 million was going to be invested into parks and housing play sites. Unfortunately, the Year 2 funding was withdrawn by central government. and so developments on the chosen Year 2 sites, including Colliers Wood Recreation Ground were not progressed. The Council is now looking at its own capital funds to progress these, but, unfortunately, not within the same one-year timetable.

4.9 Children's Facilities

There is a grassed and fenced dog-free children's playground situated along the Clarendon Road boundary of the site (to the left of the main vehicle entrance). The play area provides a variety of play equipment for 0 – 14 year olds. Children under seven must have parental supervision. The equipment is installed on tiled, wet-pour and bark safety surfacing. All equipment is purchased, installed and maintained to British Safety Standards and the European Safety Standard for play equipment. The play equipment is inspected on a minimum of 3 times per week basis by the parks staff and by an annual independent inspection undertaken by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents.

The play equipment currently includes:

- Spielhout unit
- See-saw
- SMP scooter springer
- Hopper plates
- Supernova (2004)
- SMP Action Pack
- Cradle swings (SMP 2 Bays) (2006)
- Flat swing (SMP 2006)
- Trailblazer items (RSS 2006)
- Signs; grass area seating; bins; pathways; fencing; gates
- Safer surfacing

The play area and paddling pool are in good condition but some items of equipment will soon require replacement.

There is also a popular paddling pool in the park open during the summer months, which has been refurbished to ensure it remains serviceable for the future.
Merton Free Play Strategy 2007-2012

Merton's Free Play Strategy raises awareness of the important value of free play for children and young people.

The strategy sets out our vision to work together to provide play opportunities in the community where children and young people can follow their own positive interest and ideas through experiences that are fun and inclusive of everyone's needs and abilities. Children and young people's play is central to their health, happiness and development.

The strategy was developed after consultation with children, young people, parents, carers and organisations with an interest in play. It was approved by the Children's Trust in September 2007 and supports our Children and Young People Plan as part of Merton's commitment to provide a range of positive activities for all children and young people. The Free Play Strategy includes the work of a range of Council and community services.

http://www.merton.gov.uk/merton_play_strategy.htm

4.10 Sports Facilities

The public health benefits of participating in sport and physical activity are well known and form an important part of the Merton Community Plan 2006 - 2015. Sports facilities at Colliers Wood Recreation Ground are of excellent quality and are promoted to the wider community through Merton's Leisure Development Team to encourage people to participate in healthy active lifestyles and to enjoy social interaction. The variety of organised and casual activities available to local residents and visitors encourages interaction with other members of the community.

- Multisport
- 2 tennis courts / 5-a-side football
- Tarmac kick about with basketball hoops and goal ends
- Playing Fields
- 1 full-size football pitch / 3 Little League pitches
- Main Pavilion
- Toilets and play spaces and storage room
- Pavilion
- Shower facilities
- Changing space for 2 teams
- Mess Room



Photograph: Multi-sports area at Colliers Wood Recreation Ground

4.11 History of Colliers Wood Recreation Ground

Colliers Wood Recreation Ground dates back to the development of the area for suburban housing at the turn of the 19th century, when it was secured for public use. It lies across a geological boundary between the interglacial Terrace Gravels to the east and a London Clay slope running down to the River Wandle to the west. It was largely used for arable farming, but with some meadowland. However, the northern part of the Recreation Ground overlapped the extensive grounds of Colliers Wood House that lay between there and Colliers Wood High Road from the 18th century until housing development occurred around 1895.

Milne's Land use Map of 1975 shows that the clay slope was predominantly farmed as arable. The north-east part of the Rec., was part of the extensive parkland grounds of the substantial Colliers Wood House situated to the south of the junction of the High Road and Swain's Lane (nowadays Robinson Road). By the first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1865 the only substantial change was the construction of the Wimbledon to Tooting branch of the Brighton and South East Railway away to the south across the fields - Collierwood House grounds and the fields remained the same.

The Rec. lies in the far northwest of Mitcham Parish, close to the boundary with the Parishes of Wimbledon to the west and Tooting Graveney to the north. Although the nearby Colliers Wood High Road marks the course of the Roman Stane Street and the Wandle Valley, here was the site of the 12th century Merton Priory and subsequent water-related industries.

Development of the area took place some 30 years later and Bacon's 1905 Atlas of London and Suburbs shows the major present day roads with housing development in progress.

Archaeology

No archaeological finds have been recorded at Colliers Wood Recreation Ground in the Greater London Sites and Monuments Records.

4.12 Present Use

- Dog walking
- Football
- Social meetings
- Mum's & children
- Basketball
- Tennis
- Kids activities
- Relaxation ground
- Floodlit astroturf
- Play area and paddling pool

4.13 Management

Merton's Greenspaces team, whose head office is located in the Civic Centre in Morden, are responsible for the day-to-day operational management of Dundonald Recreation Ground. The current service is an entirely "in-house" service provision with all staff directly employed by the local authority, except for occasional agency staff that backfill vacant positions and some seasonal roles. The team's current structure was substantially established over the period from April 2010 to July 2011 and in response to budget cuts within the local authority which witnessed posts in its small parks development and events teams being deleted and substantial revisions to its grounds

operations teams that were also designed to reduce costs. The current team structure is outlined as Appendix 7.

The Greenspaces Manager (Doug Napier) is the service head and oversees the ongoing development of the service and its performance. The service manages over 100 separate open spaces, including Colliers Wood Recreation Ground, which is one of the major sites in the Merton parks portfolio. The Greenspaces Manager is supported by a Parks Manager (Danny Lovelock) and a Parks Support Team Manager (David Byles) who, between them, manage the majority of the ground-based staff with the support of three supervisors. The main duties of these teams include litter picking, sports pitch preparations, pavilion cleaning and parks locking, amongst other tasks. Broadly speaking, these duties are conducted by the same small operational teams (of 3-4 staff) who manage small geographical clusters of parks, but the service has been required to become more mobile and more flexible in recent years in response to resource reductions and, being a seven day per week operation, there is some flexibility in the deployment and supervision of staff too.

This operational structure arose out of a significant transformation of the grounds service that occurred during 2011 that previously had operated on a geographical basis - with teams based in Wimbledon, Morden and Mitcham - under three Area Managers. The new structure created just two operational teams with approximately half of the grounds staff in each team. One team, the core grounds maintenance team, reporting to the Parks Manager, now focuses predominantly on horticulture and sports pitch upkeep across the borough; the other team, the Parks Support Team, deals mostly with our customers and lettings duties and also deals predominantly with litter, pavilion cleaning and on-site cash collection. Weekend and evening tasks are therefore performed by the latter team in the main.

Large-scale grass cutting operations are carried out by a small team dedicated to this task. This team operates across the borough and report to the Parks Manager. The service's technical staff (2 play technicians and one mechanical fitter) are similarly deployed across the borough or service borough-wide needs.

The Greenspaces Manager line manages two Parks Development Officers who are primarily involved in the delivery of the parks capital investment programme and for the repairs and replacement of the parks infrastructure: footpaths, gates, signs, bins, fences, etc. There is also a professional events officer and two professional arboricultural officers whose duties and responsibilities include the support of activities and conditions in Colliers Wood Recreation Ground and all other open spaces. Both the development and repair works and the arboricultural works are mainly undertaken by specialist contractors commissioned by, and reporting to, the relevant professional officers. The events role is mainly concerned with providing support and advice, especially in relation to safety, for small-scale outdoor events produced by the local community groups, at least insofar as Colliers Wood Recreation Ground is concerned as the capacity for larger events (funfairs, circuses, faith group festivals and the like), is more limited there.

4.14 Stakeholders

LB Merton works collaboratively with a wide range of partners and stakeholders in the development, improvement, maintenance and management of Colliers Wood Recreation Ground including: the Friends of Colliers Wood Recreation Ground; national, regional and local Environmental Agency branches; and various funding agencies.

The Friends of Colliers Wood Recreation Ground has been involved in the development, improvement, maintenance and management of the playing field in consultation with Merton since their formation.

"Making Colliers Wood Happy!" was set up in January 2006 as a project about personal happiness and community building. The Channel 4 TV Programme "Making Slough Happy" and the accompanying book "How to be happy" inspired the project. Colliers Wood Residents Association booked a hall and arranged a meeting where 36 local residents turned up. They were asked what they thought we could do to make Colliers Wood a happier place to live, about half of these responses were ideas for social activities such as singing, dancing and drama classes and the rest were about environmental improvements such as keeping the streets tidier, tidy up days and planting

more trees. It seemed appropriate that community woodland was planted. With the London Borough of Merton's support and some funding, the active participation of Merton Tree Wardens, local school children and other community groups, Phase 1 was planted in Wandle Park in December 2006. Phase 2 followed this during National Tree Week in 2007 and planting for Phase 3 took place during December 2008 at Colliers Wood Recreation Ground. This latter involved planting a new hedgerow. The group raised over £300 from their Christmas party in 2008.

4.15 Activities and Events

In December 2008 the local community and tree wardens planted a small woodland area adjacent to the boundaries in the playing field. More trees in the recreation ground will improve the appearance of the park and promote biodiversity and habitats for birds, butterflies and insects and improve drainage on the football pitches. The new hedgerow will provide a wildlife corridor. Further whip planting was carried out in the winter of 2009 and 2010. This was carried out by the Tree Wardens, local residents and the Arboriculture Manager.

There are a number of school and community events that take place in Colliers Wood Recreation Ground each year.

Singlegate Primary School is located next to the park and regularly use the ground to host their school sports and fun days. They won the best overall 'Wildlife Garden' in the London in Bloom competition in 2009'. (Officers from the Greenspaces Team take judges around sites in Merton for the Merton in Bloom competition each year).

There is also substantial use of the park over the summer months, especially by the local Tamil community who organise various sporting & family events including picnics, football, volleyball and athletics.

Students from the Islamic Seminary in South Park Gardens regularly use the park for sporting activities including football and cricket.

In 2007 Awards for All funding was achieved to carry out tennis coaching & funding of equipment. Over 30 children turned up every week.

Funding in 2008 was achieved through the Play Partnership for play rangers to carry out a range of activities for children during the summer.

In the summer of 2009 the Greenspaces Team and Leisure and Cultural Services worked in partnership to host a Cultural Olympiad event at Colliers Wood Recreation Ground.

4.16 Leases and Covenants

Colliers Wood Recreation Ground is owned and by Merton Council managed by the Greenspaces team which falls within the Environment & Regeneration Department.

The property is not registered and is not affected by a caution against first registration of any priority notice.

There are no entries in the Register of Common Land.

There are no entries in the Register of Town and Village Greens.

5 Vision for Colliers Wood Recreation Ground

The vision for Colliers Wood Recreation Ground reflects the wider corporate vision for Merton's parks:

“To encourage healthier lifestyles, strong inclusive communities and an appreciation of nature through the provision of an attractive, high quality space with facilities that are modern, safe, clean, sustainable and accessible to all”.



Photograph: Play area at Colliers Wood Recreation Ground

Colliers Wood Recreation Ground is an important space for the local community to realise its aspirations through physical activity, social interactions and a relationship to the natural world in an urban environment.

The vision for the Recreation Ground is focused on promoting this functional open space as a community asset where people can learn about Merton's natural environmental heritage and connect with other members of the community in a space that is fun, inclusive, safe and sustainable.

The Recreation Ground's setting in the wider London green network also contributes to encouraging healthy lifestyles through the provision of quality sporting facilities that meet the diverse needs of surrounding community. Colliers Wood Recreation Ground is an excellent example of a high quality space that balances relaxation and recreation through design and a mixture of facilities for all ages.

LB Merton values the imagination, enthusiasm and actions of the Friends of Colliers Wood who have encouraged community involvement and volunteer activities, raised funds for new play equipment and sporting facilities and negotiated for new and responsive management practices.

Colliers Wood Recreation Ground is an excellent example of a community park. The existing responsive management arrangements encourage an active interest and involvement from the local community. Working relationships with our stakeholders including the Friends of Colliers Wood Recreation Ground ensure enthusiastic participation in fundraising, management, and restoration of park features. Our community partners have been involved in horticulture, species protection and heritage restoration projects and directly involved in promoting this unique place to other members of the community.



Photograph: Memorial Garden, Colliers Wood Recreation Ground

6 Aims, Objectives and Management Actions

This section presents the aims and objectives for Colliers Wood Recreation Ground from 2008 to 2013. The format is closely aligned to the key criteria for the Green Flag Award. The current status of the park, measured against the Green Flag criteria highlights current condition, recent development and areas for improvement. Objectives have been developed based on our assessment of the current status of the park. They define our intentions for achieving the vision for the park.

The management actions that follow the objectives describe how we will allocate funding and resources and monitor our progress toward achieving our vision.

The key Green Flag criteria are:

1. Creating a Welcoming Space
2. Ensuring the Park is Healthy, Safe and Secure
3. Keeping the Park Clean and Well Maintained
4. Sustainable Management of Resources
5. Appropriate Management of Conservation and Heritage Features
6. Encouraging Community Involvement
7. Marketing the Facility Effectively
8. Implementation of Effective Management Strategies

The vision and objectives for the site are aligned with, and may be in addition to, the Merton Partnership's Community Plan, the Council's corporate objectives and the 2005 Merton Open Space Strategy vision and desired outcomes.

The management actions described in the following section include likely timeframes, responsibility for implementation, cost estimates and funding sources. Most of the management plan objectives have specific actions against them. In some cases the objective relates to how we work. In these cases there will be no related actions.

This information will be reviewed regularly and is expected to evolve as funding and other opportunities arise and the service is transformed during the course of the next 4 – 5 years..

NB: NA in Action Plans = Funding not currently assigned.



Photograph: Remembrance Garden at Colliers Wood Recreation Ground

6.1 Creating a Welcoming Park

The overall impression for someone approaching and entering the site should be positive and inviting. Features of particular importance are:

- Good and Safe Access
- Effective signage to and in the park; and
- Equal access for all members of the community.

6.1.1 Current Condition and Issues

Transport Routes

Colliers Wood Recreation Ground's location is accessible to the Colliers Wood community and the wider community using a variety of transport modes. There is a parking area for 8 cars accessible from the Clarendon Road entrance. Visitors travelling by Underground have a 5-minute walk from Colliers Wood Station on the Northern Line. The nearest bus stops are approximately 5 minutes walk from the Cavendish Road entrance. Bus routes along Merton High Street include the: 57, 52, 200, 219, 493, N155.

Pedestrian Access

Pedestrian access to Colliers Wood Recreation Ground is via 3 entrances around the park perimeter. The main entrance, on Clarendon Road is also a vehicular entrance. There are also entrances at Cavendish Road and South Gardens. The entrances are all gated and secure. In 2009, to make the entrances more welcoming to visitors, planters, new welcoming gates and directional information were installed. Sight lines are good. A separation of pedestrian and vehicle traffic at the Clarendon Road entrance has greatly improved safety and the appearance of this entrance.

Signage and Information

A public realm strategy was produced in August 2008. Access to open space and open space provision is a key element of this. The open space framework of the borough is an important element in defining the overall character of Merton. Even though the improvement of open space is outside of the scope of this study, quality and ease of access are considered to be essential to a sustainable strategy that encompasses both the public realm and open space to meet people's aspirations for a better environment.

Open spaces of the borough have a varying degree of quality, however it is generally accepted that the majority are strongly appreciated and well used. This strategy highlights current demand for and use of open spaces in the borough.

Removing unnecessary clutter and improving signage throughout the area and improving facilities for encouraging walking and cycling as healthy and sustainable ways of moving over shorter distances form part of the Strategy.

Large information panels are now situated within Colliers Wood. They show how to get to the park and also highlight the public transport links and walking/cycling routes.

There are three interpretive panels in the park, at each main entrance. Signs include information about the location of facilities, dog free areas and other use policies. Information on how to contact the park manager is also available. The play area, paddling pool and memorial garden are all dog free. Relevant signage is in place.

Accessibility

Tarmac footpaths link all areas and points of interest in Colliers Wood Recreation Ground. The sporting facilities, horticultural areas and features of biodiversity importance can be accessed by visitors with pushchairs or those in wheelchairs or with other mobility impairments.

Major tarmac improvements works were carried out to all major pathways around the site in 2009 to facilitate safe mobility. Repairs and improvements are prioritised in the management actions.

Site Furniture

The site is popular as a space for quiet relaxation or watching children play. Good quality benches are provided throughout the site so visitors can relax while others get involved in more physical activities. A programme of bench replacements has been undertaken in recent years to improve the quality and consistency of furniture.

Waste and dog bins are available throughout the site. Some bins have been replaced in recent years to remove older style units and replace them with a consistent type of waste bin.

6.1.2 Objectives

- 1 Maintain boundary fencing, hedging, soft landscaping, gates and access paths to a consistently high standard.
- 2 Improve signage in the surrounding neighbourhood to the park and provide more directional and interpretive signs within the park.
- 3 Meet the accessibility requirements of all users.
- 4 Provide everybody with a range of high quality, well-maintained and relevant facilities that are accessible, safe, and clean.

6.1.3 Management Actions

| # | Description | When | Who | Budget (£000) | Source | Secured |
|--|---|--------------------------------------|---|--------------------------|--|--|
| Objective 1. Maintenance of boundary fencing, hedging, soft landscaping, gates and access paths to a consistently high standard | | | | | | |
| 1 | Clarendon Road entrance: Replant entrance; install knee-rail fencing Separate pedestrian and vehicle access by removing and replanting vegetation to open site lines; Planting around substation; Remove shrubs on corner of bed to open views across the Recreation Ground and into car park. New entrance gate & welcoming archway | 2008 2008 2008 2008 2009 | In-house Contractors In-house In-house Contractor | 1 8 0.5 1 10 | S106 Capital Capital Capital Capital | Yes Complete Yes Complete Yes Complete Yes complete |
| 2 | Cavendish Road entrance: Tarmac improvements; paint motor cycle barrier and railings New Planters New entrance gates & welcoming archway Gap up/re-plant horticultural beds by toilet block | 2008 2008 2009 Spring 2012 | Contractor Contractor Contractor In house | 10 2 10 0.5 | Capital Capital Capital Revenue | Yes Complete Yes Complete Yes Complete Yes Complete |
| 3 | South Gardens entrance: Replant corner; Separate pedestrian and vehicle access; Reduce hedge along football ground to shoulder height to open views and improve safety. New entrance gates welcoming archway | 2008 2009 | Contractor Contractor | 8 10 | Capital Capital | Yes Complete Yes All Complete 2009 |

| # | Description | When | Who | Budget (£000) | Source | Secured |
|--|---|---------|-----------------------------|---------------|-------------------|--------------|
| 4 | Plant "edible hedgerow" along boundary from concrete wall adjacent to Memorial Garden to the tennis courts | 2013 | Volunteers and Tree Wardens | | Woodland Trust | Yes |
| Objective 2. Improve signage in the surrounding neighbourhood to the park and provide more directional and interpretive signs within the park | | | | | | |
| 5 | Install interpretive panels at South Gardens and Cavendish Road Entrances | 2009 | Contractor | 5 | Capital | Yes Complete |
| 6 | Rationalise signage in park. Remove old signs and replace with consistent dog area, information and interpretive signage | 2008/09 | In house / Contractor | 2 | Capital | Yes Complete |
| 7 | Install directional signage in local neighbourhood. (Part of the Public Realm Strategy) | 2009 | Street Scene | 5 | Capital | Yes Complete |
| Objective 3. Meet the accessibility requirements of all users | | | | | | |
| 8 | Tarmac works to increase safety of surfacing for people with mobility difficulties | 2008/09 | Contractor | 10 | Capital | Yes Complete |
| Objective 4. Provide everybody with a range of high quality, well-maintained and relevant facilities that are accessible, safe and clean. | | | | | | |
| 9 | Car park: Paint barrier rails black, top of wooden posts white for visibility. Mark out disabled bay. Improve shrub planting | 2008/09 | Contractor | 3 | Capital / Revenue | Yes Complete |
| 10 | Children's Club: Remove green netting and replace with wire mesh | 2008 | In House | 0.5 | Revenue | Yes Complete |
| 11 | Tarmac works: Tree root corner of dog free picnic area; Along Cavendish roadside, safety works Wear pads for bench seating | 2008 | Contractor | 3 | Capital | Yes Complete |

| # | Description | When | Who | Budget (£000) | Source | Secured |
|----|--|--|---|-------------------------------|--|---|
| 12 | Dog Run Area: Clear brambles; Improve horticultural maintenance Install Dog Free Area signs Install picnic tables | 2009/2010 | In house | NA | Revenue | Yes Complete |
| 13 | Memorial Garden: Install litter bin; Eliminate herbicide usage along boundary Gap-up/re-plant garden beds | 2008 Spring 2012 | In house In house | 0.5 0.5 | Capital Revenue | Yes Complete Yes |
| 14 | Play Area/Paddling Pool: Remove self-seed sycamore New bins and seats; Repaint high visibility gates for vision impaired children; Plant beech hedging along Rec Ground Boundary; Mixed shrub planting Consultation with youth groups to install additional play equipment Identify and secure alternative funding in site play equipment (to substitute for Play Pathfinder money) Refurbish paddling pool Replace playbark areas with rubber safety surface | 2008/09 20010/11 2012/2013 May 2012 2013 | In house / Contractor In house In house Contractor Contractor | 3 60 40-60 5 | Capital Pathfinder/ Playbuilderbid Capital Capital | Yes Complete Yes but now withdrawn No Yes |
| 15 | Football Pitch: Tarmac wear pad at entrance to Recreation Ground by Memorial Gardens; More seating; Remove Chestnut pale fencing along Western boundary; Reduce height of hedge adjacent Primary School to open views; | 2008 | Contractor | 5 | Capital | Yes Complete |

| # | Description | When | Who | Budget (£000) | Source | Secured |
|----|---|---------|-----------------------------|---------------|---------|-----------------|
| | Perimeter hedge shaping | | | | | |
| 16 | Toilets: Refurbish toilets, new signage, replace windows, shrub planting and seating | 2009 | Contractor | 10 | Capital | Yes Complete |
| 17 | Plant native whips in Recreation Ground along boundaries | 2009/10 | Volunteers and Tree Wardens | 1 | Capital | Yes Complete |

6.2 A Healthy, Safe and Secure Park

The park or green space must be a healthy, safe and secure place for all members of the community to use. Relevant issues must be addressed in management plans and implemented on the ground. New issues, which arise, must be addressed promptly and appropriately.

Particularly important issues include:

- Equipment and facilities must be safe to use
- The park must be a secure place for all members of the community to use or traverse
- Dog fouling must be adequately dealt with
- Health and safety policies should be in place, in practice and reviewed; and
- Toilets, drinking water, first aid, public telephones and emergency equipment where relevant (e.g. lifebelts by water) should be available on or near the site and clearly signposted.

6.2.1 Current Condition and Issues

Encouraging Healthy Lifestyles

Merton has developed the Sport, Health and Physical Activity Strategy to provide a plan that encourages healthier communities through getting involved in sport.

Active participation in sport, health and physical activity contributes to:

- Developing sporting, health and fitness skills for children young people and adults
- The enjoyment of life in the borough
- The health fitness and well being of our community

The Sports and Physical Activity Strategy sets out the Council's plans to:

- Improve opportunities in sports, health and physical activity for those people not actively involved in an average of 3 x 30 minutes of physical activity per week
- Increase the number of people regularly volunteering at least one hour per week in support of sport and active recreation
- Raise standards and improve participation in PE and sport in Merton's schools
- Raise standards and improve young peoples' participation in out of school sports and physical activities
- Improve the health of the community through our actions in improving sport and active recreation opportunities
- Target our resources to achieve our stated aims

Colliers Wood Recreation Ground is an important open space where Merton Council can promote healthy living through the practical provision of new facilities and the continuing improvement and maintenance of existing equipment. The provision of sports and play facilities and the trim trail is complemented with the many informal recreational uses that occur in the park. Dog walking, nature walks, links into the cycle network all play a role in encouraging healthy living in the area.

Safety and Security

Due to the number of visitors, and partners working visibly within the park, security in the park has improved remarkably in the past few years. There are however, minor problems with graffiti and vandalism that occur occasionally. These events often occur outside normal visiting hours. There is some limited natural surveillance from properties around the perimeter of the Recreation Ground.

In conjunction with the Friends of Colliers Wood Recreation Ground and other partners, The Greenspaces team has invested considerable resources into the improvement of the facilities in the Recreation Ground to meet community needs and provide a public space that safe, secure and enjoyable to visit.

The most sustainable solution for future safety and security in the park is to ensure that Colliers Wood Recreation Ground is a well-used and respected facility. With trained staff and sensible management of planting and trees, LBM can provide a safe and secure facility for the local community.

Within the Greenspaces service there is a programme of staff induction and training that includes:

- Chainsaw use
- Pesticides use
- First aid
- Safe operation of machinery
- Water safety
- Customer care
- Manual handling
- Dispute resolution
- The inspection programme

Encouraging Responsible Dog Walking

Dog walking is a major activity in Colliers Wood Recreation Ground and the Council wishes to encourage responsible dog ownership across the borough. Dogs are allowed in the Recreation Ground on a lead and under control.

The policy of London Borough of Merton is to treat dog waste as separate rubbish. It is emptied from the 4 dog bins in the park by Waste Services. Information regarding the Council's dog policies is displayed in the park on the main signs. LB Merton is implementing the "traffic light" system for dog control across all open spaces (including housing and highways land) in the borough:

- Red = no dogs
- Amber = Dog on Lead
- Green = Dogs off Lead and Under Control

The Council is currently considering extending its pre-existing Dog Control orders following a community consultation exercise conducted in the last quarter of 2012. Currently there are dog free and poop scoop Control Orders that apply to all parks and open spaces across the borough. Proposed new Control Orders are anticipated to come into force during 2014, subject to formal approval by the Council.

The children's play area, paddling pool and multisport area are designated dog free areas.

Safety Information

Information for emergency contact, public telephones, hospital, and local services is provided on the main park signage.

Public Toilets

London Borough of Merton is responsible for the public toilets in the park. Male and Female toilets are located inside the toilet block near the tennis courts and inside the Cavendish Road entrance. These toilets were fully refurbished in 2009. A fully accessible toilet with radar key access is available at the rear of the Children's Club.

6.2.2 Objectives

- 5 All park facilities and features to be maintained providing a safe, secure and inclusive space.
- 6 Work with local residents, rangers, police and other stakeholders to increase informal surveillance of the park and enforce park byelaws.
- 7 Address all safety issues promptly and effectively through timely monitoring and reporting.
- 8 Encourage responsible dog ownership through education, provision and maintenance of dog bins, and active enforcement by rangers and park staff.
- 9 Enforce safe working practices to protect all park staff and visitors.
- 10 Implement the Health and Safety Policy.

6.2.3 Management Actions

| # | Description | When | Who | Budget (£000) | Source | Secured |
|--|--|-----------|---|---------------|---|--|
| Objective 5. All park facilities and features to be maintained providing a safe, secure and inclusive space | | | | | | |
| 1 | Establish security of the site with regular assessment of site fencing and prioritise improvements to address illicit entrance points | 2007/2008 | LB Merton | | Revenue | |
| 2 | Improve standard of horticultural maintenance across the green space and work with all Greenspaces Team members to achieve a Green Flag Award standard | Ongoing | Parks Manager, Green-spaces Manager and all Green-spaces Team | In house | Revenue, Capital and S106. Over £100k in 2009 | Yes. First Green Flag Award achieved in 2009 & retained annually |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|--|---|----------|-------------------|----------|
| 3 | Consult with education department, senior school staff and governors and park stakeholders and users on implications of proposed expansion and management of adjacent Singlegate School | 2012-13 | Green-spaces Manager, CSF capital team, school reps | In house | Revenue | |
| Objective 6. Work with local residents, rangers, police and other stakeholders to increase informal surveillance of the park and enforce park byelaws. | | | | | | |
| 4 | Implement Park Watch Diaries in the local community | 2006/07 (not implemented), review need in 2012 | Friends | 0 | NA | |
| 5 | Enforce no motorbike byelaw | Ongoing | Police | 0 | NA | |
| Objective 7. Address all safety issues addressed promptly and effectively through timely monitoring and reporting | | | | | | |
| 6 | Implementation of adopted corporate/departmental management systems | Ongoing | All relevant staff | E Govt | Capital / Revenue | |
| Objective 8. Encourage responsible dog ownership through education, provision and maintenance of dog bins, and active enforcement by park staff. | | | | | | |
| 7 | Implementation of the traffic light dog control system in the park | 2007/08 | Parks Staff | NA | Revenue | |
| 8 | Enforce spot fines for dog control violations | 2009 (not implemented); review 2012 | Police, Community Waste Partnerships team | NA | Revenue | |
| 9 | Provision of dog area in old picnic area adjacent to play area and erect signage | 2009 | In house | | | Complete |
| Objective 9. Enforce safe working practices to protect all park staff and visitors | | | | | | |
| 10 | Implement appropriate working practices in respect of key on-site risks: paddling pool and dog free areas. (Refer to Health and Safety and CHAS policies in Appendix 5) | Ongoing | In house | NA | NA | |

| Objective 10. Implement the Health and Safety Policy | | | | | |
|---|---|----------------|----------|---------|--------------|
| 11 | Health and Safety Policy distributed to staff and available on corporate intranet | Completed 2008 | In house | Revenue | Yes Complete |
| 12 | Review site accident and near-miss incident reports | Quarterly | In house | Revenue | |



6.3 A Well Maintained and Clean Park

For aesthetic as well as health and safety reasons issues of cleanliness and maintenance must be addressed, in particular:

- Litter and other waste management issues must be adequately dealt with
- Grounds, buildings, equipment and other features must be well maintained; and
- A policy on litter, vandalism and maintenance should be in place, in practice and regularly reviewed.

6.3.1 Current Condition and Issues

Colliers Wood Recreation Ground is now classified as one of the Borough's 25 "Key Parks" whose maintenance inputs have hardly been affected by the resource reductions that have affected the service as a whole since April 2011, the staff inputs in the park remain in the vicinity of 0.6 FTEs, albeit comprising even more mobile worker inputs than in the recent past. The current Greenspaces team structure is included as Appendix 7.

Providing quality parks and open spaces remains a high priority for the Council despite the difficult financial climate. The number of Green Flag Awards secured is one of the Environment & Regenerations Department's current Key Performance Indicators. User feedback since the service restructure was fully embedded has been good and the revised operational approach has coincided with a reassuring increase in the user satisfaction levels as revealed in the annual Residents' Survey: satisfaction with parks rising 4% to 70% in the 2011 survey returns and to 72% in 2012, ahead of the London average.

Litter and Waste Management

Colliers Wood Recreation Ground is used extensively by a variety of groups and individuals and litter is an important management issue. Litter bins are emptied 3 times per week (twice midweek and once on the weekends) by park staff. Staff also undertake litter picking across the site. Such waste is collected by park staff and transported to an off site waste processing facility.

Managing dog waste is also a significant issue. Dog bins are emptied by Merton's Waste Services and regular inspections address the disposal of stray dog waste. Park staff regularly undertake the collection of litter in the park.

Sustainable waste management is a high priority for the London Borough of Merton and Colliers Wood Recreation Ground has a role in demonstrating its feasibility across the parks network. There is a green waste recycling facility on site. A new chipper/shredder was purchased in early 2009. This now ensures that all green waste is kept on site for future use on beds and borders.

Inspection and Maintenance operations

Colliers Wood Recreation Ground is maintained to a high standard. After routine inspections have ensured that the park is safe, secure and tidy, the park staff begin a wide range of maintenance and horticultural operations.

These activities are described in more detail on the maintenance schedule in Appendix 2.

Park staff work regularly with our partners and contractors to undertake specific maintenance and refurbishment works.

A key goal for this management plan is to improve the standard of horticultural maintenance at Colliers Wood Recreation Ground.

6.3.2 Objectives

- 11 Ensure high standards of maintenance for play areas, tennis courts, lawns, playing fields, trees and shrubs, user facilities and park features
- 12 Provide adequate facilities for the disposal of visitor's rubbish and dog waste
- 13 Discourage vandalism and graffiti through education, innovative design of facilities and building community alliances
- 14 Monitor the maintenance programme to ensure improvements can be celebrated and weaknesses addressed

6.3.3 Management Actions

| # | Description | When | Who | Budget (£000) | Source | Secured |
|---|---|-------------------------------|----------------|---------------|---------|--------------|
| Objective 11. Ensure high standards of maintenance for play areas, paddling pool, tennis courts, lawns, bedding areas, hedges, trees and shrubs, user facilities and park and water features | | | | | | |
| 1 | Ensure all play equipment meets European Standard and ensure regular inspections; annual ROSPA inspection | Daily/monthly; ROSPA annually | In house | NA | NA | |
| 2 | Maintain regular cleaning schedule for the pavilion and Children's Club (see Appendix 2 - Maintenance Regime) | Ongoing | In house | NA | Revenue | Yes |
| 3 | Ensure play area is regularly swept and bark pits maintained | Ongoing as required | In house | NA | Revenue | Yes |
| 4 | Repair and refurbish paddling pool | 2011, reinspect 2012 | In house | 4 | Revenue | Yes |
| 5 | Replace bark pits with rubber safety surface | 2013 | Contractor | | | |
| Objective 12. Provide adequate facilities for the disposal of visitor's rubbish and dog waste | | | | | | |
| 5 | Rationalise the siting and supply of litter and dog bins | By 2011 | 2009 | 2 | Revenue | Yes Complete |
| 6 | Replace old litter and dog waste bins with new bins of consistent style and quality | By 2011 | 2009/10 | 2 | Revenue | Yes Complete |
| 7 | Install 2 new recycling bins | 2009 | Waste Services | 3 | Capital | Yes Complete |
| Objective 13. Discourage vandalism and graffiti through education, innovative design of facilities and building community alliances | | | | | | |
| 8 | Working with Metropolitan Police Safe Neighbourhood Team and Graffiti Team | Ongoing | In house | NA | NA | |

| # | Description | When | Who | Budget (£000) | Source | Secured |
|--|--|--------------------------|--------------------|---------------|--------|---------|
| Objective 14. Monitor the maintenance programme to ensure improvements can be celebrated and weaknesses addressed | | | | | | |
| 9 | Joint monitoring programme Greenspaces Manager, Park Manager and friends group representative evaluate the park together. (Provides a good insight into management focus and maintenance programmes for the Friends) | Annually | In house / Friends | NA | NA | |
| 10 | Friends to feedback on implementation of improvements and quality standards | Ongoing | Friends | NA | NA | NA |
| 11 | Review regular inspection reports (see Appendix 1) | Ongoing at team meetings | In house | NA | NA | |

6.4 Achieving Sustainable Spaces

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

Specifically:

- An environmental policy or charter and management strategy should be in place, in practice, and regularly reviewed
- Pesticide use should be minimised and justified
- Horticultural peat use should be eliminated
- Waste plant material generated in the park should be recycled
- High horticultural and arboriculture standards should be demonstrated; and
- Energy conservation, pollution reduction, waste recycling and resource conservation measures should be used.

6.4.1 Current Condition and Issues

Many of Merton's environmental policies with regard to protecting local biodiversity, amenity, air, soil and water quality are contained within Merton's Unitary Development Plan (UDP) and the emerging Local Development Framework that will eventually replace the UDP. However, Merton's corporate vision underlines the importance of environmental sustainability in the achievement of the Council's wider objectives.

Council's current environmental policies on sustainable resources, energy efficiency, and waste management are in various stages of development.

In order to protect the health of park users, staff and the biodiversity of the park, the Greenspaces team have a general policy to reduce the use of pesticides in the maintenance of all of its parks and open spaces. The use of pesticides has been minimised from all areas of the park. Within most of the park weed growth is suppressed with hand weeding, hoeing and mulching.

Peat-based composts are not used at Colliers Wood Recreation Ground.

The small volume of green waste from horticultural works (shrub beds and occasional woodland work) is chipped or shredded on site for re-use. The new shredder /chipper purchased in early 2009 ensures this happens. Larger branches are taken to Deen City Farm so that they can be used in their biomass boiler. They run by burning locally sourced tree waste and can be described as carbon neutral. This means that the amount of carbon monoxide released when the wood is burned is no greater than the carbon dioxide absorbed by the tree when it is growing.

Vehicle use in the Playing Field is kept to a minimum. All park machinery is used correctly and is maintained to a very high standard. Any hazardous chemicals are safely stored in a lock-up on site.

Three recycling bins were installed in 2009 for paper, cans and bottles. Bins are emptied up to three times a week during the summer months by Waste Services.

Replacement park furniture and fixtures are made from sustainable and recycled resources where available. The emphasis is on maintaining existing facilities to a high standard to avoid waste. Water, electricity and gas bills are closely monitored to ensure leaks and efficiencies are addressed promptly.

A Climate Change Strategy was produced for Merton in 2009. Every two months there is an officer climate change strategy meeting attended by many different departments within the Council. Climate change is presenting new challenges for open spaces management, with extreme weather events becoming more likely including heat waves as well as storm events. On average winters are predicted to becoming wetter and warmer, while summers will be hotter and drier. Merton's open spaces are pleasant pockets of green space which not only offer the space to relax and enjoy amidst the busy city life, but are also of vital importance to wildlife. Additionally, their effect on microclimates is gaining more importance as the climate becomes warmer. Areas where trees are planted can result in reduction of peak summer temperatures and create shade.

Appendix 9 shows actions that the Greenspaces Team within Merton have taken to adapt to the changing climate now and in the future to ensure that future generations are able to use our parks and open spaces.

6.4.2 Objectives

15. Ensure environmental policies are in place, implemented and reviewed annually.
16. Minimise on site pesticide use.
17. Recycle all waste where possible.
18. Review the use of energy, water and other materials on site.

6.4.3 Management Actions

| # | Description | When | Who | Budget (£000) | Source | Secured |
|--|--|------------|----------|---------------|---------|--------------|
| Objective 15. Ensure environmental policies are in place, implemented and reviewed annually | | | | | | |
| 1 | Operate in line with Council environmental policies and priorities | Ongoing | In house | NA | NA | |
| Objective 16. Reduce on site pesticide use | | | | | | |
| 2 | Embed policy of using pesticides and herbicides only where absolutely necessary. Continue investigation into eliminating pesticides entirely through new management techniques | Ongoing | In house | NA | NA | |
| Objective 17. Recycle green waste | | | | | | |
| 3 | Install 2 recycling bins in car park area (paper, plastic bottles and cans) | March 2009 | In house | 1 | Capital | Complete |
| 4 | Retain green waste on site and use shedder/composter. Take larger branches to Dean City Farm for use in biomass boiler | Ongoing | In house | NA | Revenue | |
| Objective 18. Review the use of energy, water and other materials on site | | | | | | |
| 5 | Ensure reports from the inspection schedule inform energy and resource conservation in the park | Ongoing | In house | NA | NA. | |
| 6 | Undertake formal review of all utilities usage on site | 2011 | In house | NA | Revenue | Yes Complete |

6.5 Conservation and Heritage

Particular attention should be paid to the conservation and appropriate management of:

- Natural features, wildlife and flora
- Landscape features; and
- Buildings and structural features

These features should serve their function well without placing undue pressure on the surrounding environment.

6.5.1 Current Condition and Issues

Although the Recreation Ground comprises sport and recreation facilities in the main, its natural and built landscape features impart a sense of place to the area and provide Colliers Wood Recreation Ground with its character.

In 2008/2009/2010 a new woodland belt was planted along the boundary of the Recreation Ground in partnership with the local residents. This has greatly improved the appearance of this area and increases the insect and bird populations. Goldfinches are regular visitors to this area.

6.5.2 Objectives

19. Protect and enhance the biodiversity value of the Recreation Ground, its meadows and woodlands
20. Conserve the character, design, layout and relationship to surrounding environment of the playing field
21. Educate the public on the habitats, species and features of the nature conservation area of the Recreation Ground

6.5.3 Management Actions

| # | Description | When | Who | Budget (£000) | Source | Secured |
|--|--|---------|----------|---------------|---------|--------------|
| Objective 19. Protect and enhance the biodiversity value of the Recreation Ground, its meadows and woodlands | | | | | | |
| 1 | Minimise all pesticide and herbicide use | Ongoing | In house | NA | NA | |
| 2 | Ensure the inspection regime advises the maintenance programme and highlights opportunities for future park development. | Ongoing | In house | NA | NA | |
| Objective 20. Conserve the character, design, layout and relationship to the surrounding environment of the Recreation Ground | | | | | | |
| 3 | Plant 500 tree whips in 2009/10. (Refer to 6.13 objective 4 Number 16) | 2010 | In house | 1 | Revenue | Yes Complete |

| # | Description | When | Who | Budget (£000) | Source | Secured |
|---|--|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------|---------|--------------|
| Objective 21. Educate the public on the habitat, species and features of the nature conservation area of the Recreation Ground | | | | | | |
| 4 | Involve local friends group/residents and Tree Wardens in the new planting (Refer to 6.13) | As required 2008-10 | Green Spaces Dev. Manager | NA | Revenue | Yes Complete |

6.6 Community Involvement

Park management authorities should actively pursue the involvement of members of the community, with representation of as many park user groups as possible. Management should be able to demonstrate:

- Knowledge of the user community and levels and pattern of use
- Evidence of community involvement in park management and/or development and results achieved; and
- That there are appropriate levels of provision or recreational facilities for all sectors of the community

6.6.1 Current Condition and Issues

Colliers Wood Recreation Ground is a community space that provides opportunities for local people to take part in a number of open space activities. The support of local people, user groups, partners and other stakeholders is recognised by the Council as fundamental to the success of the facility as a safe, healthy, clean and sustainably managed open space.



Photograph: Kick-about area Colliers Wood Recreation Ground

There are 5 main stakeholder groups in Colliers Wood Recreation Ground:

- The Friends of Colliers Wood Recreation Ground/Colliers Wood Residents' Association
- Play groups
- Sports teams
- Dog walkers
- Nature conservation groups, including Tree Wardens

Merton Council will also, with the assistance of the Friends of Colliers Wood Recreation Ground, engage proactively with adjoining landowners and local residents and users of the Recreation Ground.

The Friends have been involved with:

Consultation with the LB Merton on Open Space Strategy and future improvement priorities

Developing funding applications for improvements with LB Merton

Local fundraising

Assisting with maintenance including painting, clearing graffiti and updating notice boards

Regular workdays

Play Pathfinders and Playbuilders bid

Daffodil planting

Planting 1,000 whips (hedgerows)

There are also other stakeholders and volunteers who are involved in the use, management and promotion of the Playing Field. LB Merton is seeking to further develop partnership opportunities including:

- National, regional and local parks and open spaces, environmental and heritage agencies
- Development organisations and agencies
- Funding agencies, including Play England
- Friends groups
- Councillors
- Recreational and Sports Organisations
- Private sports facility providers
- Health organisations
- Educational establishments including schools
- Local businesses
- Community and voluntary groups, particularly those for and representing children and young people, older people, the disabled and ethnic minorities
- Neighbouring boroughs
- Police and community safety agencies

Merton Council works closely with the police to discourage anti-social behaviour and protect the users and facilities of the park. Improving the coordination, communication and cooperation between different stakeholders in the park is vital to the success of this management plan. A dedicated forum to encourage closer working relationships between the various user groups could be a useful development.

A Play Pathfinder/Playbuilder bid was submitted in November 2008 for improving play facilities in up to 22 parks and open spaces across the Borough. The bid was successful and over £1.2 million was going to be

invested into parks and housing play sites. Unfortunately, the Year 2 funding was withdrawn by central government and so the Year 2 play improvements, that included a scheme at Colliers Wood Recreation Ground, were not progressed. The Greenspaces team is currently looking at alternative capital funds in order to complete these schemes, albeit this is unlikely to happen within the original one- year timeframe.

Our play area capital projects generally involve individual projects designed to meet the needs of their local communities and children. They are designed to sit within the landscape, making use of the existing natural environment and incorporating natural materials, such as sand, boulders, timber, and elements such as soft landscaping, tree planting and ground contouring, to enhance the play experience and offer a varied range of facilities for the children who visit.

Further investigation is required to establish specific use patterns for the Recreation Ground. The Council currently monitors the use and quality of the Little League and football pitches. Additionally, a 2001 study of individual park use across the Borough provided detailed information about who the open space users are in the borough and their reasons for visiting or not visiting open space. Use patterns continue to evolve and up-to-date data is gathered via the annual Resident's Survey. During the summer of 2011 a visitor count exercise was carried out to discover numbers using the paddling pool facility specifically.

6.6.2 Objectives

22. Work closely with existing stakeholders and partners to address local residents' needs, aspirations and concerns and encourage a sense of ownership.
23. Identify potential users and encourage them to participate in the development and management of the park.
24. Consult the wider Merton community about future plans, proposals and current projects in the park.
25. Provide support to the Friends of Colliers Wood Recreation Ground to ensure successful grant applications for improvements.
26. Foster closer relationships with local schools and institutions.
27. Encourage a complementary working relationship between the council and community volunteers.

6.6.3 Management Actions

| # | Description | When | Who | Budget | Source | Secured |
|--|---|----------|----------|--------|---------|----------|
| Objective 22. Work closely with existing stakeholders and partners to address local residents' needs, aspirations and concerns and encourage a sense of ownership | | | | | | |
| 1 | Questionnaire survey of members of football clubs | May 2012 | In house | 0.5 | Revenue | Ongoing |
| 2 | Participate in Borough-wide Friends Forum | Annually | In house | NA | Revenue | Ongoing |
| Objective 23. Identify users and encourage them to participate in the development and management of the park. | | | | | | |
| 3 | Questionnaire survey of park users | 2009 | In house | 0.5 | Revenue | Complete |

| # | Description | When | Who | Budget | Source | Secured |
|---|---|---------------------|----------------------------------|--------|-------------------|--|
| 4 | Monitor visitor levels in park and use of tennis courts and other facilities | Ongoing | In house | NA | Revenue | Ongoing (Paddling pool survey complete 2011) |
| Objective 24. Consult the wider Merton community about future plans, proposals and current projects in the park | | | | | | |
| 5 | Consultation on Merton Open Space Strategy Progress and Projects, reporting to Friends Groups, Press releases, Progress update newsletter + create a website | 2010 | In house + Residents Association | 1 | | Ongoing |
| 6 | Consultation with Planning Department on the development of the Local Development Framework | Ongoing as required | In house | NA | Revenue | Ongoing |
| Objective 25. Provide support to Friends of Colliers Wood Recreation Ground to ensure successful grant applications for improvements | | | | | | |
| 7 | Attend Friends Forum to raise awareness of relevant issues & support networking. Organise regular meetings on site with Greenspaces Team and ensure that details of grant funding opportunities are emailed to friends groups and posted on LBM website | Ongoing | In house | NA | Revenue | Ongoing |
| Objective 26. Foster closer relationships with local schools and institutions. | | | | | | |
| 8 | Involve Singlegate School in consultation with Play Pathfinders project | 2010 | In house | | Revenue | Project funding with-drawn |
| 9 | Support Singlegate School in entering Merton in Bloom and London in Bloom | 2010 | In house | | Revenue | |
| Objective 27. Encourage a complementary working relationship between the Council and community volunteers | | | | | | |
| 10 | Agree practical projects and/or inputs for the Community Payback Team to deliver on site | 2012/13 | In house & C.W.R.A | 1 | Revenue & Capital | Yes |
| 11 | Plant hedgerow and plant 4,000 daffodil bulbs with local volunteers (Whip planting refer to 6.13) | 2009 | Friends/ Volunteers | 0.5 | Revenue | Yes Complete |

6.7 Marketing

Is there:

- A marketing strategy in place? Is it in practice and regularly reviewed?
- Good provision of information to users e.g. about management strategies, activities, features, ways to get involved? and
- Effective promotion of the park as a community resource.

6.7.1 Current Condition and Issues

Marketing Strategy

The marketing and promotion of Colliers Wood Recreation Ground as a local facility and destination is coordinated through the Merton Open Spaces Marketing Strategy (2007). The objectives of the borough strategy are to:

1. To increase usage of parks and open spaces by providing timely and accurate information about, their features, facilities and management;
2. To effectively advertise events in Merton's Parks and Open Spaces and attract other activities appropriate to individual spaces and the surrounding community;
3. To promote positive news about Merton's Parks and Open spaces to a wide audience;
4. To ensure all parks staff and volunteers receive adequate marketing training;
5. To regularly review customer satisfaction with the condition of the facilities, features and management within the parks.

The Marketing Strategy is implemented across the borough's parks and leisure facilities, through the various council initiatives including signage outside the park, pamphlets for potential users and information on the council website. Word of mouth is also important.

The Council's 24 Friends Groups produce a number of newsletters to publicise their specific park.

Marketing of Colliers Wood Recreation Ground

Marketing of the park currently concentrates on effective signage leading potential users to the park and the promotion of specific events and sports facility availability.

Huge improvements have been made to the design and functionality of the Council's website over the last 3 years. It is crucial that Leisure Services takes full advantage of this medium to promote facilities and events in Colliers Wood Recreation Ground and other parks and open spaces in the Borough. Sports pitch bookings via the internet was implemented in 2006 on the Merton website, streamlining the information, booking and charging process for actual and potential users. (A new and improved electronic booking system is due to be introduced in the spring of 2012). Active monitoring of website activity provides managers and users with useful feedback to improve the information on the website and ensures that it is up-to-date.

A review of the current literature on the park needs to take place with the co-operation of the Friends of Colliers Wood Recreation Ground.

Well-informed and trained members of staff are vital to provide guidance to park visitors. New notice boards and signage were installed (main interpretive panel 2006) to improve the information available to visitors. The service will continue to support and encourage the local community to use the park as a venue for appropriate community events.

6.7.2 Marketing Actions

| # | Description | When | Who | Budget | Source | Secured |
|---|--|--------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|---------|--------------|
| Objective 28. Develop and implement Borough-wide Park Marketing Strategy | | | | | | |
| 1 | Implement park marketing strategy | Ongoing | In house | NA | Revenue | Yes |
| Objective 29. Provide information about the park in a variety of media both on and off site | | | | | | |
| 2 | Promote Colliers Wood Recreation Ground by advertising successes, events and issues through council publications and local media via press releases. | Ongoing | In house. Marketing Officer | NA | Revenue | Yes |
| 3 | Implement new E booking system for pitch bookings | April 2012 | In house | E govt funding | Revenue | Yes |
| 4 | Develop "Virtual Community Notice Board" for the Council website. | Deferred , no date | In house | NA | Revenue | No |
| 5 | Update friends notice board, posters in park, dog signs etc. | Ongoing | Friends | NA | NA | |
| 6 | Update residents association/friends group website; populate with relevant information on the park | Ongoing | Friends | | Revenue | |
| Objective 30. Actively promote the features and facilities of the park and encourage community ownership & use | | | | | | |
| 7 | Advertise & re-let vacant park building to community service company | 2011/12 | In house | NA | Revenue | Yes Complete |



Photograph: Recreation area of Colliers Wood Recreation Ground

6.8 Management

A Green Flag site must have a management plan. It must set out the balance between all the priorities, policies and partners that apply to a particular green space. It should establish a timescale for putting the objectives into practice. It should also identify the contribution the site is making towards an area's wider strategic aims. It must be actively implemented and regularly reviewed.

6.9 Current Status and Issues

Colliers Wood Recreation Ground is owned and managed by LB Merton and is accessible to the general public year-round. This management plan for Colliers Wood Recreation Ground has been developed to advance the aspirations of the London Borough of Merton and those of our local communities. The management plan has been developed around our commitment to the objectives of Green Flag and is key to the implementation of our Open Space Strategy (2005, revised 2011). It provides a clear and coordinated management strategy based on the characteristics of the site and the communities that use it. It will be a living document, updated annually to reflect new knowledge, successes and failures.

Parks Management

Merton's Greenspaces team, whose head office is located in the Civic Centre in Morden, are responsible for the day-to-day operational management of Colliers Wood Recreation Ground. The current service is an entirely "in-house" service provision with all staff directly employed by the local authority, except for occasional agency staff that backfill vacant positions and some seasonal roles. The team current structure was substantially established over the period from April 2010 to July 2011 and in response to budget cuts within the local authority which witnessed posts in its small parks development and events teams being deleted and substantial revisions to its grounds operations teams that were also designed to reduce costs. The current team structure is outlined in Appendix 7.

The Greenspaces Manager (Doug Napier) is the service head and oversees the ongoing development of the service and its performance. The service manages over 100 separate open spaces, including Colliers Wood Recreation Ground, which is one of the major sites in the Merton parks portfolio. The Greenspaces Manager is supported by a Parks Manager (Danny Lovelock) and a Parks Support Team Manager (David Byles) who, between them, manage the majority of the ground-based staff with the support of three supervisors. The main duties of these teams include litter picking, sports pitch preparations, pavilion cleaning and parks locking, amongst other tasks. Broadly speaking, the core duties are conducted by the same small operational teams of 3-4 staff who manage small geographical clusters of parks, but the service has been required to become more mobile and more flexible in recent years in response to resource reductions and, being a seven day per week operation, there is some flexibility in the deployment and supervision of staff too.

This operational structure arose out of a significant transformation of the grounds service that occurred during 2011 that previously had operated on a geographical basis - with teams base in Wimbledon, Morden and Mitcham - under three Area Managers. The new structure created just two operational teams which approximately half of the grounds staff in each team. One team, the core grounds maintenance team, reporting to the Parks Manager, now focuses predominantly on horticulture and sports pitch upkeep across the borough; the other team, the Parks Support Team, deals mostly with our customers and lettings duties and also with litter, pavilion cleaning and on-site cash collection. Weekend and evening tasks are therefore performed by the latter team in the main.

Large-scale grass cutting operations are carried out by a small team dedicated to this task. This team operates across the borough and report to the Parks Manager. The service's technical staff (2 play technicians and one mechanical fitter) are similarly deployed across the borough or service borough-wide needs.

The Greenspaces Manager line manages two Parks Development Officers who are primarily involved in the delivery of the parks capital investment programme and for the repairs and replacement of the parks infrastructure: footpaths, gates, signs, bins, fences, etc. There is also a professional events officer and two professional arboricultural officers whose duties and responsibilities include the support of activities and conditions in Colliers Wood Recreation Ground and all other open spaces. Both the development and repair works and the arboricultural works are mainly undertaken by specialist contractors commissioned by, and reporting to, the relevant professional officers. The events role is mainly concerned with providing support and

advice, especially in relation to safety, for small-scale outdoor events produced by the local community groups, at least insofar as Colliers Wood Recreation Ground is concerned as the capacity for larger events (funfairs, circuses, faith group festivals and the like), is more limited there. Two officers in the team have considerable practical experience of ecological issues and the Warden of Mitcham Common, also employed within the team, is an additional biodiversity knowledge resource that is employed across the service.

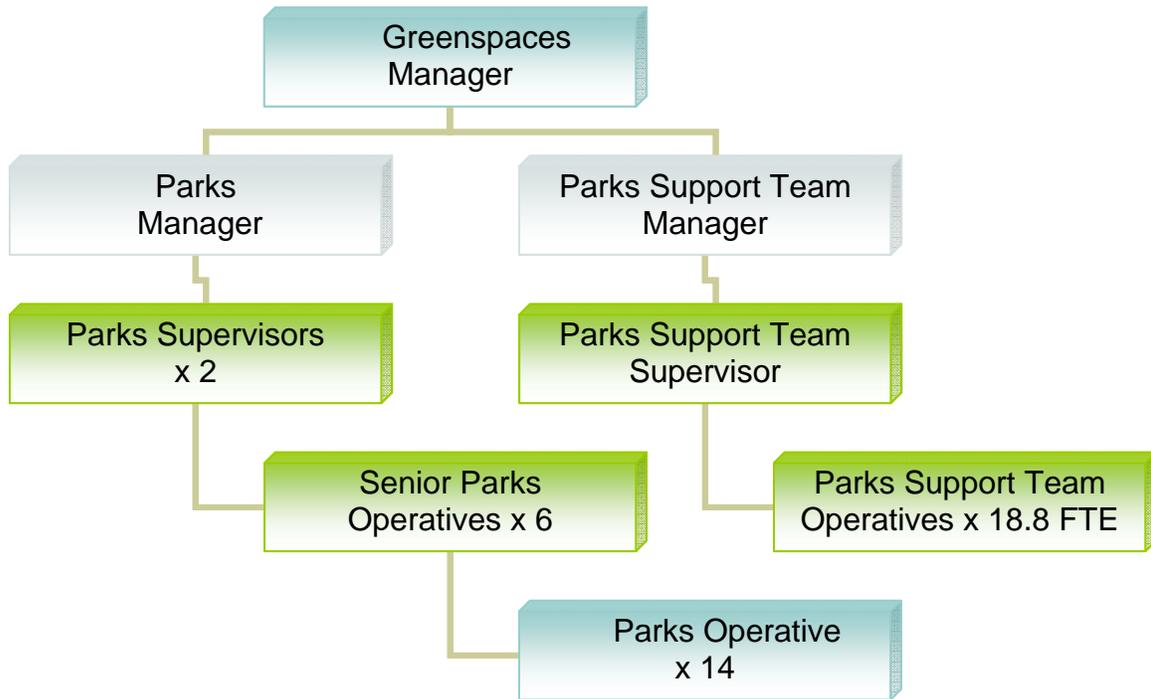
Broad details of the personnel involved in the management of Colliers Wood Recreation Ground are outlined in Table 6.1 and Figure 6.1 below and comprises individuals drawn from both the parks grounds team and Support Team working in tandem. The park formally opens at 8am and closes (the gates are securely locked by parks staff) at or about dusk, unless there are lettings in the park. Under the revised operational arrangements, staff are present in the park on most midweek days due to a combination of the park's Key Park status (with daily commitments in terms of litter collection and condition inspections allied to that) and the work commitments required to prepare the pitches on site which ensure that the sporting elements of the grounds upkeep is almost a year-round operation in itself. At weekends, the popularity of the site for lettings and sport also ensures that there is a regular staff presence from the Parks Support Team. This team also attends the park in support of the various evening lettings that the pavilion attracts.. Overall, the staff establishment is estimated at 0.6 FTEs, albeit that none is actually allocated to the park specifically under the revised operational arrangements now adopted, except during high summer when the paddling pool is open.

Figure 6.1: Parks Management Structure

| | | |
|----------------|-------------------------------|--|
| Level 1 | Parks Manager | Parks Support Team Manager |
| Level 2 | Parks Supervisor | Parks Support Team Supervisor |
| Level 3 | Senior Parks Operative | Senior Parks Support Team Operative |
| Level 4 | Parks Operatives | Parks Support Team Operative |

Appendix 7 outlines the overall management structure and posts within the Merton's Greenspaces team.

Table 6.1 Parks Management Structure



See Appendix 6 for the overall management structure and responsibilities for the LB Merton Parks Network.

6.8.2 Objectives

31. Continue to bid for capital and S106 funding for prioritised improvements.
32. Ensure sufficient budget is allocated to maintain the park to the standards of the Green Flag Award.
33. Encourage greater user ownership and involvement in facility management to promote responsible use.

6.8.3 Management Actions

| # | Description | When | Who | Budget (000) | Source | Secured |
|--|---|--|----------|--------------------------|---------|---------|
| Objective 31. Continue to bid for capital and S106 funding for prioritised improvements | | | | | | |
| 1 | Continue liaison with development contributions (s106) officer (Plans and Projects) to ensure good practice and best value. | 2009/10 and Ongoing | In house | 17K secured for 2009/10 | S106 | Yes |
| 2 | Monitor developments in funding agencies and opportunities | 2008/9 | In house | NA | Revenue | Yes |
| Objective 32. Ensure sufficient budget is allocated to maintain the park to the standards of this management plan | | | | | | |
| 3 | Specific "Green Flag" capital funding allocated to improve up to 5 sites, including Colliers Wood Rec | 2009/10 2010/11 2011/12 2012/13 | LBM | 40k 25k 25k 25k | Capital | Yes |
| Objective 33. Encourage greater user ownership and involvement in facility management to promote responsible use | | | | | | |
| 4 | C.W.R.G to manage tennis courts/multi-sport area | Ongoing | C.W.R.G | NA | | Ongoing |
| 5 | Work with local friends group to develop and improve the park | Ongoing | In house | NA | Revenue | Ongoing |

7 Monitoring and Plan Review

This management plan was first adopted in 2008 and will act as a working document for the management of Colliers Wood Recreation Ground over a five-year period.

The day-to-day management of the site and the progress of individual development projects will be monitored regularly with LBM park staff, other stakeholders and the Friends of Colliers Wood Recreation Ground.

The action targets presented in this management plan are reviewed annually in December/January with stakeholders and updated to reflect recent developments. Information and identified action areas will inform both the capital and revenue budget processes annually.

A formal review of this management plan will be undertaken in 2012/13 when the plan will be amended and updated to advance the development and management of the park until 2018.

8 References

Key references are outlined throughout the document within relevant sections with weblinks provided where appropriate and possible.

9 Appendices

1. Inspection Schedule
2. Maintenance Regime
3. Plan of the Park
4. Current Marketing Materials
5. Health and Safety Policy
6. Park Byelaws
7. Management Flow Chart Park Byelaws
8. Friends Activities

Appendix 1 Inspection Schedule

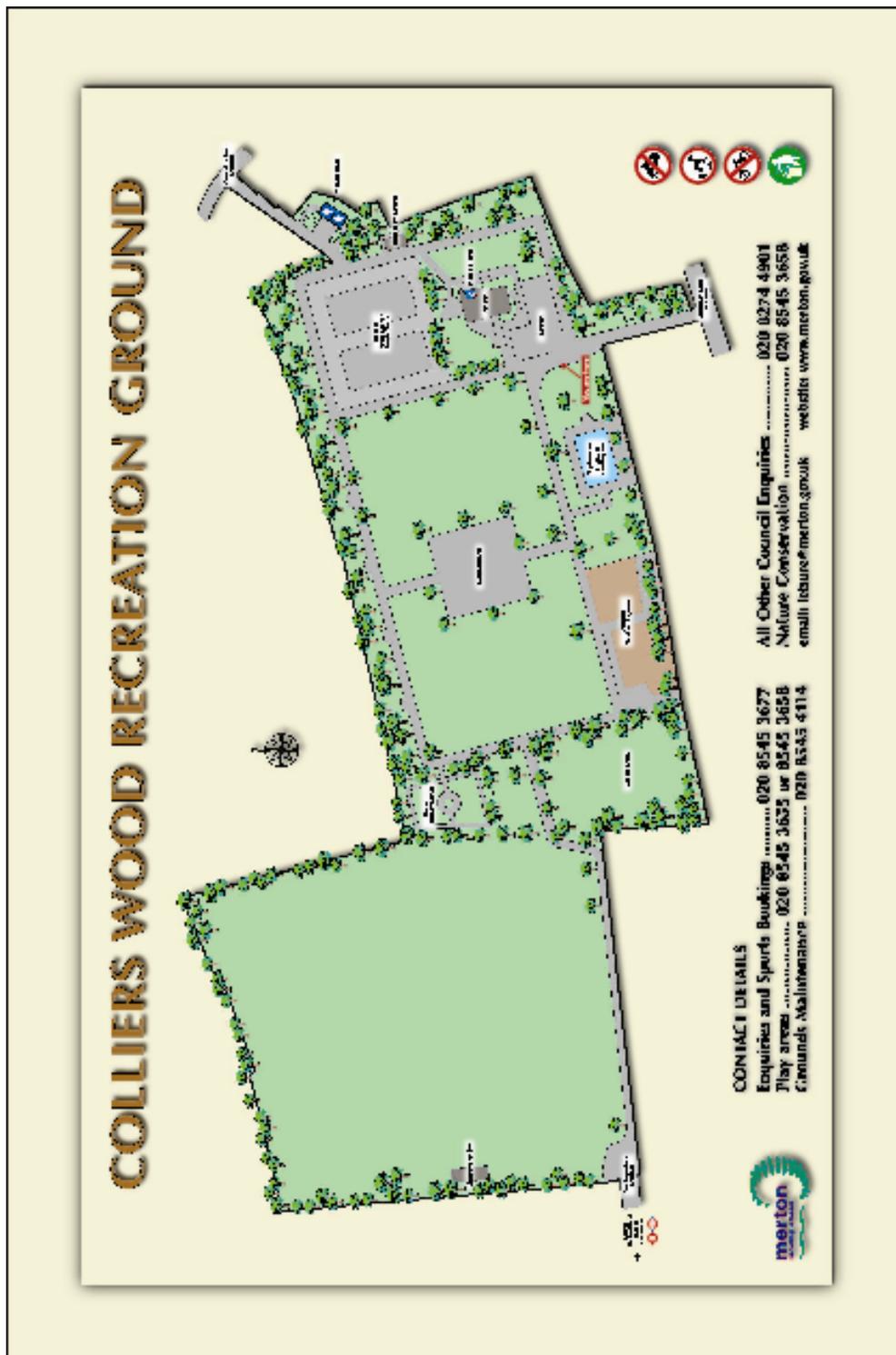
| # | Activity | Frequency | Responsibility |
|---|--|---|----------------------------|
| 1 | Daily Condition Assessment | Daily | Parks Staff |
| | Visual inspection of: 1. Seats 2. Waste bins 3. Fencing 4. General condition and presentation | | |
| 2 | Daily Built Feature Assessment | Daily | Parks Staff |
| | Inspect: 1. Pavilions 2. Report graffiti, vandalism, wear and tear to manager/supervisor 3. File malicious damage reports with police | | |
| 3 | Inspect Sign Boards | Weekly | Friends Group |
| | Remove graffiti Report vandalism to manager/supervisor | | |
| 4 | Quarterly Condition Assessment | Quarterly. Minimum of once during winter months. | Parks Staff Friends |
| | Thoroughly check the condition of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Footpaths; • Wastebins; • Benches; • Litter in paddling pool; • Shrub bed; • Playground; • Fencing and gates; • Evidence of fires. | | |
| 5 | Tree Assessment | Every 3 years Annually Immediately post-storm | Arboriculture Manager |
| | Full survey Walkover tree assessment Storm events | | |
| 6 | Other Assessments | | |
| | Gas and electric checks and Certification | Annually | Corporate Property Manager |

Appendix 2 Maintenance Regime

| # | Activity | Frequency | Responsibility |
|---|--|--|--|
| 1 | Play Area + Paddling pool Carry out visual inspection, report problems and make safe equipment Remove litter, sweep Carry out minor repairs of equipment and safety surfacing Cut grass Pre-season paddling pool maintenance (including painting) Cleaning and maintenance | Daily As necessary As necessary Where applicable Annually Daily in summer | Park Staff, Playgrounds Technicians |
| 2 | Tennis Courts (Multi-sport area) Visual inspection Sweep and remove litter Erect nets, collect fees (for specified playing times) | Daily Weekly Daily | Parks Staff |
| 3 | Pavilion, Toilets and Mess Room Carry out inspections Clean Toilets Ensure building, changing rooms and hall clean and tidy Provide chairs for functions Lock and unlock outside toilets during summer | Daily As necessary As necessary Daily | Parks Staff Friends Group (under review) |
| 4 | Amenity Grass Litter picking Cutting | As necessary Every 10 days in season | Parks Staff Tractor Gang (large areas) |
| 5 | Tarmac Paths & Informal Play area Carry out inspections and complete reports, sweep and clear litter | Monthly | Parks Staff |
| 6 | Car Park Sweep and litter pick | As necessary | Parks Staff |
| 7 | Dog Free Walking Area Cut grass Cut back bramble growth | 10 times a year As necessary | Parks Staff |

| # | Activity | Frequency | Responsibility |
|----|---|---|-------------------------------|
| | Litter Pick | As necessary | |
| # | Activity | Frequency | Responsibility |
| 8 | Shrub Beds Prune Shrubs and mulch Keep weed free Litter pick Cultivate border | Annually | Park Staff |
| 9 | Football Pitches 1. Install football posts and sockets 2. Initial mark football pitches 3. Over mark football pitches 4. Reinstate football after match 5. Top dress worn areas 6. Hang / remove football nets 7. Pierce goalmouths and compacted areas 8. Repair goalmouths / worn areas (end of season) 9. Remove, clean, paint and store football posts Facilitate football bookings | As required weekly in football season End of Season During football season as necessary | Parks Staff |
| 10 | Gates Lock and unlock gates | 2x Daily | Parks Staff |
| 11 | Interpretive Panel Remove graffiti from sign Update information | As necessary | Parks Staff Friends Group |
| 12 | Mixed Hedges / Nature hedges / Whip Planting Clip hedge face | Annually | Parks Staff |
| | Litter and Dog Bins Empty litter bins Empty dog bins | Daily 3 x a week | Parks Staff Waste Services |

Appendix 3 Plan of Park



Appendix 4 Marketing Materials

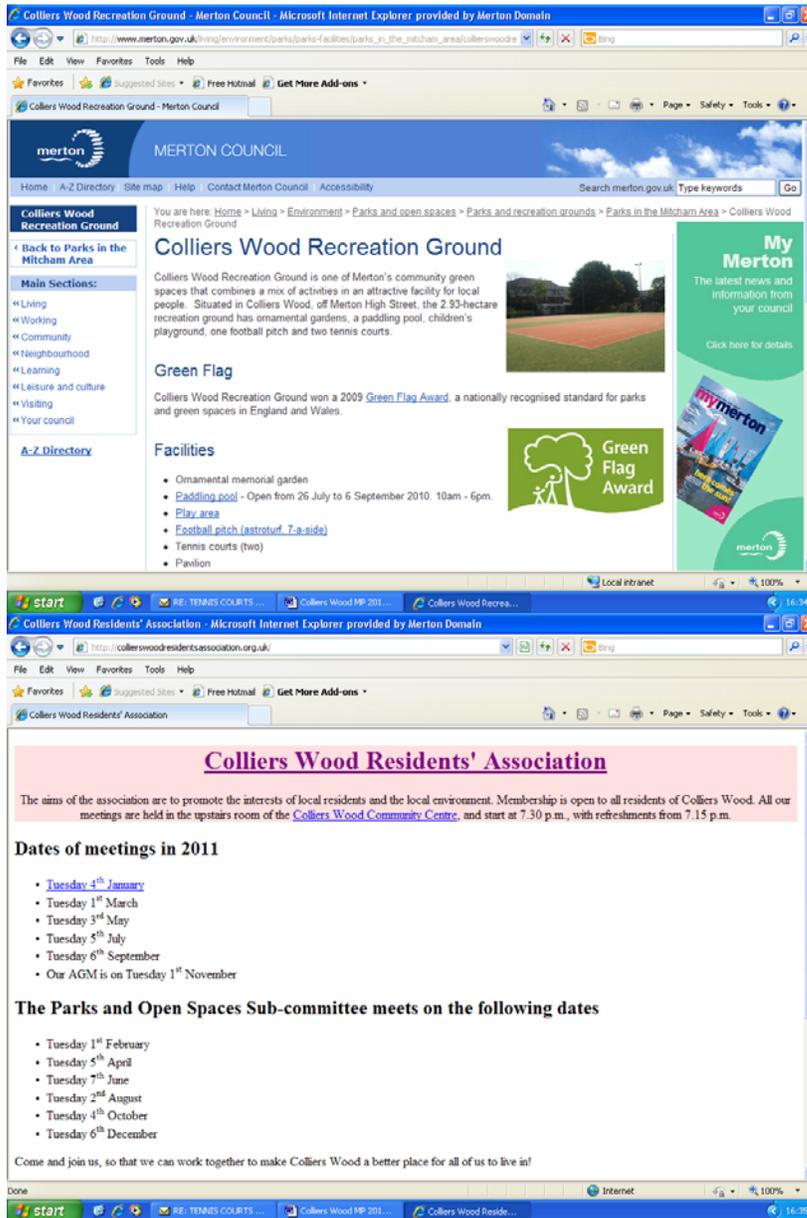


Image: London Borough of Merton website page and Colliers Wood Residents Association website page.

Appendix 5 Health and Safety Policies

LB Merton's Health and Safety Policies are available on the Council Website and are displayed at the Hillcross Parks Depot.

See Internet: www.merton.gov.uk/

And the statement from the director responsible for Health and Safety on the Merton Staff Intranet at:

http://intranet/docstatement_from_director_responsible_for_h_s_.doc

The Contractors Health and Safety Assessment Scheme

Is available to view on the Merton website at:

www.merton.gov.uk/chas

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the London Borough of Merton website. The page title is "The Contractors Health and Safety (CHAS) Assessment Scheme". The browser address bar shows "http://www.merton.gov.uk/chas". The page content includes a navigation menu on the left with "Contractors Health and Safety Scheme (CHAS)" selected. The main content area features the CHAS logo and text describing the scheme as a national database of contractors. A sidebar on the right contains a promotional message: "Lock up your worry with paying Council Tax" and "Direct Debit is the key to making payment easier". The footer of the page states "This page was last updated on Thursday 10 February 2005".

Appendix 6 Park Byelaws

LONDON BOROUGH OF MERTON BYELAWS WITH RESPECT TO PLEASURE GROUNDS

Byelaws made by the Council of the London Borough of Merton under section 164 of the Public Health Act 1875. Sections 12 and 15 of the Open Spaces Act 1906 and Section 15 of the Open Spaces Act 1906 with regard to public walks, pleasure grounds or open spaces.

INTERPRETATION

1. In these byelaws:

'the council' means the Council of the London Borough of Merton.

'the pleasure ground' means the pleasure grounds listed in the attached schedule 1.

2. An act necessary to the proper execution of his duty in the pleasure ground by an officer of the Council, or any act which is necessary to the proper execution of any contract with the Council shall not be an offence under these Byelaws.

OPENING AND CLOSING TIMES

3. On any day on which a pleasure ground is open to the public, provided the pleasure ground is fenced and has lockable gates, no person shall enter it before the time or enter or remain in it after the time appointed.

WALLS, BARRIERS, ETC

4. No person shall in the pleasure ground without reasonable excuse:

- I. Climb any wall or fence in or enclosing the pleasure ground, or any tree, or any barrier, railing, post or other erection.
- II. Remove or displace any barrier, railing, post, or seat or any part of any erection or ornament, or any implement provided for the use in the laying out or maintenance of the pleasure ground.

CATTLE, SHEEP, GOATS, ETC

5. No person shall except in pursuance of a lawful agreement with the Council, or otherwise in the exercise of any lawful right or privilege, bring or cause to be brought into the pleasure ground any cattle, sheep, goats, or pigs or any beast of draught or burden.

VEHICLES

6. No person shall, without reasonable excuse:
- i. ride or drive a cycle, motor cycle, motor vehicle, or any other mechanically propelled vehicle in the pleasure ground, or bring or cause to be brought into the pleasure ground a motor cycle, motor vehicle, trailer or any other mechanically propelled vehicle (other than a cycle), except in any part of the pleasure ground where there is a right of way for that class of vehicle
 - ii. If the council has set apart a space in the pleasure ground for use by vehicles of any class, the byelaw shall not prevent the riding or driving of those vehicles in the space so set apart, or on a route, indicated by signs placed in conspicuous positions, between it and the entrance to the pleasure ground.
 - iii. This byelaw shall not extend to invalid carriages.
 - iv. In this byelaw:

“cycle” means a bicycle, a tricycle, or cycle have four or more wheels, not being in any case a motorcycle or motor vehicle.

“invalid carriage” means a vehicle, whether mechanically propelled or not, the unladen weight of which does not exceed 150 kilograms, the width of which does not exceed 0.85 metres, and which has been constructed or adapted for use

“motor cycle” means a mechanically propelled vehicle, not being an invalid carriage, intended or adapted for use on roads

“trailer” means a vehicle drawn by a motor vehicle and includes a caravan.

7. No person who brings a vehicle into the pleasure ground shall wheel or station it over or upon:-
- i. any flower bed, shrub, or plant, or any ground in course of preparation as a flower bed, or for the growth of any shrub or plant:
 - ii. any part of the pleasure ground where the council by a notice board fixed or set up in some conspicuous position in the pleasure ground prohibit it being wheeled or stationed.

KEEPING OFF THE GRASS

8. No person shall in the pleasure ground walk, run, stand, sit or lie down
- i. Any grass, turf or other place where adequate notice to keep off such grass, turf or other place is exhibited;
 - ii. Provided at such notice shall not apply to more than one fifth of the area of the pleasure ground;
 - iii. Any flowerbed, shrub or plant, or any ground in course of preparation as a flower bed, or for the growth of any tree, shrub or plant.

PLANTS

9. No person shall in the pleasure grounds remove any soil or plant

ORNAMENTAL LAKES, PONDS, STREAMS ANY OTHER WATERS

10. No person shall in the pleasure ground:-

- (i) Bathe, wade or wash in any ornamental lake, pond, stream or other water or areas set aside for toy boats;

Provided that this byelaw shall not be deemed to prohibit wading in any water which, by a notice set up in a conspicuous position near thereto, shall be set apart by the council for use as a paddling pool or a water activity area.

- (ii) Without reasonable excuse foul or pollute any such water

FISHING

11. No person shall without lawful excuse or authority in the pleasure ground kill, molest or intentionally disturb any animal or fish or engage in hunting, shooting or fishing or the setting of traps or nets or the laying of snares.

This byelaw shall not prohibit any fishing, which may be authorised by the council at Cannon Hill Common.

FIRES

12. No person shall light a fire in the pleasure ground or place or throw or let fall a lighted match or any other thing so as to be likely to cause a fire. Provided that this byelaw shall not apply to any events held in pursuance of an agreement with the council.

GAMES

13. Where the council set apart any such part of the pleasure ground as may be fixed by the council, and described in the notice board a fixed or set up in some conspicuous position in the pleasure grounds, for the purpose of any game specified in the notice board, which, by reason of the rules or manner of playing, or the prevention of damage, danger, or discomfort to any person in the pleasure grounds may necessitate at any time during the continuance of the game, the exclusive use by the player or players of any space in such parts of the pleasure grounds – a person shall not in any space elsewhere in the pleasure ground play or take parting any game so specified in such a manner as to exclude persons not playing or taking part in the game for which the space is used.

14. A person resorting to the pleasure ground and playing or taking part in any game for which the exclusive use of any space in the pleasure ground has been set apart shall:-

- i. not play on the space any game other than the game for which it is set apart;
- ii. in preparing for playing and in playing, use reasonable care to prevent undue interference with the proper use of the pleasure ground by other persons;
- iii. when a space is already occupied by other players not begin to play thereon without their permission;

- iv. where the exclusive use of the space has been granted by the council for the playing of a match, not play on that space later than a quarter of an hour before the time for the beginning of the match unless taking part therein;
 - v. except where the exclusive use of the space has been granted by the council for the playing of the match in which he/she is taking part, not use the space for a longer time than two hours continuously, if any other player or players make known their wish to use the space
15. No person shall in any part of the pleasure ground which may have been set apart by the council for any game play or take part in any game when the state of the ground or other cause makes it unfit for use and a notice is set up in some conspicuous position prohibiting play in that part of the pleasure ground.

CHILDREN'S PLAY EQUIPMENT

16. No person who has attained the age of 14 shall use any apparatus in the pleasure ground which, by notice fixed on or near thereto, has been set apart for the exclusive use of persons under the age of 14

GOLF

17. No person shall in the pleasure ground, drive, chip or pitch a hard golf ball except on land set aside by the Council for use as a golf course, golf driving range, golf practice area, pitch and putt course or putting course.

PROHIBITION OF GAMES

18. No person shall play or take part in any game of cricket or football or nay other organised ball game nor use a hard ball in any of the grounds known as Cannizaro Park, John Innes Park, Holland Gardens, Nelson Gardens and South Park Gardens

Provided that this byelaw shall not prohibit the playing of tennis, netball, bowls and putting in parts of the grounds known as Holland Gardens and John Innes Park, which have been set aside for these purposes.

MODEL AIRCRAFT

19. (a) For the purpose of this Byelaw "model aircraft" means an aircraft which either weighs not more than 5kg without its fuel or is for the time being exempted (as a model aircraft) from the provisions of the Air Navigation Order, and "power-driven" means driven by the combustion of petrol vapour or other combustible substances.

(b) No person shall –

(i) In the part of the pleasure ground so set apart release any power-driven model aircraft for flight or control the flight of such an aircraft; or

(ii) Cause any such aircraft to take off or land in the path of the pleasure ground so set apart unless it is attached to a control line and is kept under effective control in the grounds and on the days and during the hours specified in the following table

| Name of Ground | Days | Hours |
|--------------------|--|--------------------------------|
| Cannon Hill Common | Mondays – Saturdays Sundays | 10.00 - 21.00 10.00 - 13.00 |
| Figges Marsh | Mondays, Wednesday and Friday | 18.00 - 21.30 |
| Morden Park | Monday – Saturday Sundays | 10.00 - 21.00 10.00 - 13.00 |
| Three Kings Piece | Tuesdays & Thursdays Sundays Except on the days when the ground is occupied for the purpose of the Mitcham Fair. | 18.00 - 21.30 13.00 - 16.00 |

DOG PROHIBITED AREAS

- (i) No person (other than a registered blind person) in charge of a dog shall, without reasonable excuse, permit a dog to enter or remain in any of the areas listed in schedule 2 and hereafter referred to as the "dog prohibited area";
- (ii) Notice of the effect of this byelaw shall be given by signs displayed in conspicuous positions at the entrances to the dog prohibited area;
- (iii) An officer of the council or any constable may require a person in charge of a dog which has entered a dog prohibited area to remove the dog therefrom;
- (iv) For the purpose of this byelaw the keeper of the dog shall be deemed in charge thereof, unless the court is satisfied that at the time when the dog entered or remained in the dog prohibited area it had been placed in or taken into the charge of some other person; and
- (v) In paragraph (iv) above "the keeper" shall include the owner of the dog or any person who habitually has it in his possession

OBSTRUCTION

No person shall in the pleasure ground:

- (a) Intentionally obstruct any officer or the council in the proper execution of his duties;
- (b) Intentionally obstruct any person carrying out an act which is necessary to the proper execution of any contract with the council; or
- (c) Intentionally obstruct any other person in the proper use of the pleasure ground, or behave so as to give reasonable grounds for annoyance to other persons in the pleasure ground

PENALTY FOR OFFENCES

Every person who shall offend against any of these byelaws shall be liable on summary of conviction to a fine not exceeding level 2 on the standard scale.

REMOVAL OF OFFENDERS

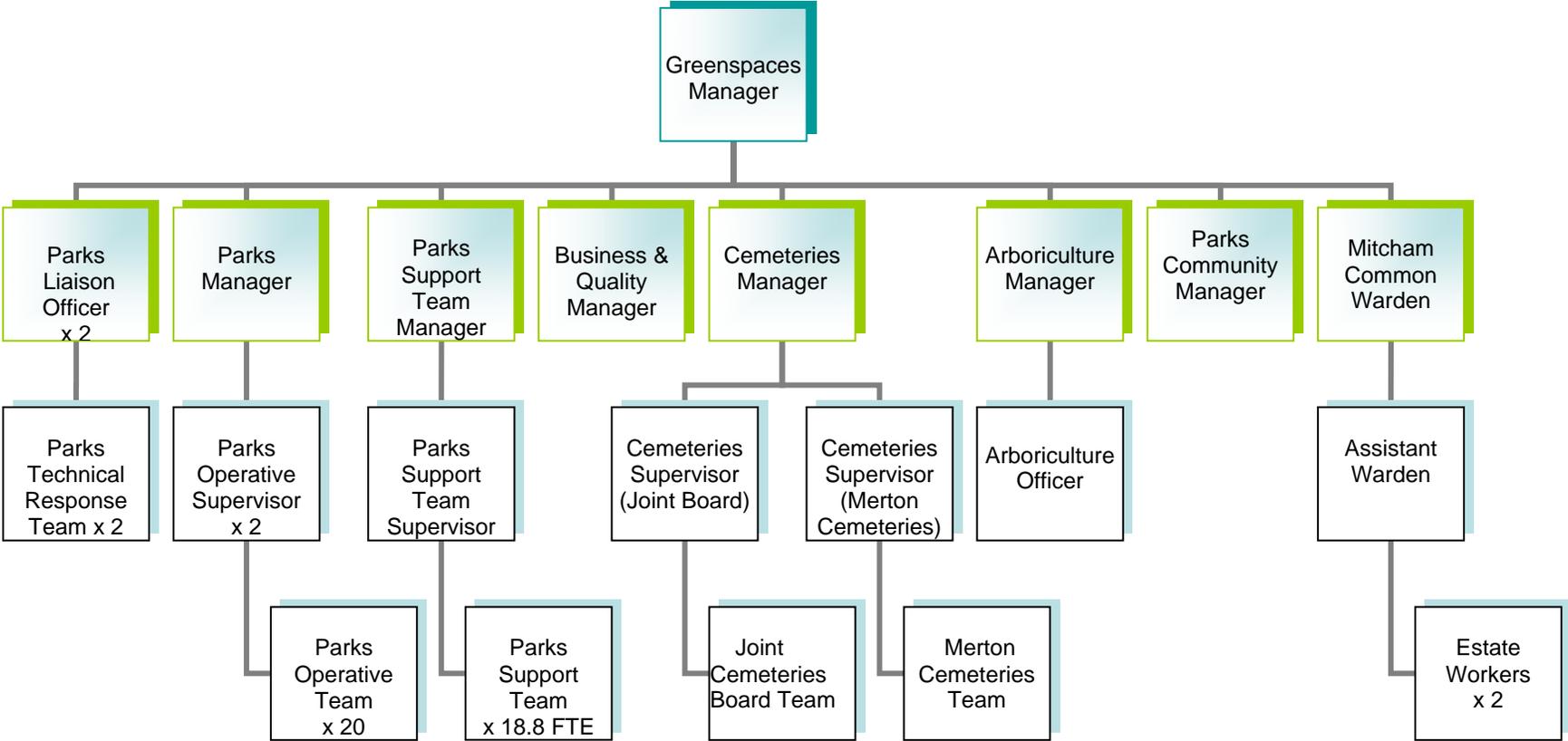
Any person offending against any of these byelaws may be removed from the pleasure ground by any other officer of the council or any constable.

REVOCATION OF BYELAWS

The byelaws with respect to pleasure grounds made by the council in the 24th day of April 1968, and confirmed by the secretary of state on the 27th day of June 1968 and subsequently amended on the 24th day of July 1975 and the 18th day of February 1983 are hereby revoked.

Appendix 7 Management Structure

Figure 1. LB Merton Leisure & Culture Greenspaces Team Structure



Appendix 8 Friends Activities

Colliers Wood Residents Association
Tuesday 2nd. December 2008
@ The Colliers Wood Community Centre
www.collierswoodresidentsassociation.org.uk

Join us in the hall upstairs from 7 p.m. for mince pies, tea and coffee. Invite your friends and neighbours!

The meeting will start at 7.30 p.m.

AGENDA

1. Introductions
2. Election of a secretary
3. Membership of the Residents Association
4. Minutes of the last meeting
5. Matters arising
6. Feedback from the Signs of Life art project.
7. Environmental issues – new developments
8. Community Police Report – an update about local policing issues, incidents and priorities.
9. Parks and Open Spaces – the community woodland and next year's Wandale Valley Festival.
10. Youth and Play Services – update on street dance, bigger league football and basketball coaching.
11. Information sharing about local events.
12. Any other business.
13. Times and dates of our meetings next year.
14. Issues and ideas for future meetings.

Chair – Keith Spears – 07982-721-496.
keithaspears@hotmail.com
Vice-chair - Tracey Reynolds – 07986-097-542.
Secretary – situation vacant – it could be you!
Treasurer – Keith Allen – 0208-542-5801.