



# **SOUTH PARK GARDENS**

## **Management Plan**

### **2016 – 2022**

(Updated 2021)



**This document was produced with assistance  
from the Friends of South Park Gardens**



## **Foreword**

I am delighted to introduce this management plan for one of the finest examples of Merton's cherished green spaces.

The borough's parks have always been greatly valued, however this year more residents than ever have benefitted from having good quality, well-managed green spaces on their doorsteps. Throughout the pandemic our parks and green spaces have been a haven for residents to meet friends, exercise, relax and enjoy the natural environment.

Merton continues to strive to enhance and protect the valuable biodiversity, landscapes and heritage in its parks and open spaces. This work is being carried out in collaboration with idverde, our contractors who have considerable expertise, and our partners in the local community particularly the park friends group.

The Council, in partnership with our local stakeholders, is pleased to support and submit this application for South Park Gardens. We welcome the opportunity for the investment made in this valued park to be formally recognised by the prestigious Green Flag Awards.

Should you require any further information with regards to this application please email [publicspace@merton.gov.uk](mailto:publicspace@merton.gov.uk)

Alternatively contact Doug Napier our Greenspaces Manager on 020 8545 3657 or [doug.napier@merton.gov.uk](mailto:doug.napier@merton.gov.uk) '.

## **Councillor Natasha Irons**

Cabinet Member for Local Environment and Green Spaces



## 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”.*

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# 1 Introduction

South Park Gardens is one of the London Borough of Merton's flagship parks, a site providing mainly for leisure and healthy living. It is registered on the English Heritage Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Interest as Grade II.

The Gardens form a valuable part of Merton's open space network of parks and open spaces. Green open space covers nearly one fifth of the Borough's land use making Merton, while generally suburban in character, one of the greenest boroughs in Greater London.

18% of the borough area is open space, compared to a 10% London average. Merton has extensive parks, green and wild spaces that offer recreation, relief, contrast and structure to the borough's built environment and this is one of the major attractions for residents. A defining characteristic of the borough is the disparity between the more prosperous west and the poorer, more deprived east of the borough.



**Photo: Looking from the main Dudley Road gate into the Gardens**

This presents particular challenges for the local area. Bridging the gap between the east and the west of the borough is the main theme of the Merton Partnership's Local Area Agreement, and of the Community Plan.

Merton's vision is for a linked and integrated open space network that not only enhances Merton residents' quality of life and provides them

with opportunities to experience a diverse range of accessible open spaces but also protects and enhances natural ecosystems and the cultural heritage features that contribute to the Borough's unique identity. In addition to enhancing the quality of life, Merton recognises that parks and open spaces are an asset to the community which provide physical and intellectual learning opportunities and contribute to healthier lifestyles, social cohesion and safer communities, regeneration and improvement of the environment and which contribute to the local economy and prosperity of the Borough.

The London Borough of Merton is developing management plans for each of its flagship parks, elite sports grounds and amenity parks and open spaces. The main purpose of this three-year management plan is to guide the development, improvement, maintenance and management of the Gardens by the London Borough of Merton in consultation with the community and partners.

In doing so this management plan seeks to,

- Reflect Merton's Open Space Study, 2012 to achieve Merton's vision and outcomes for parks and open spaces and meet the needs of all sectors of the local community
- Meet Merton's standards for the equitable provision of high quality parks and open spaces
- Outline plans for the development, improvement and maintenance of the Gardens which give due consideration to capital and revenue implications
- Inform funding decisions on the development, improvement and maintenance of the Gardens to ensure effective and efficient use of resources and to provide the basis for securing additional internal and external resources
- Provide information to the Garden's stakeholders including those who live, work and learn in the Borough and those who visit to encourage further engagement in the development, improvement, maintenance and management of the Gardens.
- Recognise the contribution made to the Gardens by the active involvement of the very active local Friends Group (the Friends of South Park Gardens – FSPG).

The management plan has been developed by the London Borough of Merton's Greenspaces team, part of Merton's Environment & Regeneration Directorate in consultation with the local community. The specialist grounds and property maintenance, nature conservation, arboriculture and horticulture skills of the Greenspaces team have been

drawn upon in the preparation of the plan together with strategic and operational planning input from the Environment & Regeneration Directorate's Support & Development Department and other specialist input from across the council.

The London Borough of Merton wishes to acknowledge the contribution of the Friends of South Park Gardens to the ongoing development, improvement, maintenance and management of the Gardens since their formation in 2002 and for their contribution to this management plan to date.



**Photo: South Park Gardens in the snow 2014**



## Action Plan Progress Summary

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

#	Description	Objective	Date Completed	Source	Value £
1	Complete restoration of Gardens (not including gardeners' compound or toilets)		2009	HLF grant & LBM Capital Section 106	1m
2	Additional works including fencing in corner of Trinity/Kings Road, more planting		2010	HLF grant & LBM Capital Section 106	40k
3	Repairs to paths including adding new expansion joints		2010	HLF grant & LBM Capital Section 106	10k
4	Benches rubbed down and re-oiled		2011	Revenue (work done by Friends)	0.2k
5	Additional planting		2012	Friends Group	1k
7	Installation of solar powered Big Belly Bin		2013	Revenue	1.2kpa
6	Fountain repaired (top re-attached)		2014	Revenue	1.5k
7	Cobbles at entrances repaired and retaining walls repointed		2014	Revenue	3.5k
8	Benches repainted		2014	Revenue and Friends Group	1.5k
9	Additional planting		2014	Friends Group	1k
10	Development of gardeners' compound to provide new community pavilion with toilets, kiosk, storage and mess room.		2014/15	HLF grant & LBM Capital Section 106 & Friends	325k
11	Landscaping around the building (partial)		2015	HLF grant & LBM Capital Section 106 & Friends	£5k
12	Repairs to gates		2015/16	Revenue	£5k
13	Entrance works (DDA)		2017/19	Capital	£20k

14	Footpath repair works		2019/20	Capital	30k
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## **2 Strategic context**

### **2.1 Background**

This Management Plan sets out the vision for the improvement and management of South Park Gardens and provides detailed objectives and action plans to direct Merton Greenspaces team to achieve this vision over the next 5 years. This section looks at the context within which the London Borough of Merton is operating.

Each organisation or public body operates within an external context. Its visions, plans and targets will be affected by the political, economic and social environment around it. These external factors will inform all the decision it makes.

### **2.2 Economic environment**

The UK is experiencing an uncertain economic future; with opinions divided about whether it is still suffering from a recession, or whether it is now in recovery; it is also feeling the effects of a general global economic downturn. This overall economic context informs much of our national and local decision-making. Generally, budgets are being cut and austerity measures are being adopted.

The London Borough of Merton has a duty of care to ensure that it sets a fiscally prudent budget, that budget holders operate within those constraints and that it balances its books and maintains an appropriate level of reserves. It also needs to ensure that effective procedures are in place to make certain that budgets are continually monitored and reviewed to ensure that resources continue to be targeted towards meeting key objectives. This financial year it needs to make further budget savings on its medium term fiscal strategy. This need for efficiency savings will inform the Council's overall targets and objectives.

### **2.3 Political Context**

#### **National**

A General Election took place on 12 December 2019 and the conservatives were elected with an overall majority.

The government elected in May 2019 have yet to announce detailed strategies and plans for parks and green spaces. However, a statement on the Direct.gov.uk website states:

*Good quality parks enhance the quality of life in towns and cities. Parks provide a focal point for communities, a place for relaxation or recreation, and the opportunity to experience nature in an urban environment.*

Previous governments had a range of initiatives in support of parks and green spaces, including six Urban Green Space Taskforces, Living Places: Cleaner, Safer, Greener', 2002, and a Community Plan, 'Sustainable Communities: Building for the Future', 2003. A regional programme of action for London

included: ensuring communities are prosperous, safeguarding green and open space and well designed, accessible and pleasant living and working environments. However, all these policies are now under active review.

## Regional

The Government Office for London had earlier been scrapped by the coalition government.

The Greater London Authority (GLA) is a strategic authority with a London wide role to design a better future for the capital. While the Mayor and the London Assembly are elected by Londoners, the staff of the GLA is a permanent body that provides continuity in the ongoing development and delivery of strategies for London. There was a mayoral election in spring 2016 and Sadiq Khan was elected. He states that: "Our parks and acres of green open space are part of our city's DNA".

The Mayor's London Plan is the overall strategic plan for London. It sets out an integrated economic, environmental, transport and social framework for the development of the capital over the next 20 to 25 years. It has 6 main objectives including:

***A city that delights the senses and takes care over its buildings and streets, having the best of modern architecture while making the most of London's built heritage and which makes the most of and extends its wealth of open and green spaces and waterways, realising its potential for improving Londoners' health, welfare and development.***

The Greater London Authority has signalled its support for parks in the capital by launching several new initiatives including the Programme for Parks and Trees in 2009, with an investment of £6m to be spent on selected parks. In addition, it has made £4m available to fund the planting of an additional 10,000 street trees.

In 2010, the Mayor launched a new Safer Parks Award. The overall aim of the award is to recognise good practice in:

- Tackling specific problem of anti-social behaviour and/or crime
- Challenging public perception that a specific park is unsafe
- Encouraging greater use, and enjoyment, of parks
- Encouraging and supporting community action to improve safety in London's parks.

The award has been discontinued since 2012.

## Local

London Borough of Merton is under majority Labour control since May 2014. Previously it was under no overall control with Labour undertaking a minority administration. The seats held are as follows: Labour: 36; Conservative: 20; Merton Park residents (Independent): 3; Liberal Democrat: 1.

Trinity ward, where South Park Gardens is situated, has three Conservative councillors; James Holmes, Paul Kohler & Hayley Ormrod. Trinity ward has a population of 8,835.

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.

### **COVID19**

The global epidemic has effected Councils up and down the country. As an authority our main priority has to been to protect and shield the most vulnerable in our society whilst still delivering essential services. Parks have been at the forefront having experienced unprecedented visit numbers as people seek to take daily exercise in the fresh air. Some facilities have had to be temporarily closed (such as outdoor gyms or MUGA's) during lockdown periods. We continue to monitor and adhere to government guidance so that we can serve our residents.

## **2.4 Merton's Community and Business Plans**

### **Merton's Community and Business Plans**

**Merton's Community Plan 2020-2026**, has been developed and implemented by the Merton Partnership (the Local Strategic Partnership), which sets out the overall direction and vision for the borough until 2026 plus a set of commitments and activities to achieve this vision. The Community Plan was refreshed in 2020 to take into account demographic, legislative and policy changes, and now sets out a vision, pledges to deliver the vision and details of achievements to date under the following headings:

- Merton: A place to work
- A healthy and fulfilling life
- Better opportunities for youngsters
- Keeping Merton moving
- Being safe and strong
- Contributing to your community

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:

- Children's Trust
- Health & Wellbeing Board
- Safer & Stronger Communities
- Sustainable Communities & Transport

The Community Plan sets out Merton's aspirations for the local area, and is based on a wide range of evidence, data and consultation that has identified



the key concerns for residents, and the big issues that the Partnership needs to focus upon to ensure it improves the quality of life for everyone who lives in Merton. The Council itself has undertaken a significant consultation exercise with local people. The results of this have contributed to the vision and priorities contained within this Plan. The Plan also sets out the key actions the Partnership will be taking to ensure we achieve our vision and priorities.

The summary of the Community Plan states: By 2026 Merton Council will be smaller, reducing in size. Our top priority will continue to be to provide safe services of the best possible quality. Providing value for money services to our residents is at the heart of our business and we must be able to demonstrate that all of our services represent best value for money. We will do this by finding innovative solutions to maximise future efficiency. We will deliver services that customers want and need and, where possible, involve our customers in service specification and design.

Delivering quality and value services in an era of significantly reduced resources will require strong and determined leadership. A single business view is essential to ensure a 'One Council' approach is followed in everything we do. Leaders at all levels will be visible and lead by example.

A key action point from the Community Plan is to 'Manage parks and gardens to protect and enhance local biodiversity by integrating biodiversity management methods into parks management plans.' Some 2,500 new trees have been planted in local open spaces and along the borough's highways. Biodiversity enhancements have focused upon heathland re-creation and pond restoration works.

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

**The Merton Business Plan 2020 - 2024**, 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 2018/19.

For further information go to <https://www.merton.gov.uk/council-and-local-democracy/finance/budgets>

## Culture and Sports Framework 2015

The value of arts and culture contributing to a fairer, better, and healthier society is a matter of constant debate, yet there is already academic and empirical evidence that demonstrates this intrinsic value. Our parks and open spaces are central to the variety of cultural activities offered by the Council.

The Council has produced a new Culture and Sports framework which sets out how the Council will support a wide range of sporting, leisure and cultural activities to enhance the lives of its residents.

The services provided include: arts, sports, leisure, parks and open spaces, children's playgrounds, activities for all ages and heritage.

These services have the potential to deliver and contribute to Merton's priorities and wider social outcomes; in particular, programmes to improve health and wellbeing; learning, skills and employability, economic resilience, positive behaviour and community cohesion. Furthermore, Culture and Sports services have the ability to develop innovative programmes to deliver against a range of outcomes and are an effective tool in promoting and facilitating behaviour change and empowering people, leading to improved life chances. For further information go to:

[http://www.merton.gov.uk/leisure/arts/culture\\_and\\_sports\\_framework.htm](http://www.merton.gov.uk/leisure/arts/culture_and_sports_framework.htm)

## 2.6 Marketing and Environmental Policies

Merton Council is committed to the principles of 'sustainable development' and 'Local Agenda 21'. The Merton Environmental Action Plan stems from these commitments.

Achieving sustainable development requires making decisions that take into account relevant environmental, social and economic factors. Merton is committed to integrating these three areas across Council policy in all departments.

Merton Council recognises the need for urgent action to address environmental problems. The Merton Environmental Action Plan complements and links with other Merton strategies and plans which address sustainable development issues, such as the Economic Development Strategy, the Community Plan and the Crime and Disorder Strategy, amongst others.

The aim of Merton's Environmental Action Plan is to:

*Encourage and facilitate the involvement of residents, businesses and other organization in helping to create an environmentally sustainable Merton, in accordance with the wider principles of sustainable development.*

To achieve this, aim the plan needs to:

- Encourage, inspire and support willingness, across the different communities in Merton, to take action to help the environment;
- Highlight opportunities for actions that can be taken by different sectors of the community to enhance the environment;

- Provide information and celebrate achievement in supporting the environment.

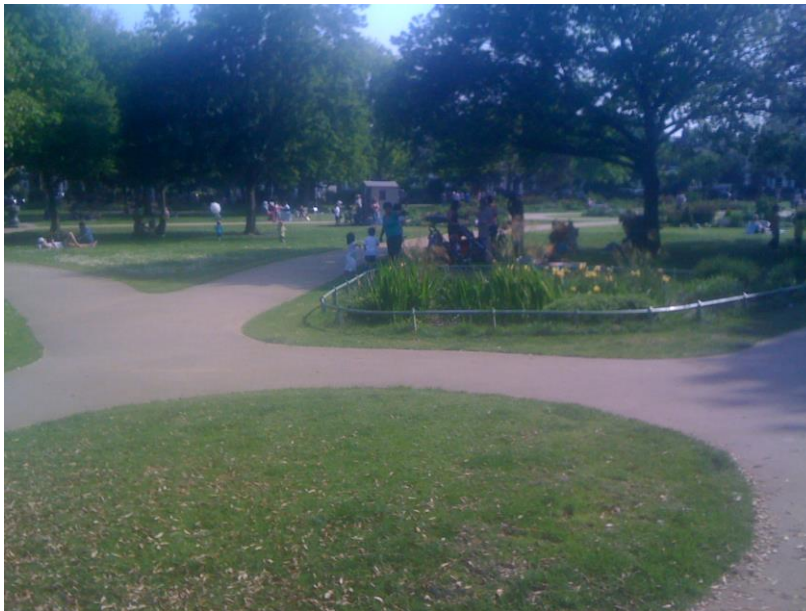
For further information about the practical steps Merton Council is making to improve our environment go to:

<http://www.merton.gov.uk/la21>

[https://www.merton.gov.uk/env\\_and\\_regen\\_1\\_foreward\\_contents\\_introduction.doc](https://www.merton.gov.uk/env_and_regen_1_foreward_contents_introduction.doc)

## **2.7 South Park Gardens and Merton's strategic objectives**

South Park Gardens 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 South Park Gardens relates to Merton's wider strategic objectives.

<b>Sustainable Communities</b>	<b>Safer, Stronger Merton</b>	<b>Healthier Communities</b>	<b>Older People</b>	<b>Children &amp; Young People</b>
Provides a tranquil 'oasis' close to thriving Broadway	Accessible facilities for people living with disabilities.	Sports facilities including: tennis, croquet, bowls and cricket facilities.	Paths level for safe access	School sports days
Protecting, enhancing and promoting local biodiversity	Inspected and well-maintained facilities	Good quality toilets	Good quality site furniture including 35 benches	Organised education activities
Protecting local urban amenity	Good policies and facilities for safe dog walking	Good pedestrian access to all parts of the site.	Toilets on site and kiosk for refreshments	Many events organized by the Friends each year
Used as a pleasant walk through from dense housing to the station for commuters	Regularly visited by local police and Community Support Officers	Merton Healthy Walks	Trail leaflets for guided tree walk and guide to birds and local history	Variety of trees to climb
Active, enthusiastic Friends group and other stakeholders	Engagement with the local community.	Fitness classes throughout the year	Pleasant flower beds provide pleasant outlook	Nature walks
Over 80% recycling of green waste on site	Volunteers pick litter to supplement Council Support Team	Personal trainers use the Gardens	Over 60s cream teas in the summer	School running clubs use the Gardens
No harmful chemicals ever used on site	Four dog waste bins and responsible dog owners	Info about fitness on notice boards	Membership of Friends Group free for OAPs	Level paths for scooting, cycling and skating

## 3 Site details and plan

### 3.1 Site details

<b>Name</b>	South Park Gardens
<b>Address</b>	Dudley Road, SW19 8PN
<b>Contacts</b>	General enquiries: 020 8545 3677 or <a href="mailto:leisure@merton.gov.uk">leisure@merton.gov.uk</a> Friends Group: <a href="mailto:friendsofsouthparkgardens@gmail.com">friendsofsouthparkgardens@gmail.com</a> Sylvia Lucas 07973 409579 Rachel Tilford 07720 322858
<b>Web</b>	<a href="http://www.merton.gov.uk/leisure/parks">www.merton.gov.uk/leisure/parks</a> <a href="http://www.friendsofsouthparkgardens.org">www.friendsofsouthparkgardens.org</a>
<b>Grid Reference</b>	Easting and Northing 525305, 170760 TQ 2530570760
<b>Designation</b>	Grade II listed park
<b>Ownership</b>	Leisure Services, London Borough of Merton
<b>Size</b>	2.43 hectares
<b>Type</b>	Victorian Pleasure Grounds
<b>Legal interest</b>	Transferred by way of a conveyance 1899
<b>Byelaws</b>	See Appendix 6
<b>Access</b>	Opening hours: Monday – Friday 08.00 to dusk Saturday, Sunday and bank holidays 09.00 to dusk
<b>Local facilities</b>	Ornamental flower beds Drinking fountain Community pavilion with public toilets and kiosk
<b>Transport</b>	Train, tram and tube: Wimbledon Station Buses: 57, 93, 151, 163, 164, 200



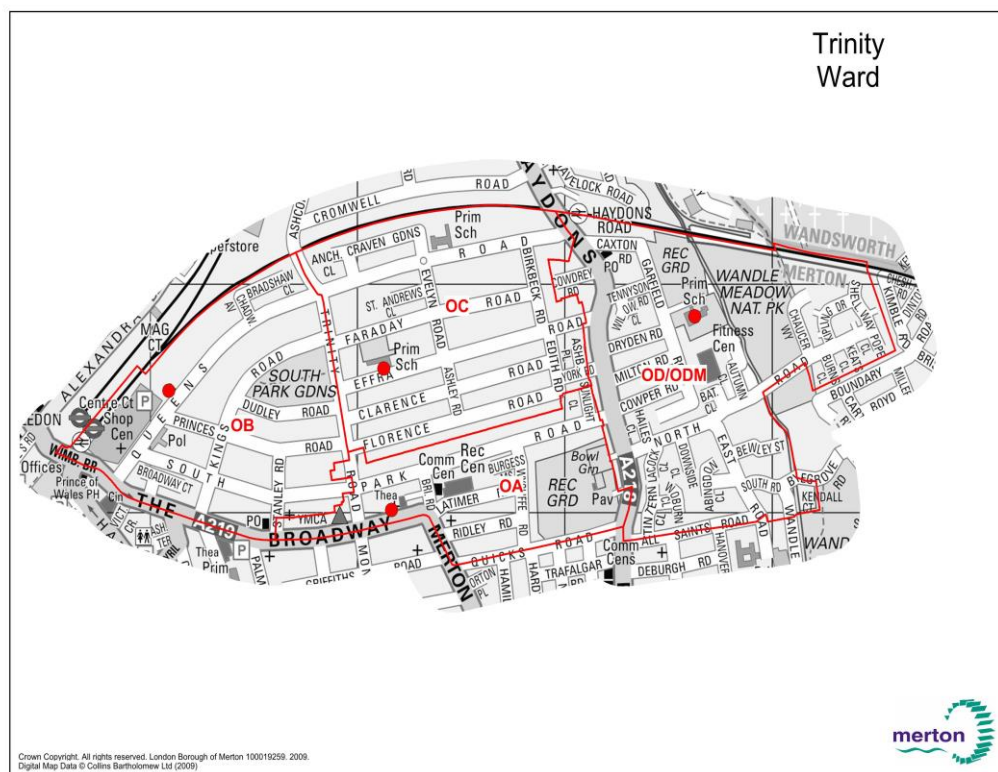


## 4. Description

### 4.1 Location

South Park Gardens is a triangular shaped park, 2.4 hectares in size, situated near Wimbledon town centre. It lies between Trinity, Dudley and Kings Roads within the South Park Gardens Conservation Area within Trinity ward just to the north of Wimbledon town centre. It is just 5 minutes' walk from Wimbledon station and the busy Broadway, with its wide array of businesses, shops, cafes and bars. It is one of the more affluent parts of the Borough, but still has relatively high-density housing, with a significant number of flats.

Wimbledon is a busy commuter town with mainline trains and District Line underground trains, plus a tram service and a wide range of buses, giving access to many destinations. Waterloo is just 20 minutes away.



The London Borough of Merton is an outer London borough, situated to the south-west of the capital. It is suburban in nature, with many residents commuting into and out of the Borough to work. 67% of residents work outside the borough, one of the highest figures in London. The borough is, on the whole, well-connected, but transport links are poorer in the east of the borough. It has a population of 199,693, and the population is younger than the national average with an average age of just under 37.

Like many London boroughs, Merton has experienced high rates of migration and population change in recent years. Between 1992 and 2005 Merton had the largest increase in population of any outer London borough, with the population growing by 13.93%.

This growth is predicted to continue, with the population reaching 220,300 by 2025. In particular, the numbers of children and young people and over 85s are predicted to rise.

The Gardens are surrounded by mainly houses and flats. The Gardens are just a few minutes' walk from a diverse range of shops, restaurants, bars and other commercial businesses. Many retail and office workers are within walking distance from the Gardens and it is well used as a tranquil place to sit and eat lunch or take a break during the working day. According to the last census, around 35% of local homes do not have access to a garden, making South Park Gardens a vital green resource in the area.

#### **4.2 Local significance and usage**

The location of the Gardens, near the town centre of Wimbledon, means that it is heavily used. The Gardens is one of several parks in Trinity ward, the others being Haydons Road Recreation Ground and Garfield Road Recreation Ground. The Gardens are conveniently situated between an area of high-density housing and the town centre and therefore the potential demand for the Gardens is high.

The Gardens are very popular with parents and young children during summer week days as it provides large flat areas of amenity grass. During the weekends, the majority of users are parents and young children who use the Gardens for informal play. Other reasons for the use of the Gardens include dog walking, picnicking, and visiting the site during lunch hours.

The usage of the Gardens had declined since the mid-1990's due to budget cutbacks and staff reductions impacting on the facilities. However, since the formation of the Friends' Group in 2002 and additional investment (especially the restoration funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund) there has been an increase in the usage of the Gardens. This has been mainly due to the formation of the Friends Group and their organisation of events and the general improvement of the Gardens.

Groups who regularly use the Gardens for a variety of activities include: boy scouts, girl guides, play groups, nurseries, YMCA, disabled youth groups, fitness classes, church youth groups, churches and schools.

The Gardens provide a green oasis, just minutes' walk from the bustle of The Broadway. It is well used by a wide range of people throughout the day.

Income generation is being developed through the fitness classes and by the provision of a new community pavilion, including a kiosk which will sell coffee, tea, soft drinks and ice cream throughout the year.

The Friends Group is constantly looking at new ideas for events which would appeal to current and potential park users.

#### **4.3 History of South Park Gardens**

In maps drawn up in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries this area is shown as farmland and orchards.



The fields to the south of Wimbledon Village were owned and managed by four farms – Manor (or Wimbledon Park Farm), Cowdrey Farm, Warren Farm and Watney Farm. Cowdrey Farm owned the land immediately to the south of the current railway line in the stretch of land roughly between Haydons Road, Queens Road, Merton Road and what was to become The Broadway.

The opening of the London and South Western Railway (L&SWR) in 1838 brought a station to the south east of the village at the bottom of Wimbledon Hill. The location of the station shifted the focus of the town's subsequent growth away from the original village centre.

The arrival of the railways accelerated suburban growth when the coming of the trains made travel easier, and gradually cheaper. With this link to the City, areas like Wimbledon with much open space, attracted families who bought large houses, needing many servants to maintain them and an array of shops to keep them supplied. In the early 1850s, houses began to go up north of the Ridgway and small cottages were built in the area below the Ridgway, going down Wimbledon Hill.

The population increased from 4,650 in 1861 to 9,000 in 1871, almost 16,000 by 1881 and to 25,000 in the 1890s. It could then be described as a London suburb. In 1871 the Commons Preservation Committee was formed to prevent Earl Spencer from enclosing much of the 'untamed' Wimbledon Common as a public park.

By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, as the Victorian era gave way to the Edwardian era, the majority of redevelopment had been carried out, with just infilling of houses being built in the already created roads. The layout of the South Park area was well established by the end of the century with houses being built around the Gardens first and then extending along the roads off – Faraday, Effra, Clarence, Florence.

The London Underground was also being developed at this time. The first section of underground railway was opened in 1863 and this soon rapidly spread throughout London and the suburbs. The District Line was extended from Earls Court through to Putney in 1880 and then on to Wimbledon by 1889. This further consolidated the position of Wimbledon as a most desirable suburb of London with excellent transport links. Although it is called the underground about 55% of the service is above ground – as is the Wimbledon branch.

Charles Hamlet Cooper was the Borough Engineer at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. He commissioned the design of the Gardens and oversaw their creation. They were designed in a Beaux Arts style – with serpentine paths and curved flowerbeds. The overall shape of the Gardens can be described as a rounded shield or curved elongated triangle. The design incorporates a number of circular paths including a circular patch of grass at each of the four gates. From above it has a similar shape to a butterfly's wings. It was designated a Victorian Pleasure Ground and was finished and opened to the public in September 1901, just 8 months after the death of Queen Victoria.

A potted history of the Gardens is displayed on the main notice board by the entrance opposite 3 Dudley Road, together with a number of historical photographs.

#### **4.4 Geology, hydrology and soil type**

South Park Gardens conforms to the geology of most of Greater London, which is of various differing layers of sedimentary rocks. Most significant is the distinctive grey-blue London clay. Topsoil above the clay is up to 5 cm deep with an acidity level of PH 5. The site is relatively flat with an underground stream (the River Effra), running from northeast to southeast across the Dudley Road boundary. This creates a very high water table in the Gardens. As a result of the geology and overall topography, the Gardens and surrounding land are subject to impeded drainage that can result in water logging. This geology is fairly common to most of the Borough.

#### **4.5 Flora and fauna**

The Gardens consists of a mix of formal landscaping – mainly formalised flower beds – and more informal shrubberies and grassland. There are several herbaceous borders in character with the character of the Gardens and some of the planting was based on historical references and gleaned from photos and residents' memories of the Gardens. The bedding, trees and shrubs are mainly native species, with a few more exotic varieties.

The Gardens are home to a variety of wildlife with over 23 species of birds known to nest or visit there including jays, chaffinches, gold crests, robins, wrens, red wings, tits, sparrows and woodpeckers. Parakeets, which often swarm around the Centre Court area at dusk, often visit the Gardens. There are two bird boxes situated on the north side of the Gardens. These have small holes to encourage smaller birds.

At least one fox den is situated in the Gardens and the shrubberies are areas known to be attractive to the usual domestic rodents and insect life. There are four mini beast areas where stag beetles may be found, if the vertical sections of rotting wood are lifted up carefully.

A bat survey was carried out in August 2008. Three species of bat were found, including: common and soprano pipistrelles. These were recorded feeding in the Gardens at dusk. There was also a distant pass of a noctule bat overhead.

#### **4.6 Trees**

There are over 150 trees in the Gardens, including over 40 different species. Around 12 trees were either transplanted or removed as part of the restoration project in 2008/9. Some of the trees, which were removed, were diseased or dying. This has had the effect of opening up the Gardens to improve the sight lines throughout. Several new trees were planted including four which were planted by four local primary schools to commemorate the restoration. The most common trees in the Gardens are: oaks, yews, maples and acers, limes, silver birches, cedars and willows (including one fine specimen of a tortured willow – *Salix matsudana* 'Tortuosa').

Trees of note and rarer specimens include:

- A strawberry tree near to the new kiosk
- Judas tree on the path between the kiosk and Kings Road gate



- A very large Deodar cedar fills the circle at the corner of Kings and Trinity Roads
- Caucasian Wingnut tree is situated close to the horse trough
- A sweet gum tree near Kings Road gate provides good colour in the autumn

There are several trees on the borders which provide good climbing trees for children to play on. Soft bark has been placed beneath these trees to provide a soft landing and particular care is taken to prune back any branches that become broken or are split.

A tree trail leaflet was produced jointly by the Council and Friends and is available from a Perspex leaflet holder at the back of the main noticeboard. The leaflet sets out a tree trail walk which can be undertaken unaccompanied. However, a few walks have been arranged over recent years with a tree expert leading them. Groups of 12-15 have participated in these.

#### **4.7 Facilities and features**

South Park Gardens provides a range of facilities for informal play, recreation and educational opportunities for all ages.

The Gardens have a network of resin-bonded gravel footpaths that connect all areas of the site and provide a good surface for walking and for children's cycling, scooting and roller blading or skating. The paths are wide enough to facilitate these activities without conflict with pedestrians. Cycling by the over 12s is discouraged. It also has a number of litterbins throughout the site. The Gardens are popular with dog walkers who use it throughout the day. Notices asking dogs to be kept on leads and that owners should clean up after their dogs, are prominently displayed on each of the 4 gates.

##### **New community pavilion building**

The new building was completed at the end of February 2015. It features a community space (dividable into 2) with small kitchen, kiosk, storage for Friends' equipment, gardeners' mess room and store and toilets. One toilet is internally accessed only, two are external – one of which is wheelchair accessible. The front of the building, which looks out over the Gardens, has bi-fold doors, which can be opened up fully when the weather is good.

The Council is invited tenders from kiosk concessionaires and now the building is fully operational.

So far the community space has been used for various friends' events including Over 60s cream teas, charity sales, paint pot parties, children's art classes, community group meetings, and regular tea/coffee sessions.

##### **Mini-beast sanctuary**

There are 4 log piles situated in the north east corner of the Gardens near the junction of Kings and Trinity Roads. These provide a suitable habitat for stag beetles, cockchafers and other native beetles and insects. Access to these 'mini-beasts' can be achieved by lifting the vertical logs out of the ground carefully.

### **Benches**

The Gardens have 35 benches sited throughout the park and providing places to sit in both shade and in the open and providing pleasant vistas across the Gardens and of flower displays. A number of these benches have been dedicated by local residents and display brass plaques. Provision has been made to install further benches, should the demand require it. The benches are maintained by the Council and the Friends of South Park Gardens.

### **Toilets**

The new building including two externally accessed toilets and one internal toilet have been open since spring 2015. Now appointed, the concessionaire of the kiosk is responsible for the day to day upkeep of the toilets, with the Council responsible for their overall maintenance. During 2015 the Friends took on the cleaning of the toilets, funding this through donations made during tea/coffee sessions.

### **Fountain**

The fountain has been restored and is now a very effective and useful water fountain. This is very popular with park users. Dogs, especially in hot weather, use the dog bowl at the base extensively. The lettering has been restored and the inscription is now much easier to read. It can be lit up at night with 4 angled lights set into the path surrounding it.

### **Horse trough**

The granite horse trough at the Dudley Road entrance (near the gardeners' compound) has also been restored and is planted twice a year with bedding plants by the on-site gardeners. It makes a great feature and is much loved by park users.

### **Lights and power**

Tree lights, fountain lights and a number of power outlets were installed as part of the restoration project. The power outlets in particular have been extremely useful providing power for a range of facilities during organised events.

### **Friends' equipment**

The Friends have invested in a few items of new equipment, including notice boards for the gates, 4 high quality, pop up, aluminium-framed gazebos and 2 new barbecues. They also own 12 folding tables and sundry lights, tea urns and other essential items. These will be stored in a specially designated storage area to the rear of the new building.

### **Notice boards**

There are 2 notice boards in the Gardens. One at the Dudley Road entrance (opposite the horse trough) has a permanent display outlining the history of the Gardens. It also has two display areas with windows where notices can be displayed. The Friends use these to display FSPG and Merton materials. The second one by Trinity Road gate displays the current byelaws.

On the outside of the Gardens there are three additional small notice boards facing out, displaying FSPG notices, which can be read when the Gardens are closed.

## **4.8 Access**

South Park Gardens is a site of open access to the general public. The Gardens are open during daylight hours throughout the year, generally from 06:30 hours Monday to Friday and 09:00 hours Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holidays with seasonal closing times. These times are displayed on the notice boards around the Gardens. The gates are opened by rota of local volunteer key-holders and are locked at night by idverde.

The entrances to the Gardens are situated in Dudley Road (2 gates), Kings Road and Trinity Road. The entrance opposite 3 Dudley Road is the main vehicular access and provides a route into the gardeners' compound and store-room.

The paths form a serpentine pattern around the Gardens, totalling 4 kilometres in total length. However one circuit around the Gardens totals just 570 metres. Information has been posted on each of the notice boards about fitness sessions and the Friends regularly post information about keeping fit in the Gardens. Five circuits provides around 3,000 average length steps and therefore constitutes the amount of brisk daily walking recommended by the NHS' Walk Yourself Fit Campaign. Free pedometers are on offer to any park user wanting them.

### **Transport Links**

The Gardens can be reached by local bus 200, which stops in Queens Road near to the Debenham's entrance of Centre Court. It is also within 5 minutes walk of other bus routes along The Broadway and the main station at Wimbledon with its underground (District Line) and main line train services. Buses go from The Broadway to Kingston, Putney, Morden, Mitcham, North Cheam and Sutton including 93, 163, 164, 131, 219, 156 and 57.

A regular tram service from Wimbledon station serves Croydon, Beckenham, Addiscombe, New Addington and Elmer's End.

The local area has relatively good public transport accessibility.

Car parking is available on all adjoining roads, but is subject to on street parking fees currently £2.30 per hour. Car parking is also available in the underground Centre Court car park.

### **Visual Access**

The Gardens are signposted at the main entrance. A Friends Group notice board and an information panel are situated just inside the main entrance – opposite 3 Dudley Road. The notice board provides information about matters affecting the Gardens, often inviting the community to comment and information on the facilities and services available. The information panel provides a map of the Gardens and information on the site's history. A separate notice board at the Trinity Road entrance displays the current Council Bye-laws.

The Friends have added 3 additional notice boards next to three of the gates, enabling residents to see information even after the Gardens have been locked for the night. The gardeners also have a notice board by their compound.

### **Accessibility of infrastructure**

A level resin-bonded gravel path system connects all areas of the Gardens making it accessible for pedestrians, pushchairs and wheelchairs. The new toilets are disabled and family friendly with baby changing facilities and level access.

### **Availability and affordability**

The Gardens provides a simple open space, which is free for the public to enjoy. The Friends of South Park Gardens regularly organise community events, which are open to all and sometimes require pre-booked tickets to be purchased. Many of these events are run in the Gardens without the necessity of closing the Gardens to other members of the public. So the Gardens can continue to be used by the public alongside any events – for example the annual picnic, over 60s cream tea, Teddy Bears' Picnic and occasional music events. Exceptions to this are the Hallowe'en, Fireworks and Christmas events, which take place after the Gardens are closed for the night. In these cases, access gates are fully staffed, ticket-holders only are admitted and lights are utilised to ensure the safety of the public.



**Photo: One of the many fitness classes which take place in the Gardens**

## **4.9 Management**

Merton's Greenspaces service delivery has changed considerably since February 2017. Where once all services were delivered in house now the grounds maintenance and operations are now delivered by a private contractor: idverde. A small team remains within The London Borough of Merton Greenspaces Team delivering Capital investment, Site development, Events and Arboricultural management. 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 110 separate open spaces. The Greenspaces Manager and the rest of the team oversee the idverde contract. The main duties of idverde include litter picking, sports pitch preparations, pavilion cleaning and parks locking, amongst other tasks.

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 upkeep 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 SPG 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 the area is concerned as the capacity for larger events (fun fairs, 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.

The park formally opens at 8am and closes (the gates are securely locked by Idverde 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). Idverde also attends the park in support of the various evening lettings that the pavilion attracts. Overall, the staff establishment is estimated at 2 FTEs, albeit that none is actually allocated to the park specifically under the revised operational arrangements now adopted.

#### **4.10 Stakeholders and community involvement**

The Friends of South Park Gardens has been involved in the development, improvement, maintenance and management of the Gardens in consultation with Merton since its formation in 2002. This involvement has included,

- Consultation with Merton regarding the priorities for improving the Gardens.
- Application for the funding of improvements with support from Merton.
- Locally raising money for improvements.
- Running community events in the Gardens.
- Promoting the park to potential users.
- Full involvement in the bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund – leading to the restoration of the Gardens in 2008/9.
- Maintenance of the notice board with information about the Gardens and their facilities including providing the community with the opportunity to comment on issues affecting the site.

In addition to this, several other community groups, churches and businesses have been involved in the restoration of the Gardens and have an interest in their continued maintenance and improvement. These include Queens Road Church, South Park Estate Residents Association (SPERA), Holy Trinity Church, YMCA, Polka Theatre, Ellisons Estate Agents, Domestic & General plc, CIPD, Wimbledon Town Centre Management and the Police.

Other groups which regularly use the Gardens include: Boy Scouts, Girl Guides, YMCA youth groups, groups for the disabled, Holy Trinity and Queens Road Churches, fitness groups, local primary schools, nursery schools and playgroups.



#### **4.11 Activities & events**

South Park Gardens is one of Merton's most popular and frequently used open spaces. The site supports a number of events and activities year-round.

The new community pavilion within the park is likely to be extremely busy with a range of activities occurring there that support the local community's needs. The Friends will manage the space and ensure that activities fit with the overall ethos of the Gardens and will not create nuisance.

There are regular FSPG events in the park, during the summer months holding an annual picnic, which has been taking place annually since 1977, plus Teddy Bears' Picnic, Over 60s cream teas, Easter Egg Hunt, music events, Halloween and fireworks events. These events have proved very popular with local park users and many which have limited numbers, sell out. For example, the annual fireworks event, which is aimed at families with small children and uses low noise fireworks, regularly has 1600 attendees. These events take a lot of volunteer time to organise and run. The fireworks event can involve up to 80 people in different roles.

Celebrations of Green Flag achievements give the Friends great opportunity to showcase their past and present efforts and encourage new membership and strengthen interest in their local park. Activities during the winter period have included bulb planting by local children, all with the full support of the Council. The Friends meet around every 6 weeks or so to discuss park issues and they hold their AGM locally. From now on they will be using the new building for their meetings.

Other activities taking place recently have included Under 5s meet ups, small dog meet ups, tree trail walks, local history group meetings, litter 'blitzes'.

#### **4.12 Leases and Covenants**

South Park Gardens is owned by Merton Council and is managed by the Greenspaces Team of the Environment & Regeneration Department in conjunction with idverde. The property was transferred by way of a conveyance between JT Smith and the Urban District Council of Wimbledon in 1899. The land was transferred with the full right for the Council and its successors in title and people authorized by it to have access to the land.

The London Borough of Merton holds all plans and additional information. 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 The Vision for South Park Gardens

The vision for South Park Gardens reflects Merton's corporate vision for its parks and open spaces:

*"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".*



**Photo: Easter egg Hunt with the Easter Bunny**

South Park Gardens is a fine example of a park at the heart of its community. There is a very high level of engagement and involvement from the local community. The Friends group (FSPG) has a large membership (nearly 800 at its height), and regularly communicates with park users and local residents. It has raised nearly £100k since its inception in 2002 and is planning ways it might support and improve the Gardens. The Friends have regular discussions with the Council about maintenance issues and how the Gardens may be improved. It has many active members and volunteers who help out at the many events it organises.

Merton Council values the input from the Friends and recognises that the HLF grant, restoration of the gardens and the new building would not have happened without the hard work and enthusiasm of the friends Group.

### **Satisfaction surveys**

81% of all residents surveyed in Merton's Annual Residents Survey 2019 considered that parks, playgrounds and open spaces were good or excellent, a 2.0% increase on 2017.

The full results can be viewed at: <https://www.merton.gov.uk/council-and-local-democracy/performance/annual-residents-survey>

Specific information about users of South Park Gardens' level of satisfaction with the Gardens has been collected in a series of annual user surveys since 2007. The results show that the level of usage has almost doubled since the restoration and users' comments about the Gardens have been overwhelmingly positive.

### **Challenges**

The challenges faced by Merton and its partners in ensuring that it achieves the vision for South Park Gardens as outlined previously in this plan, have been identified through a range of consultation, surveys and feedback.

The major issues affecting the Gardens which had been raised by the local community before restoration were:

- Vandalism
- Illegal entry at night
- Poor toilet facilities
- Poor communication by Merton up until 2004
- Lack of provision for older children and young people
- Poor state of paths

Although investment has been made into the Gardens since 2003, for many years prior to this investment had strictly been limited to emergency or urgent works. The areas where the lack of investment had become most apparent were the,

- Poor state of the pathways
- State of the boundary fencing
- Maintenance and upkeep of the flowerbeds
- Decline of other horticulture elements

These have now been addressed by the restoration – with the exception of the toilets, which could not be included in the bid. However, the new building does meet the community's needs in this respect.

NB: regular park users and teenaged volunteers often pick up litter and dog walkers use peer pressure to ensure dog waste is picked up and disposed of properly.

Vandalism has not been a problem for the Gardens since the restoration.

## 6 Aims, objectives and management actions

This section presents the aims and objectives for South Park Gardens from 2016-2021. The format of this section has been closely aligned to the key criteria used to assess parks and open spaces as part of the Green Flag Award, which the Council aspires to achieve, and covers the current status and assets and features of the park and recent developments and investments. A number of management objectives have been developed based upon the management team's assessment of the current condition of the park and to assist the management team and stakeholders to achieve 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:

- Creating a Welcoming Space
- Ensuring the Park is Healthy, Safe and Secure
- Keeping the Park Clean and Well Maintained
- Sustainable Management of Resources
- Appropriate Management of Conservation and Heritage Features
- Encouraging Community Involvement
- Marketing the Facility Effectively
- Implementation of Effective Management Strategies

The vision and objectives for the playing field are aligned with the Merton Partnership's Community Plan, the Council's corporate business plan objectives and the Merton Open Space Strategy and its 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.

This information will be reviewed regularly and is expected to evolve as opportunities arise.

(Note: N/A in Action Plans = Funding not currently assigned or clarified)

### 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*



## **Current condition and issues**

South Park Gardens is in a very central location, close to Wimbledon town centre. There is no parking allowed on site, but on street parking is available all around the perimeter of the park, which is a Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) zone W3. Visitors travelling by South West Trains or by Thameslink have a five minute walk from Wimbledon Station. Trams to New Addington, Croydon and Elmers End also run from the station as does the District Line on the underground service. Bus stops for a variety of buses are situated on the Broadway (57, 93, 131, 163, 164) and on Queens Road (200, which runs between Raynes Park and Mitcham).

As part of the restoration project, but before the HLF grant was received, Merton Council installed new railings and gates, matched to the originals. The railings have spearhead shaped finials which discourage people from climbing over them either into or out of the Gardens. The railings are around 1.8m high and are painted gloss black.

The two roads which run alongside the Gardens on its longest sides are very quiet residential roads with sparse traffic (in fact they are often used by driving schools for learner drivers to practice in). Trinity Road, which runs north to south along the shortest boundary is rather busier but this has traffic calming measures in place (chicanes) and a 20 mph speed limit.

There are 4 gates into the Gardens, 2 situated on Dudley Road and one each on Kings Road and Trinity Road. The route from Trinity Road to the gate opposite 3 Dudley Road is the busiest route as it connects the densely populated roads off Trinity Road (Faraday, Effra, Clarence and Florence Roads and their connecting roads) with the town centre. So this route is a cut through for commuters in the morning and evening. Each gate displays dog control notices.

Each entrance has a noticeboard close to it and Trinity Road gate also has a noticeboard displaying the current byelaws. It also has rails to prevent children running straight out of the Gardens onto the road. The gate is opposite a pedestrian crossing with a central island allowing safe crossing. This is particularly well used by parents with children. It is just around the corner from Holy Trinity Primary School, one of the most popular schools in Wimbledon. The pupils use the Gardens a lot throughout the year.

Resin bonded paths link all areas of the Gardens and these are laid out in a serpentine style with interconnecting circles at each of the three corners. In the centre is an octagonal area laid out with York stone which represents the shape of the old bandstand which stood in the centre of this area between 1914 and the early 1960s. This space is used as a flexible performance space and is where the Friends often erect their gazebos for their many popular events in the Gardens.

Good quality benches line all the paths and 8 litter bins are located conveniently around the site. In addition there is a Big Belly solar powered bin near the Trinity Road gate, next to the flagpole which displays the Green Flag Award.

## Objectives

1. Maintain boundary fencing, hedging, 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.

## Management actions

#	Description	When	Who	Budget (£000)	Source	Secured
<b>Objective 1. Maintain boundary fencing, hedging, gates and access paths to a consistently high standard</b>						
1a	Replace old chain link fencing along boundary with cast iron railings and matching gates	2006	Contractor	165k	S106 & capital	Complete
1b	Replace tarmac paths with new resin bonded paths in original serpentine layout	2008/9	Contractor	Part of £1m HLF grant	HLF & capital	Complete
1c	Plant new yew hedge around gardeners' compound	2008/9	Contractor	Part of £1m HLF grant	HLF & capital	Complete
1d	Repairs to cobbles and retaining walls at gateways	2012	In house	.5k	revenue	Complete
<b>Objective 2. Improve signage in the surrounding neighbourhood to the park and provide more directional and interpretive signs within the park</b>						
2a	New notice boards added as part of restoration project	2008/9	Contractor	Part of £1m HLF grant	HLF & capital	Complete
2b	Install signage in surrounding neighbourhood leading to South Park Gardens from Wimbledon Station	2008/9	In house	1K	Revenue	Yes
<b>Objective 3. Meet the accessibility requirements of all users</b>						
3a	Tarmac footpath replacement and responding to tree root damage	2008/9	Contractor	Part of £1m HLF grant	HLF & capital	Complete
3b	Climbing trees pruned and made safe with bark at base	2008/9	Contractor	Part of £1m HLF grant	HLF & capital	Complete
#	Description	When	Who	Budget (£000)	Source	Secured
<b>Objective 4. Provide everybody with a range of high quality, well-maintained and relevant facilities that are accessible, safe and clean</b>						

4a	Provision of seating throughout	2008/9	Contractor	Part of £1m HLF grant	HLF & capital	Complete
4b	Installation of high quality bins and dog waste bins	2008/9	Contractor	Part of £1m HLF grant	HLF & capital	Complete
4c	Installation of power and water points throughout the Gardens	2008/9	Contractor	Part of £1m HLF grant	HLF & capital	Complete
4d	Refurbishment of drinking fountain with dog bowl at base	2008/9	Contractor	Part of £1m HLF grant	HLF & capital	Complete
4e	Repairs to drinking fountain	2014-16	LBM	6k	Capital	Complete
4f	Entrance improvements	2017/19	LBM	£15k	Capital	Complete
4g	Footpath improvements	2020	LBM	30k	Capital	In progress

## 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.*

### Current condition and issues

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 activity 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.

South Park Gardens is an important borough facility where Merton Council can promote healthy living through the practical provision of new facilities and the continuing improvement and maintenance of the environment. The Gardens are used for many informal recreational uses throughout the year. Dog walking, nature walks, tree climbing, exploring the shrubberies, scooting, rollerblading, roller skating and cycling (for under 12s only), picnics and fitness, all play a role in encouraging healthy living in the area.

Following the transformation of the Culture and Greenspaces department in late 2011 and again in early 2017 idverde continue the staff presence on site and ensure the ongoing safety and security of the open space. An ongoing staff presence in the park at peak times is important to develop and maintain links to the local community and to discourage vandalism and anti-social behaviour. This legacy is continued via idverde as of 2019/20.

Between 2009 and 2012 there were two permanent members of staff on site throughout the year. As part of the re organisation, regular maintenance of the Gardens will be carried out by a mobile team. Other staff may have attended as and when required by seasonal demand. As of 2017 this has now changed and is instead is attended to by mobile staff.

In conjunction with the Friends of South Park Gardens and other partners, Merton Leisure Services has invested considerable resources into the improvement of the facilities within the park 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 South Park Gardens 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. Incorporating the local knowledge and expertise of our partners is essential to ensure effective management and development of the park.

Our partners in this goal include:

- idverde
- The Friends of South Park Gardens (reporting vandalism, inspecting flower beds, checking litter bins etc.)
- Local Metropolitan Police Beat Manager
- LB Merton Street Wardens

- LB Merton Tree Wardens

Involvement and respect between managers, users and enforcement agencies is very important for the continued effective management and enjoyment by all. Equipment, facilities and park infrastructure are of high quality and are inspected regularly (see Inspection and Maintenance Regime – Appendices 1 & 2) by grounds maintenance staff to ensure their safety for users. Trees are regularly inspected visually by idverde staff on patrol. Following stormy weather all trees are checked by park staff to identify risk from damaged limbs.

The condition of footpaths, waste bins, benches, planting and fencing are inspected four times a year by parks supervisors and parks staff. The condition of seats, litterbins, etc. is undertaken on a regular basis by parks staff. Unsafe facilities are repaired or replaced immediately to ensure user safety and discourage vandalism.

### **Management systems**

The Council's tree data and management history is now managed exclusively in Easy TREEV, for example. A new lettings management system has recently been procured and is now in use, and there are also in-house corporate systems for recording and tracking enquiries and complaints, coordinated by a small team in the Council's Corporate Governance section. Due to the high number of visitors, and the large number of partners working visibly within the park, security in the park has improved remarkably in the past few years.

Risk assessments and the Health and Safety Policy are available to view at the Hillcross Depot.

Idverde has its own internal H&S and risk assessments which are made available to their respective staff.

Within the idverde 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

Dog walking is a major activity in South Park Gardens and the Council wishes to encourage responsible dog ownership across the borough. 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 Environmental Services. The Council changed in 2015 to a system of integrated rubbish bins in parks, meaning that dog owners will be permitted to place (bagged) dog waste in any litter bin in its parks and open spaces. Information regarding the Council's dog policies is displayed in the park on the main signs.

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



London Borough of Merton is responsible for the public toilets in the park, being built as part of the new community pavilion. One unisex toilet is located inside the building. There are also toilets accessible from outside. These include an accessible toilet for disabled visitors; and all have baby changing facilities. The toilets will be open whenever the kiosk is open (i.e.: during normal opening hours and up to around 6pm in the summer) and when required for events in the Gardens by the Friends. It will be part of the contract with the kiosk concessionaire that they keep the toilets clean and usable.

## Objectives

5. All park facilities and features to be maintained providing a safe, secure and inclusive space.
6. Work with local residents, parks staff, 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 park staff.
9. Enforce safe working practices to protect all park staff and visitors.
10. Implement the Health and Safety Policy.

## Management actions

#	Description	When	Who		Source	Secured
<b>Objective 5. All park facilities and features to be maintained providing a safe, secure and inclusive space</b>						
5a	Repairs to boundary railings	2019	LB Merton		Revenue	Complete
<b>Objective 6. Work with local residents, parks staff, police and other stakeholders to increase informal surveillance of the park and enforce park byelaws.</b>						
6a	Notices on main noticeboard as supplied by police with emergency numbers	2013/4	police	NA	NA	NA
6b	Informal reporting system instigated by Friends for any instances of dogs off leads, vandalism etc.	ongoing	Friends	NA	NA	NA
<b>Objective 7. Address all safety issues addressed promptly and effectively through timely monitoring and reporting</b>						
7	Implementation of the Confirm System (Computerised Parks Management Tool)	Ongoing	In house	E Govt	Capital / Revenue	Ongoing
<b>Objective 8. Encourage responsible dog ownership through education, provision and maintenance of dog bins, and active enforcement by park staff;</b>						
8a	Installation of dog notices on each gate	2008/9	In house	0.1k	Revenue	
8b	Consult with Environmental Services on feasibility of on-the-spot fines for dog control violations	March 2013	LB Merton	NA	Revenue	Yes

<b>Objective 9. Enforce safe working practices to protect all park staff and visitors</b>						
9a	Apply & enforce health and safety & CHAS policies (see Appendix 5); review and update relevant operational risk assessments and practices	2010-14	In house	NA	Revenue	Yes
<b>Objective 10. Implement the Health and Safety Policy</b>						
10a	Health & Safety Policy: distributed to staff and on the internet.	Ongoing	In house	NA	Revenue	Ongoing
10b	Record & review all health & safety incidents & near misses; provide feedback to corporate health & safety team; provide necessary training/re-training	2010-14	In house	TBC	Revenue	Yes
10c	Provide relevant training for staff	2010-14	In house	TBC	Revenue	Complete



**Photo: One of the local primary schools holds its sports day in the Gardens**

### **6.3 Clean & well maintained 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.*

### **Current condition & issues**

South Park Gardens 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, save for losing its 2 permanent members of staff who were relocated as part of the transformation. Overall, the staff inputs in the park remain in the vicinity of 2FTEs, albeit comprising 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 2% to 81% in the 2019 survey returns.

### **Litter & dog waste**

The Gardens are used extensively by a variety of groups and individuals and litter is a significant management issue and challenge. Litter bins are emptied 3 times per week by the idverde staff as a minimum (twice midweek and once per weekend), more often when staff are deployed in the park to support specific events and lettings. Members of staff also undertake litter picking across the site, as do a number of volunteers organised by the Friends, including young people who do this as part of their Duke of Edinburgh Award – Community Service.

Managing dog waste is also a significant issue. The Council has moved to a system of integrated rubbish bins in parks, meaning that dog owners are permitted to place (bagged) dog waste in any litter bin in its parks and open spaces. Information regarding the Council's dog policies is displayed in the park on the main signs and the Merton website.

Non-green waste generated in the park is disposed of to an off-site waste processing facility.

### **Green waste management**

Sustainable waste management is a high priority for the London Borough of Merton and South Park Gardens has a role in demonstrating its feasibility across the parks network. There is a small green waste collection bay on site. All green waste material that cannot be utilised on site is taken to a local composting facility at Nursery Road Playing Field or to the sub-regional waste processing centre in Beddington.

### **Maintenance**

The Gardens are maintained to a very high standard. After routine inspections have ensured that the park is safe, secure and tidy, the playing field staff undertake a wide range of maintenance and horticultural operations. These activities are described in more detail on the Maintenance Schedule outlined in Appendix 2. Park staff work regularly with the area grounds maintenance team and other partners and contractors to undertake specific maintenance and refurbishment tasks.

## Objectives

11. Ensure high standards of maintenance for play areas, tennis courts, lawns, playing fields, trees and shrubs, user facilities, park features and buildings.
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

## Management actions

#	Description	When	Who	Budget (£000s)	Source	Secured
<b>Objective 11. Ensure high standards of maintenance for play areas, tennis courts, lawns, bedding areas, trees &amp; shrubs, user facilities &amp; park &amp; water features</b>						
11a	Implement established site, infrastructure & equipment inspection procedures	Ongoing, 2010-17	GS Managers	Minimal - staff time	Revenue	Yes
11c	Instigate regular cleaning schedule for the pavilion	From 2015	tbc	Inc kiosk staff	Revenue	Yes
11d	Inspect, upgrade & refurbish pavilion as required	Annually from 2016 onwards	Facilities managem't	TBC	Capital	Yes/TBC
11e	Full tree survey every 3 years plus ad hoc inspections as necessary	2017	Tree staff		Revenue	yes
<b>Objective 12. Provide adequate facilities for the disposal of visitor's rubbish &amp; dog waste</b>						
12a	Installation of solar powered Big Belly Bin	2013	Contractors	1.2k	Revenue	Yes
12a	Review condition of all bins & replace as required	Annually	GS Develop't	<1	LBM Revenue	Yes
<b>Objective 13. Discourage vandalism &amp; graffiti through education, innovative design of facilities &amp; building community alliances</b>						
13a	Liaise with Metropolitan Police, Safe Neighbourhood Team & LBM Graffiti Team.	Ongoing	GS Managers	Minimal - staff time	LBM Revenue	Yes
<b>Objective 14. Monitor the maintenance programme to ensure improvements can be celebrated &amp; weaknesses addressed</b>						
14a	Liaise with Friends on implementation of agreed improvements & maintenance	Ongoing	GS Managers; GS Develop't; Friends	Minimal - staff time	LBM Revenue	Yes
14b	Review all formal monitoring & inspection returns	Ongoing	GS Managers	Minimal - staff time	LBM Revenue	Yes



## 6.4 Sustainability

*Methods used in maintaining the green space and its facilities should be environmentally sound, relying on best practice according to current knowledge. Management should be aware of the range of techniques available to them, and demonstrate that informed choices have been made and are regularly reviewed. 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 arboricultural standards should be demonstrated; and*
- Energy conservation, pollution reduction, waste recycling and resource conservation measures should be used.*



**Photo: Willow tree pruned back after storm damage 2013**

### **Current condition & issues**

Many of Merton's environmental policies with regard to protecting local biodiversity, amenity, air, soil and water quality are contained within Merton's Local Development Framework that recently replaced its Unitary Development



Plan (UDP). Over and above this, Merton's corporate vision and objectives underline the importance of environmental sustainability in the achievement of the Council's wider objectives.

### Environmental plans & policies

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

In order to protect the health of park users, staff and the biodiversity of the park, the Greenspaces team has adopted a general policy to reduce the use of pesticides in the maintenance of all of the parks and open spaces within its portfolio to a minimum. The use of pesticides has been eliminated from all areas of South Park Gardens. Weed growth within the Gardens is suppressed with hand weeding, hoeing and mulching.

Peat-based composts are not used at South Park Gardens and the Greenspaces team no longer procures peat-based horticultural materials as a matter of policy.

The small volume of green waste from horticultural works (shrub beds and occasional woodland work) is transported to the Greenspaces team's green waste facility at Nursery Road for composting and reuse at other sites if it cannot be reused at South Park Gardens.

Vehicle use in the park is kept to a minimum. The service utilises some electric vehicles within its fleet as these provide a cleaner and quieter alternative to diesel. 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.

Replacement park furniture and fixtures is 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.

### Objectives

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

### Management actions

#	Description	When	Who	Budget (£000s)	Source	Secured
<b>Objective 15. Ensure environmental policies are in place, implemented and reviewed annually</b>						
15a	Comply with all Council environmental policies & priorities	Ongoing	All	Minimal - staff time	Revenue	Yes
<b>Objective 16. Reduce on site pesticide use</b>						
16a	Apply team pesticides policy: using pesticides only as a last resort & having considered all other possible management techniques	Ongoing	GS Managers; Parks Staff	Minimal - staff time	Revenue	Yes
<b>Objective 17. Recycle green waste</b>						

17a	Review local procedures for storage & disposal of green waste generated on site & increase volumes being re- used on site.	Ongoing	GS Managers	Minimal - staff time	Revenue	Yes
<b>Objective 18. Review the use of energy, water &amp; other materials on site</b>						
18a	Undertake formal review of all utilities usage on site	Ongoing	GS Managers	Minimal - staff time	LBM Revenue	Yes
18b	Consult with specialist energy & LBM Climate Change Manager on means & methods to reduce energy consumption & wastage and install energy efficiency measures as appropriate Consider opportunities presented by proposed pavilion reconstruction.	Ongoing	GS Managers; LBM Energy & Climate Change Manager	Minimal - staff time	LBM Revenue; LBM Capital	TBC
18c	Installation of green roof to pavilion to improve insulation and reduce heating costs	2015	Contractor	Part of overall project cost	HLF grant/LBM Capital	Yes

## 6.5 Conservation & 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*

### Current condition and issues

South Park Gardens is an important part of its local community. Recognised as a fine example of the Beaux Arts design, and Victorian public park design, its heritage is celebrated in a number of ways. The local history of the Gardens is described on the main noticeboard and a local history leaflet is available from a Perspex leaflet holder on the rear of the notice board.

The Gardens contain a number of important heritage features including:

- Serpentine layout of paths and flower beds.
- Granite horse trough
- Granite drinking fountain

The Council is keen to monitor biodiversity in the Gardens to assess progress of conservation management. It has also undertaken to:

- To maintain the reserve for the quiet enjoyment and understanding by people.
- To maintain pedestrian access through the reserve in good order.
- To provide information on the ecological value of the reserve.

- To promote the reserve as an education al resource for people of all ages.

This park management plan complements the Conservation Management Plan and will assist in the enhancement, conservation and protection of South Park Gardens and promotion of these features to the wider public. Copies of the Conservation Management Plan can be requested from

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

## Objectives

19. Protect and enhance the biodiversity value of the Gardens
20. Conserve the character, design, layout and relationship to surrounding environment of the Gardens
21. Educate the public on the habitats, species and features of the nature conservation area of the Gardens

## Management actions

#	Description	When	Who	Budget (£000)	Source	Secured
<b>Objective 19. Protect and Enhance the Biodiversity value of the Gardens</b>						
19a	Review the Conservation Management Plan	ongoing	In house	NA	Revenue	
19b	Apply team pesticides policy: using pesticides only as a last resort & having considered all other possible management techniques	See Action 2 5.4.3	In house	NA	NA	
19c	Implement and monitor the Conservation Management Plan	Ongoing	In house	NA	NA	
19d	Ensure the inspection regime advises the maintenance programme and highlights opportunities for future park development.	Ongoing	In house	NA	NA	
<b>Objective 20. Conserve the character, design, layout and relationship to the surrounding environment of the Gardens</b>						
20a	Achieved through implementation of this management plan	Ongoing	In house	NA	NA	
<b>Objective 21. Educate the public on the habitat, species and features of the nature conservation area of the Gardens</b>						
21a	Tree trail and bird leaflets available on site	Ongoing	LBM & Friends	.5k	NA	Yes



**Photo: Array of homemade cakes at the 2012 Diamond Jubilee Picnic**

## **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.*

There is a very active and enthusiastic Friends group which engages very well with the local community. It has a very high level of membership and high recognition. FSPG organises a wide variety of events and activities throughout the year. In addition the HLF project funded a Community Park Warden who helped with events and also built up a number of useful relationships with schools, youth groups, park users and local businesses and stakeholders.

The Gardens are used very extensively by local residents and by the four local primary schools amongst others. Regular user surveys funded by the HLF project showed general satisfaction with the Gardens and with the Friends. Many of the events that are run are oversubscribed, due to the Friends wishing to keep events at a small and friendly size in line with the nature and size of the Gardens.

Over recent years 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 (HLF bid which was successful and led to restoration of the Gardens)

- Local fundraising
- Assisting with litter picking, ad hoc maintenance such as oiling the benches, cleaning the railings and updating notice boards
- Organising a variety of events and activities, engaging with the local community and schools with a number of joint ventures plus hosting sports days, running clubs, nature trails etc.

Since 2005 the Friends Group in partnership with LBM has been successful at raising funding over £1.4m which led to the restoration of the Gardens. 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.



## **7 Monitoring and plan review**

This management plan was adopted in January 2016 and has acted as a working document for the management of South Park Gardens.

The Action Targets presented in this Management Plan are reviewed annually in October with stakeholders and updated to reflect recent developments. Information and Identified action areas will inform the budget process in December.

A formal review of this management plan was undertaken again in September 2021 when the plan was amended to advance the development and management of the Park until 2026.

The day to day management of the Gardens and the progress of this planned development will be monitored regularly by the Greenspaces Manager, LBM park staff and the Friends of South Park Gardens.

The maintenance schedule was reviewed in the autumn of 2012 after a year of operation and updated to reflect levels of satisfaction by major stakeholders, taking into account operational factors and budgetary constraints. The Friends of South Park Gardens are discussing possible future volunteering opportunities in the Gardens, such as help with discrete horticultural tasks – weeding, bulb planting etc. as well as possibly formalising the current litter picking arrangements. Information from this review and discussions will inform the budget process in December 2021.

Views on the operation of the maintenance and management of the Gardens were sought at the last user survey in September 2012, as well as through the public consultation on the redevelopment project. That was the last user survey funded through the HLF restoration project.

## **8 References**

The history of South Park Gardens (4.3) was extracted from a book being produced by the Friends and Wimbledon Society.

## **9 Appendices**

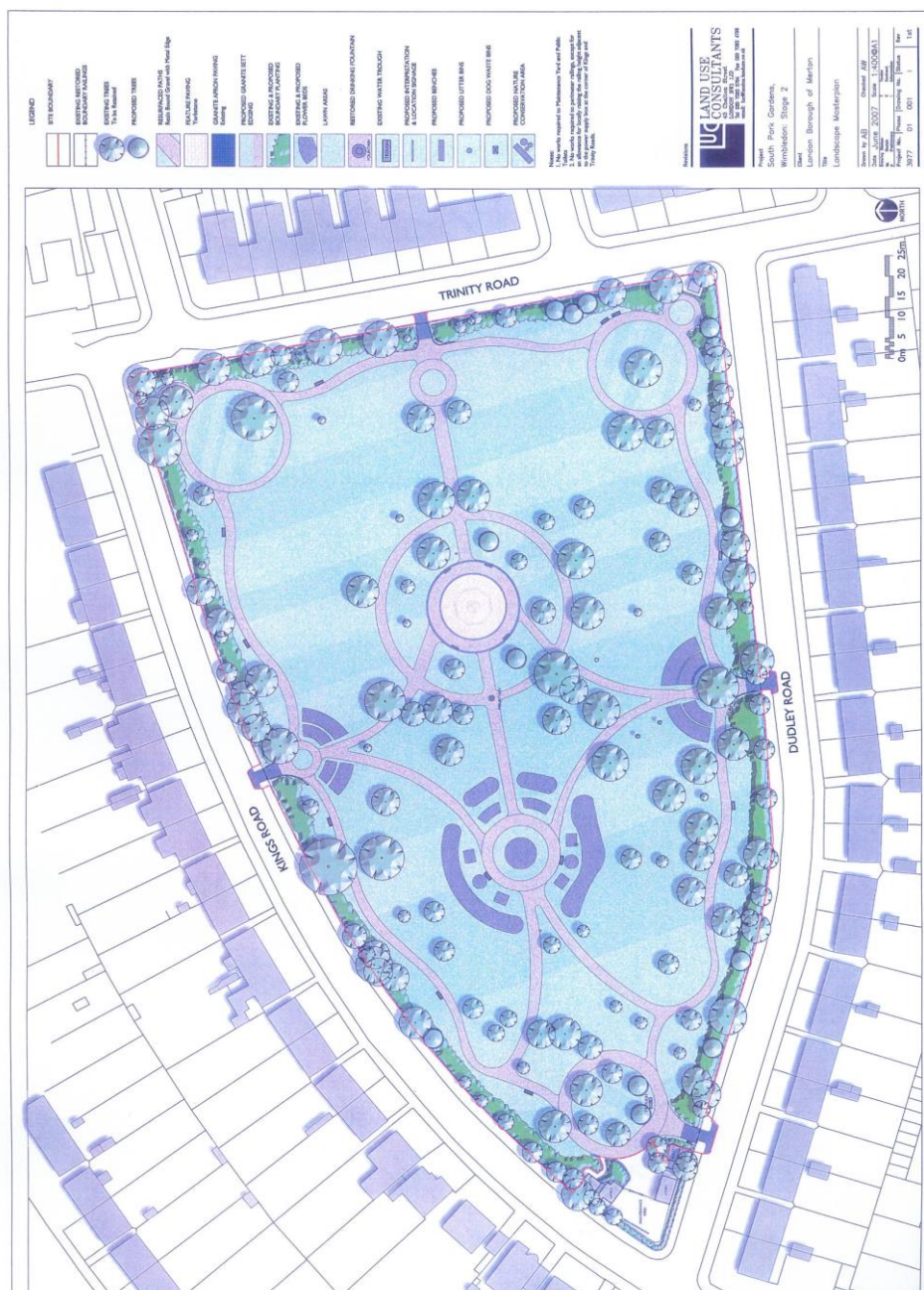
1. Inspection schedule
2. Maintenance regime
3. Plan of the park
4. Marketing plan and materials
5. Health and safety policy
6. Park byelaws
7. Management structure
8. Friends' activities
9. Climate Change Action Plan
10. Social, Economic and Environmental Profile of Trinity Ward
11. Plan of Gardeners' Compound Area
12. Plan of gardens compound area

## Appendix 1 Inspection Schedule

#	Activity	Frequency	Responsibility
<b>1</b>	<b>Daily Condition Assessment</b>		
	Visual inspection of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seats</li> <li>• Waste bins</li> <li>• Fencing</li> <li>• General condition and presentation of Park and Recreation Ground</li> </ul>	Daily	idverde
<b>2</b>	<b>Daily Built Feature Assessment</b>		
	Inspect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pavilion</li> <li>• Report Graffiti, Vandalism, Wear and tear to Technical Services</li> <li>• File Malicious damage reports with Police</li> </ul>	Daily	idverde
<b>3</b>	<b>Inspect Sign Boards</b>		
	Remove Graffiti Report Vandalism to Park Staff	Weekly	idverde Friends Group
<b>4</b>	<b>Quarterly Condition Assessment</b>		
	Thoroughly check the condition of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Footpaths</li> <li>• Waste bins</li> <li>• Benches</li> <li>• Shrubberies</li> <li>• Fencing and gates</li> <li>• Evidence of fires</li> <li>• Drinking fountain and horse trough</li> </ul>	Quarterly. Minimum of once during winter months.	idverde Friends Group
<b>5</b>	<b>Tree Assessment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full tree survey</li> <li>• Walkover tree assessment</li> </ul>	Every 3 Years Annually	Arboriculture Manager
<b>6</b>	<b>Gas and Electric Checks and Certification</b>	Annually Autumn	Property Manager

## Appendix 2    Maintenance Regime (Refer to 6.8 of Management Plan)

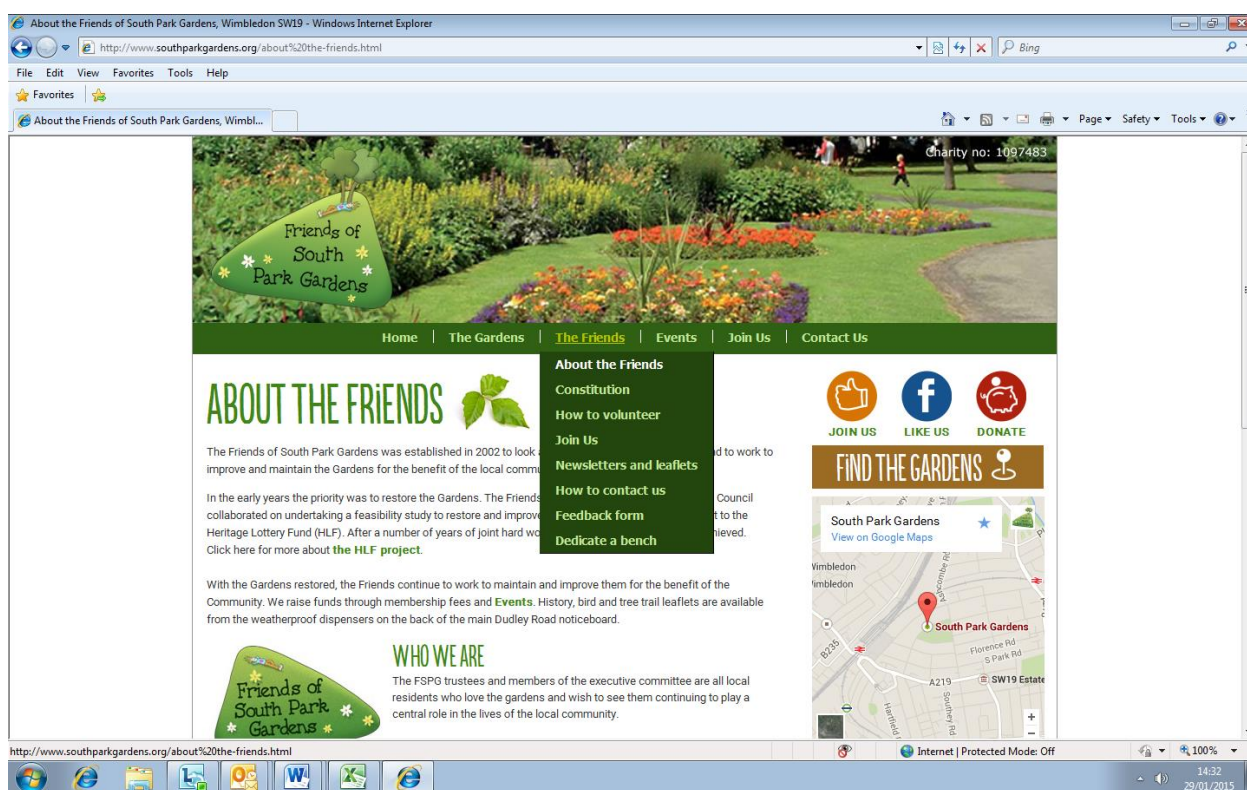
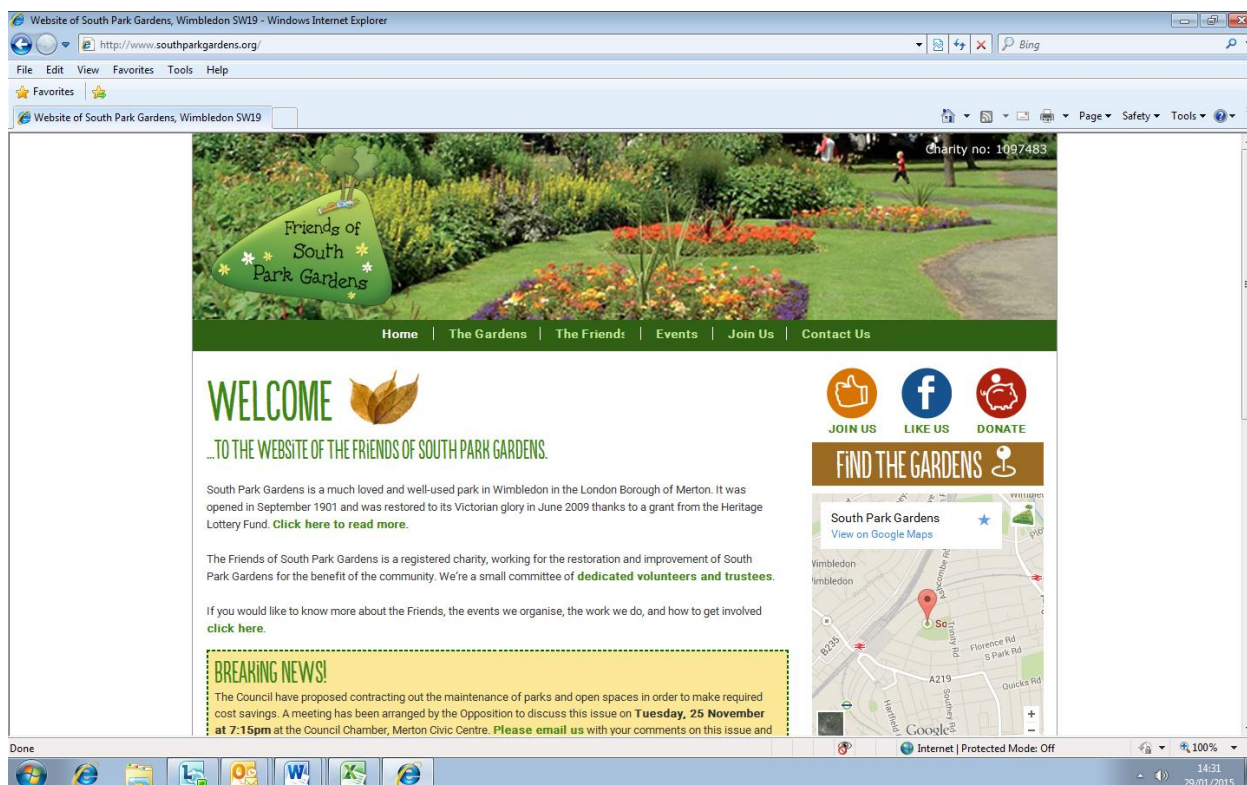
#	Activity	Frequency	Responsibility
<b>1</b>	<b>Pavilion, toilets and staff accommodation</b>		
	Carry out inspections	tbc	idverde
	Clean Toilets	tbc	Kiosk staff
	Ensure building clean and tidy	tbc	Kiosk staff/Friends
	Provide chairs for functions	As necessary	Friends Group
	Lock and unlock outside toilets during summer	Daily	Kiosk staff
	All the above to be confirmed once building is operational		
<b>2</b>	<b>Gardens</b>		
	Maintain shrub and flower beds keep weed free	2 x per week	idverde
	Clear litter and empty bins	3 x per week	idverde
	Cut grass	12 x per year	idverde
<b>3</b>	<b>Infrastructure</b>		
	Inspect paths and park furniture for damage/vandalism	Daily/ongoing	idverde Friends Group
	Check notice boards update as necessary	Daily/ongoing	idverde Friends Group
<b>4</b>	<b>Locking/unlocking</b>		
	Gates unlocked	daily	Friends Group
	Gates locked	daily	idverde

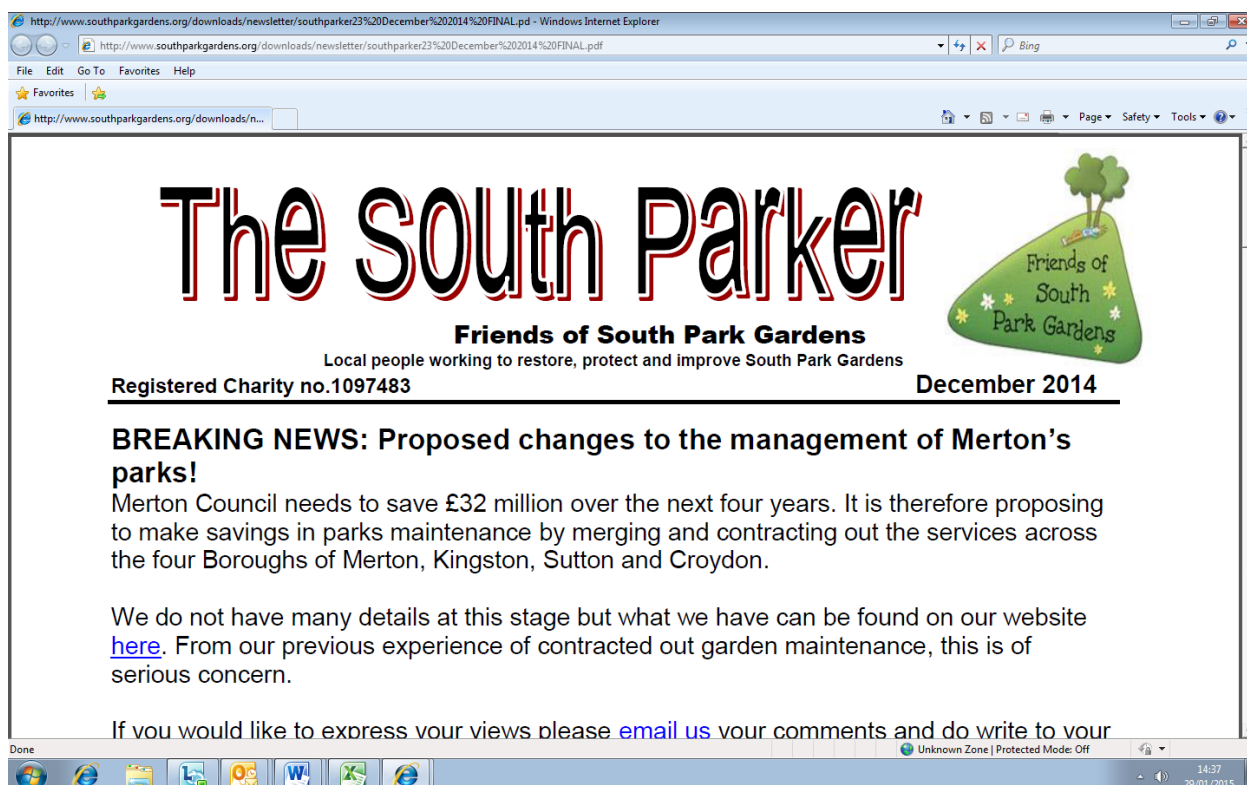
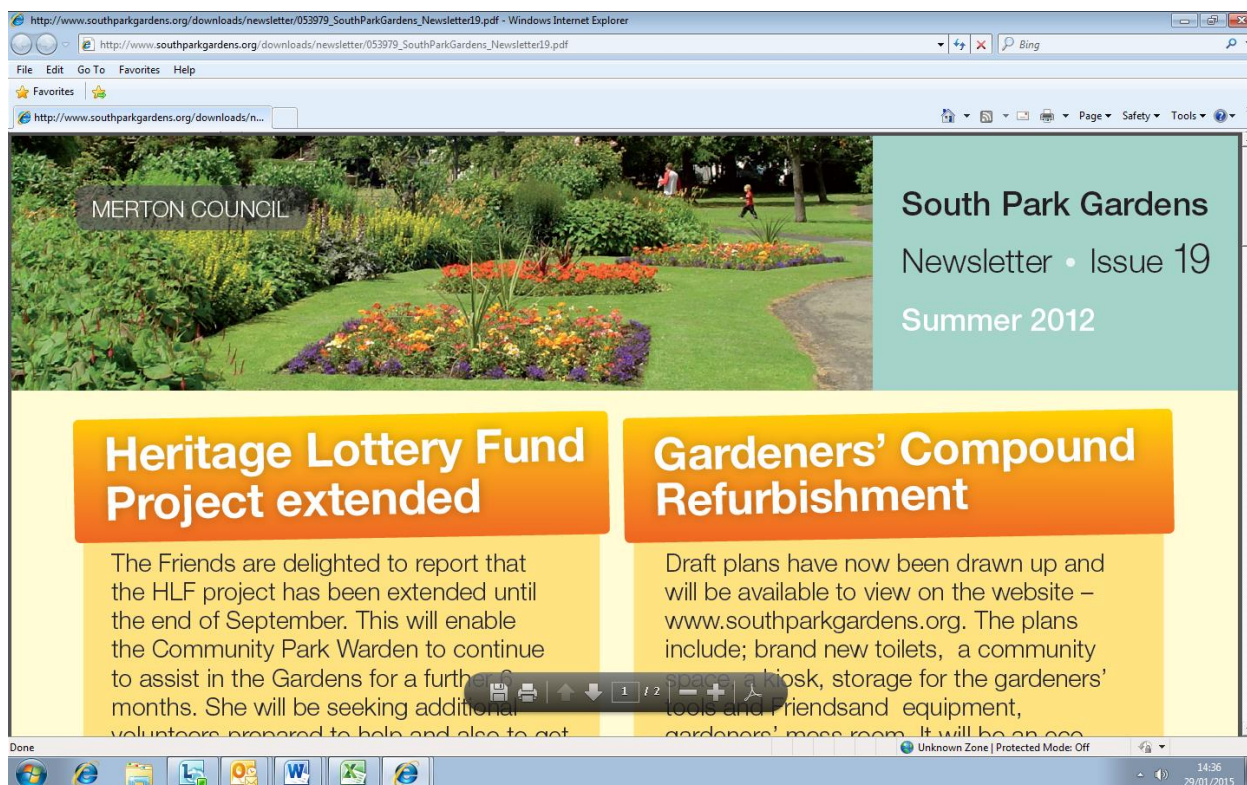


## Plan of South Park Gardens



## Appendix 4 Marketing Materials





This strategy has been devised to ensure that all the events and activities recommended within the Action Plan are advertised and promoted to a wide audience within the local community.

The target audience is all members of the public living within the community in the vicinity of the gardens and visitors to the area. This must include individuals and community groups currently excluded through lack of information.

Existing events currently organised through Friends of South Park Gardens will be included in this strategy as all events will be dependent on volunteers organised through the Friends group.

The Community Park Warden and the Friends of South Park Gardens will deliver this strategy.

## **Targets**

- To identify key audiences and to keep them informed, through a variety of appropriate outputs of the Gardens and the range of activities and events available there.
- To promote the Gardens as widely as possible to increase their usage.
- To obtain feedback through regular contact to collect information on levels of satisfaction.
- To coordinate communications (where relevant) with the Council's communications department.

## **Audiences**

Existing users of the Gardens

Potential new users of the Gardens

Community Groups which are existing or potential users of the Gardens

Local businesses

Churches

Old peoples' homes

Schools, play groups etc

The local media

## **Outputs**

- 3 newsletters in years 1, 4 & 5 (2008, 2011, 2012)
- 4 newsletters a year in years 2 – 3.
- Website
- Facebook page
- Emails to members of the Friends and other contacts (meet up groups)
- Event posters and banners
- Event fliers to be delivered door to door
- Notices on park notice boards
- Annual user survey
- Promotion through editorial in local media
- Press releases to:
  1. Wimbledon Guardian



2. Wimbledon post
3. Surrey Comet
4. Time & Leisure
5. SW magazine
6. Parents News
7. Child of Wimbledon
8. Wimbledon and Raynes Park Directory
9. My Merton

## **Budget**

The estimated budget is £4,800 in total - £1,600 per year to cover 4 newsletters, fliers and posters in the first three years. Wherever possible, sponsorship money will be obtained from local businesses to cover costs.

## **Banners**

Banners will be ordered for any of the annual events, where deemed appropriate; at an average cost of £25 per banner. These events could include:

- Easter Egg Hunt – March/April
- Annual Picnic in the Park – June
- Music Festival - July
- Teddy Bears' Picnic – July
- Fireworks & Bonfire Party – November

## **Newsletters**

Newsletters are designed by the borough's design department and printed through the printing facility. Each newsletter currently costs approx. £700 to produce and (max) £160 to deliver through the Friends. The overall budget for the year's PR is £1600.

Using the Friends Group to deliver has reduced the delivery costs. The fee charged has been donated back into the project. 3,000 leaflets are generally distributed throughout the southern part of Trinity ward (bounded by Queens Road, the Broadway and Haydons road)

Some of the event fliers will be sponsored or can be covered by the arts & events budget.

## **Website**

A website has been set up for the Gardens and this should be regularly updated with information about events and activities allowing users to download appropriate information.

## **Facebook page**

The Gardens should have a Facebook page which will help with contacting FB users.

## **Annual User Survey**

As part of the HLF project a regular annual user survey will be undertaken to collect relevant information about the Gardens including user numbers and levels of satisfaction.

## **Emails**

Regular emails will be sent to members of the Friends, via their database to update members on forthcoming events and with requests for volunteers.

## **The media**

The media will be used to disseminate information about the Gardens and also to promote the gardens and specific events. Press releases will be co-ordinated through the Council's Communications department and the Community Park Warden.

## **Review of Strategy**

This strategy will be reviewed in 2012 when the relevant funding from the HLF will be coming to an end (March 2013). Decisions will have to be taken regarding future marketing and promotion of the Gardens.

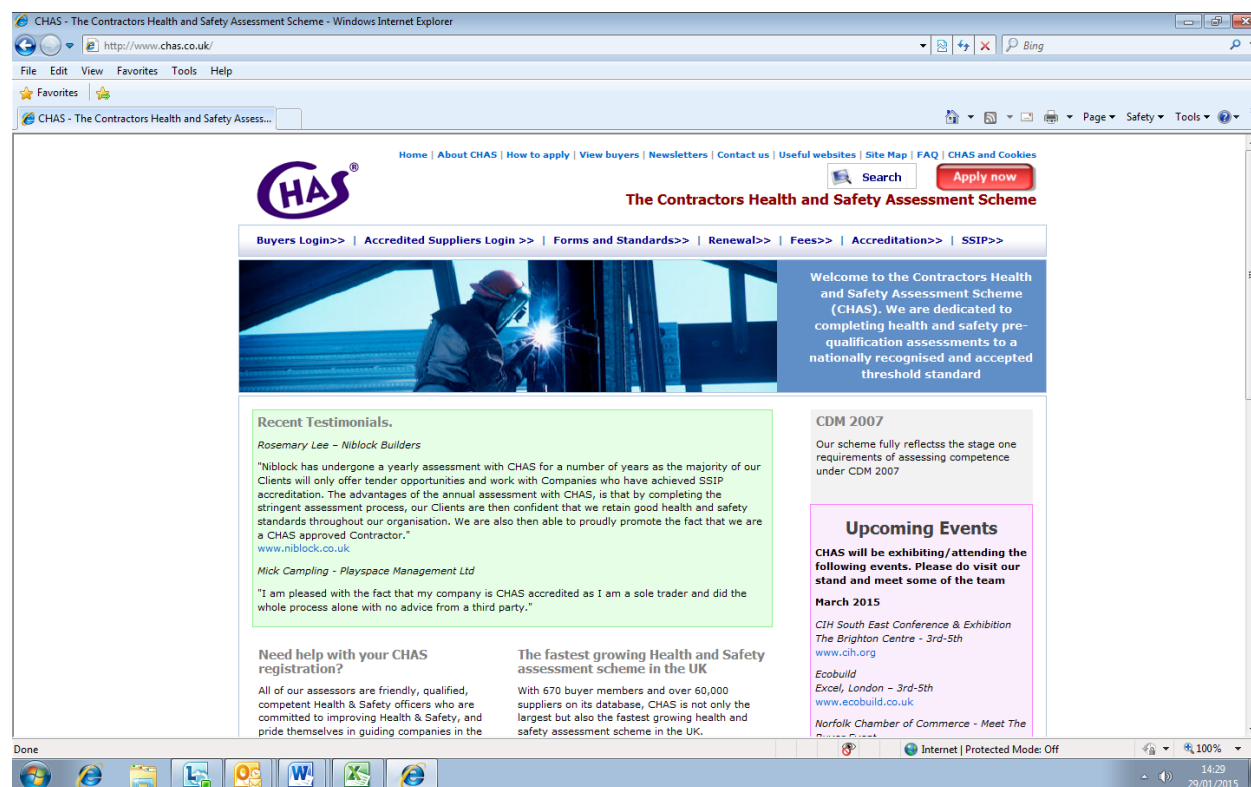


## Appendix 5 Health and Safety Policies

LB Merton's health and safety policies are available on the Council's website and are displayed at the service's main operational depot at Hillcross Avenue/Morden Park.

See Internet: [www.merton.gov.uk/](http://www.merton.gov.uk/)

The statement of the Director responsible for Health & Safety is posted on the Merton staff intranet at: <http://intranet/docstatementfromdirectorresponsibleforhs.doc> **The Contractors Health and Safety Assessment Scheme (CHAS)** is available to view at [www.merton.gov.uk/chas](http://www.merton.gov.uk/chas) on the Merton Internet site



## 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. (i) No person shall, without reasonable excuse, 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.
- (iiii) 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;
- Provided at such notice shall not apply to more than one fifth of the area of the pleasure ground;
- (ii) 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 part in 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;
  - (iiii) 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 any 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.
- 20.

(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

<b>Name of Ground</b>	<b>Days</b>	<b>Hours</b>
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

21.

- (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

22. 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

23. 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

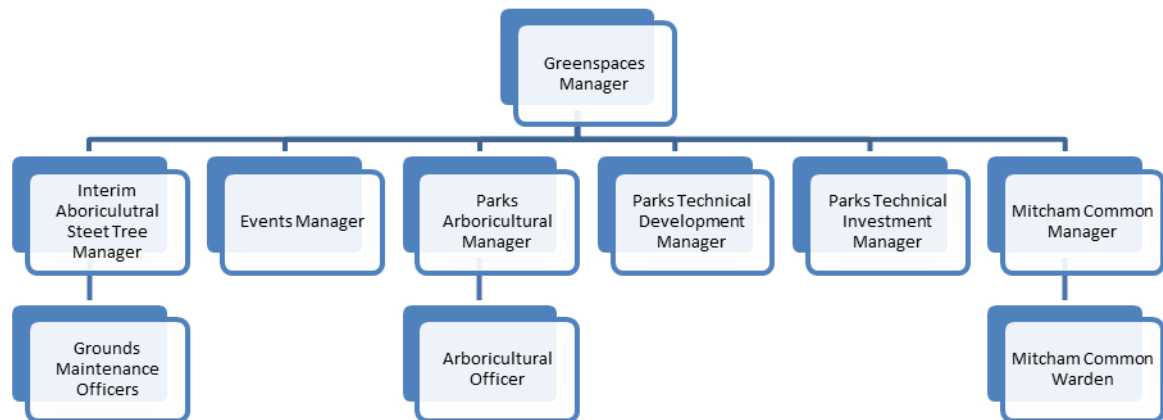
24. Any person offending against any of these byelaws may be removed from the pleasure ground by any other officer of the council or any constable.

## REVOCATION OF BYELAWS

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

## Appendix 7 Management Structure

### LBM Greenspaces Structure



### Idverde Staff Structure



## Appendix 8 Friends Activities



**Photo: Bagging chocolate eggs for Easter Egg Hunt March 2014**

- 1) Organised a range of events during 2015 including:
  - Easter Egg Hunt
  - Annual Summer Picnic
  - Over 60s cream teas (3)
  - Charity sales
  - Holy Trinity School Summer Fair
  - Fireworks and Bonfire Party
  - Children's art classes
- 2) Attended workshops run by London Parks and Green Spaces Forum at Civic Centre 2013/14.
- 3) Liaised with gardeners regarding planting and bought replacement and new plants for the Gardens.
- 4) Facilitated local Beaver pack to plant bulbs
- 5) Liaised with Council over the letting of the kiosk.

### **Plans for 2015 include:**

- A further programme of locally organised events and activities, including:
  - Easter Egg Hunt
  - Annual Summer Picnic
  - Over 60s cream teas (3)
  - Charity sales
  - Holy Trinity School Summer Fair
  - Fireworks and Bonfire Party
  - Children's art classes
- Further liaison with the Council over use of the new building and kiosk
- Managing a programme of community activities in the new building
- Liaison with gardeners on planting plans
- Managing a team of volunteer litter pickers and gardeners on regular work in the Gardens
- Maintaining a store of useful equipment for events
- Installing WiFi in the building
- Installing new bins in the toilets
- Installing new post box and noticeboard at the building
- Further promotion of the building for community hire (appropriate activities only).

## APPENDIX 9 Climate Change Action Plan

Adaption	Actions
<p><b>Tree planting:</b>            Provide a tree planting budget for new tree planting in Parks            New woodland areas in Parks and Open Spaces            Encourage Green corridors            Advice to Highways on street tree planting that may be more suitable to changing climate – changing species is premature at the present time, a greater variety is very likely a good move.            Advice to Education to minimise removal of trees when creating new classrooms. BS 5837 should be followed when contractors are working in schools to minimise costs of maintenance or removal of trees in the future.            Where tree removal is necessary, and replacement desirable, planting should be based on tree canopy area rather than like for like number replacement as a new sapling is NOT a replacement for a mature tree lost.            Plant new trees in locations where there are higher visitor numbers.            Popularise the conceptions, tree cover, tree canopy, shade tree.</p>	<p>Capital bid for Tree planting in 2009/10            Woodland/hedge planting schemes have taken place in Winter 2008 at Colliers Wood, Morden Park and Wandle Park in conjunction with local residents and tree wardens.            Merton Group of London Wildlife Trust have enhanced a hedgerow at Beverley Meads Local Nature Reserve</p> <p>New guidance given to Education and Highways to minimise removal of trees and protect existing ones.            Legislative protection of school trees is advised.            Tree Strategy to be produced by 2010.            Tree planting in streets may reflect changing climate with more planting of a greater variety of species from a wider range of climatic zones.            More shade tree planting in play areas and paddling pools where high usage by Children and parents during the summer.            For example, New trees were planted at Dundonald play area in 2008.</p>
<p><b>Shrub Planting:</b>            Planting should reflect the changing conditions.            Replace bedding plants with sustainable planting in consultation with local residents            Discourage use of more bedding plants and herbaceous plants which require more            Maintenance and requires more water.            Discourage the use of peat in bedding plants and plants bought in from Contractors            Look at vertical planting walls.</p>	<p>Sustainable planting at Cannizaro Park to replace some bedding near main entrance and Cannizaro Hotel.            Sustainable planting proposed at Ravensbury Park, Colliers Wood, Rowan Road Recreation Ground, Kendor Gardens in 2009/10.</p>



<p><b>Grounds Maintenance</b></p> <p>Relax mowing regimes to reduce number of cuts.          Use of electric vehicles in Parks          Green waste bays and composting on site          Bark chip area so that mulch can be re-used in Parks but not to suppress ground flora in established wooded areas and dense shrubberies.          Reduce production of woodchip by retaining deadwood piles/ habitat in Parks          Reduction in use of pesticides and herbicides          Irrigation systems to preserve water and protect existing planting schemes          Encourage watering in the morning          Encourage staff to ensure lights; heating is turned off/down when the buildings are not in use.          Investigate alternatives to peat in any future bedding contracts.          De-compaction methods after heavy use in Parks          Prevent vehicle use and mowing around important trees.          Purchase of mulcher/composter to avoid taking vegetation off site.          Ensuring drainage ditches kept clear          Sun safety advice and appropriate clothing given to Grounds Maintenance staff.</p>	<p>The Grounds maintenance contract is now in house so grass is cut when needed rather than when contract states. In some areas cuts have reduced from 17 times a year to 10. This will reduce compaction and reduce machine journeys. Many Local Nature reserves have meadows, which are only cut once a year. There are 6 electric vehicles in Parks. Team meetings held regularly to ensure unnecessary energy use. Turf management regime in partnership with Grassroots Trading Company introduced on bowling greens including John Innes Park to reduce chemical use. Reviewed annually with consultation with Grassroots Co. specialist. All bedding plants are now grown in peat free substrate De-compaction machinery used to reduce compaction and water logging after heavy use in Parks. i.e. Fireworks Displays and Tennis parking at Wimbledon Park. No heavy vehicles or mowing around established trees. New Composter purchased in 2008.</p>
<p><b>Hard Surfaces</b></p> <p>Reduce amount of hard surfacing in Parks</p>	<p>Where possible use free draining materials/grass Crete which reduces water problems elsewhere.</p>

<p><b>Internal Partnership Working</b></p> <p>Work with Planners and Corporate Facilities team to ensure that new buildings are constructed in an energy efficient way. These may include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Green roofs</li> <li>Solar Panels</li> <li>Wind turbines</li> <li>Retention of all mature trees by appropriate development design</li> <li>Encouraging use of local contractors</li> <li>Waste management- separate skips for recyclable materials to avoid material being taken to landfill</li> <li>Re-using of existing buildings and materials</li> <li>Use of new, sustainable materials; masonite timber framed walls, warmcel insulation, English Oak, Natural ventilation, Larger windows to reduce lighting in buildings, Control systems, Energy efficient lighting, PVC free cables, Dual flush toilets, Miliken Earth square carpet, water based paints, rainwater harvesting.</li> </ul> <p>Work with Planners and Corporate Facilities to ensure that where possible existing buildings have energy efficient ways of operating. These may include replacing boilers with condensing boilers, introducing on off switches on taps, lights, heating to reduce electricity, water and costs and use.</p> <p>Work with Planners to ensure that S106 funding is made available for enhancing our Parks and Open Spaces.</p> <p>Work with Planners to protect our Green spaces and increase areas of Green space with sufficient revenue funding to maintain in the future.</p> <p>Work with Waste Services to re-cycle waste</p>	<p>New building proposed for Cannon Hill Common, Capital bid in 2009 to replace existing old pavilion at Abbey Recreation Ground. Pavilion completed in Autumn 2011. This build has a Green Roof.</p> <p>Corporate Facilities maintain park buildings and have a programme of works to reduce energy use in buildings. These may include condensing boilers, on/off switches, upgrade heating, lighting, and reduced water requirement for toilets.</p> <p>Over £300,000 S106 improvements in Parks in 200/8/9</p> <p>Recycling bins installed in Parks.</p>
<p><b>External Partners</b></p> <p>Work with Local Friends Groups and other partners to bid for funding to enhance open spaces and priority wildlife habitats.</p> <p>Protect existing Green space with assistance from Partners.</p> <p>Gather and store biological data that will help guide land management and development control decisions.</p>	<p>L.B.M works closely with E.A, National Trust, Merton Group of LWT, London Biodiversity Partnership and Friends Groups including 24 Friends Groups including Tree Wardens Friends of Sir Joseph Hood, Friends of John Inns Park and Make Colliers Wood Happy to bid for funding and help</p>

	<p>improve Parks in Merton. A recent project included a lake restoration project at Cannon Hill Common where funding was achieved through a Heritage Lottery Bid and contribution from Cannon Hill Common Friends and the Environment Agency. LBM has entered into a service level agreement with Greenspace Information for Greater London.</p>
<p><b>Adaption through staff skills</b> Timing of Operations Choices of plants Managing the soil organic matter, content and fertility Managing irrigation Managing pests and diseases Training/Conferences to learn new skills and exchange information</p>	<p>Reduction in use of herbicides and Pesticides in Parks.</p> <p>Training proposed for staff in 2009 include conservation skills. All staff have filled in a training requirement sheet in November 2008</p>

<p><b>Control input to maintain the quality of water features and irrigation systems.</b>  Introduction of reed beds  Silt traps  Removal of Invasive plants along water courses  Removal of concrete channels in Parks along water courses  Use of bio bombs and Barley straw to watercourses to reduce algal blooms.  Introduce irrigation systems to bowling Greens to preserve water.  Introduction of automatic irrigation systems to 3 bowling greens to preserve water.</p>	<p>Reed beds introduced at Wandle Park and Cannon Hill Common to improve quality of water.  Silt trap installed at Wimbledon Park in 2008.  Barley Straw introduced at Wimbledon Park and Cannon Hill Common to reduce algal blooms.  Removal of concrete channels to stream at Wandle Park.  Proposed removal of some revetment and concrete channel on the River Wandle at Ravensbury Park in 2009/10.  Control of invasive Pennywort in the River Wandle and Ravensbury Park Lake.  New bowling green irrigation systems at Canons Recreation Ground, Joseph Hood and John Innes Park in 2008/9.</p>
<p><b>Sustainable transport in Parks</b>  Introduce shared use paths to encourage less car use  Introduce bike racks in Parks  Work bike</p>	<p>New shared use paths introduced at Sir Joseph Hood M.P.F, Joseph Hood and Morden Park in 2008/9. New shared use path proposed in 2009 at Wimbledon Park.  Cycle racks introduced at Sir Joseph Hood and Joseph Hood in 2008.  Mountain Bike available and pool car available to use from Civic Centre.</p>
<p><b>Recycling</b>  Use recycled materials in Landscape works  Provide recycling bins in Parks for glass, bottles, cans and paper.</p> <p>Recycling bins introduced into six sites at Raynes Park SG, Sir Joseph Hood, John Innes Park, Colliers Wood Rec, Dundonald Rec and Haydons Road Rec.</p>	<p>Recycled produced used where possible in new landscaping projects.  Timber from sustainable sources.  Boardwalk at fishponds Wood used English Oak for boards rather than a Hardwood.  Play areas use recycled products in wet pour surfacing.  Re-cycling bins at Cannon Recreation Ground and Figges Marsh.  Recycling bins proposed in 2009 for paper, glass, bottles</p>

	and cans at Raynes Park S.G, Sir Joseph Hood M.P.F, John Innes Park, Colliers Wood, Cannizaro Park, Dundonald Recreation Ground and Haydons Road
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## **Appendix 10 - Social, Economic and Environmental Profile of Trinity Ward**

### **Extract of Census and Survey Information**

#### **Resident population**

Total resident population (2001): 9559

Population rank as compared to all Merton wards: 7/20

Age of population in ward (%):

0-17: 22.0%

18-44: 42.2%

45-64: 22.3%

65+: 13.4%

#### **Ethnicity**

Ethnic minority population including white Irish (%): 30.9%

% Irish population: 3.1%

#### **Health**

% of people with limiting long-term illness: 17.4%

Rank of ward as compared to all Merton wards: 15 / 20

People with "good" health (%): 74.0%

People with "good" health (Rank): 5 / 20

People with "not good" health (%): 5.9%

People with "not good" health (Rank): 15/20

#### **Education**

Ward population with qualifications (%): 82.9%

Rank of ward compared to all Merton wards: 9/20

#### **Households and Housing**

One person households: 24.0%

Pensioner households: 21.0%

Households with dependant children: 32.5%

Households without central heating: 0.7%

Households with no car: 21.5%

Households rented from the Council: 3.1%

Households rented privately: 8.2%

Average household size: 2.6 people

Average number of rooms per household: 5.5 rooms

#### **Crime**

Total number of offences recorded (2003/4): 665  
Rate of recorded offences per 1000 population: 69.6  
Rank of crime rate in Merton: 17 / 20  
Breakdown of numbers of certain offences:  
Sexual offences (per 1000 population): 0.3  
Robbery (per 1000 population): 1.8  
Burglary from a dwelling (per 1000 households): 11.3  
Theft of vehicles (total): 1  
Theft from vehicles (per 1000 population): 4.8

### **Economic Activity and Deprivation**

Employment rate for the ward (2001): 68.5%  
Unemployment rate for the ward (2001): 2.2%  
Average deprivation score (2004): 7.8  
Average deprivation score rank: 18

### **User Perception of Local Issues and Services in the Ward Cluster**

Cluster: 3 (Cannon Hill, Lower Morden, Merton Park, West Barnes)  
Top 10 personal concerns (Merton Residents Survey 2004, %):  
Quality of Health Service: 26%  
Not enough being done for elderly people: 14%  
Rising prices/Interest rates: 11%  
Level of council tax: 57%  
Crime: 41%  
Standard of education: 20%  
Pollution of the environment: 10%  
Traffic congestion: 26%  
Lack of affordable housing: 12%  
Litter/dirt in the streets: 26%  
Dissatisfaction with local services (Merton Residents Survey 2004, %)  
Residents who responded 'poor', 'very poor' or 'extremely poor':  
Public transport: 7%  
Policing: 25%  
Housing benefit service: 1%  
Collection of council tax: 3%  
Services for young people: 23%  
Fly tip removal: 12%

## **Appendix 5**

## **FSPG South Park Gardens User Survey Report - September 2012**

The fifth annual survey of Users of South Park Gardens was conducted in September 2012. This report details the profile of users throughout the day by looking at group size and composition, age of user, their post code and activity undertaken whilst visiting the park.

### **Number of Visitors**

A total of **292 visitors** to South Park Gardens were interviewed on Thursday, 27<sup>th</sup> September 2012. Half of all respondents were accompanied by one or more other people, with an average group size of 1.9. It is estimated that those interviewed represented a minimum throughput to the park of **561** people, with additional users who it was not possible to stop to interview. Data from 2008 - 2012 is shown for comparison in Table 1.

The overall number of interviews is significantly less than in other years, and there are two likely reasons: first, as detailed in the Technical note at the end of the report, there were fewer interviewers in 2012, administering questionnaires over a shorter time period than in previous years, and thus it was not possible to interview all park users; second, the weather was cold and dull for most of the day, especially when compared with the survey day in 2011 when near record-breaking temperatures were reached, it is probable therefore that visitor numbers on the day of the 2012 survey were down compared with previous years.

### **Time of day park used**

The busiest period recorded was first thing in the morning, with 29% of all respondents being interviewed between **7-9 a.m.** when there was a high throughput of users 'crossing the park'. The park was busy again over lunch and after school. See Table 1

### **Age of users**

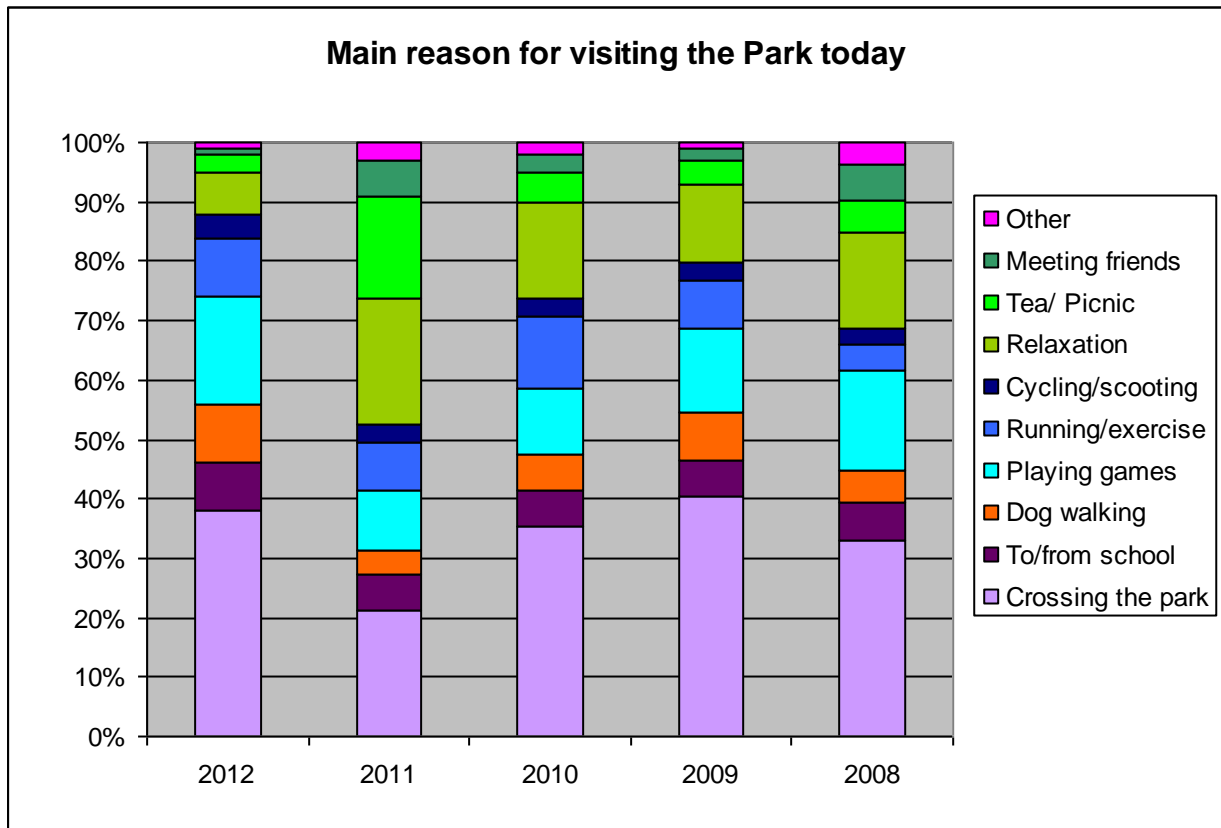
People of **all ages** used the park, though most were **under 55**. The age profile of respondents was similar to previous years, with the majority (65%) falling into the 30-54 age group. The percentage of respondents accompanied by one or more children aged 10 and under was also similar to previous years (45%), younger children in particular making up the group. See Table 1

### **Postcode of users**

91% of visitors came from SW19, this was the highest percentage recorded over the years as coming from within the postcode. See Table 1

### Reason for Visiting

The park was visited for a variety of reasons (see chart below and Table 1), and these changed throughout the day (see Table 2).



As in previous years, **'crossing the park'** was given as the main reason for being in South Park Gardens by a high proportion of visitors (38% in 2012). When those who said they were **'taking children to / from school'** (8%) are taken into account as well, then we can see that 46% were using the park as a thoroughfare, and this accounted for 75% of users between 7-9 a.m.

The combined percentage of those using the park for various forms of exercise (shaded blue on the chart) was the highest yet at 32%, with **'playing games'** given as the main reason for visiting the park by 18% **'running/exercise'** by 10% and **'cycling/scooting'** by 4%. The percentage rises to an even greater all-time high of those using the park to be active when **dog walking** (10%) is added.

In contrast, those visiting the park for more relaxing activities: **'relaxation'** (7%), **'having lunch / tea / picnic / coffee'** (3%) or **'meeting friends'** (1%) was lower than in previous years, and it is presumed that the weather played a role in this. These reasons were quoted more by users of the park during the middle of the day.

### **Spontaneous comments about the Gardens' restoration**

When asked if they had **any comments** they wished to make about the Gardens' restoration (See Table 3), 105 of those interviewed responded, with 70 of all interviewees making a positive comment, 28 a negative remark and 16 a neutral comment or suggestion.

The main **positive** comments were of a generalized nature – 'Brilliant /fantastic/ great/ beautiful/ lovely/ etc' (8%), other positive observations mentioned by more than two people concerned frequency of visit, the good maintenance, and the fact that the park provides a pleasant walking route.

Most of the **negative** remarks concerned the rubbish - overflowing bins, litter, etc (commented on by 10 people). Other negative remarks made by more than two respondents were the anti-social behaviour exhibited by some teenagers (smoking, drugs, drink, litter), the poor condition of the paths and the toilets.

A number of individual suggestions for **improvements / additions to the park** were made. A request for some form of play equipment was mentioned by 6 and a desire for longer hours from the coffee man was mentioned by two.

### **Technical Note:**

*292 visitors to South Park Gardens were interviewed face-to-face on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> September 2012.*

*Interviewers attempted to intercept and interview as many visitors as possible between 7.00 a.m. and 6.00 p.m. Unlike previous years where interviewers were placed at the two main gates to the park (Trinity Road and Dudley Road), due to a shortage of*



*available interviewers, for most of the day only one interviewer was present (at Trinity Road gate). In addition, interviewing ceased at 6.00 p.m. compared with 7.00 p.m. in previous years. These two facts will have depleted the overall number of interviews achieved compared with previous years.*

*The weather was mainly overcast and damp.*

*A copy of the questionnaire is appended.*

Visitors interviewed							
(No. of visitors interviewed)	2012		2011	2010	2009	2008	
	(292)	(292)					(789)
Time visiting the park:	No.	%	%	%	%	%	
7.00 - 8.59 a.m.	85	29	13	17	18	13	
9.00 - 10.59 a.m.	32	11	13	16	11	13	
11.00 a.m. - 12.59 p.m.	64	22	20	14	14	16	
1.00 - 2.59 p.m.	42	14	21	17	17	18	
3.00 - 4.59 p.m.	62	21	27	23	22	26	
5.00 – 6.59 p.m.	7	2	5	12	17	14	
MAIN reason for visiting today:	No.	%	%	%	%	%	
crossing the park	112	38	21	35	40	37	
playing games	53	18	10	11	14	19	
dog walking	30	10	4	6	8	6	
running / exercise	28	10	8	12	8	5	
taking children to / from school	23	8	6	6	6	7	
relaxation	19	7	21	16	13	18	
cycling / scooting	12	4	3	3	3	3	
having lunch/tea/picnic/coffee	8	3	17	5	4	6	
meeting friends	3	1	6	3	2	7	
Other	2	1	1	*	1	4	
Number of people in visitor's party:	No.	%	%	%	%	%	
1	144	49	44	43	51	47	
2	78	27	35	38	34	34	
3	45	15	13	14	11	11	
4	12	4	5	3	3	6	
5 or more	13	4	2	2	2	2	
estimated total number	561		1479	988	872	933	
Average no. of people in party	1.9		1.9	1.8	1.8	1.8	
Number of children in interviewee's party:							
Any children		Aged 0-5		Aged 6-10		Any Children	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	%
None	160	55	178	61	746	88	61
Any	132	45	114	39	43	12	59
One	73	25	73	25	22	8	66
Two or more	44	15	41	14	12	4	37
Age of visitor interviewed:	No.	%	%	%	%	%	%
11 – 18	11	3	3	5	3	6	
19 – 29	54	18	21	19	20	20	
30 – 54	190	65	63	64	61	57	
55 & over	37	13	12	11	16	15	

Postcode of visitor interviewed:	No.	%	%	%	%	%
SW19	267	91	83	86	84	84
SW20	3	1	3	*	2	3
CR	3	1	2	*	3	3
KT	2	1	2	2	1	2
SM	3	1	2	1	1	2
Other	11	4	6	9	9	7

\* = <0.5

**Reason for crossing the park by time and number of people in party (2012)**

**Table 2**

	Total	Time					
		<u>7-9</u>	<u>9-11</u>	<u>11-1</u>	<u>1-3</u>	<u>3-5</u>	<u>5-7</u>
Number of visitors interviewed	292	85	32 <sup>^</sup>	64	42	62	7 <sup>^</sup>
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
crossing the park	38	<u>57</u>	<u>44</u>	38	26	21	14
taking children to / from school	8	<u>18</u>	6	5	0	0	0
dog walking	10	15	13	8	17	0	14
playing games	18	0	13	19	10	<u>52</u>	14
running / exercise	10	8	22	6	12	3	43
cycling / scooting	4	0	3	8	5	6	0
relaxation	7	0	0	<u>16</u>	<u>19</u>	2	0
having lunch / tea / picnic/ coffee	3	0	0	2	<u>12</u>	3	0
meeting friends	1	1	0	0	0	2	14
Other	1	0	0	0	0	3	0

<sup>^</sup> Beware – small base of respondents

**"Are there any comments you wish to make about the Gardens' restoration?"**

**Table 2**

	No of visitors interviewed	
	(292)	(292)
	No.	%
<b>Any spontaneous comments</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>36</b>
Any Positive comments	70	24
Any Negative comments	28	9
Any Neutral comments/suggestions	16	5
<b>Spontaneous Positives</b>	<b>(70)</b>	<b>(70)</b>
	No.	%
Brilliant/fantastic/great/beautiful/lovely/etc	51	73
Here often	8	11
Well maintained	4	6
Nice walk even though longer way	4	6
Like the planting	2	3
Good for children	2	3
Like the kiosk	2	3
Like design	2	3
Very safe	2	3
Traditional elements/no playground	1	1
Improvement on before	1	1
Like events/functions	1	1
Good for a sandwich	1	1
<b>Spontaneous Negatives</b>	<b>(28)</b>	<b>(28)</b>
	No.	%
Rubbish awful / overflowing / bins	10	36
Teenagers – smoking – drinking – drugs - litter	5	18
Paths - poor condition/ need repair	4	14
Toilets	3	11
Chalking on paths	2	7
Dog poo	2	7
Shouldn't allow dogs	1	4
Damage to trees	1	4
Not at well looked after since gardeners gone	1	4
Busy with bikes / too fast	1	4
Too child orientated	1	4
Slightly too clean	1	4
Too posh	1	4
Café unreliable	1	4
Coffee too expensive	1	4
<b>Spontaneous Neutral comments/suggestions</b>	<b>(16)</b>	<b>(16)</b>
	No.	%
Playground equipment/ swings	6	38
Café - longer hours	2	13
Lockable gates	1	6
More bins	1	6
More activities	1	6

Would like to take dog off lead	1	6
Concerned as to what dog control orders may mean (no dogs in future)	1	6
Sink logs into ground	1	6
Ban smoking	1	6
Prune trees	1	6
1 o'clock club	1	6

NB – Very low base of respondents for % Negatives and Neutral comments



**INTERVIEWER:**

**PLEASE CIRCLE THE RELEVANT NUMBER CODE TO THE RIGHT OF THE ANSWERS. IF RESPONDENT IS IN GROUP CODE ANSWER GIVEN BY RESPONDENT ONLY**

**START AT C**

**A Respondent No** \_\_\_\_\_ (1)

**B Date: 27 September 2012** (2)  
1

**C Time:** (3)  
7.00 - 8.59 a.m. ....1  
9.00 - 10.59 a.m. ....2  
11.00 a.m. - 12.59 p.m. ....3  
1.00 - 2.59 p.m. ....4  
3.00 - 4.59 p.m. ....5  
5.00 - 6.59 p.m. ....6

**D Weather** (4)

Sunny / fine / bright 1  
Overcast / cloudy / dull 2  
Damp / raining 3

**1 What is your MAIN reason for visiting the park today?**

(5)  
playing games .....1  
cycling / scooting 2  
having lunch /tea /picnic /coffee 3  
meeting friends .....4  
running / exercise 5  
dog walking 6  
relaxation .....7  
crossing the park 8  
sunbathing 9  
taking children to / from school .....10  
Other .....20

		(9)	
A:	11 - 18	1	
B:	19 - 29	2	C: 30 - 54
3	D:55 & over	4	

**2 How many people are in your party?**

	(6)
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5 or more	5

**3 How many children in each of the following age groups are in your party?**

	<u>5 &amp; under</u>	<u>6 to 10</u>
	(7)	(8)
1	1	1
2	2	2
3	3	3
4	4	4
5 or more	5	5

**4 Please could you tell which of these age groups you fall into: A, B, C or D?**

**5 Please could you tell me your postcode?**

	(10)	SW19 1
SW20	2	
CR	3	
KT	4	
SM	5	
Other _____	6	

**6 Are there any comments you wish to make about the Gardens' restoration?**

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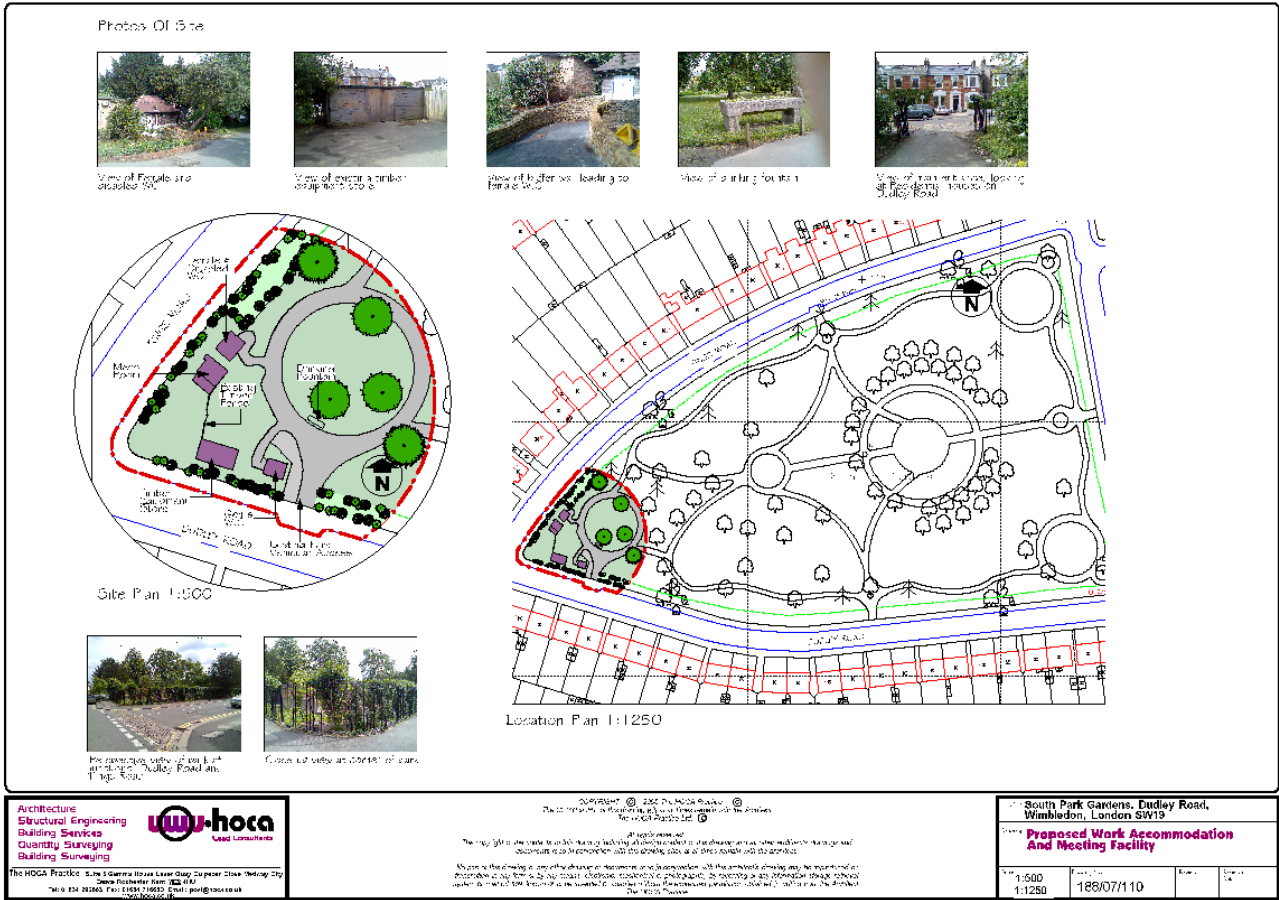
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**THANK YOU FOR HELPING US TODAY**

## Appendix 11 - Merton Leisure Facilities & Technical Group Contact Information

Contact	Name	Telephone Number	Email address
Head of Leisure and Greenspaces Manager	Doug Napier	020 8545 3657	doug.napier@merton.gov.uk
Parks Support	idverde	020 8540 1606	Zsolt.Takacs@idverde.co.uk
Tree Officer	David Lofthouse	020 8545 3659	david.lofthouse@merton.gov.uk
General Enquiries		020 8545 3677	leisure@merton.gov.uk

Appendix 13 - Plan of Gardeners' Compound Area

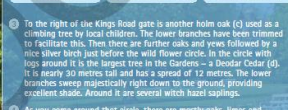


## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION &amp; RENEWAL FORM

For more information visit: [www.southparkgardens.org](http://www.southparkgardens.org)

Follow the instructions below to explore the trees in the Gardens, walk clockwise around the outside path, starting at the horse trough.

- 
- Three photographs of trees are shown in a row. The first is a Strawberry Tree with dense green foliage. The second is a Judas Tree, a tall, slender tree with a light-colored trunk. The third is a Hibernian Oak, a large, spreading tree with dark foliage.



- This concludes the Tree Trail Walk.

