

Draft Open Spaces Strategy Aims and Actions Plan 2016 - 2021

| Aim 1. The provision and maintenance of appropriate and good quality open space that is open to all and protected for future generations | | | | |
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| Objective | Output | Actions | HDC Team | Partner |
| Objective 1: To ensure creatively designed and appropriate open spaces are provided on new developments that are accessible and support community requirements. Ensure that schemes are well designed, multifunctional , well connected and cost effective to maintain. | That appropriately designed and landscaped open space is provided on new development | Continue to work with developers, landscapers and other partners to deliver open space on new development | Strategic Planning | Development Industry |
| | | Seek to address shortfalls in open space and playing pitch provision, and any restrictions to its accessibility | Strategic Planning | Development Industry |
| | That open space is provided according to local need and to an adoptable standard | Continue to review the need for open space; formulate and apply locally based standards appropriate to Harborough District using the policies in Open Space Sport and Recreation 2015 | Strategic Planning | |

Draft Open Spaces Strategy Aims and Actions Plan 2016 - 2021

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| | | <p>Seek to provide an area of safe, attractive and useable open space, accessible to all sectors of the community within reasonable distance of dwellings according to its typology.</p> | <p>Strategic Planning, Development Control</p> | |
| | <p>Open Space is connected by a series of Greenways to cater for walking or cycling</p> | <p>Seek to work with partners and landowners to provide links between open spaces that form a network of 'Greenways' for walking and cycling either for leisure or commuting</p> | <p>Strategic Planning, Development Control</p> | <p>Leicestershire County Council Local Transport Team, Stepping Stones, Local Landowners, Development Industry</p> |
| | <p>That open space is multifunctional and cost effective to maintain</p> | <p>Ensure that open space provision is considered early in the development process and in development briefs</p> | <p>Strategic Planning, Development Control , Engineers Team</p> | <p>Development Industry</p> |

Draft Open Spaces Strategy Aims and Actions Plan 2016 - 2021

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| | | Ensure landscape management plans are provided by developers to give certainty that open space will be appropriately managed in the future | Strategic Planning, Development Control | Development Industry |
| | Sustainable Drainage Systems are routinely used on new housing development landscaping schemes to provide habitat, biodiversity and multifunctional open space | To provide a Developer Guidance note regarding the planting and landscaping of SUDS for promotion of biodiversity | Strategic Planning | Leicestershire County Council as lead flood authority, Steeping Stones, Welland Valley Partnership |
| | | Comments to be provided at an early stage for landscaping and SUDS schemes on new development | Engineering team, Strategic Planning, Development Control | Development Industry |

Draft Open Spaces Strategy Aims and Actions Plan 2016 - 2021

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| Objective 2: To carefully manage the acquisition and disposal of open space by the District Council to ensure that the open space portfolio remains appropriate, is maintained by the most appropriate organisation and provides services the community wants. | The Corporate disposal and acquisitions policy is used when determining the future management of open space | HDC will follow the policies of the Corporate Property Strategy in acquiring or disposing of open spaces, | Asset management Team, legal Services | |
| | | HDC will pay due regard to the social, community and environmental benefits or drawbacks when assessing the future management of open space | Asset Management Team, Strategic Planning, Leisure Services | Community Groups and Parish Councils |
| | Management of open space is directed towards the most appropriate organisation | HDC will work with community groups, Parish Councils and Partners to deliver open space provision by the most suitable organisation | Community Partnerships, Strategic Planning, Asset Management Team, Legal Services | Community Groups and Parish Councils |
| | | HDC will seek opportunities to work in partnership with and build capacity in Parish Councils and others to achieve local management of open space | Community Partnerships, Strategic Planning, Asset Management Team, Legal Services | Community Groups and Parish Councils |
| | Open Space provides services required by the community | Continue to maintain the Asset Database and Open Space mapping to provide information on all public and publicly accessible open space | Strategic Planning | |
| | | Use the District Council website as a means to share information and promote services and events | Strategic Planning, Leisure Services | |

Draft Open Spaces Strategy Aims and Actions Plan 2016 - 2021

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| <p>Objective 3: To develop a prioritised and strategic approach to open space improvements and that this remains an inclusive process.</p> | <p>That Open Space Improvements are prioritised according to budgetary constraints and:</p> <p>Priority 1: must do projects to comply with legislation</p> <p>Priority 2: projects that will improve facilities or amenities and are a community priority</p> <p>Priority 3: projects that are purely cosmetic</p> | <p>Rank projects as a list of priorities to take account of those that are required because of legislation to those that would be good to do but are not a legislative requirement</p> | <p>Asset Management Team, Engineers team, Contracted Services</p> | |
| | <p>That a full consultation is undertaken when making decisions concerning open space improvement projects, but not for projects or works that are required to comply with legislation.</p> | <p>Consult the local community, Ward members, open space users and other stakeholders all appropriate methods when delivering improvement projects</p> | <p>Asset Management Team, Contracted Services</p> | <p>Community Groups and Parish Councils</p> |
| | | <p>Use the annual resident satisfaction survey, and other feedback to sample public opinion concerning open space use and use this information to prioritise improvements</p> | <p>Contracted Services, Leisure Services</p> | <p>Community Groups and Parish Councils</p> |
| | | <p>Work in association with other Council departments and external agencies and partners to be fully inclusive in future consultations</p> | <p>Asset Management Team, Contracted Services, Leisure Services</p> | |

Draft Open Spaces Strategy Aims and Actions Plan 2016 - 2021

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| Objective 4: To ensure that open space retains a detailed and well documented specification and schedule of maintenance which is appropriate to the open space level of use and location | That a Bill of quantities and Specification is produced for the new Grounds Maintenance Contract | Ensure that all parks and open spaces meet Harborough District Council's maintenance standards | Contracted Services | |
| | That the Bill of Quantities and Specification is flexible to allow management of open space to change according to priorities and budget | Work closely with community groups, partners and private landowners to ensure existing areas of open space are available for public use and are maintained in an appropriate condition. | Contracted Services | Community Groups and Parish Councils, Local Landowners |
| Objective 5: To ensure that open space is providing services the community wants, open to all and is protected for future generations. | That community opinion concerning open space is monitored and used to inform open space provision | To implement the policies relating to open space sport and recreation sites in the national Planning Policy Framework 2012 and the Core Strategy 2011 or subsequent adopted policies. | Asset management Team, Contracted Services, Leisure Services, Strategic Planning | Development industry, Community Groups and Parish Councils |
| | | Use the annual resident satisfaction survey, and other feedback to sample public opinion concerning open space use and use this information to prioritise improvements | Asset Management Team, Contracted Services, Leisure Services, Strategic Planning | Community Groups and Parish Councils |
| | That open space is not lost for public use, and is protected for people and wildlife | Review the provision of accessible woodlands and seek to address any shortfalls | Strategic Planning | Local Landowners, Woodland Trust, Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife trust |

Draft Open Spaces Strategy Aims and Actions Plan 2016 - 2021

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| | | Ensure that open spaces are considered in social, economic and environmental strategies | Strategic Planning | Local Authority partners, other partners |
| | | Local Green Space will be identified, designated and protected in the New Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plans | Strategic Planning | Parish Councils and Communities |
| Aim 2. The natural environment, conservation and habitat is enhanced and protected | | | | |
| Objective 6: To promote better habitat and conservation and work with partners to manage key sites in line with best practice and site management plans where appropriate. | That habitat and conservation is protected and enhanced. | Maintain an appropriate balance between amenity areas and areas for wildlife protection/enhancement. | Strategic Planning, Contracted Services, Asset management Team | |
| | | Liaise with partners to ensure areas for habitat and biodiversity are appropriately managed and where possible enhanced. | Contracted Services, Strategic Planning | Local Landowners, Woodland Trust, Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife trust, Stepping Stones |

Draft Open Spaces Strategy Aims and Actions Plan 2016 - 2021

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| | | Promote the planting of woodland within the District to better achieve The Woodland Trust access standard and the relevant actions of the LRWT Biodiversity Action Plan . | Strategic Planning | Local Landowners, Woodland Trust, Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife trust |
| | That site management plans are developed on key sites, where appropriate; | Periodically review site management plans to ensure that natural habitats are being managed in the most appropriate way. | Contracted Services | |
| | Grounds Maintenance practices are reviewed periodically | Periodically review grounds maintenance practices to ensure that natural habitats are being managed in the most appropriate way. | Contracted Services | |
| | Sustainable Drainage Systems are routinely used on new housing development landscaping schemes to provide habitat, biodiversity and multifunctional open space | To provide a Developer Guidance note regarding the planting and landscaping of SUDS for promotion of biodiversity | Strategic Planning | Leicestershire County Council as lead flood authority, Steeping Stones, Welland Valley Partnership |
| | | Comments to be provided at an early stage for landscaping and SUDS schemes on new development | Engineering Team, Strategic Planning, Development Control | Development Industry |

Draft Open Spaces Strategy Aims and Actions Plan 2016 - 2021

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| <p>Objective 7: Manage green spaces wherever possible in order to protect biodiversity and create multifunctional greenspaces for current and future generations to enjoy and learn.</p> | <p>Biodiversity is protected</p> | <p>Continue to work in partnership with Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust, Woodland Trust and others to ensure habitat and biodiversity is protected, enhanced and accessible.</p> | <p>Contracted Services, Strategic Planning</p> | <p>Local Landowners, Woodland Trust, Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife trust, Welland Valley Partnership</p> |
| | <p>Multifunctional greenspaces is created and protected for future generations</p> | <p>Establish and manage, where appropriate, meadow land, wetland and woodland on open space, taking account of management cost increases or decreases.</p> | <p>Strategic Planning, Contracted Services</p> | <p>Local Landowners, Woodland Trust, Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife trust, Welland Valley Partnership</p> |
| <p>Objective 8: Ensure open space is retained for increased indirect environmental benefits such as surface water</p> | <p>SUDs is routinely used on open space for flood mitigation and biodiversity enhancement</p> | <p>Promote the good design, landscaping, planting and construction of Sustainable Drainage systems and techniques that establish areas for habitat and biodiversity.</p> | <p>Strategic Planning, Development Control, Engineering team</p> | <p>Development industry</p> |

Draft Open Spaces Strategy Aims and Actions Plan 2016 - 2021

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| attenuation and mitigation against climate change. | Open space contributes towards mitigation against climate change now and in the future | Harborough District Council will adopt new water attenuation structures and balancing lagoons (where other suitable partner management cannot be found) with an appropriate commuted sum in line with the Provision for Open space Sport and Recreation policy. | Asset management Team, Contracted Services, Strategic Planning, Legal Services, Engineering team, Development Control | Development Industry |
| | | Harborough District Council will monitor flood alleviation structure not only for flood mitigation but for habitat management and improvement. | Engineering team Asset Management team | |
| Aim 3. To ensure open spaces are safe and litter free, and contribute towards a safe environment | | | | |
| Objective 9: Ensure open space sites are maintained in a clean condition | Open Spaces meets a minimum of Grade B when rated against LEQSE criteria (Grade A in zone 1) | Ensure the frequency of litter picks is appropriate to maintain the site to at least Grade A in zone 1 areas and Grade B elsewhere according to LEQSE Remove graffiti within ??? | Contracted Services | |
| | | Address and action reports of dog fouling and broken glass within??? | Contracted Services, Community Safety Team | |
| | | Undertake a programme of park furniture and play area cleansing on an annual basis | Contracted Services | |

Draft Open Spaces Strategy Aims and Actions Plan 2016 - 2021

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| | | Liaise and work with partners to ensure open spaces across the District are maintained safely and litter free | Contracted Services | Parish Councils and Community Groups |
| Objective 10: Reduce the fear of crime and antisocial behaviour on open spaces. | Open Space users have a greater perception of safety when using open spaces | The community safety team will continue to work in open spaces to reduce anti social behaviour, dog fouling and graffiti and issue penalties to offenders. | Community Safety Team | Parish Councils |
| | | The community safety team will continue to encourage people to report incidences of crime or anti social behaviour | Community Safety Team | Parish Councils and Community groups |
| | | Ensure staff, volunteers and contractors that come into contact with children and vulnerable adults meet the requirements of HDC Safeguarding Duties and Policies | Equality and Diversity Team | Parish Councils and Community Groups |
| Objective 11: Balance the conflicting requirements to reduce crime and antisocial behaviour, but still provide interesting landscaped areas which protect the natural environment | Landscaping is used that balances public safety with amenity planting and biodiversity | Work with landscapers and other partners to reduce the fear of crime through good design that is not detrimental to users or biodiversity | Strategic Planning Team | Development Industry |
| | | Monitor the contract to ensure planting is appropriately managed to prevent sight lines becoming overgrown. | Contracted Services | |
| | | Where appropriate use 'soft policing' to monitor areas of open space. | Strategic planning team | Development Insustry |

Draft Open Spaces Strategy Aims and Actions Plan 2016 - 2021

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| <p>Objective 12: Reduce the risk of accidents on all typologies of open space and play areas by regular inspection, repair and replacement where needed</p> | <p>Risk is managed appropriately on play areas and open spaces.</p> | <p>Contracted Services and their appointed contractor will continue to monitor open spaces and play areas as per the grounds maintenance contract</p> | <p>Contracted Services</p> | |
| | | <p>Ensure that RoSPA inspections on play areas are undertaken annually and all defects are repaired or items replaced</p> | <p>Contracted Services</p> | |
| | | <p>Ensure a rolling programme of tree inspections is undertaken using an Arboricultural Association approved consultant on a five yearly cycle, or more often if recommended. All works arising from the survey will be carried out according to the recommendations</p> | <p>Contracted Services</p> | |
| | | <p>Memorials in Cemeteries and Closed Churchyards will be inspected for safety on a five year cycle by suitably qualified persons. All works arising will be carried out according to the risk assessment at the time of inspection.</p> | <p>Contracted Services, Asset Management Team</p> | |
| | <p>Replacement of equipment is undertaken on a cyclical basis, with repairs undertaken in a timely manner as required</p> | <p>Ensure that RoSPA inspections on play areas are undertaken annually and all defects are repaired or items replaced</p> | <p>Contracted Services</p> | |
| | | <p>Play equipment will be replaced on an ongoing basis, with adequate funding made available to Contracted Services following</p> | <p>Contracted Services, Asset Management Team</p> | |

Draft Open Spaces Strategy Aims and Actions Plan 2016 - 2021

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| | | the annual RoSPA audit of play provision. | | |
| Aim 4: Voluntary groups are supported to use and manage open spaces | | | | |
| Objective 13: District Council teams are set up to providing suitable support and advice to volunteer groups operating on open space. | That a suitable structure will be maintained at the District Council to support volunteers | Teams should review structures to ensure that they are sufficiently customer focussed to support volunteering on open spaces. | Corporate Management team and Senior management team | |
| | That teams have the knowledge and resources to support, and advise volunteer and community groups | Teams should ensure volunteers are given timely and suitable support and advice, especially during the first few months of a project. | All Services | |
| | | Teams will ensure that volunteer groups are signposted towards organisations that can provide further support, advice or funding | All Services | |
| Objective 14: District Council officers will seek to encourage and facilitate new volunteering opportunities where | Volunteering will be promoted and supported on open space | Teams should ensure that bureaucracy is avoided to allow volunteers to operate successfully on District Council open spaces | Asset Management Team, Contracted Services, Strategic Planning | |
| | | A suitable protocol will be developed to issue licences to operate on District Council open spaces for less than 5 years | Asset management Team, Legal Services, Strategic Planning, Director of Community Services | |

Draft Open Spaces Strategy Aims and Actions Plan 2016 - 2021

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| resources permit. | | A suitable protocol will be developed to issue leases for volunteers and community groups to operate on District Council open space. | Asset management Team, Legal Services, Portfolio Holder | |
| Objective 15: Where funding permits, S106 off site open space contributions will be directed towards volunteer groups that can add value to open space provision or have provided match funding and can demonstrate sustainable projects | Support for volunteering groups will be prioritised to those groups that can add value to open space provision and are sustainable | Developer contributions that are collected for off site open space improvements will be directed as a priority to volunteer groups that can demonstrate that they have secured, or will secure, additional funding for their project. | Community Partnership team, Strategic Planning | |
| | | Distribution of S106 contributions will meet the Allocations (grants) process and be in accordance with the Provision for Open Space Sport and Recreation. | Community Partnerships team, Strategic Planning | |
| | | Sustainable and long term projects will be supported as a priority | Community Partnerships team, Strategic Planning, Asset Management Team | |
| | | Teams should identify key areas where volunteer support will provide a clear benefit to the Council. | All Services | |

| Aim 5: Deliver value for money services when managing open space | | | | |
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| Objective 16: To deliver an appropriate level of Grounds Maintenance service, recognising the usage and profile of an open space. | That the Grounds Maintenance delivers an appropriate service that is prioritised according to open space usage and needs | Retender the Grounds Maintenance contact with appropriate specifications and Bill of Quantities | Contracted Services, Procurement Team | |
| | | Ensure that an appropriate Grounds Maintenance specification is written to allow a differentiation of service level between different typologies or locations of open space. | Contracted Services | |
| | | Prioritise resources to those open spaces that are most used or have the highest profile. | Contracted Services | |
| Objective 17: Periodically review provision of landscape features and amenities available on open spaces | That facilities and amenities are appropriate and deliver value for money | Periodically undertake a cost of maintenance and benefit of provision analysis of landscape features and other amenities provided on open space to assess whether they are still appropriate and offer value for money | Contracted Services | |
| | | Use the results of the cost benefit analysis to determine whether existing landscape features and amenities should be removed, repaired, remodelled or be subject to alternative management when assessing available budgets. | Contracted Services | |

Aim 6. Open Space supports business and income is maximised

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| Objective 18: Review pricing policy for open spaces | The pricing policy is appropriate and meets the requirements of the service | Review the sites which are used by external organisations, compile a list of lettings, licences and leases and consider whether a pricing review can be undertaken. | Asset management team | |
| | | Review the pricing policies and scale of fees and charges for all typologies open space to assess whether the charge meets the real cost of provision | Asset Management Team, Finance team | |
| | | Review the exclusive right of burial policy to determine whether the time period for exclusive right of burial should be altered and whether a renewal of the exclusive right of burial should be introduced. | Corporate Services | |
| Objective 19: Investigate the benefit of sponsorship of open space | Open Space will achieve sponsorship to subsidise maintenance | Review where open space could benefit from sponsorship and consider whether it is possible to issue tender notices for specific locations | Asset Management Team | |
| Objective 20: Continue to support community | External funding opportunities through community groups will be realised and external funding | Continue, with partners, to promote grants through the Grants Surgery. | Community Partnerships, Strategic Planning | |

Draft Open Spaces Strategy Aims and Actions Plan 2016 - 2021

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| <p>groups in seeking external funding for open space projects</p> | <p>maximised</p> | <p>Officers to identify and be aware of the support available for community groups to apply for external funding</p> | | |
| | | <p>To encourage community groups and Parish Councils to have 'shovel ready' schemes to take advantage of funding when available</p> | <p>Community Partnerships, Strategic planning</p> | |
| | | <p>Continue to work with Parish Councils and other community groups to ensure that open space projects are identified, costed and included in Section 106 agreements where appropriate.</p> | <p>Community Partnerships, Strategic Planning, Development Control, Legal Services</p> | |
| <p>Objective 21: Support Local Business first</p> | <p>Local business is benefitting from work and projects relating to open spaces</p> | <p>Give opportunity for local business to quote or tender for works in open spaces</p> | <p>Asset management Team, Procurement team, Contracted Services</p> | |
| | | <p>Consider the benefits provided by local employment when issuing service contracts one off works to companies.</p> | <p>Asset management Team, Procurement team, Contracted Services</p> | |
| | | <p>Where tenders are submitted of equal value priority should be given, where possible, to a local business or employer.</p> | <p>Asset management Team, Procurement team, Contracted Services</p> | |

Aim 7. Ensure that open spaces support health and wellbeing of local people

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| Objective 22: Promote activities for open spaces use that are linked to health benefits | Activities that promote health increase on open spaces, and the number of people taking regular exercise increases | Continue to provide open spaces suitable for organised sport | Asset Management Team, Contracted Services, Community Partnership, Strategic Planning | |
| | | Leisure team continue to monitor the number of persons taking regular exercise | Community Partnerships | |
| | | Continue to provide areas for children's play | Asset Management team Contracted Services | |
| | | Work with Partners and landowners to create a network of greenways that allow walking and cycling , either for leisure or commuting | Strategic planning, Community Partnerships | |
| | | Continue to provide advice and support for community groups and individuals who want to promote health and wellbeing activities and facilitate use of open spaces for these activities where possible | Community Partnerships, Strategic Planning | |
| Objective 23: Increase provision of 'green gyms' for all ages | Opportunities created for persons to access green gyms | Provide additional space for outdoor gyms and activities that support older people to exercise | Asset Management Team, Contracted Services, Strategic Planning, Community Partnership | |
| | | Work with partners and community groups to provide green gyms where appropriate | Strategic Planning, Community Partnership | |