

Stapenhill Gardens

Burton on Trent

Management Plan 2021-2030

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Foreword

Stapenhill Gardens is one of the finest parks in the Borough, and, as such, very important to the Council's commitments to delivering its corporate priorities of Environment & Health and Wellbeing. Furthermore, the park plays an important role in Council's efforts to combat climate change and a number of actions in this plan are designed to positively contribute towards this. Every year Stapenhill Gardens forms the centre piece of the Council's in Bloom entry. Stapenhill Gardens is an important park to residents of Burton and East Staffordshire and is cherished with great nostalgia. Therefore, the plan seeks to harness those feelings in a modern 21st century park that pays due respect to the history of Burton and its residents.

The Council's 380 hectares of parks and open spaces contribute much to what attracts people to live and work in the Borough and provides ample opportunities for all to lead healthier more enjoyable lives. As such, the drive to improve quality in our most valuable green spaces is one which I support and commend. In particular, our ambition to achieve a Green Flag Award for Stapenhill Gardens is one I totally support and wish the officers and the local community every success in this endeavour.



Cllr Dennis Fletcher
Cabinet Member

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Introduction

Stapenhill Gardens is predominantly formal in style and retains much of its original layout, complemented by a small play area. The backdrop for this park is truly inspiring with extensive views of the river, enhanced by many floral beds which add a vibrancy of colour. Though split by St Peter's Bridge, the gardens continue around St Peter's churchyard where they link into Stapenhill Hollows and The Woodland Walk.

In 1933 Henry Goodger a successful solicitor, gave the land adjoining the former Stapenhill House and its garden to the public as a pleasure ground; in memory of his late mother. The Goodger family were significant local figures of the time. Miss Mary Goodger also of Stapenhill House, had been elected as the first woman Councillor in 1923, and she went on to become the first woman mayor of Burton in 1931.

Stapenhill Gardens occupies a central location on the eastern side of Burton upon Trent. Its location is historically significant in that it sits adjacent to the eastern end of the Ferry Bridge; provided by Sir Michael Arthur Bass (later Lord Burton) in 1889 to replace a previous ferry service. The viaduct was provided the following year and this created a second safe crossing point across the Trent Washlands, linking the settlement of Stapenhill with the commercial centre of the town. Prior to this as many as 17,000 people per month used the ferry to cross the river but the route across the Washlands was muddy and treacherous. A second road bridge known as

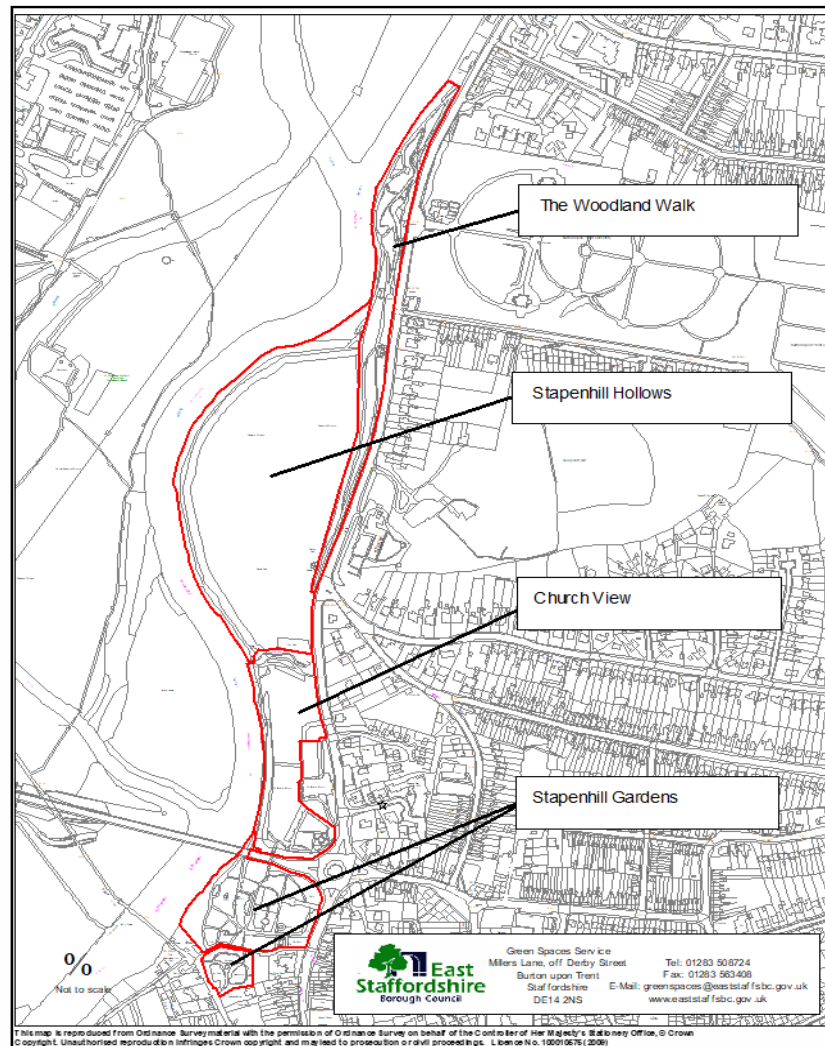
St Peter's bridge was built in 1985 to ease congestion in the town, leading to the loss of a central portion of the park, but reinforcing the strategic location of Stapenhill Gardens.

Moving into the forthcoming decade the Council's aim is to preserve local people's warmth and good regard of Stapenhill Gardens and to positively harness that nostalgia. The onset of the Coronavirus has seen the use of parks rise exponentially, whilst this has been challenging at times, the Council will aim to foster this new found interest and create an environment that contains something for everyone. However, this will be done using 21st century approaches that reflect an increasing need to think about individual well-being (physical and mental) and addressing the climate crisis. To this end, in 2020 the Council adopted a borough wide Parks Development Plan that sets out the Council's ambitions for all parks and open spaces over the next decade. Anchoring this plan are the clear strategic pillars of health and well-being (physical and mental) and climate change.

Location Plan

The area of Stapenhill Gardens, Stapenhill Hollows and The Woodland Walk is considered throughout this plan in the zones identified here.

Stapenhill Gardens - Management Zones



Stapenhill Gardens - General Layout



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History

1857- Stapenhill Woodland Walk (Burton's oldest public park) is laid out by Mr Edward Cliff.

1864- Current Trent Bridge is built

1865- Burton rowing regatta is held for the first time

1866- Stapenhill Cemetery is opened

1899- Ferry Bridge, provided by Michael Bass, is opened to replace the ferry service

1926- Trent bridge is widened to accommodate increase in motor vehicle traffic

1933- Henry Goodger "gifts" the land adjoining the former Stapenhill House and its garden to the public as a pleasure ground; in memory of his late mother.

1958- Stapenhill Swan statute is constructed in Stapenhill Gardens and becomes an iconic Burton landmark.

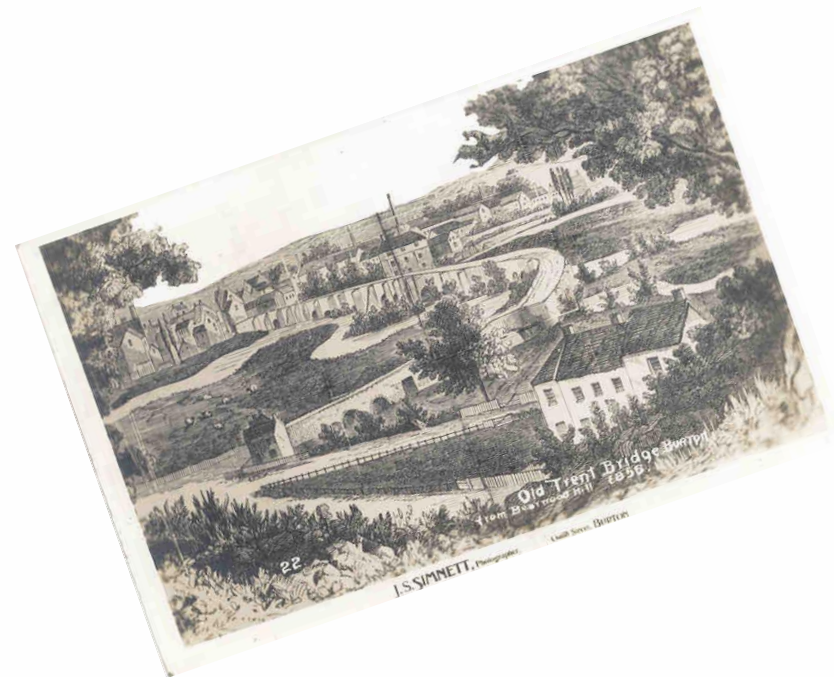
1985- St Peters bridge, a second road bridge, is opened to ease congestion around Burton.

2016- Stapenhill Ferry Bridge is closed for a period of restoration re-opening in September 2016. Diversitree sculpture designed by local school children, is installed at Stapenhill Gardens.

2018- Stapenhill Swan rededication ceremony and installation of Coltman VC memorial.

2020- New upgraded children's play area introduced at Stapenhill Gardens. Creation of Reflection Arboretum. Tram shelter repaired and restored

2022- Hosted the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations



Community Use: Something for everyone

- ✓ Home of Leander and Phoenix Rowing Clubs.
- ✓ Fishing rights and the base for Coors Angling Club
- ✓ Picnic benches and tables
- ✓ New upgraded, in 2020, fenced children's play at Stapenhill Gardens
- ✓ Historic Stapenhill Swan
- ✓ Centre of Burton in Bloom entry
- ✓ Diversitree sculpture
- ✓ Landmark and historic Ferry bridge
- ✓ Victorian style tiered planters
- ✓ Fitness boot camps
- ✓ Coffee and snack van
- ✓ Bird feeding areas
- ✓ Dog walking
- ✓ Woodland Walk
- ✓ Brizlincote Family Nature Walk
- ✓ Community cricket pitch
- ✓ Coltman VC stone
- ✓ Golden decade tree planting celebration
- ✓ Outdoor Music performances
- ✓ Reflection Arboretum



A Welcoming Place

- ✿ Two main entrance off Main Street and Fleet Street with parking available at Main Street, Ferry Street, Stapenhill Hollows and Watson Street
- ✿ Maintenance takes place throughout the year and is undertaken by uniformed Council contractors from ID Verde.
- ✿ Noticeboards are present in key locations containing the latest information and important contact numbers/details
- ✿ Stapenhill Gardens area covered by CCTV
- ✿ Volunteer designed interpretation boards welcome and guide visitors around the park and also provide interesting information on the history of the area and Burton on Trent.
- ✿ Litter picked 2 days a week by the Council's contractor.
- ✿ Graffiti is removed within 24 hours when identified
- ✿ Toilet block at Stapenhill Gardens owned and managed by ESBC was extensively refurbished in 2015.
- ✿ Easily accessible from Burton Town Centre with finger posts to guide visitors around the Gardens and other nearby attractions.
- ✿ Award winning floral displays from May to October
- ✿ Zero tolerance of litter and dog fouling with public space protection order in place.
- ✿ Dogs welcomed but encouraged to be on a lead



General Maintenance and Safety

ID Verde maintain Stapenhill Gardens for ESBC and, although not based on site, can be seen about the park during a typical day. ID Verde staff wear, distinct uniforms with fluorescent vests or jackets with logos and identification badges clearly visible. Examples of the uniform are illustrated below.

FLEECE JACKET



POLO SHIRT



Action	Frequency
Grass cutting	10 per year (March to November)
Shrub bed spot treatment	3 per year (April-July-September)
Shrub bed maintenance with long handled shears	5 per year (June, July, August, September, October)
Play inspection (visual)	2 per week
Play inspection (operational)	4 per year (1 each quarter)
Play inspection (annual)	1 per year
Property and building inspections	annually
Play equipment painting	Every 5 years
Play area surface treatment	3 per year (April, July, September)
Safety Surface inspections	2 per week
ESBC Officer whole site inspections	12 per year
Bin emptying and litter picking	2 per week (Monday & Friday)
Picnic area chemical control	3 per year
Sweeping	Weekly following mowing
River bank erosion	Monthly as part of general site inspection
Toilet cleaning and inspection	Twice daily

The table on the previous page sets out the contractual works and operational inspection regimes quantitatively. ESBC inspect all parks on a monthly basis using a balanced scorecard methodology (an example can be seen in the Appendices). This method enables the officers to consider the entirety of the park from different and varying perspectives. These inspections are conducted monthly. The exception to this monthly whole site regime takes place in December and January when officers revert to tree inspections that are conducted in line with the Council's Tree Management Policy. But, as can be seen from the balanced scorecard, trees are also reviewed all year round.

Sitting behind these monthly inspections are an annual site audit conducted by the Council's officer responsible for biodiversity and horticulture. These annual audits seek to assess the level of biodiversity in the park and identify further opportunities to enhance the open space through environmental improvements.

Repair works or items such as graffiti when identified by officers or by members of the public are reported to contractors on the same day and are given a red, amber or green rating. Red denotes emergency works and requires an immediate response. Amber within one week and green up to three weeks. All works allocated to the contractors are tracked in real time using the contractors ACORN system. Details on how the public can report issues to the Council are set out below.

Important and useful safety information

Opening times. Stapenhill Garden gates are open 364 days a year. During the summer the park is open 8:00-21:00. Winter opening times are 8:00-16:30.

The Council and ID Verde strive to ensure that the park is maintained to the highest standard. Unfortunately, sometimes things do go wrong or break. To report a fault contact the Open Spaces Team on 01283 508013 during office hours. Weekends and evenings contact the Council out of hours number on 01283 517111 for emergencies.

Stapenhill Gardens is enjoyed and respected by the majority of visitors. However, a small minority taint this experience for others. To report ASB contact the Police 101 number or report it via the Staffordshire Police or ESBC websites. Dog Fouling and Littering can be reported to the Council's Community & Civil Enforcement team on 01283 508856 or community.civil_enforcement@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk

Conservation & Heritage

East Staffordshire Borough Council, through the Climate Change Strategy have committed to becoming carbon neutral by 2040. As part of this strategy the Council have declared both a climate change and ecological emergency, Stapenhill Gardens, as the premier park in Burton, can play a key role in response to these emergencies.

Across Stapenhill Gardens the Council have planted a number of native trees, relaxed the mowing regime and introduced a wildflower mix to encourage pollinators. Trees planted in 2022 are to be all designated “Queens Trees” to celebrate the platinum jubilee. Furthermore, the recently re-rendered grounds maintenance contract, requires the contractor to utilise vehicles and equipment that does not use fossil fuels and reduce the use of chemicals. For many years, the Council have operated a peat free policy. All none green waste generated on site is taken to the contractor’s waste facility and recycled wherever possible. 100% of green waste is recycled.

Stapenhill Gardens and the surrounding area is home to a rich and diverse flora and fauna that can be enjoyed by visitors to the park. Feeding the ducks is an activity that has been enjoyed by generations of visitors to Stapenhill Gardens. However, the modern visitor is encouraged not to feed the birds bread. Winged friends are given a helping hand with bird and bat boxes, installed by the Wildlife Trust, visible throughout the park.

In partnership with Brizlincote Parish Council, Stapenhill Gardens has been incorporated into the wider Brizlincote

Family Nature Walk that provides visitors with a varied walking route which highlights environmental features along the way.

The Council makes every endeavour to encourage wildlife and examples of some of the species can that can be found locally:

- ✓ Swans, Canada Geese, Heron, Robin, Wren, Chaffinch, Moorhen, Cormorants, Kestrels, Buzzards, Snipe, Kingfishers, Herons, Wrens, Reed Buntings, Reed Warblers, Little Grebe, Little Egrets, Chetti’s Warbler, Gulls, Sparrow hawk, Ducks, Geese
- ✓ Carp, Grayling, Rudd, Dace, Roach, Chub, Bleak, Minnows, Perch, Gudgeon, Barbel, Ells, Trout, Pike, Bream, Bullhead, European Eel, Spined Loach.
- ✓ Daubenton & Common Pipistrelle bats
- ✓ Otter, Fox, Squirrel, Badger
- ✓ Rye grass, Timothy hair grass, tufted hair grass, creeping buttercup, ribwort plantain, silverweed, black medick, common bird's-foot-trefoil, great burnet , common knapweed, hard rush, hairy sedge, great willow herb, common marsh-bedstraw, gipsywort, marsh woundwort, cock's-foot, branched bur-reed, reed sweet-grass, Yorkshire-fog, creeping bent, bulrush, soft rush, purple-loosestrife, reed canary-grass, yellow iris, meadowsweet, common chickweed, cow parsley, hedge garlic, meadow buttercup, germander speedwell, yarrow, common cats ear and dovesfoot cranesbill, meadow vetchling, yarrow, salad burnet

Inspection and maintenance regimes for the park's trees follow the standard prescription for the Borough and is delivered through the Council's Tree Management Policy.

- ✓ Tree species include: Ash, Beech, Black Poplar, Common Alder, Common Elder, Common Lime, Common Walnut, Copper Beech, Corsican Pine, Crack Willow, English Elm, English Oak, Hawthorn, Holly, Horse Chestnut, Hybrid Poplar, Japanese Cherry, Lawson Cypress, Leyland Cypress, Lombardy Poplar, Norway Maple, Rowan, Scots Pine, Silver Birch, Swedish Whitebeam, Sycamore, Weeping Willow, Western Red Cedar, White Poplar, White Willow



Community Involvement

Stapenhill Gardens and the river Trent are free to access for community groups and attract a wide variety of activities ranging from organised sports through to mass celebration events. Group leaders from each of the community groups are in regular touch with the Council and help to manage the park through their presence and exchanging information with the Council. The following organised groups are already active within the park:

Water, wickets or walking

The river Trent and the surrounding Washlands and Stapenhill Gardens are home to various organised sporting events and teams. Leander (formed in 1847) and Phoenix Rowing Clubs make extensive use of the river. Since 1865 the river has hosted the annual Burton Regatta with teams coming from a far afield to compete in this prestigious event. Lifebelts are provided along the length of river to assist those in distress and swimming is discouraged through the use of signage.

Away from the water, the community cricket pitch at the Hollows is utilised for informal play in the summer and is the site for an annual community festival that celebrates a local minority and their passion for cricket and food.

Those that like a more sedate pace are catered for with numerous paths that criss-cross the site, enabling visitors to stroll around the park at their leisure or as pleasant walk into nearby Burton town centre. Alternatively, visitors can enjoy the Brizlincote Family Nature Walk (created in partnership with Brizlincote Parish Council) which was completed in 2021. Details of the walk and a map can be found in the link below.

<https://brizlincote-pc.org.uk/about-the-parish/nature-walk/>

Fishing

The River Trent passing through Stapenhill Gardens is classed as free water, which entitles anyone who lives or works in Burton upon Trent to fish the stretch of water from the Leicester Line Bridge on Waterside Road through to the Newton Road recreation ground with just a rod license. Furthermore, the river is home to a fishing club, Coors Angling Club, regularly host fishing matches and events along the river.

Reflection Arboretum

In response to requests for people to have a spot to remember loved ones, the Council created the Reflection Arboretum in Stapenhill Gardens. Residents can purchase a tree- from a list of native species- and have it planted in the park to provide a permanent natural memorial. With the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic felt across the town, the arboretum has gained even greater poignancy and meaning to many local people.

Having fun and doing their bit

Volunteers have looked after and maintained a community garden at Stapenhill Hollows which has focused on introducing pollinating plants to encourage the growth of the local bee population.

Big top and big band

Given the versatility of the area, the nearby Washlands has also hosted a regular Circus. Only providers that don't use

animals in their displays are permitted to use the ground. Over the years this circus has proved a popular attraction for residents of the town.

Away from the big top, Stapenhill Gardens has welcomed "Force 10" a swing band that have performed outdoor concerts for local music lovers.

Schools and charities.

Stapenhill Gardens has proved a popular venue for schools, scouts, guides, and charities who want to carry out litter picks, host outdoor classrooms, study wildlife or want space to simply enjoy the outdoors.

FOREST (Friends of Renewing East Staffordshire Trees) Volunteers

In 2020 the Council created the FOREST volunteers programme to plant trees and encourage biodiversity through part of the Council's Climate change strategy. Like all volunteer programmes this scheme is about more than the environment and gives people the chance to exercise in the fresh air, meet people and make a real tangible difference. Many of the new trees planted in Stapenhill Gardens have been by volunteers.

Burton Swan trail

2020 saw the introduction of the Burton wide Swan Trail with swan sculptures painted by local artists and then placed in key locations across the town. Stapenhill Gardens was fortunate enough to host a few "feathered friends" with people from all backgrounds taking in part in visiting and locating

each and every one. Further details on the project can be found below.

<http://www.eaststaffsbc.gov.uk/es-news/burton-swan-trail-huge-success>

The Big Burton Carousel

Following the huge success of the Swan trail, 2022 saw the introduction of a Carousel trail to celebrate Burton's role in making the timeless prancing horses carousels. 30 galloping horses were designed by independent artists and positioned about the town.

Beer Barrel trail

2024 will see the third incarnation of the ESBC Arts team "trail" with the theme focusing on Burton's proud history as the centre of the UK brewing industry.

Want to host an event or get involved? Then contact the Open Spaces Team on 01283 508013 or e-mail openspacesteam@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk and the team would be happy to talk you through what is needed and current opportunities

Promoting Stapenhill Gardens

Stapenhill Gardens is well renowned locally and really has something for everyone. However, ESBC and partners are active in promoting the park.

ESBC has a dedicated webpage for Stapenhill Gardens which receives annual views exceeding 5,020, the second highest of any park in East Staffordshire. Furthermore, the Council develops an annual plan of marketing and communications activities to increase awareness and visits.

Promotion of parks and open spaces, much like consumer behaviour, is now focussed on digital engagement, developing digital media to bring parks and open spaces to life.

This includes having a virtual tour video embedded into the Stapenhill Gardens web page, highlighting the benefits of the open space and to further illustrate that the park genuinely has something for everyone and encourage more visitors.

The corporate social media channels are also utilised, to not only promote the park, but also distribute relevant information to residents on news, opening times and open space campaigns. Throughout 2020 social media has been a key tool in promoting sensible and safe use of parks as the number of users increased during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Stapenhill Gardens' features heavily in Council open spaces campaigns, such as the annual "In Bloom" awards, which

showcases the work of volunteers in developing and maintaining open spaces. ESBC have consistently achieved a gold standard for over a decade and have reached the national finals twice in the last four years.

Traditional media channels, such as press releases through the local written media, remain in use to promote events and news stories from the park throughout the year.

Promotion of the park is not just left to ESBC, partner organisations such as Leander rowing club and Staffordshire Wildlife Trust utilise their various social media platforms to promote events and share content.



Action Plan

The Action Plan for Stapenhill Gardens is derived from the SWOT analysis below, which is reviewed annually following a site tour with officers and other stakeholders. The resulting actions are defined for just one year with the Parks Development Plan providing the 10 year strategic vision for all ESBC owned open spaces.

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well used and regarded by the public (locals and visitors from outside Burton) • Varied and interesting visitor experience with free parking and good links to the town centre and the Washlands • Varied plants and wildlife • Tiered planting forms centrepiece of “In Bloom” entry • Good and well-developed links to community groups and users. Significant community activity. • “Diversitree” artwork • Links to other internal Council departments and external partners help to keep the park safe and secure • New re-vamped children’s play area • Public Space Protection Order for dogs on lead and zero tolerance of litter with fines issued to offenders 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited revenue budgets, resources and external income • Some dog fouling and occasional graffiti
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Washlands and TTTV project linkages • Volunteering opportunities • History of Stapenhill Gardens • Increased public awareness of climate change and ecological crises and changing perceptions • Utilise space to increase tree coverage • UKSPF funding • More people are “staying local” and enjoying parks • Potential for habitat creation and biodiversity enhancements 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • River bank erosion and the potential for flooding • Management costs and budget pressures • Further strain on Council budgets

Actions in 2024/25

Task	Cost	Lead	Objective	
Hold annual review of Stapenhill Gardens	n/a	All Partners	All categories	Nov 2024
Explore opportunity to introduce defibrillators at Stapenhill Gardens	£5,000	Michael Hovers	General Maintenance & Safety	August 2024
Continue with FOREST volunteers programme and tree planting	n/a	Paul Steed	All categories	On going
Continue to monitor river bank erosion	n/a	Carl Ainsworth	Biodiversity, Landscape and Heritage	Ongoing
Host the annual Picnic in the Park event	n/a	ESBC Arts	All categories	June 2024
Introduce "Beer barrel trail"	n/a	ESBC Arts	All categories	Summer 2024
Explore opportunities for strategic tree planting and habitat creation	TBC	Mark Jeffcote/ Michael Hovers	Biodiversity	Ongoing
Work with Regeneration team to identify opportunities for the use of UKSPF funding	TBC	Michael Hovers/ESBC Regeneration	All categories	March 2025

Appendix 1: Related Council Policies

Running and operating a local authority park impinges on a number of other Council policies and strategies. The Open Spaces team work in close collaboration with our colleagues

in other departments to ensure the requirements of these policies are implemented in all ESBC ran parks. These documents in their own right are long and detailed and providing a full copy of all these would make this management plan unwieldy. All of the items below can be made available on request or can be viewed on the Council's website. The name in brackets denotes the lead service for each of these policies.

- i) Climate change (Environmental Health)
- ii) Enforcement Policy (Enforcement)
- iii) Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy (Enforcement)
- iv) Maintenance and upkeep of buildings strategy (Facilities)
- v) Littering and graffiti policy (Waste Management)
- vi) Community Engagement Strategy (Neighbourhood Working)
- vii) Communications & Marketing (Marketing & Communications)
- viii) Public Space Protection Order (Community & Civil Enforcement)
- ix) Events Policy (Environmental Health)
- x) Health & Safety Policy (Health & Safety)

- xi) Waste Management & Recycling Policy (Waste Management)
- xii) Tree Management Policy (Open Spaces)
- xiii) Parks Development Plan (Open Spaces)
- xiv) Volunteer recruitment and retention plan (Open Spaces)
- xv) Arts Development Policy (Arts & Culture)

Appendix 2: Sample Balanced Scorecard Inspection

Parish:	Site:	Date:
Overall assessment	Non-contract items	
Welcoming?	Water-side access:	
	Car park surface and lines:	
	Path edges and surface:	
Safe & Secure?	Play equipment appearance:	
	Fixture and fittings appearance (includes fences and bollards):	
Well Maintained and clean?	Lighting (condition- including post- and functioning)	
	Memorials or artwork:	
What is missing or could be added?	Bridges and structures (e.g. fishing pegs):	
	Display brackets:	
	Condition of buildings:	

Contract Items (condition as per contract expectations)	Trees & Hedges (general condition and any works required)
Grass cutting and maintenance:	
Beds/weeds and edging:	
External displays:	
Cleaning- sweeping, litter picking bin emptying:	
Pitches	
Play equipment and surfaces:	
Furniture & Fixtures:	
Notices & Signs:	
Lifebuoys and belts	