

Essential Reference Paper 'D'

PARKS AND OPEN SPACES STRATEGY 2013 - 2018 – DRAFT HIGH LEVEL ACTION PLAN

This plan represents specific aims which are new and actionable arising from the strategy. It is not a full list of activities by the Council in this service area but is intended to give a strategic view of direction that outlines any significant changes in provision.

A more in depth description of the actions including timescales will be presented to Environmental Scrutiny as part of their forthcoming programme.

Main heading	Aim	Current Status	Related sub-headings
Identify specific projects to support the Council's Health and Wellbeing and Ageing Well agendas	To improve existing and introduce new facilities which provide opportunities for all ages to undertake healthy exercise and encourage participation in sports, subject to availability of resources.	Some facilities such as trim trails and walking routes have been introduced. Greater emphasis on healthy activity has been considered in relation to our play development programme. Health walk activities are in place and supported on some of our major parks.	Work with volunteers to guide improvements and support the initiatives to get more people into our parks.

<p>Identify opportunities to improve formal sports provision on open spaces with the Council's Leisure Services Contractor</p>	<p>Work with Everyone Active to identify potential business cases to improve provision within available resources and to meet identified need.</p>	<p>We currently work with our leisure Contractor on provision of football pitches and promotional events. There are opportunities to expand this partnership approach.</p>	
<p>Improve the integration of open space improvement plans with the Development Management process to determine how Section 106 contributions are allocated</p>	<p>To make better use of available funds and share projected schemes and aspirations for open space improvements with Development Management.</p>	<p>An initial matrix of needs for the 120 significant open spaces across the district has been drafted with reference to existing management plans. This approach will be researched in more detail and modified as a live and developing information source.</p>	
<p>Deliver the plans to ensure that minor sites in towns fit with the management plans of the major parks in the context of green infrastructure planning.</p>	<p>To encompass a network of open spaces in each main town within the wider programme of improvements. This will focus on access, interpretation and healthy activity.</p>	<p>Major parks have benefitted from a programme to create Green Space Action Plans that define their character and identify what needs to be improved. A wider approach had been</p>	<p>To maximise promotional activities and marketing to ensure residents are aware of the wide network of open space facilities available across the District.</p>

		developed for Bishop's Stortford (see Southern Country Park & Beyond management plan 2013-18).	Assess the viability of area based 'friends of groups (wider than one park).
To improve the play value of existing sites through innovative approaches that appeal to young people	Re- audit of all Council owned play areas identifying any remaining gaps in access, age provision, healthy activity and landscape design. This will inform the next Open Space Development Programme.	A programme of development has been completed in accordance with the original audit to identify specific equipment needs across the district. This focussed on the main play elements of swinging, rocking, rotating, balancing, climbing and sliding.	To identify areas for social gathering and natural play development, along with health and well being.
Work with partners and across directorates to identify needs and deliver projects to ensure sustainable drainage legislation and water framework directive requirements are incorporated into plans when developing open spaces	Liaise with other departments to support the water framework directive and engage with stakeholders and partners to ensure emerging projects take this objective into consideration.		

Develop partnerships and encourage local groups and organisations to better utilise our open space resources	To explore the potential for adding value to and identifying potential income sources in our open spaces by facilitating more “things to do” such as boot camps and local events and explore collaborative ways of managing our open spaces.	The Council currently works with a range of organisations to provide activities on its open spaces such as tennis, bowls and canoeing. We plan to look for opportunities to extend this.	To develop ways to support local groups such as scouts or wildlife enthusiasts to run events on our open spaces. To work with partners to promote the use of parks and open spaces for community events / festivals and active recreation such as walking clubs. To ensure that spaces are ‘multi-purpose’ and meet the needs of a wide range of users, where possible.
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