

ST. JOHNS PARK



Green Flag Application & Management Plan

New Plan: January 2018



Foreword



As Cabinet Member of Service Delivery and representative for the Parks and Public Open Spaces throughout the District, I am proud to endorse this management plan as a guide for the future development of the St Johns Park reflecting the high standards of management and maintenance practices that the Council strives to achieve.

The landscape of our rural district is amongst the finest in the country, with two distinct 'Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty' – the High Weald and the South Downs. Management of the Council's green spaces throughout the district endeavours to complement these important natural areas. St Johns Park is an excellent example of one of Mid Sussex District Council's green spaces that has some wonderful and unique public facilities. This urban park is close to the town centre and has been developed to encourage participation in formal and informal sport and non-sport activities for the residents of and visitors to Burgess Hill.

The park has two distinct areas with cricket outfield and wickets to the east and informal recreation to the west. The cricket outfield area is registered with the Charities Commission and Mid Sussex District Council are the trustees and custodians for the preservation and conservation for this important aspect of the park. The area to the west is owned by the District Council and has been developed to encourage informal leisure activities and accommodates the largest skate ramp facilities in the District.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gary Marsh'.

Councillor Gary Marsh



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Introduction

0.1 Summary of Management Plan

St Johns Park is one of Mid Sussex District Council's premier parks. This management plan has the flexibility to be annually updated until it is fully reviewed after a period of five years.

This management plan has been written to:-

- Provide a written record of how the site is managed, maintained and developed.
- Provide a vehicle for the Green Flag Application.
- Enable the interested user or local resident to find out more about the site itself e.g. its history, ecology, features and usage etc.
- Provide a concise summary of all the myriad policies, strategies and guidelines etc. that have a bearing on how the site is managed and developed in the future.
- Provide a working reference document for both the Council staff and maintenance contractors for its long-term.
- Provide a basis for local consultation especially in relation to the developmental work

1 Section 1: Site Information

1.1 Technical Information

1.1.1 Land Tenure

St Johns Park is registered with the Charities Commission (Reg No. 305202) and Mid Sussex District Council are the trustees and custodians for the preservation, regulation and conservation of the park in perpetuity. The dedicated landscape teams within the Leisure and Sustainability Service are responsible for the management and maintenance of St Johns Park.

1.1.2 Location

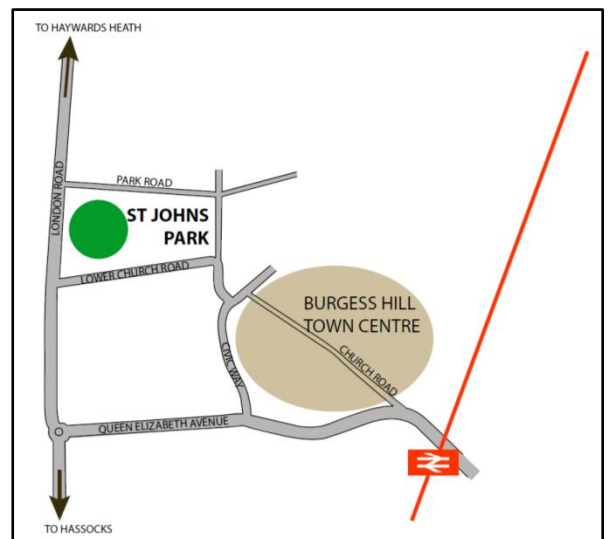
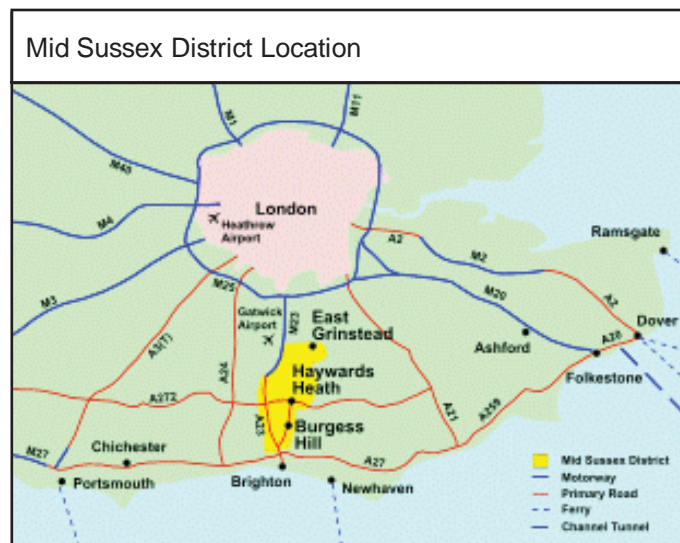
Address: Park Road, Burgess Hill RH15 8HG

Directions:

By Car: St Johns Park is located off of the B2036 London Road between Hassocks and Haywards Heath

By Train: Burgess Hill Railway (Southern) 0.5 miles away and Wivelsfield Railway Station (Thameslink) 0.8 miles away.

By Bus: Buses stop on Lower Church Road adjacent to St Johns Park, or it's a 15 minute walk from Burgess Hill train station



1.1.3 Site Context

Strategic & Local Context

The public recreation ground of St John's Park is sited in the center of Burgess Hill just to the north-west of the parish church of St. John's. It covers 4.9 hectares of level ground and provides a number of sporting and recreational facilities for the general public. Featured within its layout are lawns, flower beds, mature trees, a cricket pitch, tennis courts, playground areas and a skateboard park. At the park's north-west corner stands a Victorian lodge which currently houses a nursery school.

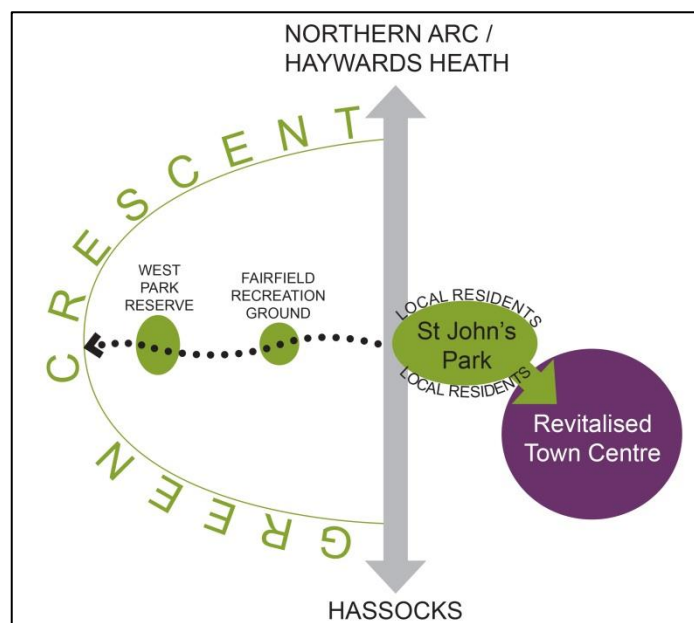
Burgess Hill is one of the three key central shopping and civic areas for the District. Along with the other 2 principle towns in the district (East Grinstead and Haywards Heath), Mid Sussex has developed a 20 year revitalisation and redevelopment vision for the town centres as part of the 'Better Mid Sussex Partnership'. Its key aims are to develop:

'A town of quality, which attracts and retains business and people through maximising its rail connections and offering a high quality life with a stronger community focus.'

'A town that balances forward thinking with traditional values and that offer an opportunity for all.'

Although this vision is primarily based on the town center it also impacts on how St Johns Park is managed. Certain key principles from the visions strategic objective can be applied to the site:

- Improve levels of accessibility
- Safe, direct and attractive routes
- Engaging walking and cycling
- Create user friendly spaces
- Providing a greater mix of uses
- Sustainability



Immediate Surroundings

Northern Boundary: **Park Road** which is primarily large residential properties

Eastern Boundary: **St Johns Road** which is mixed residential properties, commercial properties and the St Johns Evangelist church

Southern Boundary: **Lower Church Road** which is mixed residential properties, commercial properties

Western Boundary: The **B2036 London Road** runs North to Haywards Heath and South to Hassocks and made up primarily of commercial properties

1.1.4 Access & Circulation

This site is accessible to local residents and visitors travelling both on foot and by car. It has a well-maintained network of linked pathways in and around the site allowing users of all abilities equal accessibility to all of the sites features and facilities.

St Johns Park is accessible to local residents and visitors travelling both on foot and by car and bus. St Johns Park has a network of linked pathways in and around the site allowing users of all abilities equal access to key site features and facilities.

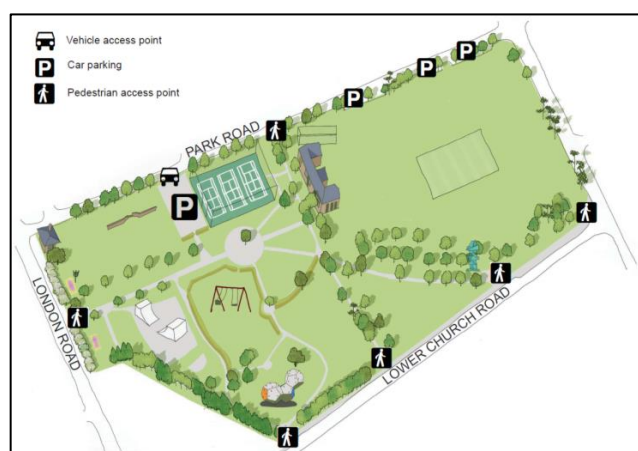
Access from the roads:

A - Vehicular Access from Park Road into St Johns Park Car Park, which is used by park users for FREE with pedestrian access into the park at the end of the car park. There are also 3 layby's on Park Road adjacent to the Cricket Field that can be used by park users for FREE and a further pedestrian access into the park which leads to the pavilion and café

B - Pedestrian Access: London Road has 1 pedestrian access points

C - Pedestrian Access: Lower Church Road has 3 pedestrian access points

D - Pedestrian Access There is no formal pedestrian access on St Johns Road



St. Johns Park Access Map



St. Johns Park Site Circulation Map

1.15 Topography

The land has a gentle slope from north to south that is more pronounced in the western area than the eastern section. Overall the park is lower than the adjacent land to the south and there is a retaining wall along this boundary to support the footpath. The cricket outfield on the eastern area is relatively level, but does have the characteristics of the general park.

1.16 Features and Facilities

St Johns Park offers the public access to a variety of recreational features and facilities, as follows:

- **Children's Playground** – This is a large playground that caters for a wide variety of age groups that is suitable contained for security. Its spacious layout allows children space to run around from one piece of equipment to another, with plenty of seating for parents or carers.
- **Skate Park** – This is the largest skate park in the District and includes a variety of platforms for riders to practice their trick riding. The venue has been used for competition riding that also had a themed event in other locations of the park. There is automatic floodlighting on the skate park to allow rides to enjoy the facility later into the evenings.
- **Outdoor Gym** – A small selection of free to use fitness equipment to gently improve strength, fitness and flexibility whilst enjoying the fresh air.
- **Event Lawn** - The large grassed area north of the skate park used to have an indoor swimming pool and outdoor lido pool. This facility was disbanded when the new leisure centre was built that is situated to the north west of Burgess Hill. The land was left to allow settling of the back fill for the outdoor pool and then it would be landscaped. However, it has become widely used by different organisations to stage events and it is deemed appropriate to keep this potential for this area. Successful events have included the Burgess Hill Town Week events and the conservation 'Wild About' show.
- **Public Art** - The park has a sculpture on the southern boundary adjacent to entrance. This sculpture is named 'Stability' and was commissioned from a local artist. Unfortunately, the sculpture is of an age that details of the artist have been lost due to it having been moved to the park from its original located in Church Walk, Burgess Hill. Local feedback is that it stood in Church Road for a number



of years and likely transferred when the pedestrian shopping areas around The Martlets were developed.

- **Pavilion** - The Pavilion is home to a play group, Burgess Hill Cricket Club, and a seasonal Café. It also has ad-hoc use for other organisations when there isn't a scheduled booking. The original pavilion in this park was destroyed by fire and the current building is the replacement that has been designed to replicate the appearance of the old building. The park toilets are also housed on the end of the pavilion.
- **Cricket Green** – The cricket outfield is multi-functional as it is heavily used for ad-hoc recreational activities as well as the outfield for cricket games. The cricket square is leased to the Burgess Hill cricket club who maintain the square at their own expense with their own greenkeeper. In the north east corner of the outfield is a millennium tree that was planted by a community group in Burgess Hill
- **Tennis courts** – Home to Burgess Hill Tennis Club. The three courts are regularly used by local tennis clubs and casual users throughout the year. The Courts can be booked through Mid Sussex District Council all year round and via the Burgess Hill Town Council. The tennis courts are also hired by a fitness organisation for outdoor fitness classes.
- **Seasonal Café** – With outdoor seating serving hot and cold drinks and snacks, Little Ritz Vintage Teas provides the perfect place for refreshment in St Johns Park during the summer months.
- **Car Park** – The location and capacity of the car park is a remnant of the when there was a swimming center on the site. It has been retained as a desirable facility to encourage visitors to the park.
- **Old Roman Road** - Ordnance survey plans show that an old Roman Road traversed to park and Burgess Hill Town Council have placed an interpretation board on the south east corner to show the line of the road.
- **Ornamental Planting** - Formal border plantings are adjacent to the tennis courts and entrance to the park from the west. The circular border was designed to be a hub for the ornamental area of the park. It is intended that it becomes the meeting place for social interaction. The entrance borders and adjacent bedding borders were laid in this configuration when the swimming centre was in use. A refurbishment of these borders is being planned to update the entrance and improve the interest of planting in the location of the hub and entrance.



1.2 Ecological Information

1.2.1 Climatic Conditions

The park, as with all open space, has its own distinct microclimate that relates to the vegetation and topography of the site. These site characteristics need to be recognised when planning new planting schemes and site activities.

1.2.2 Hydrology

There are no streams or watercourses in close proximity to the site that will cause any severe risks of flooding. However, the topography of the land can cause flooding from surface run water if the drains on Park Road, to the north, become blocked. The Park has a dry balancing pond and a large culvert in the south west corner to slow the flow of surface run water across the park.

The park has developed a natural spring that surfaces close to the tennis courts and the source has not been identified. It is thought to be an off-shoot of an underground water course that runs north of the park, but investigation to establish this would be difficult due to the tennis courts, Park Road and the adjacent private properties.

1.2.3 Flora & Fauna

Trees & Hedges

The western boundary has the remnants of the *Pinus nigra* (Black Pine) avenue mentioned in that are a feature of the original layout of the estate. Due to the proximity of the road these avenue of trees hasn't been replaced when there has been a failure with the structure of individual trees. The mix of trees throughout the park is quite varied with ornamental and native species, but predominantly the broad leaf native species make up the tree habitat. The aerial view of the park will demonstrate that trees have been planted to delineate two distinct areas of the cricket outfield and informal recreation area. Individual trees have been planted through the amenity area, and the mix in this part of the park is being developed for interest and age diversity.

The park has a number of mature *Betula pendula* hedges around its perimeter. These are trimmed to form an boundary feature, but not to the extent of closing the park. The playground also has a *Crataegus monogyna* hedge around the playground that is also trimmed annually. These hedges provide a useful habitat for wild life.

Herbaceous Perennials

Adjacent to the tennis courts are herbaceous perennial borders along with seasonal bedding displays. Species have been chosen to provide colour and interest as well as being bee friendly.

Shrubs

Ornamental shrubs are planted around the amenity area of St Johns Park providing a range of colours and forms. Whilst they not be considered specimen shrubs they form an aesthetically pleasing feature in the landscape.

1.2.4 Naturalised Areas

The park has a naturalised area on the western boundary that is a tree belt with under planting of spring flowering bulbs. This location is heavily shaded by the tree canopy and developing a natural understory makes this an attractive feature.

Fauna

There are currently no formal wildlife surveys specific to St John's Park, however from general observation there are a good range birds, butterflies and insects etc. due to the many diverse natural habitats available such as the hedgerows.

1.3 Historical Information

1.3.1 History

St. John's Park occupies land which was once part of St. John's Common. In 1828 this common land was enclosed to form a network of small fields (Keymer Enclosure Map). Of these, a six-and-a-half acre plot known as 'Park Field' (Field No. 260, 1874 Ordnance Survey map) was owned by a local benefactress, Emily Temple, known also as 'Madame Temple'.

Emily Temple died in 1874 and in her will left Park Field for use as a public park and recreation ground. It now forms the eastern portion of the present park which includes the cricket pitch. Three trustees, Dr. James Braid, Mr. Thomas Brown Crunden and Mr. Frederick Crunden, were appointed to oversee the upkeep and running of the park. Provision was also made in her will for the park to be kept in good repair.

By 1891 the trustees decided to gift the freehold of Park Field to the Burgess Hill Local Board and the St. John's Park Charitable Trust was set up to oversee the management of the park. One proviso was that the row of fir trees on the eastern boundary should be retained.

By 1898 the Burgess Hill Local Board had become Burgess Hill Urban District Council. It was then planned to erect a cricket pavilion and to extend the park westwards as far as the London Road at an estimated cost of £750. As it appeared that Madame Temple had owned these fields as part of her estate the Council approached the trustees of the Crunden Estate to see if they were prepared to sell the land to the Council. They agreed to this with a proviso that the fields were subject to a covenant that the land in question be forever used as a public park.

A public enquiry was held but opposition caused the proposed extension of the park to be refused. Finally, in 1929 Burgess Hill Urban District Council appears to have secured the land to the west. In 1931 the Council wished to develop the London Road frontage of the park with the erection of a row of houses, but this was rejected by the Crunden trustees.

By the early 1930s, this new area of the park had been fenced and levelled at a cost of £300 and was subsequently opened to the public. The new facilities in this area were very varied and included an open-air swimming pool, tennis courts, a children's paddling/boating pool, and a putting green. New paths were laid together with formal flower beds. Later on a children's playground was added and by the 1970s an indoor swimming pool had been built.

To date both swimming pools have been demolished, the paddling pool has been replaced by a children's playground, the putting green has disappeared and there is now a large skateboard park. The tennis courts remain together with the cricket pitch. Over the years the paths and tree planting have been increased in number. Some formal flower beds still exist and new planting has been added.

1.3.2 Site timeline

1874: The eastern part of the park was gifted in her will by Emily Temple.

1929: The Park was extended to the west in 1929.

1.3.3 Site Features

Pool

Feature created: Before 1964

This boating / paddling pool was situated in the south-west area of the park (Ordnance Survey map 1964). Rectangular in shape it proved highly popular with children. In the mid-1950s, when the pool was annually drained for the winter months, it was used on Good Friday as a venue for the popular game 'Bat and Trap'. However, the pool was closed in 1988 due to the lack of water filtration and the pool area was incorporated into one of the children's playgrounds.

Tennis lawn

Feature created: 1930 to 1939

The grass and all-weather tennis courts were laid out in the 1930s and are situated in the northern section of the park where it borders Park Road.

By the 1950s the grass court(s) had been removed. The 1964 Ordnance Survey map indicates a car park had been added to the west, while to the south stood a line of mature trees (now removed). The courts and car park still exist and are partly surrounded by hedging.

Lawn

Feature created: After 1933

In 1933 a putting green was set up to the south of the present east-west path. This activity proved highly popular at the time and was in use for many years. It has since been replaced and is now part of the children's playground

Paths

Feature created: After 1929

North-south path

When the park was extended westwards, a new path was laid running north-south from Park Road to Lower Church Road. This followed the far western edge of the original park and ran approximately along the old line of the field boundary. In time this path was planted on either side with mixed deciduous trees with predominantly horse-chestnuts to the north, some of which remain to this day.



East-west path

The path was laid from the western entrance in London Road to connect with the north-south path. An illustration of the 1930s shows formal flower beds laid to the north and south of the path, but these are no longer in existence.

There was also a roundel just to the east of the western entrance (Ordnance Survey map 1964) which had a central flower bed with formal bedding and planting around the perimeter. These flower beds were bordered by a very low metal fence. Today's semi-circle of tarmac probably indicates its original position. To the north and south of this are some large rectangular flower beds.

South of the tennis courts there is another large roundel laid out with shrubs and grasses. Lime trees have been newly planted at intervals to the north and south of this east-west path.

Feature created: Before 1964

Diagonal (north-west to south-east) path

The 1964 Ordnance Survey map shows a path running from the tennis courts, south-east to one of the entrances in Lower Church Road and bisecting the south-west corner of the cricket field. To date the alignment of the path has been slightly altered and it now follows a more curving line. There is a row of flowering cherries to the south-west and a double row of mixed trees to the north-east. At the southern end of this avenue of trees there is a copper statue entitled 'Figure of Stability'. It was cast in 1972 and erected in the nearby Martlets Shopping Centre to commemorate the centre's completion. It represents sand-blown blocks in the desert and was made by the sculptor Shaun Crampton. It was, however, moved from the shopping centre and repositioned in the park. Over the years a number of additional paths have been added connecting the various play and sporting facilities.



Cricket pavilion

Feature created: After 1873

In 1871 a Working Men's Club was formed and the members were allowed to play cricket on Park Field. Then in 1873, Emily Temple erected to the north-east of the park the St. John's Institute for the Club's use and, as stated earlier, this building has been redeveloped for housing. Cricket has continued to be played on the charitable trust section of the park since this time.

The 1874 Ordnance Survey map marks the cricket ground with clumps of coniferous trees planted at intervals around its circumference. A summer house is also indicated to the south-west of the ground but by 1897 these trees and the summer house had disappeared. Around 1902 there was another small summer house to the north-east of the cricket ground and at some time this was replaced by a bigger wooden pavilion. In 1993 this was in turn superseded by a larger brick-built and tile-hung building which is still in use. Cricket nets occupy a small area to the north of the pavilion.

Park feature

Originally there was one playground situated to the east of the paddling/boating pool. An illustration from the 1950s shows an array of play facilities which have now been replaced with updated equipment. To the north of this area is a further playground for younger children. Both areas are surrounded by beech hedging.

Feature created: 2000

A skate park, built in 2000, is sited to the west of the younger children's playground and can be used by skateboards, BMX bikes and roller blades. The course was extended in 2005 and was designed with the assistance of local youth groups. There is also hedging around this area. West of the skateboard park is a grass bund made from the soil excavated from this site. To the south of the skateboard park is a basket- ball practice area.

Gate lodge

Feature created: 1837 to 1874

This Victorian lodge is situated at the corner of London Road and Park Road and is marked on the 1874 Ordnance Survey map (No. 252). The building is L-shaped in plan, brick-built with a slate roof. Unfortunately, it has not been possible to establish its original use.

When the park was extended westwards in the 1930s, it was incorporated into the park. It is believed it was then used as the park keeper's lodge, after which it was leased out to various tenants and is now being used as a Montessori children's nursery. In recent times a conservatory has been added to the south side of the building.

Pool

Feature created: 1935

In 1935 an open-air pool was built in the northern area of the park to the west of the tennis courts. Rectangular in shape it measured 30.5 x 12.2 metres and cost #3700 to construct. At the eastern end of the pool was a high-diving board, beyond which lay the pool plant-house. To the north of the pool was a terrace where a large circular fountain was situated (Ordnance Survey map 1964). Beyond this was a raised terrace and wooden changing rooms whilst to the west stood the ticket office. The pool proved highly popular and between 1946 and 1968 it received three-quarters of a million visitors. There was once a line of trees to the south of the pool area.

By 1968 the changing rooms were showing signs of wear and tear, so it was decided to build an additional indoor pool to the west. This was opened in 1975 and measured 25 by 7.2 metres. It was housed in a single-storey timber and brick building and the whole of the western side consisted of bronze- tinted glazed windows. The old outdoor changing rooms were then pulled down. With the opening of the Burgess Hill Triangle sports complex in 1999 the two pools were demolished and filled in. To date the only remaining feature of the pools is the raised brick terrace and the whole area is now laid to lawn.

1.4 Social Information

1.4.1 User Groups

St Johns Park offers a wide variety of facilities for users to enjoy, some of the main user groups currently based at St Johns Park are:

- Burgess Hill Cricket Club
- Lavendar Lodge Nursery
- Burgess Hill Tennis Club
- Outdoor Military Fitness
- BodyBlast Fitness
- St Johns Park Café
- Little Ritz Vintage Teas

Informal Use

St Johns Park is open to the general public on a daily basis. The main informal (non- fee paying) visitors include those who visit the site to use the children's play area, walk their dogs, to relax in the pleasant environment or to socialise with family and friends.

Formal Use

The site provides facilities for several local sporting organisations including:

- Burgess Hill Cricket Club
- Burgess Hill Tennis Club
- Outdoor Military Fitness and Body Blast Fitness



1.4.2 Community Groups

Organisations and clubs that are involved with St Johns Park include:

- Burgess Hill Town Council
- Burgess Hill Cricket Club
- Burgess Hill Tennis Club
- Lavendar Lodge Nursery
- Little Ritz Vintage Tea

A number of these organisations actively assist the District Council by contributing to the Steering Group and helping with some of the maintenance of the facilities and structures, e.g. The Burgess Hill Cricket Club maintain the 10 wicket cricket table in St Johns Park.

1.4.3 Public Consultation

Public consultation is an important part of managing the park. Feedback from the general public is vital in helping us to design and improve the facilities on offer.

The main community groups involved with St Johns Park now have a direct input to the parks development via the St Johns Park Steering Group. Mid Sussex District Council organises and chair these meetings twice a year established in January 2018.

Mid Sussex District Council's Park Rangers also carry out public surveys in parks alongside their normal duties of patrolling the parks across the District.

Burgess Hill has been specifically targeted for survey as the park is close to the town centre, has a relatively high number of visitors, and benefits from a wide range of facilities.

Public consultation has been limited in St Johns Park with Steering Group only recently established.



2 Section 2: Policies, Plans & Strategies for Parks & Open Spaces

This section will first consider the policies, plans and strategies developed by the District Council and then will look at the national and regional strategies and policies that have a bearing on how these parks are managed.

2.1 Mid Sussex District Council Policies & Strategies

2.1.1 Framework

The policies and strategies developed by Mid Sussex District Council have a number of key principles relevant to the districts parks and open spaces. These are all core to this management plan informing the direction of its aims and objectives and directly influencing the working practices within St. Johns Park.

2.1.2 Corporate Plan 2017/18

Each Business Unit delivers a service plan each year that details how they intend to deliver the year's success criteria.

Our Priorities and Flagship Activities are based around Council's four priorities, which are:

- Effective and responsive services
- Sustainable economic growth
- Strong and resilient communities
- Financial independence

Flagship Activities for 2017/18

Effective and responsive services

The Council wishes to build on the performance of all of its services with a particular focus on further improving customer experience. Flagship activities for 2017/18 are:

- Improving our customer service with more enquiries dealt with at the first point of contact.
- Increasingly digitising our services to make them more customer-friendly by improving efficiency.

Sustainable economic growth

The Council has an important role in supporting businesses, encouraging new ones and attracting inward investment. Flagship activities for 2017/18 are:

- Progressing the Town Centre redevelopment at Burgess Hill.
- Redevelopment of the station quarter at Haywards Heath including the opening of the new Waitrose store and also work on East Grinstead Town Centre.
- Working towards the provision of new business parks at Burgess Hill.
- Providing Economic Development grants to support business.
- Production of a new Economic Development Strategy

Strong and resilient communities

Continuing to work with partner organisations to build sustainable communities that will deliver a better quality of life for all. Flagship activities for 2017/18 are:

- Continue to support our community through grants to local organisations.

- Ensure that the “Think Family” community initiatives are delivered and supported.
- Providing an effective Wellbeing Service that helps residents to make healthy lifestyle choices.
- Enable the provision of 200 new affordable homes.
- Supporting communities with new facilities and playgrounds, such as at Ansty recreation ground, Hickmans Lane, Lindfield and Finches Field, Pease Pottage.

Financial Independence

Reduced Government financial support brings the need for robust management of budgets and maximising of income to be as financially self-sufficient as possible. Flagship activities for 2017/18 relate to the development of services and assets that will generate revenue for the Council such as:

- the delivery of improvements to the leisure centres
- extension of the green waste service to a further 2,000 users
- making best use of our land and commercial property holdings

2.13 Sustainable Communities Strategy 2008 - 2018

The Sustainable Communities Strategy for Mid Sussex seeks to improve the social, economic and environmental well-being of the Mid Sussex District and to improve the quality of life for everyone.

The focus of the Sustainable Communities Strategy is to identify and address the issues and needs facing the communities of Mid Sussex and to approach this through partnership working.

This will enable the Local Strategic Partnership to move forward and provide a means of joining up services and tackling issues together.

The Sustainable Communities Strategy will:

- Reflect local communities’ aspirations, needs and priorities;
- Enable coordinated action between local partners;
- Enable greater efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources available to partners;
- Provide an opportunity to develop a shared understanding of partners’ needs and learn from everyone’s experience.

In short, the Sustainable Communities Strategy is a practical tool for “joining up” services to address local issues and priorities.

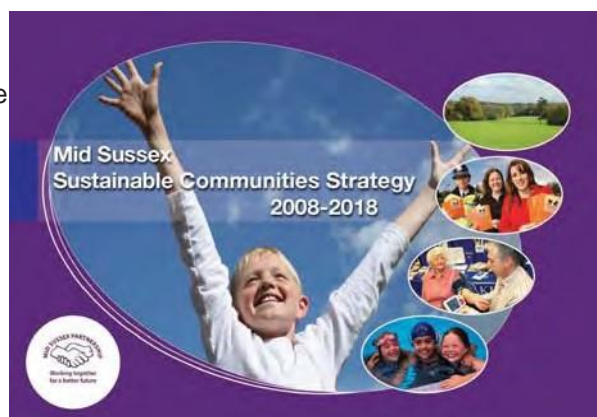
Vision: ‘Working together for a Sustainable Future’

The vision of Mid Sussex’s Sustainable Communities Strategy is to improve the social, economic and environmental well being of Mid Sussex District and the quality of life for everyone.

Underpinning this are four priority themes:

- Protecting and Enhancing the Environment
- Economic Vitality
- Cohesive and Safe Communities
- Healthy Lifestyles

If properly managed these themes will enable the sustainable development of the communities of Mid Sussex.



Copy of existing Sustainable Communities Strategy available to download at:
http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/media/Mid-Sussex_FOR_WEB.pdf

2.14 Customer Service Standards

One of Mid Sussex District Councils key corporate priorities, as set out in the Corporate Plan, is to provide efficient and effective services and integral to this is high quality customer service.

Customer Care Standards

Mid Sussex District Council will ensure that:

- We will at all times handle enquiries or problems in a courteous and efficient manner.
- We are committed to providing a helpful service without discrimination to the best of our ability.
- We will treat all persons with disabilities, of whatever nature, with respect and provide an equal service to that given to any other person.
- We will provide up to date information at our reception areas, in our letters, in our publications and on our web site.

Telephone Calls

Our target is to answer telephone calls within 30 seconds (6 rings).

- We will greet customers in a polite and courteous manner.
- It is our commitment to put the customer in touch with the right person in the right Division if we are unable to directly help with the enquiry.
- We will leave clear instructions on voice mail recorded messages.
- We will return all voice mail messages by the next working day subject to the officer being available.
- We will provide an interpreter service if required for non-English speakers (this is a phone based system only).

Correspondence

- We will answer letters and faxes within 10 working days or acknowledge correspondence within 3 days, telling the writer who is dealing with their enquiry, if a full reply is not possible within the 10 working day target time.
- We will acknowledge e-mail within 1 working day and provide a full answer within 10 working days.
- When customers visit us We will greet customers in a polite and courteous manner and will always give them our full attention.
- We will ensure our receptions are clearly signed.
- Where practical we will provide reception areas with disabled access including low enquiry desks and hearing induction loops.
- We will provide an equal service to a disabled person as we would to any other person
- We will make our reception areas safe places, which are clean and tidy
- All reception staff will be smart in appearance and identifiable by desk names plates or lapel badges.
- We will aim not to keep customers waiting for more than 15 minutes if they have an appointment or we will advise them of a delay.
- We will make available confidential interview rooms for personal enquiries.
- We will ensure publicity materials are prominently and clearly displayed.
- Our reception areas will be checked every day to ensure standards are maintained.
- This will need to be recorded and any actions needed passed onto the Facility Management Team.
- When visitors are invited into the back office they will be issued with a visitors pass.

Visual Standards

One way to ensure our message is delivered with consistency is through the correct use of our corporate identity. There needs to be a consistent look through everything we produce including forms, stationery, booklets, signing, advertisements and vehicles.

A visual standards guide has been produced to help us and any suppliers we use on how we should apply our logo and on issues such as creating a consistent look across our communications.

Measuring and Monitoring Performance Monitoring of our customer service is a vital to ensure standards are being met and maintained. For corporate standards (e.g. phone and letter response times), there are recording and reporting mechanisms in place. These are reported on a monthly basis to management team, to ensure there is remedial action to address any non-achievement of targets with quarterly reports being submitted to a Performance and Scrutiny Committee to keep Members informed.

2.1.5 Cultural Strategy

The District Council recognises that cultural provision can make an important contribution to the wellbeing of our community in Mid Sussex. The Strategy aims to guide all those involved in cultural provision as to how we can best work together to maximise the opportunities that can result from cultural development in Mid Sussex.

A Leisure & Culture Strategy for Mid Sussex 2009 - 2020 key objectives are to:

- Engage with key stakeholders in and around the District and clarify desired community outcomes
- Assess current and future 'leisure' needs locally and their relationship with regional and national trends
- Ensure public involvement in the shaping of local provision
- Highlight areas of good practice, gaps in provision and opportunities for improved service
- Identify affordable alternative options for the provision of leisure in Mid Sussex
- Clarify the role of the Council as strategic director, partner, facilitator, enabler and provider - and the role of others across the public, private and voluntary sectors
- Highlight opportunities for partnership working and cross-boundary planning
- Make firm recommendations and create a clear and targeted action plan to underpin delivery of the strategy.

Copy available to download at:

<http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/page.cfm?pageID=1693>

2.1.6 Sport Development and Physical Activity

Sports Development and the development of Physical Activity relating to healthy lifestyles, active recreation and active travel is part of the service provided by Mid Sussex District Council. Its aims are to promote healthy lifestyles within the District.

Areas of work include:

- Support of Sports clubs through strategic guidance advice -Contact us email via culture@midsussex.gov.uk or call 01444 477275
- Wellbeing programmes
- Signposting for Club, coach and volunteer development
- Small Grants programme
- Advice and support of funding and facility development

Much of our work is in partnership with a large network of organisations and individuals such as voluntary clubs, coaches, national governing bodies of sport and Active Sussex, the County Sports Partnership.

2.1.7 Playing Pitch Strategy (2015-31)

Mid Sussex District Council has produced a Playing Pitch Strategy which was adopted by Cabinet in February 2015. The strategy provides information about organised outdoor sports clubs (cricket, football, rugby, netball, hockey, tennis, bowls and stool ball) that train and compete in the District. It maps existing provision, current and future demand for facilities and provides a framework for planning, investment and sport development. You can download .pdf copies of the strategy and appendices below:

2.1.8 Better Young Lives

Better Young Lives is a forum of professionals led by Mid Sussex District Council to work with partners from both the statutory and voluntary sector to ensure better lives and outcomes for children and young people from birth to 25 years.

Young people represent our future, and that future is influenced by the environment in which young people develop. Here in Mid Sussex, we are fortunate to live in an area with a range of resources available to young people. However, assessments of current provision have identified youth issues that need to be addressed. This has been a subject for concern and debate at all levels in recent years.

The District Council aims to increase the level of partnership working and the amount of services available for young people living in the district. 'Better Young lives' was produced after consultation with partners agencies, professionals, councillors and of course young people.

Current issues identified for the Better Young Lives Group to address during 2016/17 are:

- Voice and Engagement of Young People
- Support for Village Provision in Mid Sussex
- Positive Activities for Young People
- Worklessness
- Isolated Communities
- Safeguarding

NEETS Forum - a sub-group of BYL Partners specifically focusing on young people 16 to 18 who find themselves not in education, employment or training. During this closed meeting the professionals representing various agencies working with NEET young people discuss their options and opportunities. MSDC has a legal obligation towards any information supplied by young people.

2.1.9 Health & Safety Policy

The Council expects all its employees, volunteers and contractors working on behalf of the Council to fully co-operate in the adherence to its health and safety policy.

Under the Health and Safety at Work Etc. Act and other relevant legislation Mid Sussex District Council are responsible so far as is reasonably practicable for:

- the provision and maintenance of safe and healthy working conditions, equipment and systems of work for all its employees.
- providing the resources for information, training and supervision as is needed for these purposes.
- the health and safety of other people who may be affected by its undertakings.

(Appendix 03: Health and Safety Policy & Risk Management)

Contractors

In addition to adhering to the Council's health and safety policy the Council's main contractors and their staff will be monitored in regards to compliance to their own health and safety policies. The companies submitted these policies at the tendering stage of new work procurement. If instances occur whereby the contractor's staff are seen to be working in an unsafe manner it is reported to the contracts manager for instant action and the details are discussed monthly at contract meetings.

2.1.10 Risk Assessments

Risk assessments are regularly carried out at all Council owned sites across the district. Risk assessments for parks and open spaces are reviewed annually by the Park Ranger Service. The Council cannot guarantee that St. Johns Park will always be safe and secure, however applying the principles of risk assessment, the recognised hazards can be properly managed. Aside from the usual risks associated with public parks, particular risks at St. Johns Park.

Mid Sussex District Council's risk management at St. Johns Park uses an effective and consistent approach:

- Regularly reviewing risk assessment procedures.
- Constantly monitoring the site for hazards.
- Carrying out event-specific risk assessments for non-sporting events that take place within the park, undertaken by the events organiser in conjunction with Council staff.
- Identifying high risk and high use areas and monitoring these more regularly than low risk and low usage areas.

Risk Assessment Process:

1) Generic Risk Assessments

These identify hazards and associated risks which are common across the district and the common preventative steps to be taken to eliminate the risk where possible or reduce the risk are specified.

2) Specific Risk Assessments

Exist for individual operational areas/ projects. Any new developments within sites or new areas of land will trigger adjustments to the risk assessment.

3) Site Record Cards

These are individual cards containing specific information for each site. Site cards are reviewed annually by the Park Rangers and contain a list of the relevant generic risk assessments applicable to the site together with site-specific risk assessments. The site card also summarises any hazards which are unique to the site to guide future inspections.

4) Matrix

This is a definitive list of all sites across the Mid Sussex District with the date of the last risk assessment review carried out on site and the name of the officer who completed it.

2.1.11 Dog Public Spaces Protection Orders

Dog walkers constitute a large percentage of the customers to the park and the control of dog fouling is extremely important to ensure that all users can enjoy using the park. Under the Anti-social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014 Mid Sussex District Council have put a number of Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPOs) relating to dog control in place.

These PSPOs have replaced the previous Dog Control Orders which were made under the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005. The following PSPOs apply to St Johns Park:

Dog Fouling

Anyone in charge of a dog is required to clean up their dogs' mess on all District Council owned or

managed recreational and other public land. The Council provides special dog bins for dog waste disposal.

Dog Exclusion

To prevent people or the dogs themselves being injured as a result of sharing activity space, dogs are banned from all fenced recreational areas such as tennis courts and play areas owned by the District Council.

Dogs on Lead by Direction

In order to stop a loose dog disrupting sporting or community events or disturbing local wildlife, dogs must be placed on a lead if requested to do so by an authorised officer, such as a Park Ranger.

There is clear signage displayed around the Park informing park users of the PSPOs that apply on site and the Park Ranger Service has done a considerable amount of work in promoting responsible dog ownership.

Anyone caught failing to comply with these orders risks being issued a Fixed Penalty Notice by an authorised officer, such as a Park Ranger. Failure to pay a Fixed Penalty Notice may result in prosecution with a maximum fine of £1000.

2.1.12 Park Rangers

Mid Sussex District Council introduced a Park Ranger for each of the Northern, Central and Southern areas of the District in August 1995, with the aim of providing a consistent and customer driven service across the whole of the District. St Johns park falls into the Southern Area.

The Park Rangers work to a shift pattern, operating 7 days a week in parks, sports grounds, open spaces and nature reserves throughout Mid Sussex. They are clearly identifiable by their distinctive uniforms bearing council logos, thus providing a visible staff presence whilst out patrolling sites. The Park Rangers can be followed on their twitter account @MSDCrangers or on instagram on msdcrangers where they tweet or post regularly with updates of their activities.

The role of the Park Rangers is to engage with park users and the local community to ensure parks are safe and fit for purpose, providing an enjoyable leisure environment. They offer a friendly and informative point of contact and promote and encourage responsible facility use. They work to resolve conflict issues, such as dog fouling and vandalism and have the authority to enforce byelaws and Public Spaces Protection Orders, working in partnership with the local Police when necessary.

On their regular patrols of St Johns Park, Park Rangers inspect the park and buildings, monitoring issues such as litter and cleanliness and reporting any vandalism or damage for resolution or repair as appropriate. The Southern Park Ranger carries out an annual review of the risk assessment for St Johns Park (see Appendix 04: Risk Assessments for the St Johns Park Site Record Card), as well as dynamic risk assessments of the park on every patrol.

Additionally, the Park Ranger Service conducts periodic visitor surveys to gauge public opinion on proposed park improvements. The Park Rangers also co-ordinate a thriving programme of Healthy Walks across Mid Sussex that are accredited by the national Walking for Health Scheme

Dog Public Spaces Protection Orders

The Park Rangers have been very successful with a long-term programme to encourage owners to clear up after their pets.

2.1.13 Pesticide Policy

The Council strictly adheres to the current legislation and codes of practice for use and application of pesticides approved by MAFF and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

The control of pesticides in Great Britain is set out and implemented by Part III of the 'Food and Environment Protection Act 1985', and 'The Control of Pesticides Regulations 1986'. It is a requirement under the legislation to ensure that reasonable precautions are taken to protect the health of all living organisms and safeguard the environment when using a pesticide.

The Local Agenda 21 initiative recognises the importance of maintaining biodiversity and undertaking land management to enhance and protect existing species and habitats. As part of the initiative a national reduction in the use of pesticides has been targeted as a means of establishing a more environmentally sustainable and ecologically acceptable way forward in the maintenance of the amenity landscape.

The landscapes section has its own pesticide policy which encompasses the key tenets of Council procedure in the decision making process and has been adopted for the selection, approval and application of pesticides. (See Section 3.4.8 for further information).

2.1.14 Trees & Woodlands

The Tree & Woodlands management guidelines highlight the importance of trees in the urban environment and assists in guiding the management of the tree stock within St. Johns Park. These guidelines also link to the Landscape and Biodiversity Strategy – 'Our Green Heritage'.

Tree & Woodland Guidelines download available at:

<http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/page.cfm?pageID=2652>

2.1.15 Byelaws

St Johns Park is regulated under section 12 and 15 of the Open Spaces Act 1096 (See Appendix 05: Relevant byelaws). Proper regulation is essential to ensure that the council is not exposed to complaint or litigation from its inability to properly control the activities within the park.

The Park Ranger service works to increase public awareness of the council's byelaws and the Rangers have established a close working relationship with Sussex Police. This has enabled a more comprehensive approach to tackling criminal and anti-social behaviour with St Johns Park.

2.1.16 Policy for Inclusion for Disabled Users

In accordance with 'The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995', extended in 2005, the Council strives to allow disabled access to facilities and services that they provide. St. Johns Park is one of the Council's key leisure parks and as such work has been and will continue to be undertaken to make it as accessible as is reasonably practical.

The policy covers all District Council sites and can be broken down into the following four categories: Outdoor Sites:

Access issues (primarily access from roads, twittens and car parks) are assessed on an individual site basis.

Priority is given to the District Council's most used sites, especially those with regular activities.

Specific requests brought to the District Council's attention highlighting particular access problems on any of their managed sites are assessed sympathetically and acted on within the budget constraints that may exist at the time.

Playgrounds:

All the play equipment in the District Council parks that are managed by the District Council is professionally assessed for DDA compliance in the annual inspection report.

Any improvement works to District Council's existing playgrounds will be DDA compliant.

Improvements will be implemented on a phased basis that is assessed by perceived need (customer feedback) and cost.

The most well used play areas in the main parks will receive the highest priority.

Signage:

It is recognised that the existing signage for users of the outdoor facilities, Council buildings and car parks could be improved to make it easier for those with various disabilities. Due to the significant costs this work will be undertaken over a period of time and prioritised according to greatest need. The Council will also be guided by comments it receives from the Access Groups and members of public.

Communications:

It is recognised that more general advice, e.g. about limitations of buildings where DDA compliance may not always be possible, would be very beneficial to the disabled user. The Council will endeavour to provide this advice where possible.

2.2 National & Regional Policies

The Government has a vision for its public open spaces recognising that they impact on the quality of life. Its vision is delivered through the publication of planning policy guidance/ strategy documents and reports that are developed to guide authorities like Mid Sussex District Council on the Governments broader objectives, which are:

- Urban Renaissance
- Rural Renewal
- Social and Community Inclusion
- Health and Well-Being
- Sustainable Development

These documents have an impact on the District Council's own policies and strategies that in turn are used to develop shared objectives in the management and maintenance of their parks and open spaces including St. Johns Park.

3 Section 3: Site Management

3.1 Management Philosophy

The philosophy for the management of these parks is to provide a high quality urban park with diverse facilities for the enjoyment and relaxation of residents and visitors. By careful and sensitive management and appropriate regulation St. Johns Park will continue to be an important visitor attraction for Burgess Hill.

3.2 Management Aims & Objectives

The philosophy for the management of this Park is to provide a high quality urban park with diverse facilities for the enjoyment and relaxation of residents and visitors. By careful and sensitive management and appropriate regulation St Johns Park will continue to be an important visitor attraction for Burgess Hill and the District.

The general management aim for the Council's public open spaces is to enhance and protect the local green infrastructure in harmony with the changing demands for recreational activities. They should be used and enjoyed by all residents and visitors to the District. The main aim is to contribute to the overall health and happiness of the local community by providing healthy outdoor exercise, an escape from the stresses of everyday living and providing an educational resource.

Specific Management Aims for ST Johns Park:

- **To be sympathetic custodians of this important local green space**

Management of the Park needs to take regard of the culture of Burgess Hill, whilst developing and maintaining a vibrant town park. This Management Plan demonstrates that the Council is acting as responsible custodians of this green space.

- **Provide safe and well-maintained facilities**

Visitors are more likely to enjoy and return to the parks if their sense of personal comfort and safety has been preserved. The Council endeavors to ensure that the features and facilities are in a suitable condition for use. This park is never shut and there have, regrettably, been occasions when antisocial behavior has resulted in damage to some of the infrastructure. In an effort to mitigate this it is important that the Park is inspected regularly. Applying the principles of Risk Assessment ensures that potential risks and hazards are analysed, measured and recorded, and actions put in place to minimise or negate their effect.

- **Provide recreational entertainment for the community**

The aim for St Johns Park is to provide a visitor experience that will encourage visitors to spend time in the park for formal or informal recreation. Similarly, it is intended that the value of their experience is sufficient for them to want to return. Facilities throughout the Park cater for a wide variety of family orientated formal and informal activities. A significant enhancement for the visitor experience has been the addition of a seasonal café in the pavilion.

- **Research developments in recreational time and pursuits**

The way in which people use their leisure time is likely to change with a number of employers encouraging working from home. It is possible that there will be more demand for recreational activities during the day rather than the traditional early morning and evenings.

Leisure facilities at ST Johns Park will need to be of a standard and type suitable to engage the interests of these customers. Sources of information for researching the changes in recreational trends will include:

- Information from industry based organisations such as the Institute of Horticulture and
- Institute of Sport, Parks and Leisure (ISPAL)
- Horticultural publications

- **Encourage use of the park as an educational resource**

The Park is a suitable resource as a “green classroom” for both formal and informal learning. The facilities on site can be useful in the class/ lecture room as well as in the park for learning about the environment and landscape. Park enthusiasts, landscapers and green-keepers can also use the park as a resource to study the design and use of plants and discuss its maintenance with the grounds maintenance staff.

- **Community Involvement**

Engagement with the community for the development of ST Johns Park is achieved through a user group made up of regular hirers and users and the Town Council and. The role of the user group is to guide Council Officers proposals with a local perspective on improvements and developments of the park.

- **Encourage sustainable management and usage**

The need to ensure the park is sustainable is a strong management aim. Re-using, recycling and reducing the usage and waste is encouraged (energy, water etc.). Pesticide use is minimal and bedding is peat free and materials are sourced locally where possible. Water usage is reduced by use of mulches often made by chipping woody material from on site or nearby.

Management Responsibility

The management of the park endeavours to provide a facility that is maintained to a high standard and that its management aims and objectives are achieved. All staff involved in the management and maintenance are appropriately qualified for managing and developing the park as well as engaging with the local community.

Management of the park can be defined in three broad areas:

- (A) Management and maintenance of the physical features of the park and development that is sympathetic to the natural features of the landscape.
- (B) Management of the formal activities and organised events.
- (C) Management of informal activities ensuring that casual use of the park is appropriate and safe and encourages customers to partake in a variety of activities.

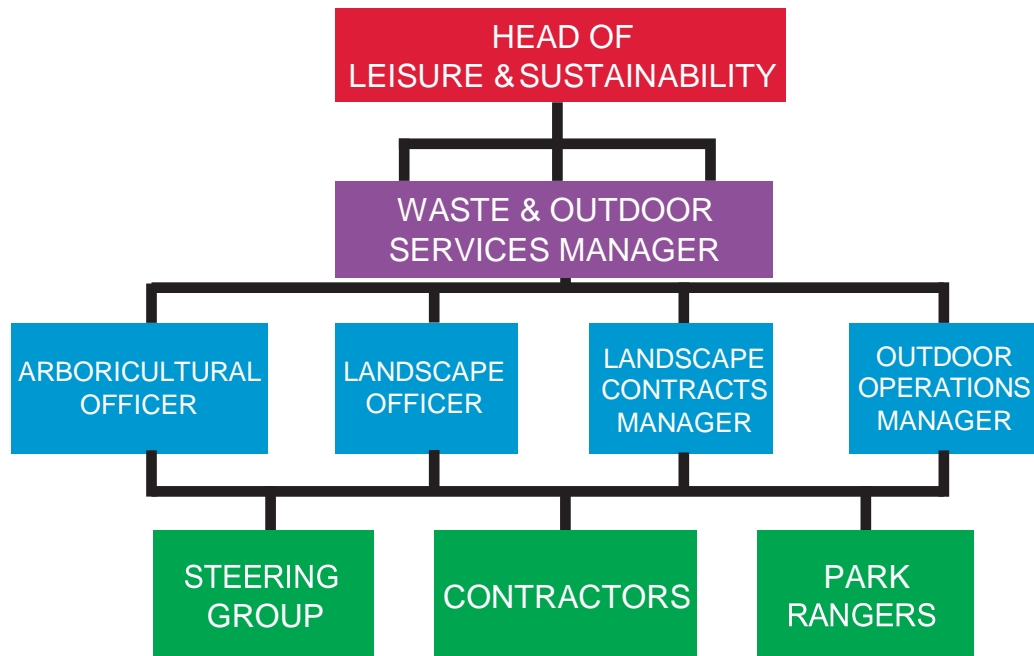
Landscapes Team

The Landscapes team represents the ‘client’ side of the Mid Sussex District Council parks maintenance and development service. This team is the main point of contact for the management and maintenance of the Council’s green assets. Routine & regular site maintenance is procured through a range of national and local private landscape companies.

The ethos of continuous improvement is a key management aim of the team. Developing lasting and trusting partnerships with the contractors and their staff is important as it will lead to a better quality of service and a shared responsibility for the on-going development of the green spaces.

3.3 Management Structure & Responsibilities

3.3.1 Organogram: as relates to Management of St. Johns Park



This structure ensures that St. Johns Park is managed and maintained to a high standard and that its management aims and objectives are achieved. All staff involved in the management and maintenance are appropriately qualified for managing and developing the Parks as well as engaging with the local community.

Management of the Parks can be defined in three broad areas:

(A) Management and maintenance of the physical features of the Parks and development that is sympathetic to the natural features of the landscape.

(B) Management of the formal activities and organised events.

(C) Management of informal activities ensuring that casual use of the park is appropriate and safe and encourages customers to partake in a variety of activities.

3.3.2 Landscapes Team

The Landscapes team represents the 'client' side of the Mid Sussex District Council parks maintenance and development service. This team is the main point of contact for the management and maintenance of the Council's green assets. Routine & regular site maintenance is procured through a range of national and local private landscape companies.

The ethos of continuous improvement is a key management aim of the team. Developing lasting and trusting partnerships with the contractors and their staff is important as it will lead to a better quality of service and a shared responsibility for the on-going development of the green spaces.

3.3.3 Outdoor Services Team

The Outdoor Services team is responsible for site regulation and promoting leisure activities. (See Section 1.4.4) They are the main point of contact for formal (fee-paying) users of the facilities provided in Council parks.

The team also incorporates the Park Ranger Service, which operates 7 days a week in parks across the District. There are three Park Rangers and their role involves engaging with park users and the local community to ensure that parks are



safe and fit for purpose (See Section 3.3.4).

The team operates a Voluntary Park Rangers Scheme to enable our interested and active local partners to be directly involved in shaping the service.

3.3.4 Park Rangers



Mid Sussex District Council introduced a Park Ranger for each of the Northern, Central and Southern areas of the District in August 1995, with the aim of providing a consistent and customer driven service across the whole of the District. St. Johns Park falls into the Burgess Hill.

The Park Rangers work to a shift pattern, operating 7 days a week in parks, sports grounds, open spaces and nature reserves throughout Mid Sussex. They are clearly identifiable by their distinctive uniforms bearing council logos, thus providing a visible staff presence whilst out patrolling sites.

The role of the Park Rangers is to engage with park users and the local communities to ensure parks are safe and fit for purpose, providing an enjoyable leisure environment. They offer a friendly and informative point of contact and promote and encourage responsible facility use. They work to resolve conflict issues, such as dog fouling and vandalism and have the authority to enforce byelaws and dog control orders, working in partnership with the local Police when necessary.

On their regular patrols of St. John Park, Park Rangers inspect the park and buildings, monitoring issues such as litter and cleanliness and reporting any vandalism or damage for resolution or repair as appropriate. The Park Ranger carries out an annual review of the risk assessment for St. Johns Park (see Appendix 04: Risk Assessments for the St. Johns Park Site Record Card), as well as dynamic risk assessments of the park on every patrol.

Additionally, the Park Ranger Service conducts periodic visitor surveys to gauge public opinion on proposed park improvements and manages a Voluntary Ranger scheme enabling local people to become actively involved in shaping the service. The Park Rangers also co-ordinate a thriving programme of Healthy Walks across Mid Sussex that are accredited by the national Walking for Health Scheme. Recent programmes have included regular Healthy Walks through St. Johns Park led by volunteer walk leaders.

3.3.5 Steering Group

St. Johns Park is a charitable Trust that is a bequest from its former owner to the people of Burgess Hill. The Council is responsible for the management of the Park, but being a community asset it is important to ensure that the Park is being managed and developed in a manner conducive with their expectations.

Developing a Steering Group is a valuable forum for formal consultation for the Park. Representatives come from regular users/hirers of the Park, elected representatives of both District and Town Council's and members of the Landscape and Outdoor Facilities Teams.

Role of the Group:

- 1) To guide the Council on the overall provision and management of the Park.
- 2) To review the existing plan(s) and comment and advise on master plans.
- 3) To review site based information and commission historical research.

Key Issues:

- Green Flag Application – annual applications
- Wildlife Surveys
- Masterplan Consultation
- Town development and it's impacts on the Park

Aims & Objectives:

Recreation:

To promote the informal recreational benefits of the Park, to attract new and existing customers.

Health:

To promote the Park and the facilities located therein for improving health and wellbeing.

Education:

Encourage and facilitate the interpretation of the Park (history of site, items of ecological interest etc.

Landscape:

Uphold the provision of a high quality and appropriate landscape infrastructure within the Park.

Conservation:

Identify, protect and enhance the habitats and wildlife within the Park. Ensuring the Management plan(s) embrace principles of ecologically sympathetic management practices.

Meetings:

The Steering Group will meet twice per year, once during Spring/Summer to walk the sites and once in Autumn/Winter at a suitable location with capacity for all delegates nominated to the group. Meetings may be called if a development opportunity arises within those periods.

Structure:

Members and Officers of the District Council service the Steering Group for St. Johns with representatives from Burgess Hill Town Council, leaseholders, regular clubs and community organisations.

3.3.6 Community Involvement

Currently there is no formal Friends of St Johns Park, but a steering group has been established which is made up of the numerous community organisations that use St Johns Park as a base for their activities.

Practical inputs to the maintenance of the Park by the steering group are limited although Burgess Hill Cricket Club maintaining the fine sports turf of the 10 wicket cricket table.

The steering group is also talking to the Crawley Community Rehabilitation Company (formerly Community Payback Team) to discuss potential weekly tasking on site linked to Green Flag Awards.



3.3.7 Contractors & Contracts

The maintenance of the hard and soft landscape within the Council's green spaces is contracted out to private sector landscape companies. Procuring these services from the private sector has provided some unique opportunities to encourage innovation within the industry.

Although staffs working on the contracts are directly employed by the landscape companies, Mid Sussex District Council considers them, in effect, to be Council employees. These staff members are perceived to be employed by the Council by park users and they represent the Council when they are approached on site. Encouraging this style of management has been beneficial as it has allowed the contractors to develop a sense of ownership for the parks they maintain.

The specifications for the grounds maintenance contracts have been revised and rewritten and these specifications have become the new standard for horticultural maintenance from January 2014. Previously, parks were classified and grouped together according to specific site features i.e. the sports grounds contract was set up to manage sites with predominantly a sporting interest. This style of contract tended to have repetition of specifications and on occasions differing standards dependent on when the contract was written. The revised specification seeks to unify the areas of commonality across all of the parks and open spaces and only specify separately areas specific to some parks.

Contracts that have relevance to St. Johns Park are:

- Parks & Open Space Contract (the main contract affecting the park)
- Arboriculture Contract
- Playground Inspection and Maintenance Contract
- Irrigation Contract (for bowls)
- General Building Maintenance Contracts
- Refuse Contract

The approach of the Council for working with external contractors places high importance on partnership working. Partnership working with contractors encourages their staff to consider the general appearance of the park on their routine visits and report back on the condition of all facilities. Delegated authority to the Contract

Managers have allowed them to assess the priority for corrective action and to implement essential works without getting formal instruction from the Landscape Section. Among the benefits of this approach has been the reduction in response times to site based problems such as that caused by a spate of unwelcome anti-social behaviour.



3.4 Site Maintenance and Activities

3.4.1 Routine Maintenance Plans

Routine maintenance plans are the scheduled horticultural maintenance tasks for the parks and are drafted in the form of a specification and bill of quantities for a grounds maintenance contract. The budget for the Parks is separated into 3 categories (see section 3.7): -

Core scheduled maintenance

The specification for core-scheduled maintenance will include all the horticultural tasks that must be performed each year to maintain the basic appearance and infrastructure of the park. This specification is flexible evolving with the addition of developments in horticultural practice and achieving high quality standards.

Non-core scheduled maintenance

The non-core schedule is made up of tasks, which are necessary but not considered to be essential to the appearance of the site.

Non-core, non-scheduled maintenance

These are tasks which are required on an ad-hoc basis to retain the landscaping objectives in locations of the park i.e. stripping and replanting a shrub border. Projects for non-core non-schedule works are identified in an annual, non-recorded visual audit of the infrastructure of the parks. The audit will define a programme for the renewal of plantings for the expected life of the landscaping scheme for the location.



3.4.2 Soft Landscaping

The specifications in the contract documents for the maintenance of the soft landscape are based on a combination of frequency and performance so as to ensure that the end product is a high quality Park landscape.

Improvements are accessed that can be achieved in the short and long term. Short- term improvements are minor landscaping projects that can be funded through the revenue budget and longer-term schemes are the larger refurbishment projects that are normally funded through the Council's Capital and Asset Management budgets. Examples of minor works would include remodeling and replanting shrub borders plus wildflower and bulb planting.

Grassed Areas:

The specification for grass cutting within the Park has been based on the potential usage of the area. Locations laid for informal amenity use are cut in accordance with the following four specifications:

High Frequency – 30 cuts per season

Medium Frequency Grass Cutting– 15 cuts per season

These specifications do not include removing the arising, or the maintenance for the fine turf sports areas. The locations with a higher frequency of grass cutting are generally the high profile, intensively used areas of the Parks.

Cuts normally take place between March and October however the cutting regimes are flexible during periods when the ground conditions are deemed unsuitable for cutting; for example in drought periods cutting ceases and is extended during the warmer autumn and spring periods. This prevents any damage to the surface or levels of the ground.

Grassed areas that include naturalised spring planting flowering bulbs are left uncut until the flower has completed its expected growth cycle, normally 6 weeks after the flower has dropped. These areas are then cut and cleared before reverting back to the normal cycle of cutting. Areas within the park that are rich in wild flower species are cut once per year following seed setting.

Shrub Beds / Herbaceous Borders:

There is an annual assessment of borders to ensure that they continue to contribute to the overall aesthetic appearance of the parks. Routine maintenance endeavours to regenerate the plantings, which preserves the appearance of the landscape design. Borders that are assessed to be in poor condition and no longer contributing to the appearance of the parks are scheduled for refurbishment. The Council endeavour to purchase plants for these projects from nurseries within the region in order to support local businesses and reduce the carbon footprint.

The Contract Specification for the routine maintenance of shrub and herbaceous borders is a performance based specification. This requires maintenance tasks to be performed when it is necessary for the cultivation of the species, rather than on a frequency basis. This approach provides the most benefit e.g. renewal pruning is programmed around the needs of the plant instead of being performed the same time every year.



3.4.3 Hard Landscaping

All hard landscaped facilities including the tennis courts, the petanque pistes, and the path network are inspected by staff and contractors on a weekly basis with any safety issues, damage, vandalism, graffiti and excessive wear and tear being reported and acted upon as appropriate e.g. Moss growing on the courts in the shaded areas.

Playground Inspections:

Annual Inspections by Playground Safety Consultant

These inspections are a complete engineering assessment of all aspects of the play area, including equipment, surfacing, bin, gates and fences. This will include a structural assessment of the play equipment. The reports provide an analysis of the condition of equipment, with recommendations for improvement, each item is supported with a photograph. (See Appendix 06: Playground Inspection Report)

Monthly Inspection of Play Areas

An annual contract is let for inspecting the play areas on a monthly basis. The specification requires a visual inspection of all equipment and features during the first week of each month. The report will be used to formulate a schedule of maintenance for the play areas.

Ad-hoc Inspections

Officers of the Landscape Unit and Contractor's staff will inspect the condition of play areas and equipment whilst visiting a site for routine inspections and/or maintenance.

Inspections consist of all play equipment and associated infrastructure being checked for obvious safety hazards. If any equipment appears to be in a dangerous condition it is cordoned off with appropriate warning tape and, if possible, immobilised. In addition the equipment is checked for obvious signs of vandalism, graffiti and excessive wear and tear (such as shackles and chains worn by more than 2mm). The inspecting contractors liaise with Council Officers to put right any defects or problems.

3.4.4 Leased Property

The only Leased Property within St Johns Park is the Pavilion for the Nursery. The Cricket Club is in the process of having a new lease written for their use of the Pavilion and the Cricket Square but this is not completed yet.

The Café and Cricket Club presently are under an agreement with MSDC for the use of the site.

3.4.5 Litter Removal

The cleaning specification for St Johns Park is performance based, which requires the Contractor to visit as many times as is necessary to maintain the expected Grade A standard as defined in the Environmental Protection Act of 1990 (EPA). The contract specification uses the Act as the guiding reference, but it has been slightly modified to fit with the Council's requirements. The EPA standards are:

Grade A - No Litter or detritus

Grade B - Predominantly free of litter and detritus apart from small items.

Grade C - Widespread distribution of litter and detritus with minor accumulation.

Grade D - Heavily littered with significant accumulation. Grade A should be achieved after cleansing.

If the park falls to Grade B it should be restored to Grade A within twelve hours. If it falls to Grade C it should be restored to Grade A in six hours and Grade D should be restored to A within three hours.

Daily inspections are carried out by the contractor who checks the entire site paying particular attention to the boundaries i.e. where wind-blown litter tends to get trapped in hedges. Fly-tipping that takes place is either dealt with by the main contractor or cleared by specialist contractor depending on the material that is tipped.

3.4.6 Performance Monitoring

Officer inspections of the park will include all aspects of the parks maintenance standards. Some inspections may be scheduled around specific work items, but in general the need to visit parks will be for assessing the overall aesthetic appearance of the park and potential developmental needs. Performance monitoring of the grounds maintenance contractor will be assessed by the key performance indicators (KPI's) that have been agreed by the Council and Contractor. A KPI for this contract is for the Contractor to undertake visitor satisfaction surveys on behalf of the Council for each quarter (400 surveys per year). Other aspects of performance have been agreed, but this aspect is an integral part of the KPI's reported to Council Members. The Landscapes Team works a partnership with Contractors which has developed a working relationship whereby instances of poor performance are rectified quickly and without further reference to contract default clauses.

3.4.7 Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

Parks have free and open access 24 hours a day throughout the year and as such it is highly likely that they will attract some degree of anti-social behaviour. Residents in Mid Sussex are fortunate that the crime statistics demonstrate that this area is amongst the safest in the county, however this doesn't mean that such incidents do not occur within the District. The majority of the recorded incidents of anti-social behaviour at St Johns Park are of the nature of such:

Vandalism

Malicious damage of plants or defacing the parks buildings. These issues are reported via park users, Park Rangers, contractor staff or inspection by a member of the Landscape team. These inspections tend to be reactive due to the ad-hoc nature of anti-social behaviour. The practice for dealing with such incidents is to tidy the site within 2 hours of the report and then effect a repair as soon as can be arranged, depending on the severity of the damage and the financial resources required to rectify. Graffiti is removed from parks under a partnership agreement with Burgess Hill Town Councils as they have their own staff resource and have agreed that the removal of Graffiti will be actioned within the same day as it is reported.

Littering

Visitors will often leave their litter/debris rather than placing it in litter bins. This isn't a significant problem for the district except in the 'hot spot' locations where the littering tends to include quantities of broken glass. Due to the popularity of the park, its skate ramps area and being in the town centre it is a high profile park for cleaning.

Litter has been classified into three categories:

Non-hazardous waste – paper, food cartons, drinks cans etc.

Human waste – clearing up after an unauthorized traveller encampment

Hazardous waste – sharps or chemicals.

Non-hazardous waste is collected by the grounds maintenance contractor as part of their core scheduled works. The standards of maintenance for ST Johns Park are linked to the EPA standards for clean neighbourhoods and as such the contractor provides the necessary labour to ensure a site is kept clean.

Human waste is cleaned by a specialist contractor on instruction following an incident that requires such treatment. The Landscapes Team endeavour to ensure that cleaning is achieved within 24 hours of the incident being reported.

Hazardous waste will either be collected by the Council's Waste Collection Contractor or other specialist contractor, depending on the nature of the waste. Cleaning of this nature will be reactive and is expected to be cleaned within 24 hours

Dog Public Spaces Protection Orders

Dog walkers constitute a large percentage of the customers to the park and the control of dog fouling is extremely important to ensure that all users can enjoy using the park.

Under the Anti-social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014 Mid Sussex District Council have put a number of Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPOs) relating to dog control in place. These PSPOs have replaced the previous Dog Control Orders which were made under the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005. The following PSPOs apply to the Park:

Dog Fouling

Anyone in charge of a dog is required to clean up their dogs' mess on all District Council owned or managed recreational and other public land. The Council provides special dog bins for dog waste disposal within the Park and at other sites.

Dog Exclusion

To prevent people or the dogs themselves being injured as a result of sharing activity space, dogs are banned from all fenced recreational areas such as tennis courts and play areas owned by the District Council.

Dogs on Lead by Direction

In order to stop a loose dog disrupting sporting or community events or disturbing local wildlife, dogs must be placed on a lead if requested to do so by an authorised officer, such as a Park Ranger.

There is clear signage displayed around the Park informing park users of the PSPOs that apply on site and the Park Ranger Service has done a considerable amount of work in promoting responsible dog ownership.

Anyone caught failing to comply with these orders risks being issued a Fixed Penalty Notice by an authorised officer, such as a Park Ranger. Failure to pay a Fixed Penalty Notice may result in prosecution with a maximum fine of £1000.

Aggressive Behaviour

The potential for such anti-social behaviour is recognised, but this hasn't been a problem relating to this park. On the occasions that an incident has been reported the Council's Anti-social Behaviour Team has responded quickly in liaison with the Police to investigate and seek a resolution. Unfortunately, a significant number of such claims have been found to be about the fear of crime, rather than actual crime committed within the parks. Dealing with the fear of crime seeks to establish why there is a perceived fear associated with the park. Information from investigations for has aided refurbishment proposals that are intended to offer a greater sense of personal security.

Misuse of Illegal Substances

Substance abuse has been noted at a few locations, but this does not tend to be a problem associated with the Council's public open spaces. The incidents of substance abuse that have been noted are first reported to the police and a clear up actioned as soon as they are happy that the scene can be cleared, in practice this is usually between 2-3 hours of the incident being reported.

Misuse of Alcohol

This aspect of anti-social behaviour is probably one of our more prevalent in parks as they tend to become gathering places when clubs and pubs close. In most instances the behaviour of such groups is not necessarily malicious; it tends to be carelessness and inappropriate high spirits. However, the aftermath can result with a hazard in the park, especially if they have left broken bottles. When an incident has been reported the Council endeavour to clear up after these incidents within 2 hours.

Using Motorised Vehicles in the Park

The Council has a standard 10mph speed limit for all authorised vehicles within the parks. Vehicles that are deemed authorised are any contractor maintenance vehicles or any other vehicle that has been given specific permission by arrangement or facility hire to be on site.

St Johns Park has been protected against incursion from unauthorised encampments with lockable bollards and access control is maintained by the Council with the issue of keys. Response to vehicle abuse in the park is not an issue and the few occasions that it has been reported have been dealt with swiftly and the damage reinstated.

Monitoring and Inspections

The partnership arrangements that the Council has developed with the grounds maintenance contractors include the requirement for their staff to inspect the condition for the parks that they are working on. Similarly, there are frequent site inspections by the members of the Landscapes and Facilities Management Teams and Park Rangers. Due to the number of parks and the frequency of visits it is impractical to record the results of all visits. Records from visiting the parks will be for desirable developments and/or negative maintenance standards. In addition to this, visitors to the Council's parks are encouraged to provide information relating to their experience. Visitors that use the parks have proved to be very good for reporting anti-social behaviour and site conditions.

Prevention Measures

The Council endeavour to reduce the impact of anti-social behaviour and have established a multi-agency group made up of Council Officers and the Police to regularly meet to discuss anti-social behavioural issues within the district.

Operational measures to reduce ASB in parks are:

- 1) Maintaining an official site presence through site visits by office staff, Park Rangers and grounds

maintenance staff. This is also supported with frequent media releases to raise the profile of the service and who to contact

2) Community engagement - informing people about what problems there are, how they are being dealt with and how the community can help.

3) Quality checks on the parks. Behavioural studies have demonstrated a causal link with the aesthetic appearance of a park and the behaviour of the community that use it. A park perceived to be poorly maintained has a tendency to attract a higher degree of anti-social behaviour (the 'broken window' syndrome).

4) Quick and active response to reports of antisocial behaviour. - a quick and active response from the Council and the police has a positive effect within the community to care for their parks.

Park Rangers

Mid Sussex District Council introduced a Park Ranger for each of the Northern, Central and Southern areas of the District in August 1995, with the aim of providing a consistent and customer driven service across the whole of the District.

The Park Rangers work to a shift pattern, operating 7 days a week in parks, sports grounds, open spaces and nature reserves throughout Mid Sussex. They are clearly identifiable by their distinctive uniforms bearing council logos, thus providing a visible staff presence whilst out patrolling sites. The Park Rangers can be followed on their twitter account @MSDCrangers or on instagram on msdcrangers where they tweet or post regularly with updates of their activities.

The role of the Park Rangers is to engage with park users and the local community to ensure parks are safe and fit for purpose, providing an enjoyable leisure environment. They offer a friendly and informative point of contact and promote and encourage responsible facility use. They work to resolve conflict issues, such as dog fouling and vandalism and have the authority to enforce byelaws and Public Spaces Protection Orders, working in partnership with the local Police when necessary.

On their regular patrols of St. Johns Park, Park Rangers inspect the park and buildings, monitoring issues such as litter and cleanliness and reporting any vandalism or damage for resolution or repair as appropriate. The central Park Ranger carries out an annual review of the risk assessment for the Park (see Appendix 04: Risk Assessments), as well as dynamic risk assessments of the park on every patrol.

Additionally, the Park Ranger Service conducts periodic visitor surveys to gauge public opinion on proposed park improvements. The Park Rangers also co-ordinate a thriving programme of Healthy Walks across Mid Sussex that are accredited by the national Walking for Health Scheme. Recent programmes have included regular Healthy Walks through the Park led by trained volunteer walk leaders.

Using Motorised Vehicles in the Park

Most of the Council's green spaces are protected against incursion from unauthorised encampments. This also offers significant protection from unauthorised vehicle access to the sites, but doesn't alleviate the problem completely. The Council will endeavour to protect a location when vehicles have illegally entered a site, but this has to be managed in line with not inhibiting public access. Response to vehicle abuse tends to be reactive for the sites and the occasions that the problem has been experienced.

Conflict issues

The Park Rangers regularly visit and liaise with users of the Council's green spaces and as such they are the first line of contact in dealing with anyone misusing the parks. The emphasis for their liaison is to resolve the issue on site without the need for enforcement activity. If a situation develops beyond their capacity to resolve, they have a strong network of contacts with local police constables and Community Support Officers.

The procedure for dealing with these situations is:

A Park Ranger is called to the park to address the issue.

If the Park Ranger feels threatened and unable to deal with the situation the police are then contacted.

Monitoring

The partnership arrangements that the Council has developed with the grounds maintenance contractors includes the requirement for their staff to inspect the condition for the sites that they are working on. Similarly, there are frequent site inspections by the members of the landscapes team, facilities team and park rangers. Due to the number of sites and the frequency of visits it is impractical to record the results of all visits. The only record of site visits will be for desirable developments and/or negative maintenance standards. In addition to this, visitors to the Council's facilities are encouraged to provide information relating to their experience of the sites. Users have proved to be a very vigilant group for reporting anti-social behaviour and site conditions.

Prevention Measures: Strategic

The Council endeavour to reduce the impact of anti-social with the assistance of the Community Safety Team. This team have a wide remit to liaise with internal and external teams and organisations to investigate and resolve incidents and causes of anti-social behaviour. A multi representative team from different disciplines within the Council regularly meet to discuss anti-social behavioural issues as it relates to existing and new green spaces.

Operational measures to reduce ASB in Parks:

Maintaining an official site presence through site visits by office staff, Park Rangers and grounds maintenance staff. This is also supported with frequent media releases to raise the profile of the service and who to contact

Community engagement

informing people about what problems there are, how they are being dealt with and how the community can help.

Continuing quality checks on the parks

The appearance of a green space is directly related to visitor appeal and maintaining a sense of security (the 'broken window' syndrome).

Quick and active response to reports of anti- social behaviour.

a quick and active response from the Council and the police has a positive effect within the community to care for their green spaces.

3.4.8 Pesticides

Pesticide Policy

The Council strictly adheres to current legislation and codes of practice for use and application of pesticide, which will include any revisions or new legislation. Current legislation for the control of pesticides in Great Britain is:

- Food and Environment Protection Act 1985
- The Control of Pesticides Regulations 1986
- Biocidal Products Regulations 2013

It is a requirement under the legislation to ensure that reasonable precautions are taken to protect the health of all living organisms and safeguard the environment when using a pesticide. The Council recognises the importance of maintaining biodiversity and undertaking land management to enhance and protect existing species and habitats. A national reduction in the use of pesticides has been

targeted as a means of establishing a more environmentally sustainable and ecologically acceptable way forward in the maintenance of the amenity landscape.

The landscapes section has its own pesticide policy which encompasses the key tenets of Council procedure in the decision making process and has been adopted for the selection, approval and application of pesticides.

MSDC Pesticide Policy

A consideration for park management is the appropriate use of pesticides in the public places. Whilst there are a variety of products that are on the approved products listings the overriding decision is whether it is justified as being the most appropriate method of control. Legislative controls are more than adequate to ensure that products are used safely and in accordance with the manufacturers guidelines, however when managing in the municipal environment other factors are necessary to ensure the risks to park users has been adequately addressed. Therefore, Mid Sussex District Council has instigated a supporting Code of Practice for the use of pesticides to reduce the quantity of chemicals in the environment

The Code of Practice requires that any infestation is assessed on the grounds of whether it requires a management intervention, alternative methods of control should an intervention be deemed necessary and if chemical treatment is required the products are investigated to establish the lowest toxicity. There will be situations whereby the infestation can be tolerated as the impacts are negligible. Customers will need information to help understand this approach, but if it isn't going to cause a long term problem then it may not need an action. Similarly, biological and non-chemical solutions should be considered as a means of managing an infestation if it seen to need an action. This course of action may incur additional cost if there is a need for repeated applications, but it is likely to significantly reduce the impacts on the environment. Investigating a situation in this manner will ensure that the decision to use pesticides is justified and will provide the desired control.

The main elements of the Code of Practice are in line with the legislation and cover the following key elements:

- To ensure pesticides are used only where absolutely necessary to achieve a cost effective and acceptable grounds maintenance service;
- To comply with all relevant legislation;
- To use the least harmful approved product for consistent efficacy;
- To comply with all terms of approval and manufacturers recommendations relating to the use of pesticides;
- To ensure trained personnel undertake the prescription and use of pesticides;
- To keep adequate records of pesticide application;
- To undertake regular inspections of Contractor compliance with relevant legislation and codes of practice.
- To provide temporary signage informing the public of areas being treated and with what pesticides.

The procedure for use of pesticides:

- Identify the weed/pest/disease/other problem.
- Assess the need for applying pesticides to combat identified problems.
- If pesticides are necessary, get qualified advice if appropriate on which pesticide to use.
- Instruct Contractor to apply pesticide according to the code of practice.
- Keep a record of all pesticide applications.

3.4.9 Site Heritage

Conserving the sites heritage is an important consideration when any new designs for the parks are prepare

3.4.10 Sustainability

Sustainable practices are continually being developed within the landscapes team with a goal to improve our environmental performance, which will be a great benefit to the community.

The following are sustainable practices, which we use at St Johns Park:

Minimal pesticide usage

Trials are being arranged for non-chemical weed treatment on hard surfaces. The suitable alternative will become the standard for MSDC Green Spaces.

MSDC have self-imposed bans on certain pest control products that are considered high toxicity. The partnership with the grounds maintenance contractor enables the Council to stay up-to-date with revisions of approved products and suggested trials for non-chemical products/methods

Green Waste

Branches from pruning are chipped on site and spread on the surrounding border as a mulch. This has a dual benefit for moisture retention and the resins of the wood having weed suppressant qualities as the material dries and decomposes.

Grass arisings from the Cricket Club are stored on site for collection and taken to the green waste recycling facilities at West Sussex County Council's Waste Transfer Stations

Bedding displays are a feature of the park, but the plant choice endeavours to have plants that have better drought resistant qualities to reduce the need for watering.

The grass cutting specification no longer has a requirement collect the arisings. These are spread evenly across the surface of the grass areas after cutting. The only exception to this is when the quantity of arisings is too great following cutting and there is a potential to damage the sward.

Tree management is programmed to benefit the longevity of the tree. The Arboriculture Officer uses a variety of modern technology to assess tree health to ensure the decisions for maintenance will aid the trees health. Felling is only considered when the health of a tree has declined to a position whereby surgery would not improve its condition

3.4.11 Organised Activities & Events

Organised Activities

- Sussex BodyBlast
- Burgess Hill Cricket Club – Adults & Juniors

Events

- Wild about Mid Sussex – 3rd June
- Burgess Hill Symphony Orchestra – 4th June
- Teddy Bears Picnic – 7th June
- Party in the Park – 10th June
- Boules Taster session – 7th June
- Tennis Taster Session – 10th June
- Church Picnic – 16th July
- Playday, Wheels in Motion – 2nd August

Summer Festival

- Jazz in the marquee with Herbie Flowers and His Band – 4th June
- Fun and Magic with Robbie – 4th June
- Burgess Hill Summer Fayre – 11th June



3.4.12 Car Parking

A parking order at St. Johns Park limits the waiting time to 4 hours on Monday - Friday from 9am - 5pm. The parking order is being enforced by the Councils Civil Enforcement Officers. The aim is to deter commuters and other non-users of the parks from parking in the car park all day and taking spaces from visitors.

There is a free car park for park users.

3.5 Marketing

3.5.1 Celebrating Success

St. Johns Park Publicity Objectives:

- Inform existing customers
- Attract new customers
- Develop and maintain loyalty
- Stimulate enquiries

The Council regularly produces press releases and articles regarding St. Johns Park. In addition when there are events on in the park or local ceremonies these are often publicised in the local papers or on the site Notice Board (Appendix 08: Recent Publicity)



3.5.2 Branding

It is important for the Council to convey a clear and consistent message for all of its services and to be seen as a cohesive organisation. Everything that it produces, from press releases and booklets, to logos and advertisements follows the guidelines set by the Council's corporate publicity section. At St. Johns Park the Council's brand is incorporated by displaying it on temporary and permanent signage as well as on any leaflets or other marketing publications issued.



3.5.3 Site Signage

Existing signage: -

- Directional signs
- Park maps
- Enclosed information board
- Flag
- Playground signs
- Welcome signs

Identified signage improvements: -

- Educational signs
- Car park signage
- Improved directional signage



3.5.4 Internet

St. Johns Park has a page dedicated to it within Mid Sussex District Council's website.

This page has been recently updated and gives information about the sites location, its history, its features and facilities with links to other relevant sites for further information and contact details

Website:

<http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/leisure-recreation-tourism-events/parks-places-of-interest-and-things-to-do/parks/st-johns-park-burgess-hill/>



The park also features on a range of other web sites including:

<https://www.burgesshill.gov.uk/stjohnspark>

<http://www.burgesshilluncovered.co.uk/events/2017-08-02-play-day-in-the-park.html>

<http://www.parksandgardens.org/places-and-people/site/6869?preview=1>

3.6 Finance

Funding Allocations

Parks and public open spaces within the District come under the responsibility of the Divisional Leader for Commercial Services and Contracts. This post holder is responsible for a wide range of outdoor services including all the grounds maintenance contracts. Administration of the budgets for grounds maintenance is delegated to officers of the Landscapes Section. The two principal sources of finance can be summarised as follows:-

Revenue Budget - The revenue budget refers to the allocation of revenue funds for the necessary annual maintenance of the buildings and infrastructure and the activities that take place within the park.

Capital Budget – Improvements of the infrastructure of the Parks are funded through a capital grants scheme. This essentially comes from developer contributions under the Section 106 or Community Infrastructure Levy.

Revenue Budget – Grounds Maintenance

The budget for the park is allocated into three categories of expenditure. These categories are:

- a) Core Scheduled Maintenance.
- b) Core Non-scheduled Maintenance.
- c) Non-core Non-scheduled Maintenance.

Core Scheduled Maintenance accounts for approximately 80% of the total budget sum, which will be paid to the Grounds Maintenance Contractor. Payments against this sum will be for 1/12th of the annual core sum. The specification for core-scheduled maintenance will include all the horticultural tasks that must be performed each year to maintain the basic appearance and infrastructure of the park. This specification is flexible and will be updated with the addition of developments in horticultural practice and achieving high quality standards.

Core Non-scheduled Maintenance accounts for approximately 7% of the total budget sum. The core non-schedule is made up of tasks that are essential but not considered to be required on a routine basis for the appearance of the site. This could include for example the application of pesticides to bowling greens or leaf sweeping.

Non-core Non-schedule accounts for approximately 7% of the total budget sum. These are tasks which are required on an ad-hoc basis to retain the landscaping objectives in locations of the park i.e. stripping and replanting a shrub border. Projects for non-core non-schedule works are identified each year.

Materials for the park is approximately 6% of the budget sum

Grounds Maintenance Indicative Costs for 2016/17:

Core schedule (routine maintenance) - £18,713

Core non-scheduled work (Maintenance of similar nature to core schedule, but is an addition i.e. extra grass cutting) - £1,753

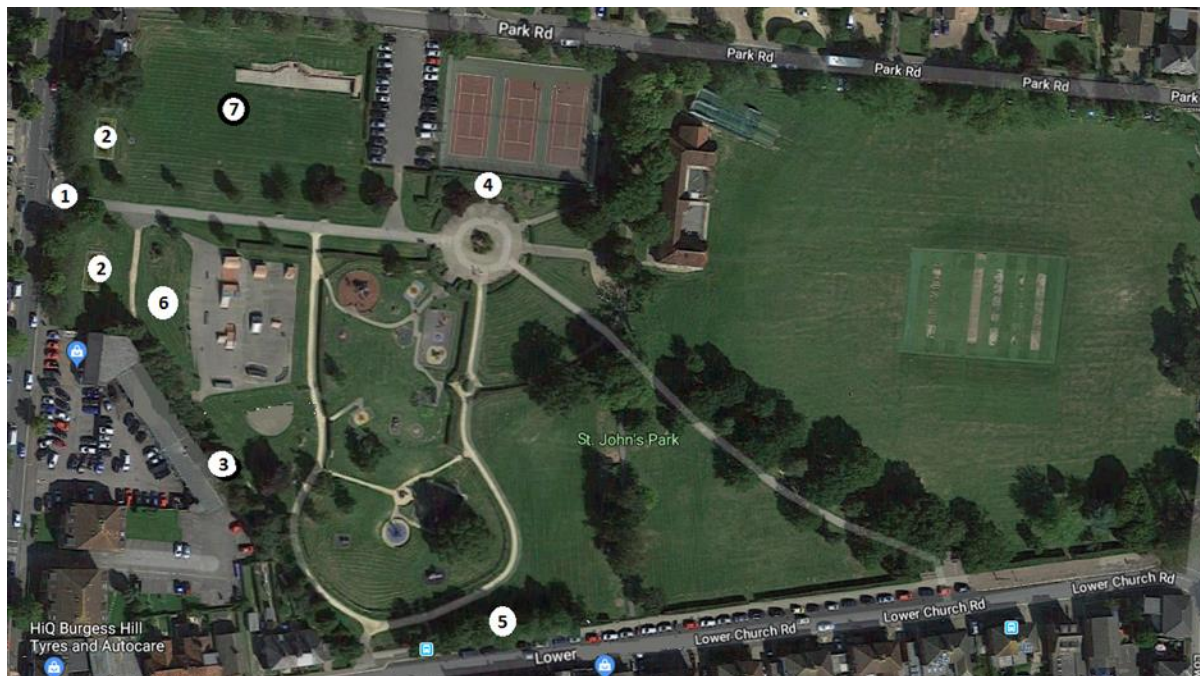
Non-core, non-scheduled work (minor landscaping and improvements) - £1,627

An element of the budget caters for the purchase of material such as plants, seeds etc. - £1,494

Total Allocated Budget - £23,587.00

4 Section 4: Park Works Improvement Plan

Work Programmed for period April 2018 - March 2019



Area	Description	Green Flag Judging Criteria	Date Planned	Funding Source	Value
1	Thinning and lifting of Cherry Trees on the London Road entrance to the park	1 / 2	Autumn 2018	Capital	£4K
2	Renovating both beds to move away from summer bedding but to provide all year around interest.	4	Autumn 2018	Capital	£2K
3	To clear under storey coppice and replant with Dogwoods.	2	Autumn 2018	Capital	£4K
4	Renovate all borders in and around the roundabout with interest for all seasons	4	Autumn 2018	Capital	£3K
5	Clear coppice and renovate grass in this area.	2	Autumn 2018	Capital	£2K
6	Establish staff training program with Plumpton College.	3 / 8	Spring 2018	Capital	£5K
7	Establish CRC Probation Team at St Johns Park.	6	Spring 2018	Idverde Investment	Staff time
8	Graffiti bedding border.	6	Aspiration	TBC	TBC
9	Make lawn area more desirable for events	7	Aspiration	TBC	TBC

Appendices

Appendix 01: Ecological Assessment and Management Suggestions for St Johns Park

Appendix 02: Cyclical Condition Tree Survey

Appendix 03: Health & Safety Policy & Risk Management

Appendix 04: Risk Assessments

Appendix 05: Relevant Bye-laws

Appendix 06: Playground Inspection

Appendix 07: Park Improvements

Appendix 08: Recent Publicity

Appendix 09: Recent improvements completed at St Johns Park 2017-18

