

# Woodford Park

## Management Plan 2020



**THIS PAGE IS INTENTIONALLY  
LEFT BLANK**

# Contents

---

SECTION 1		Page
Introduction		
1	Introduction	5
1.1	History of the site	7
1.2	Location	9
1.3	Vision statement	11
SECTION 2		
A welcoming place		
2.1	Good and safe access	13
2.2	Announcing the park	13
2.3	Physical access	13
2.4	Dog fouling	15
2.5	Social access	15
2.5.1	Play	15
2.5.2	Young people	16
2.5.3	Sports	16
2.5.4	Quiet areas	17
2.5.5	Toilets and first aid	17
2.5.6	Events	17
2.6	Aspects of design	17
2.6.1	Entrances	18
2.6.2	Seating	18
2.6.3	Pathways	18
2.6.4	Queen's Birthday Community Garden	19
2.6.5	War memorial / memorial gates	20
SECTION 3		
Healthy, safe and secure		
3.1	Safe working practices	21
3.1.1	Play areas	21
3.1.2	Dogs	21
3.1.3	Water testing	21
3.1.4	Lighting	21
3.1.5	Hirers / events	21
3.1.6	Ground works	21
3.1.7	Needles / syringes	22
3.1.8	Fly tipping	22
3.2	Secure	22
3.2.1	Staff presence	22
3.2.2	Just Around the Corner (JAC)	22
3.2.3	Policing	23
3.2.4	Buildings in the park	23
3.3	Healthy	24
3.3.1	Quiet areas	24
3.3.2	Community orchard	24
3.4	Fitness	25
3.4.1	Park Run	25
3.5	Sports development	26
3.6	Gym on the park	27
3.7	Other activities	28

SECTION 4		
Clean and Well Maintained		
4.1	Grounds team	29
4.1.1	Litter, waste management and ground works	30
4.1.2	Green waste	30
4.1.3	Tree works	30
4.1.4	Grass cutting	30
4.2	Buildings	31
4.3	Seating	32
4.4	Dog fouling	32
4.5	Lighting	32
4.6	Graffiti	32
4.7	Friends of Woodford Park	33
4.8	Maintenance schedule	34
SECTION 5		
Sustainability		
5.1	Environmental policy and Climate Emergency	37
5.2	Procurement	38
5.3	Green waste	38
5.3.1	General waste	38
5.4	Energy	38
5.4.1	Water	39
5.5	Pesticide/herbicide use	39
5.6	Tree planting	39
5.7	Reuse of materials	40
5.8	Vehicles and equipment	40
5.9	Cycling	41
SECTION 6		
Conservation and heritage		
6.1	Wild flowers	43
6.2	Natural margins	43
6.3	Trees	43
6.4	Crocus planting	44
6.5	Social heritage	44
6.6	Lake restoration project	45
6.7	Memorial Ground Board restoration	46
SECTION 7		
Community involvement		
7.1	Friends of Woodford Park	47
7.2	Consultation	49
7.3	Residents survey	49
7.4	Woodley Carnival	49
7.5	Remembrance	50
7.6	Social media	52
7.7	Memorial seats, trees and plaques	52
7.8	Community Orchard	52
7.9	Events and community	53
7.9.1	Community links and partnerships	54

SECTION 8		
Marketing		
8.1	Marketing objectives	55
8.2	Marketing activities	55
8.2.1	Residents survey	55
8.2.2	Press releases	55
8.2.3	Social media	56
8.2.4	Woodley Herald	56
8.2.5	Events	56
8.2.6	Open days / consultation	57
8.2.7	Website	57
8.2.8	Local listings	57
SECTION 9		
Management		
9.1	Structure and process	59
9.1.1	Policies	59
9.1.2	Challenges	59
9.1.3	Green Flag Award	59
9.2	Budget and resourcing	59
9.2.1	External funding	60
9.3	Staff team	60
9.4	Leisure Services Committee – powers and duties	61
9.5	Leisure Services Committee budget 2018/19	62
9.6	Assessment	63
9.7	Action plan	65
9.8	Recent projects and investment	69
Appendices		
	1. New play area assessment	75
	2. New play area draft design brief	77
	3. Play Areas – Inclusive/access assessment	79
	4. Volunteer Park Warden – job description	89
	5. Environmental Policy	91
	6. Lake restoration project overview	93
	7. Lake restoration ecology report	95
	8. Residents survey	115
	9. Woodley Herald	147
	10. Environmental, Health & Safety policy statement	157
	11. Green Flag Award criteria	159
	12. Green Flag feedback & response	161
	13. Mystery Shop Assessment 2019	169

**THIS PAGE IS INTENTIONALLY  
LEFT BLANK**



# Introduction

---

This management plan has been produced by Woodley Town Council and is intended as a living document that is accessible and easy to understand. It forms the basis for the ongoing management of Woodford Park and the Memorial Ground (referred to as Woodford Park in this document).

The purpose of the Management Plan is;

- To act as a 'blueprint' for how the site will be managed both now and in the future.
- To provide a reference document for those responsible for maintaining the park.
- To provide a benchmark for both the physical and social management of the park with standards that can be monitored and measured.
- To enable the Council to better manage the various operational and management activities in a coordinated way.
- To enable the park to be entered for a Green Flag Award, a national standard for quality parks and open spaces.

The plan includes an action plan outlining the aspirations for the park and how we aim to achieve these, both financially and through community engagement. The action plan will be updated, taking into account progress on specific areas and feedback from the Green Flag Award scheme.

Participating in the **Green Flag** Award scheme has already seen significant, measurable improvements and investment in Woodford Park. Woodford Park is the first and currently the only park in Wokingham Borough to have achieved this status and this is a great source of pride for the Council and residents.



**THIS PAGE IS INTENTIONALLY  
LEFT BLANK**



## History of the site

---

Woodford Park is a well-used public park owned and managed by Woodley Town Council as a local amenity. The Council recognises a need to enhance the park's character and sense of identity, and improve the quality of facilities for visitors and local residents and protect the park for future generations.

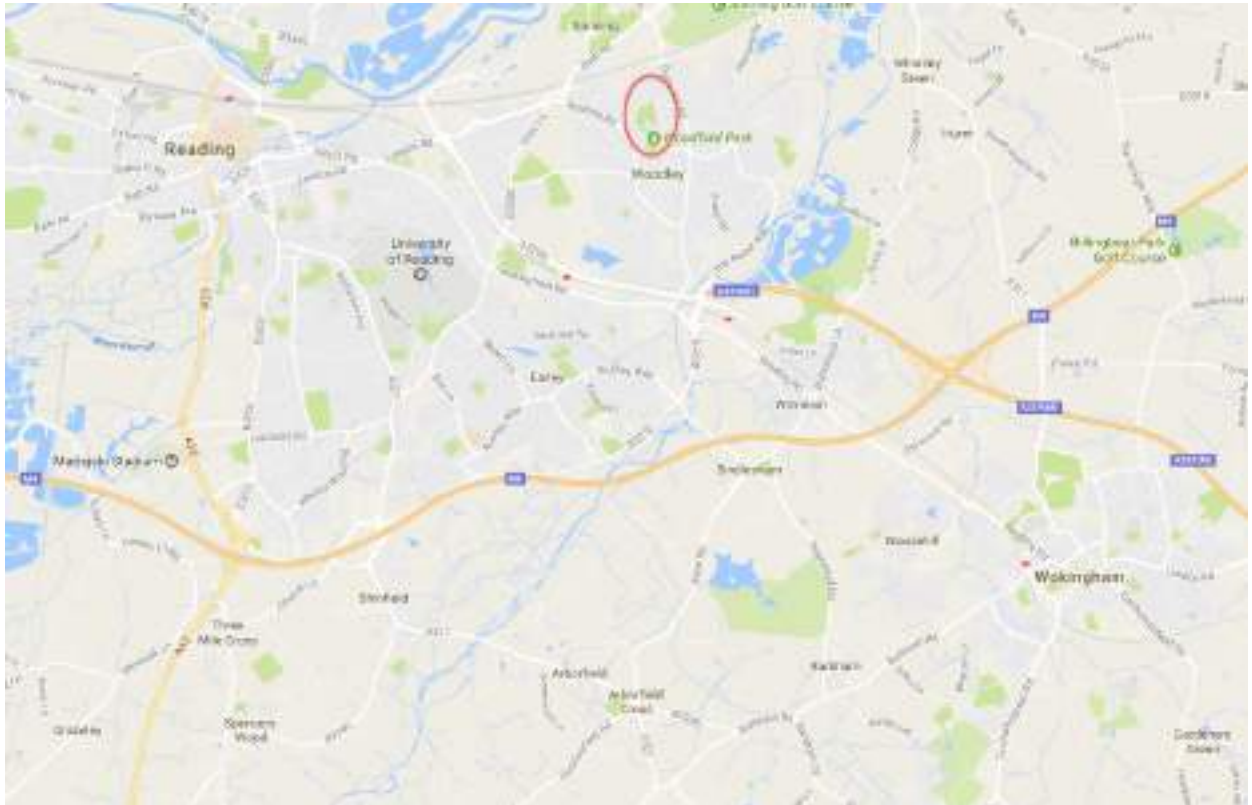
- Woodford Park originates from a 5 acre recreation ground, laid out in 1887 on farmland leased from the Rev. Goldring-Palmer. It was an example, on a very small scale, of the nineteenth century Public Parks Movement, developing public open space for the good of all;
- In 1918 the recreation ground became The Memorial Ground when the land was purchased by subscription from the community to commemorate the end of the First World War. An old army hut was erected two years later for the ex-servicemen's club. The Council is the trustee of the Woodley Memorial Recreation Ground Charity which has covenants on the use of the land.
- By 1956, the hut had been replaced by Coronation Hall, opened by the war hero Group Captain (later Sir) Douglas Bader, who learnt to fly at Woodley Aerodrome. The hall became a centre for community events and remains an essential venue for the people of Woodley to this day.
- Additional farmland adjacent to the Memorial Ground was purchased by the Council and formally named in 1964 by Lord Luke, Chairman of the National Playing Fields Association, a charity dedicated to the provision of open space for public recreation, essential for the growing, modern town of Woodley. For the purposes of this document reference to Woodford Park includes the Memorial Ground.
- The vision of town planners in the late 1960s and 1970s saw further changes to Woodley, such as the development of a pedestrian shopping centre and the M4 link road. At the same time, greater focus was placed on Woodford Park's value as an open space for passive recreation and a major landscape project took place, creating a distinctive modernist landscape of lake and sculpted landforms.
- Since its conception as a simple recreation ground, Woodford Park has remained at the centre of the community, providing a meeting space for a range of local societies, clubs and organisations; offering multi-purpose venues for sport, the arts and other social activities; and the home of the Town Council offices since the Council's inception.
- Woodford Park is the only public park in central Woodley, providing an essential green space in an extensive urban area.

**THIS PAGE IS INTENTIONALLY  
LEFT BLANK**

## 1.2 Location

Woodford Park is located in the centre of Woodley with the town centre immediately to the south, and residential areas to the north, east and west.

Woodley itself is located between Reading and Wokingham and the nearby villages of Sonning, Twyford, Winnersh, Hurst and Charvil.



*Woodford Park location map*

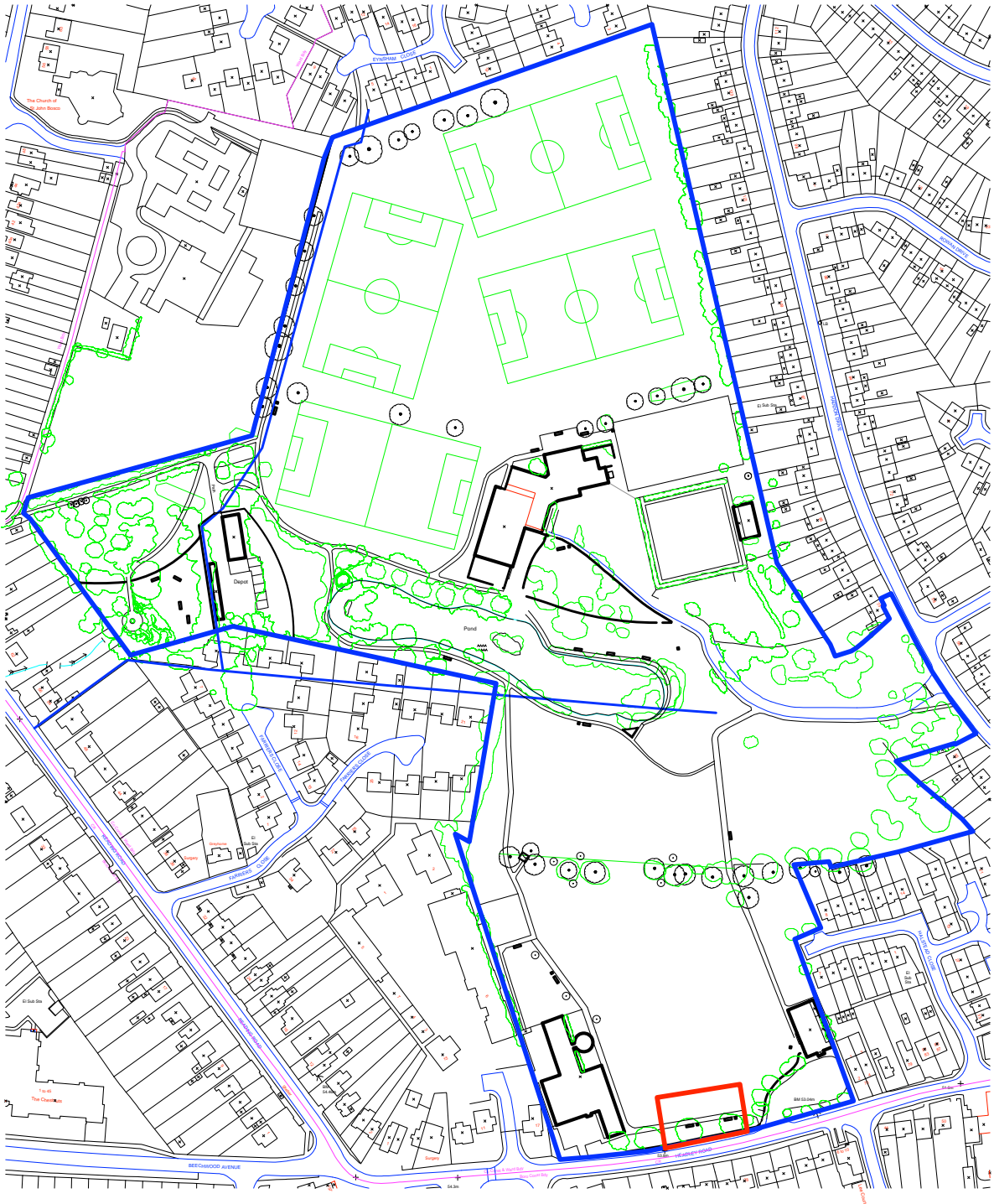
Woodford Park is home to:

- The Oakwood Centre – housing the Town Council offices, hireable rooms, theatre, coffee shop and public toilets.
- Coronation Hall – a busy community hall and operation centre for the local food bank.
- Woodford Park Leisure Centre – a multi-use leisure centre offering various indoor and outdoor sports activities and also home to Woodley Pre School, Woodley Bowls Club and Optalis care services.

Woodford Park has several access points from the surrounding residential areas and has free car parking at the leisure centre and Coronation Hall.

The park is a regular through route for pedestrians travelling to the town centre from the north side of the town and is serviced by the local bus routes with stops at Headley Road and Butts Hill Road.

Woodford Park location plan:



## Vision Statement and Objectives

---

Woodley Town Council recognises Woodford Park as the 'Jewel in the Crown' of the services and facilities managed by the Council and as an essential open space for residents and visitors to the Town.

The Council is committed to providing;

- High quality grounds and infrastructure maintenance.
- Continued environmental improvements and reductions in carbon footprint of operations.
- A welcoming, attractive and safe place to visit.
- A diverse range of activities, stakeholders and park users.
- High quality play equipment for a range of ages.
- Activities for older children and young adults.
- A well maintained war memorial and civic space.
- A venue for community activities and events.
- A space for organised and casual recreation activities.
- High quality sports pitches for organised and casual use.
- Opportunities for residents to express their views and ensure that Woodford Park continues to meet their needs.
- The removal of barriers to the use and enjoyment of the park
- Responsible and effective stewardship of the park for future generations.
- Conservation and enhancement biodiversity through conservation of trees, restoration of the lake and provision of wild flower areas and natural borders.
- Reducing dog fouling the park through partnership working and campaigns.
- Involving people of all backgrounds and abilities in the improvements and enjoyment of the park.
- Improving the economical and environmental sustainability of Woodford Park as a whole and maintain a secure financial basis for the management of the park.

- Working in close partnership with local residents, particularly through the Friends of Woodford Park group.
- Preserving the character of the Garden of Remembrance as a special place in the park.
- Continuing to work with partners e.g. Neighbourhood Police Team , Just Around the Corner Youth Charity to engage with young people in the park.



At the Full Council Meeting on 1 October 2019 the following motion was adopted:

*This Council notes that:*

1. *The impacts of climate breakdown are already causing serious damage around the world.*
2. *Limiting Global Warming to 1.5°C (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, October 2018) may still be possible with ambitious action from national and sub-national authorities, civil society and the private sector.*

*This Council therefore:*

1. *Commits to a declaration of a 'Climate Emergency' with the aim of becoming a carbon neutral organization by 2030.*
2. *Welcomes the declaration by Wokingham Borough Council of a 'Climate Emergency' and will actively participate in the creation of the Borough-wide climate change strategy to ensure Woodley Town Council is fully engaged in its creation for the benefit of its residents.*
3. *Will explore, with all parts of the community, the development of a local action plan in support of, and to compliment, the Borough Council's climate change strategy plan for those parts relevant to Woodley Town."*

These principles will filter through all services provided by the Council and will influence buying decisions and methods of work relating to the management of our parks.

There are great opportunities to improve our services in a sustainable way, engage in environmental initiatives and encourage residents to contribute to this. The Council is developing a plan to deliver these improvements and achieve these targets.



## 2 A Welcoming Place

### 2.1 Good and safe access

Part of our vision for Woodford Park is that it be accessible to all parts of our community and that we continue to identify and remove barriers to the use and enjoyment of the park. We now have an annual budget allocation for pathway repairs and have repaired many areas of pathway and potholes in the park. The pathways around the lake were also resurfaced as part of the regeneration project.

### 2.2 Announcing the park

Signage was identified as a key area for improvement from our first Green Flag application. We have now installed 'Welcome' notice board signs at each of the 4 main access points into the park. These signs include an interpretation map, contact information and updated information about the park.

Directional fingerpost signage has also been installed to guide pedestrians to various facilities and locations within the park from wherever they are.



*New site map, notice board and way finding signage*

### 2.3 Physical access

Woodford Park is centrally located and easy to get to by public transport, road or on foot. There is parking provision at Woodford Park Leisure Centre, Coronation Hall and the pay & display car park in Headley Road. Disabled parking is available close to the park at all of these car parks.

The Town Council has installed bike racks at the leisure centre and Oakwood Centre to encourage cycling.

In 2016 the old railings were removed from the access points from Eynsham Close and Keane Close to the north in order to provide access for wheelchairs, mobility scooters and pushchairs. These may be reinstalled allowing the appropriate access width if required.

Access from Headley Road has been improved by removing the pedestrian gate from the redesigned entrance area.

Access issues remain at the entrance from Western Avenue due to the ownership of the access road being unknown. The Council has taken steps to try and identify the owner of this land through Land Registry, local solicitors and local residents but this has been unsuccessful. The Council does carry out periodic surface repairs to minimise issues for park visitors.

In 2012 the Council carried out significant repairs and improvements to the drainage in key areas of the park which had caused a problem for pedestrians and disabled visitors for many years during periods of very wet weather.

Significant improvements have been made over the last two years to the pathways around the park. The pathways around the lake, Garden of Remembrance and Rotary Garden have been resurfaced and a new path from the small car park to the pre-school has been installed to provide a safer route for parents and children.

A programme of pathway repairs has been implemented with several areas around the park repaired or re-laid in 2019. The Council now allocates a budget each year specifically for pathway improvements and repairs.



*New paths around the lake*

2.4

### **Dog fouling**

A survey carried out by the Friends of Woodford Park (FOWP) group highlighted the issue of dog fouling in the park. Working with the FOWP the Council launched the 'We're Watching You' campaign run by Keep Britain Tidy to reduce instances of dog fouling. The campaign has seen a significant reduction in instances of dog fouling and we continue to replace signage as it deteriorates.



2.5

### **Social access**

Woodford Park has a wide social usage in terms of age, ability, gender and heritage background. The location of facilities within the park is important in encouraging use while limiting impact on other facilities and areas of the park. This works very well and provides a wide range of activities for different groups without making others feel uncomfortable.

2.5.1

#### Play

The play area near the leisure centre was created in 2010 on the site of a seldom used mini golf course. The play area was added to in 2012 to provide play equipment for younger children adjacent to the paddling pool. The play area is very well used and we have made improvements to the surfacing and sand pit to accommodate the heavy usage. The paddling pool is extremely popular through the summer months and attracts families and groups who can have a picnic on the grass and dip in and out of the pool.



*Woodford Park Paddling Pool*

Plans are being developed for a new play area to replace the old one to the rear of the Oakwood Centre. This exciting project will be a substantial investment and will help us make Woodford Park a destination park in the area. Delivery of this project is expected in 2020. A key aspect of the design will be inclusive play and accessible facilities. A project assessment and draft design brief are appended to this plan. **(APP 1 & 2).**

In January 2020 the Council has carried out an accessibility review of all it's play areas and is currently developing a site by site plan to improve access and provide inclusive equipment. **(APP 3).**





*Woodford Park Play Area*

2.5.2 Young people  
The skate park was constructed in 2011 following a long consultation to find a suitable site in Woodley. The Town Council moved the project forward providing the site, securing the funding and consulting with local young people on the design. The skate park continues to be very well used by a wide age range and also provides a focal point for the outreach work carried out by Just Around the Corner youth charity. The skate park is located so that it is clearly visible from the pathways around the park and from the Council Offices. This provides informal supervision while allowing users to express and enjoy themselves without feeling overlooked.

2.5.3 Sports  
Woodford Park has a sporting legacy going back to the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and sports provision remains a key priority. A new 3G football pitch was installed in 2016 to complement the grass football pitches and cricket pitch in the park. The 3G pitch is used by local clubs, organisations and charities for organised sport, and is also made available for local people for turn up sessions. The Town Council runs a 'play for £2' scheme through the school holidays which provided hundreds of local children the experience of playing on a first class sports surface. The organised activities range from youth development football and coaching, adult football, walking football and rugby for the less mobile, wheelchair rugby and fitness and wellbeing classes for all ages and abilities.

The park is also home to Woodley Bowls Club with its county standard green – maintained by the Town Council Grounds Maintenance Team. Woodford Park also hosts the annual schools cross country, Cecil Trembath football tournament and Woodley Sports Week.

#### 2.5.4 Quiet areas

The Rotary Garden, Garden of Remembrance, War Memorial and Queens Birthday Garden provide quite places to sit and enjoy the park. Benches are also located along all of the pathways. The Garden of Remembrance was improved in 2019 with re-laid pathways, new planting and box hedging.



*Garden of Remembrance*

#### 2.5.5 Toilets and first aid

Toilets including disabled and baby changing are provided for park users at both Woodford Park Leisure Centre and The Oakwood Centre. First aid facilities at each site include defibrillators and trained staff. Both buildings are also part of the 'Safer Places' scheme to provide assistance and reassurance to vulnerable people.

#### 2.5.6 Events

The park hosts many annual events such as the Woodley Carnival, Woodley 10k Run, schools cross country, cricket and football tournaments, funfairs and circus events, gatherings of Remembrance as well as cultural events open to all including the Barbados Day celebration and the local Muslim group fun day. A list of events is included in this plan. In 2019 we celebrated the 100<sup>th</sup> year of the Memorial Ground with a free event attracting hundreds of residents. This fun event included live entertainment, free picnic bags and opportunities to try circus skills, handle reptiles and see farm animals up close. We intend to repeat and develop the event in 2020.

We are also making plans to commemorate the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VE day with an event in the park.

#### 2.6 **Aspects of design**

Woodford Park consists of many 'character' areas worked together to create a pleasant place to be. The earth mounds create a landscape which is both interesting and functional. The mounds are a favourite for picnics and also for children to play on, particularly in the snow. They also provide a vantage point to view the rest of the park.

### 2.6.1 Entrances

The driveway entrance into the park from Haddon Drive is welcoming with spring daffodils, winter crocuses, log path borders and large Willow trees.

The bespoke and artistic memorial gates from Headley Road provide an attractive and interesting entrance to the Civic Space, War Memorial, Remembrance Panels and flag poles on the Memorial Ground.

### 2.6.2 Seating

Seating is mostly of the same style with robust but attractive iron/timber seats. Residents can make a donation for a memorial seat in the park in memory of a loved one. Other seating includes reused trunks from felled trees.

### 2.6.3 Pathways

Pathways are well used and reflect the pedestrian routes from the residential areas in the north to the town centre to the south. There is a well used pedestrian route going north east across the Memorial Ground which does not have a formal path. This has been considered in the past and public opinion has been split as to whether a formal path across the middle of the Memorial Ground would be desirable or would impact on events and activities e.g. Woodley Carnival. The ground is well draining and does not flood or become boggy so this informal route does remain accessible all year round. The Town Council will be installing ground reinforcement in 2020 to reduce erosion and maintain the grass along this busy route.

The pathways around the lake have been re-laid using a golden gravel tar & chip method as used in the Royal Parks. This work included eliminating numerous trip hazards from tree root damage and deterioration of the old tarmac paths.

The paths in the Garden of Remembrance have been re-laid and several sections of tarmac footpath repaired and replaced around the park.



*Rotary Garden Path*



2.6.4

The Queen's Birthday Community Garden

This community garden adjacent to the war memorial was designed by a local garden designer created by the Friends of Woodford Park. It provides formal planting with year round colour. The garden has been added to by the volunteers over the last few years and has transformed this area of the park. More beds were added in 2018/19 and provide a very special feel to this area of the park, with a wide range of plants, textures and colour.

The work carried out by the volunteers is crucial as this would not be possible to achieve with the resources currently available to the Council. It also provides an important opportunity for residents to be involved in their park in a very positive way.



*Queen's Birthday Community Garden*

## 2.6.5

### War memorial / memorial gates

The appropriate location and design of the new war memorial and Civic Space was essential to the success of this project. The historic and planned use of the area was taken into consideration to create a setting that, although on a busy pedestrian route, provides a pleasant place to sit and enjoy the park, as well as a venue for formal gatherings of remembrance. Bespoke gates were commissioned with symbolism to reflect Woodley, Woodford Park and the Memorial Ground. Gatherings of Remembrance have grown in numbers year on year since the monument was installed. The Centenary gathering in 2018 attracted many hundreds of people.

The gates were refurbished in 2018 and updated with additional sculpture detail to commemorate the 100 years since the end of the First World War.

The Remembrance Panels and flagpoles were also added to create a truly special area in the park.

The Remembrance Panels tell stories of Woodley families who lost loved ones in the war and provide a poignant reminder of the cost of war on real people.



*Memorial Gates and Remembrance Panels*



## 3 Healthy, Safe & Secure

---

### Safe

#### 3.1 Safe working practices

The Council maintains an up to date health & safety policy along with appropriate training for all staff. Tasks and potential hazards are considered and addressed through formal risk assessments. Council staff are issued with and required to use and wear appropriate safety equipment and carry out all tasks in a safe way. The Council has a partnership arrangement with Ellis Wittham - health & safety professionals for advice and assistance on safety matters. This includes regular audit of practices and documentation.

#### 3.1.1 Play areas

The play areas in the park are inspected and cleared of all litter 3 times per week by the Council's maintenance team. Three monthly recorded inspections of the equipment are also carried out by the team who have received ROSPA approved training for play area safety inspections. The Maintenance Manager has been trained and is now a qualified ROSPA play area assessor. The sites are also inspected annually by an independent ROSPA approved inspector.

#### 3.1.2 Dogs

Dogs are excluded from the play areas and the signage reflects this. The Council is continuing to work in partnership with the Friends of Woodford Park and the Borough Animal Warden to reduce instances of dog fouling in the park. The 'We're Watching You' campaign was launched in September 2016. Dog waste bins are provided on all pedestrian routes through the park and are regularly emptied.

#### 3.1.3 Water testing

The paddling pool water quality is tested daily through the summer period when it is open to ensure the safety of the water for all users. Regular water testing is carried out on all water supplies both in the park buildings and external equipment e.g. bowls green irrigation system.

#### 3.1.4 Lighting

Lighting columns in the park are regularly inspected and subject to a maintenance contract. We aim to repair lamp outages as soon as possible through the contractor. All columns were replaced in 2018 with hinged columns and LED lanterns to dramatically improve reliability and quality of light, and dramatically reduce energy consumption.

#### 3.1.5 Hirers / events

All hirers of the park are required to provide insurance details, risk assessments and safety certificates as appropriate to ensure the safety of visitors.

#### 3.1.6 Ground works

Risk assessments are carried out and reviewed at least annually for all ground works in the park. This includes the use of all machines, herbicides and tools. All works and activities are carried out in accordance with the Council's health & safety policy and procedures.

All contractors are required to provide the appropriate evidence of competence and insurance to carry out the activity. No contractors are permitted to carry out works on site without the express permission of the Council.

### 3.1.7 Needles/syringes

We have a policy for collecting needles/syringes immediately and safely. The grounds team, maintenance team and staff teams at the Oakwood Centre and Woodford Park Leisure Centre have appropriate equipment and the procedures for this. We also report any instances where needles or syringes are found to the police.

### 3.1.8 Fly tipping

Fly tipping is removed immediately by the Council's grounds and maintenance teams. Hirers of the park are required to remove all rubbish from the site under the terms and conditions of hire. Both teams are based in the park, as are the Council offices which means issues are reported and responded to quickly.

## 3.2 **Secure**

### 3.2.1 Staff presence

The Council's maintenance and grounds teams are both based in the park which results in a strong staff presence during working hours. The Oakwood Centre, Woodford Park Leisure Centre and Coronation Hall are also in the park and help to provide an informal supervision over much of the site. The increased numbers of people using the park for a wide variety of purposes also makes for a safer feeling environment. Antisocial behavior has decreased in recent years as the park has maintained to a higher standard.

### 3.2.2 Just Around the Corner (JAC)

JAC is a youth charity which carries out a wide range of activities to engage with and support young people in Woodley. Woodley Town Council has a service level agreement with the charity and Woodford Park is a key location for its outreach work. The JAC mobile unit sets up next to the skate park on Friday evenings each week providing an opportunity for outreach workers to build links and relationships with young people in the town. JAC are also heavily involved in the Community Youth Partnership and also provide a report to each meeting of the Council's Leisure Services Committee.



*JAC outreach workers in Woodford Park*

3.2.3

Policing

The Woodley Neighbourhood Police Team is based in the Oakwood Centre, within the park. This enables the team to respond in a very effective way to issues within the park and also to build relationships with park users. Woodford Park is also the venue for the annual Emergency Services open day with police horses and vehicles and a visit from the Thames Valley Police helicopter.



*Neighbourhood Police Team with young people in Woodford Park*

3.2.4

Buildings in the park

The Oakwood Centre and Woodford Park Leisure Centre are part of the 'Safer Places' scheme, providing a safe place for vulnerable people to get assistance if they are concerned, worried or frightened.

Both buildings are also equipped with a defibrillator, first aid kits and trained staff as well as providing accessible toilets including disabled and baby changing facilities. Our public buildings are welcoming and both the building staff and grounds/maintenance staff have a good relationship with many park users. This encourages people to report concerns or issues and also promotes a feeling of community within the park.



### 3.3 **Healthy**

#### 3.3.1 Quiet areas

Woodford Park has several quiet areas – Garden of Remembrance, Queen’s Birthday Garden, War Memorial, Rotary Garden and lake where visitors can sit and enjoy the surroundings. Areas for quiet contemplation are as important as those for other activities and can help combat stress and anxiety. All of these areas have been improved and enhanced over the last 2 years and will continue to be a key part of the our programme of continuous improvement.



*Goslings by Woodford Park lake*

#### 3.3.2 Community orchard

The community orchard was planted in 2014 in partnership with Transition Reading. The orchard of 20 fruit trees was planted by local families and volunteers, providing free fruit for the community as well as food and habitat for birds and insects. The project trains volunteers in tree planting and grafting in order to expand the project to other areas in a sustainable way while promoting the benefits of healthy eating and physical exercise.



## 3.4

### **Fitness**

#### 3.4.1

##### Park Run

Park Run and Junior Park Run continue to be a tremendous success with 200 – 500 participants each week.

The Oakwood Centre provides the meeting point for runners before and after the run and the Council works in partnership with Park Run organisers to ensure that the event runs smoothly and considers the needs of other park users and neighbours.

The route runs through the entire park and provides local people with a free, fun, community based, healthy activity in the surroundings of their local park.



*Park Run*



*Junior Park Run*

The park is also the start and finish point of the annual **Woodley 10k run** with around 700 participants.

The park is used daily for organised fitness e.g. boot camps, new mums fitness, Nordic walking as well as casual fitness e.g. running, walking, cycling, and use of the outdoor gym equipment.

### 3.5 **Sports development**

Woodley Town Council has an important role in fitness and sports development in the town and Woodford Park Leisure Centre and the park's sports pitches are central to this provision.

Woodford Park is home to the Berkshire Youth Development football league, with a busy programme of fixtures and training on both grass and artificial pitches.

The new 3G artificial grass pitch was opened in June 2016. The project was made possible through funding from the Town Council along with a grant from the Football Foundation FA Premier League Facilities Fund. This £500,000 project includes a 9 a-side, all weather artificial grass pitch which can also be split for 5 a-side training and fixtures.

The Town Council has engaged with partner clubs to produce a football development plan for the facility and has also engaged with local and national organisations to maximize opportunities for use. The facility provides a first class sports pitch for organised sport, courses and training, and turn up sessions. Sports offered include football, walking football and rugby for the less mobile and boot camp fitness.



*Tournament football on the 3G pitch*



Every year since 2012 Woodford Park Leisure Centre has teamed up with local schools to host the increasingly popular and ever impressive **Woodley Sports Week**. The week-long event is designed to promote physical activity and the benefits of sport and exercise to our younger population.

Approximately **2,750** local primary school children are given an opportunity to compete against rival schools in a wide variety of sporting contests, ranging all the way from the opening ceremony dance festival to Paralympic sports and kwik cricket tournaments. As well as being a simply great spectacle, children are given the chance throughout the week to demonstrate and celebrate their passion and love for sport as well as showcase their ability and skill in a competitive and healthy environment.



*Woodley Sports Week in Woodford Park*

### 3.6

#### **Gym on the park**

The Gym on the Park at Woodford Park Leisure Centre was opened in 2017. The gym offers a friendly, welcoming fitness option that has been very popular with parents and older clients. The gym further enhances Woodford Park Leisure Centre and the wider park as an important community and health hub in the town.



**Other activities**

Woodford park is the venue for many other health and fitness activities organised by local groups and individuals including new parents 'Buggy Fit' boot camp, personal training, casual fitness –walking, running etc.



*Buggy Fit in Woodford Park*

Woodford Park is very popular and well used for a wide range of activities, which presents challenges in maintaining standards of upkeep.

### 4.1

#### **Grounds team**

The Council's grounds team is based in the park which enables a quicker response to issues of littering, fly tipping, vandalism and damage. The presence within the park also helps to reduce instances during working hours.

The small team increased from three to four staff members in 2018. Two have been in post for more than 20 years which provides a great deal of site specific experience and a good relationship with park users. The benefits of the in-house team include greater ownership of issues and genuine pride in how the park looks and operates.

The Grounds Maintenance Officer completed a level 3 NVQ in horticulture in 2019 and has already put these skills to good use in redesigning the planting in the Garden of Remembrance.

Since 2017 the Council has invested in a chipper/shredder to recycle green waste on site, a utility vehicle specifically for the park, a ride on rotary mower to reduce manual handling and improve cutting in difficult to access areas, modern white lining machine and new grass seed spreaders for the sports pitches.



*Woodley Town Council Grounds Team with Councillors and the Chairman of the Friends of Woodford Park*



#### 4.1.1

### **Litter, waste management and ground works**

Woodford Park is very popular and accessible to all – 24 hours a day. This means that a large quantity of litter and waste is generated and collected, particularly in the summer months. There are litter bins and dog waste bins positioned along all the pedestrian routes in the park. These are emptied daily by the Council's grounds team with waste deposited in skip waste containers in the grounds yard. The yard is out of sight of the main park and locked when unmanned.

The park is litter picked six days per week by the grounds team with additional litter picking as required. Needles and syringes are not commonly found but are disposed of appropriately using the correct equipment and procedure.

All Council staff are encouraged to pick up litter wherever they may find it. This is also a specific activity that is carried out during quiet work periods – e.g. the Oakwood Centre staff litter pick the areas around the building and the skate park through the day.

#### 4.1.2

### Green waste

Green waste from the site is transported to the grounds yard and stored until it can be chipped and reused as mulch on the shrub beds around the park. The Council purchased a chipper/shredder in 2017 to enable the recycling of green waste on site.

#### 4.1.3

### Tree works

Major tree works are carried out by an approved arboriculture contractor. The Council identifies maintenance works on an annual basis in order to maintain a healthy tree stock and address issues that may arise with trees in close proximity to the park's neighbours.

#### 4.1.4

### Grass cutting

The grass cutting regime varies across different areas of the park, depending on usage and activities. Most of the large areas are cut approximately 8-10 times during the growing season or as required. Additional cuts are sometimes carried out in advance of specific events e.g. Woodley Carnival. The in-house grounds team is able to work flexibly and respond quickly to changing requirements and circumstances.



*View from the 'Big Mound'*



## Buildings

The buildings in the park are an important link and are kept in good condition and maintained by the Council's maintenance team. The buildings are integral to the park with many activities making use of both indoor and outdoor spaces. The park is an essential ingredient in the success of the buildings in terms of renting the rooms out for business and community use.



*The Oakwood Centre*

The Oakwood Centre was opened in 2004 and has become a key part of how the park is used. The centre provides good quality public toilet facilities, a coffee shop, council offices, theatre, meeting spaces for businesses and community groups, public access wifi and access to town council and some borough council services. The toilets in the centre are scheduled for refurbishment in summer 2020.

Woodford Park Leisure Centre was refurbished in 2019 with a new reception and office area, flooring, ceilings and décor and exterior signage. Both the leisure centre and the Oakwood Centre were fitted with solar panels in 2019 through a 20 year contract with Reading Community Energy Society.



*Refurbishment at Woodford Park Leisure Centre*

Coronation Hall was also refurbished in 2019 to a very high standard - with new ceiling, energy efficient lighting, new energy efficient boiler, furniture, new toilets and decoration.

Grounds Depot – 2020 will see considerable improvements to the grounds yard, buildings and facilities that are home to the Grounds and Buildings Maintenance Teams. These will include new hard standing, storage, toilets, workshop and office space to support the teams in their work and provide appropriate welfare facilities. This project is currently in the design stages.

4.3

### **Seating**

The Council allocates funding each year for seating, litter bins and dog waste bins in the Council owned parks. Newer seats are of a similar design with cast ends and substantial timber slats. These seats are attractive and extremely robust. All seats in the park are maintained by the Council's grounds and maintenance teams. There are some older style seats in the park, including the bespoke seats in the Rotary Garden.



*Wild flowers and seating in the Rotary Garden*

4.4

### **Dog fouling**

The Council launched the 'We're Watching You' campaign in Autumn 2016 which saw a marked reduction in the amount of dog fouling in the park. The Council continues to work with the Friends of Woodford Park on this issue and is recruiting Volunteer Park Wardens to help raise the profile of the issue, talk to park users and report offenders to the Council.

4.5

### **Lighting**

Lighting along footpaths and car park areas is subject to a maintenance contract which includes scouting to spot outages and required repairs. All columns were replaced in 2018 with mid-hinged columns for easy maintenance and energy efficient LED lanterns. Additional lighting was installed along the side of Coronation Hall in January 2020 in response to residents comments about this footpath in the park.

4.6

### **Graffiti**

We aim to remove graffiti as quickly as possible. Offensive graffiti is removed immediately. This has not been a significant problem in the park, due to the provision of street art walls and the number of park users in the park at any one time. The war memorial is coated with a protective wax to aid in the removal of graffiti should it occur.

**Friends of Woodford Park**

The friends group (FOWP) are assisting with the maintenance of key areas in the park, in addition to the Queen's Memorial Garden which was created by the group in 2016. The group continues to grow and has extended the beautiful planted beds on the Memorial Ground over last two years. The group volunteers meet regularly with Officers of the Council and representatives from other stakeholders e.g. Rotary.



*Queen's Birthday Garden*

## Typical Maintenance Schedule

### January

- Machinery repairs & servicing
- Football pitch repair / preparation
- Spiking of cricket pitch & bowling green
- Check fine turf cricket & bowling green for diseases – treat if required
- Obtain quotes for grass seeds etc
- Cut back trees and undergrowth around the lake
- Tidy yard & depot
- Take down Christmas tree from town centre
- Snow clearance if required

### February

- Football pitch repair / preparation
- Machinery repairs & servicing
- Start topping grass – weather permitting
- Spiking of cricket pitch & bowling green
- Check fine turf cricket & bowling green for diseases – treat if required
- Woodchip shrub beds

### March

- Apply lawn sand to bowling green and cricket pitch
- Football pitch repair / preparation
- Reseed mini pitches
- Reseed cricket boundary
- Check and repair cricket sight screens as required
- Roll cricket square
- Clean out bowling green gullies
- Rotovate wild flower areas
- Spray soil conditioner – fine turf cricket & bowling green
- Spiking of cricket pitch & bowling green
- Scarify cricket & bowling green

### April

- Reseed adult football pitches
- Take down goals
- Measure and mark out cricket boundary
- Set up bowling green irrigation system
- Begin cutting all areas
- Fertilize cricket square
- Measure out wild flower areas
- Spray soil conditioner – fine turf cricket & bowling green
- Spiking of cricket pitch & bowling green
- Scarify cricket & bowling green
- Pre season roll of bowling green



## May

- Bowling and cricket season in full flow
- Spray soil conditioner – fine turf cricket & bowling green
- Grass cutting – all areas
- Grass cutting – Allotment site
- Weed spray – selected car park and paths
- Planting out – Garden of Remembrance
- Sow wild flower areas
- Spike bowling green
- Scarify bowling green
- Weeding around Oakwood Centre

## June

- Prepare football pitches for Woodley Carnival tournament
- Tidy up and repair following Carnival day
- Spike bowling green
- Scarify bowling green
- Grass cutting – all areas
- Maintenance – Garden of Remembrance

## July

- Bowling and cricket green general maintenance
- Spike bowling green
- Scarify bowling green
- Grass cutting – all areas
- Maintenance – Garden of Remembrance
- Fertilize bowling green
- Spray soil conditioner – fine turf bowling green
- Additional watering on bowling green if required

## August

- Bowling and cricket green general maintenance
- Measure and mark out x2 adult football pitches and x4 mini pitches
- Set up goals
- Grass cutting – all areas
- Spray soil conditioner – fine turf bowling green
- Spike bowling green
- Scarify bowling green
- Organise end of season work on bowling and cricket greens
- Hedge trimming

## September

- Football season starts
- Repair and reseed cricket square
- Top dress and overseed boundary
- Spray soil conditioner – fine turf bowling green
- Spike bowling green
- Scarify bowling green
- Hedge trimming
- Cut allotments
- Maintenance – Garden of Remembrance
- Cut down wild flower areas

### October

- Bowling season ends
- Bowling green preparation works for next season – cutting, scarifying, spiking, reseeding, x4tonne top dressing, remove & clean gully pips, close down irrigation system, spray soile conditioner, fertilize green, treat diseases if required.
- Final grass cutting – all areas
- Remove bedding plants – Garden of Remembrance

### November

- Put up Christmas tree in town centre
- Occasional grass cut if required
- Tidy willows and hedging
- Tidy war memorial area
- Leaf clearing
- Football pitch maintenance

### December

- Football pitch maintenance
- Leaf collecting
- Path clearance
- Prepare machinery – spare parts list
- Tidy up yard and depot
- Spike bowling and cricket green
- Apply woodchip to shrub beds

### Year round daily tasks include

- Litter picking
- Fly tipping removal
- Empty bins
- Empty dog waste bins (twice per week)
- Brush dew off bowling green
- Removal of rubbish from lake



## 5 Sustainability

### 5.1 Environmental Policy & Climate Emergency

The Town Council has adopted an Environmental Policy to consider activities across the organisation and to pull together the good management practices already in place. This policy covers energy use, waste, ethical procurement and once adopted will form part of the Council's core operating procedures with individual and organisational responsibilities clearly stated.

A copy of the policy is appended to this plan (**APP 5**).



At the Full Council Meeting on 1 October the following motion was adopted:

*This Council notes that:*

1. *The impacts of climate breakdown are already causing serious damage around the world.*
2. *Limiting Global Warming to 1.5°C (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, October 2018) may still be possible with ambitious action from national and sub-national authorities, civil society and the private sector.*

*This Council therefore:*

1. *Commits to a declaration of a 'Climate Emergency' with the aim of becoming a carbon neutral organization by 2030.*
2. *Welcomes the declaration by Wokingham Borough Council of a 'Climate Emergency' and will actively participate in the creation of the Borough-wide climate change strategy to ensure Woodley Town Council is fully engaged in its creation for the benefit of its residents.*
3. *Will explore, with all parts of the community, the development of a local action plan in support of, and to compliment, the Borough Council's climate change strategy plan for those parts relevant to Woodley Town."*

These principles will filter through all services provided by the Council and will influence buying decisions and methods of work relating to the management of our parks.

There are great opportunities to improve our services in a sustainable way, engage in environmental initiatives and encourage residents to contribute to this. The Council is developing a plan to deliver these improvements and achieve these targets.

## 5.2

### **Procurement**

Practices already in place include procurement from ethical sources where possible and practical and ensuring where possible that suppliers and contractors have an appropriate environmental policy e.g. ensuring that seat manufacturers use sustainably sourced timbers. All purchasing and procurement will be considered in the context of climate emergency and opportunities to reduce the Council's carbon footprint and reduce waste.

No peat containing products are purchased for use on any Council sites.

## 5.3

### **Green waste**

Green waste is chipped and reused on site. Leaves, wood and brush from tree works and grounds maintenance is chipped on site and used as natural mulch for the shrub beds in and around the park.

### 5.3.1

#### **General Waste**

General waste from litter bins and fly-tipping is currently placed in waste skips located at the grounds yard and removed from site as required. Paper, card and plastic recycling was introduced at the leisure centre, Oakwood Centre and Coronation Hall in 2015.

## 5.4

### **Energy**

The Oakwood Centre and Woodford Park Leisure Centre have been kitted out with solar panels through a 20 year partnership programme with Reading Community Energy Society. The society operates as a community interest company, supported by Energy4All, and provides a low unit rate cost for daytime electricity – fixed for the 20 year duration of the contract, and at no cost to the Council. This reduces costs to the Council while offsetting our carbon footprint by providing renewable energy back to the grid. Any financial surplus is put back in to sustainability projects in the local area.

The leisure centre installation has saved more than 7 tonnes of carbon in the first year since installation. The Oakwood Centre installation was carried out in December 2019 and we are expecting to see a similar level of energy generation from this building.



*Solar panels on Woodford Park Leisure Centre*

We are looking at the potential for investing in Biomass energy for the Grounds depot buildings along with further solar panel projects.

Lighting columns and bulkheads were upgraded with energy efficient LED lamps in 2017. This significantly reduced energy consumption and light pollution. Flood lighting of the 3G pitch and car park is also LED. This was part of the Council's LED replacement programme for all its street and footway lights in the town. Procurement was through the Wokingham Borough Council supply contract which also means a considerable saving.

The Oakwood Centre, Woodford Park Leisure Centre and Coronation Hall have Display Energy Certificates and energy reports - providing information on energy consumption and potential areas for improvement.

#### 5.4.1 **Water**

The use of water on the site is limited to the bowls green fine turf lawn – through use of an irrigation system, the cricket wicket and the shrubs and roses in the Queen's Birthday Garden. Plant selection elsewhere in the park includes shrubs, grasses and wild flowers that require little or no watering.

We are currently looking at the potential for rainwater harvesting from the Oakwood Centre, Woodford Park Leisure Centre, Coronation Hall and Grounds Yard buildings. We aim to store water on site for use on the flower/shrub beds and trees through the summer months. This water will also be used for washing down vehicles and general use at the grounds yard.

#### 5.5 **Pesticide/herbicide use**

Pesticides/herbicides are used only on limited, specific areas where persistent weeds are prevalent and for the maintenance of the fine turf on the bowls green. All staff are qualified in their use and follow specific working procedures to ensure safety and minimise environmental impact.

#### 5.6 **Tree planting**

The Council continues to consider opportunities for appropriate tree planting in the park. Where it is necessary to remove or fell trees we ensure that at the least that number of new trees is replanted within the park.

We have ordered a number of trees through the Woodland Trust 'Free Trees for Communities' scheme, for planting in November 2020.

The Council has planted several specimen trees over the last few years and we now offer residents the opportunity to plant a memorial tree in the park. Although space for planting is limited we are looking at potential locations for planting more trees both in Woodford Park and the Council's other open spaces.

A community orchard of 20 fruit trees was planted in 2014 in partnership with Transition Reading charity.

A specimen English Oak tree was planted in the park as part of the Borough wide Diamond Jubilee Tree Planting Project in 2012.

A line of Cherry Trees and 8 specimen trees were donated and planted in the park through the 'Communitrees' volunteer scheme in 2017. Children from neighbouring St Dominic's School assisted with the planting.



*Children from St Dominic's School planting Cherry Trees*

## 5.7

### **Reuse of materials**

The bin store near the leisure centre was constructed by the Council's maintenance team using timber from pallets left on site during the construction of the 3G pitch. This removed the need for a large vehicle to remove the pallets which may not have been recycled.

Road planings from the work on the new car park and driveway were reused on site to resurface the entrance area at Western Avenue. The remainder of the material was reused to reinforce the roadways at the nearby allotment site.

Where it has been necessary to fell trees in the park we have utilised the trunks as natural seating, creating a very natural feel while reusing waste on site.

*Reused tree trunk seating in Woodford Park*



Silt from the lake restoration works was reused on site to create reed beds and reform the lake edges. Timber used to create the boardwalk was from sustainable sources.

## 5.8

### **Vehicles and equipment**

Vehicles and equipment are serviced regularly to ensure they are working safely and efficiently. We are looking at the potential for using electric vehicles on the parks in future and installing charging points at the Grounds depot and leisure centre.



## Cycling

Cycle racks are provided at the Oakwood Centre, leisure centre and the play area to encourage cycling to the destinations in the park.

In 2019 the Council set up a Cycling Working Party to look at improving cycle ways and provision through the town and the surrounding areas – linking in to the other local initiatives like 'My Journey' Wokingham.

Woodford Park is now also home to a 'Bike Hub' as part of the My Journey scheme. The hub offers a location for storage of bicycles and equipment and a venue for cycling lessons and other initiatives such as 'Balance Bike Club'.

*Cycling lessons at Woodford Park Bike Hub*





**THIS PAGE IS INTENTIONALLY  
LEFT BLANK**

## 6 Conservation and Heritage

Woodford Park's landscape is predominantly a creation of the 1960's and early 1970's with a distinctive landscape of sculpted hills and a lake. It is an example of a mid-twentieth century public park development contemporary with the 'new' town of Woodley.

The Park with its many mature trees and lake provides a wildlife habitat in an otherwise entirely built environment.

### 6.1 **Wild flowers**

Wild flower borders have been introduced in various areas of the park, providing a habitat for bees and insects, cover for birds and an attractive flowering display. Different flower mixes are used each year to provide variety and interest.



*Wild flowers in Woodford Park*

### 6.2 **Natural margins**

Several of the margin areas around the edge of the park are left to grow longer to provide habitat for insects, birds and small mammals.

### 6.3 **Trees**

Programmed tree works are supplemented by emergency works as required. All major works are carried out by the Council's contractor. The trees in the park are a fundamental part of its identity and new tree planting is planned in several areas during the next few seasons. Felled trees are also used as seats where possible, or left to rot to provide habitat for beetles etc. The Council's policy is to plant more trees than are felled or die in the park each year. The Council has applied to the Woodland Trust for 165 trees of various kinds for Woodford Park – for planting in November 2020.

6.4

### **Crocus planting**

Each year since 2016 approximately 2,500 crocus bulbs have been planted in various areas of the park. These bulbs were donated by local Rotary Club with planting coordinated by Friends of Woodford Park volunteers. This was part of a worldwide Rotary campaign to raise the profile of the End Polio Now campaign. In 2019 the local Beavers and cubs also took part in the planting under the supervision of the Friends group volunteers.



*Volunteer crocus planting in Woodford Park*

6.5

### **Social heritage**

Woodford Park has been an important feature in the lives of Woodley residents over many years. The mounds, lake, sports pitches and community activities are much loved and we want them to continue to provide lasting memories for residents in Woodley. The 'Big Mound' has been used for many years as a great site for tobogganing in winter and picnicking and water sliding in summer.



*Tobogganing and water sliding on the Big Mound in Woodford Park*



### Lake restoration project

This main elements of this project are now complete and have transformed the lake and it's surrounds with a nature area, native planting, water lilies, boardwalk, dipping ponds, new paths, de-silting and reshaped banks. Works were completed in March 2019. A project overview and ecology report are appended to this plan. **(APP 6&7)**

The project aims to increase the numbers and variety of invertebrates while continuing to provide a habitat for wildfowl and improving the amenity value of the area. We have more marginal planting to do in 2020 and will be installing a new knee rail fence around the eastern bank. The new hogging path along the north bank will be extended and this area sown with wildflowers.

The lake is home to many native ducks, Canada Geese, Egyptian Geese, Coots and Moorhens with occasional visits from Heron and even Cormorant, and is a highly valued feature in the park. The regeneration project followed a public consultation and extensive environmental and topographic surveys to develop a plan to enhance habitat as well as amenity value.

The project was a significant investment in the future of the park and has been very well received by residents. The project is also providing opportunities to develop knowledge and skills within our grounds maintenance team in enhancing and managing the lake environment.



*De-silting and boardwalk construction*



*Completed boardwalk*



**Memorial Ground Board – restoration**

The Memorial Ground Board was in very poor condition and had not been on display for many years. In January 2020 the Buildings Maintenance Team repaired and restored the board to its original condition – ready to be reinstalled on the Memorial Ground.

The board will now be regularly maintained and is an important part of the retained heritage of the park.



## 7 Community Involvement

### 7.1 Friends of Woodford Park



The Friends of Woodford Park group began in 2016 with a small group of local residents contacting the Council to discuss how they might assist in the upkeep of the Park. The Council has supported the group by providing free meeting spaces, attending monthly group meetings and encouraging the group to develop. The Council awards the group a community grant each year which goes toward the purchase of plants, tools and equipment.

The group's first project was the Queen's Birthday Garden, to celebrate Queen's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday. The garden was formally opened by the Rt. Honorable Theresa May in June 2016 and received a level 4 'Thriving' award in the Britain In Bloom community garden category in September 2016. The group has carried out extensive work in the Rotary Garden and continues to add great value to the park.



*Official opening of the Queens Birthday Garden*



*Shrub planting in the Rotary Garden*





*Shrub planting by the Friends of Woodford Park volunteers*

The friends group is now well established with a core of regular volunteers. The group has engaged with a large local company (SAGE) to make use of their corporate volunteering programme – with staff groups working alongside the friends group volunteers.

The Friends of Woodford Park is a constituted with an elected committee. In 2019 an elected member of the Council was invited and appointed to committee to further strengthen the partnership and link between the group and the Council.

The group has also forged links with other local groups e.g. Rotary, Beavers and local companies and suppliers. They have a stall at the Woodley Carnival each year and sell postcards and calendars showcasing the groups work in the park. In December 2019 the group received a donation of crocuses from the local WI along with various other bulbs donated by a local plant nursery.



*Friends of Woodford Park - Recruiting volunteers*

## 7.2

### **Consultation**

Woodley Town Council seeks to consult with users and stakeholders on a regular basis and also during the early stages of specific projects. We consulted with local parents and children on specific items of play equipment for inclusion in the play areas, with over 100 responses.

We held consultation days and ran an online questionnaire consultation as part of the skate park project. We also involved local young people in the design of the skate park through our youth charity partner – Just Around The Corner. We also held on site consultation days regarding the lake restoration project which provided great feedback on the proposals and comments on other things to consider.

## 7.3

### **Residents survey**

The Residents Survey carried out each year shows us that usage of the park across the community is high - 85% in the 2018 survey (80% in 2015), as is the percentage of residents who regard the standard of the park as good or excellent – 84% in 2018 survey (72% - 2015 survey). Relevant information from the 2018 Residents Survey is appended to this plan. The survey suggests an increase in usage and standard of upkeep since the Council embarked on its Green Flag programme. **(APP 8)**

## 7.4

### **Woodley Carnival**

Woodford Park has been home to Woodley Carnival since it began in 1960. The Carnival includes a week full of community activities raising money for local good causes. The Carnival Committee contributed £233,000 toward the building of the Oakwood Centre in the park and the Council maintains close links with the Carnival project.

Carnival day sees thousands of visitors from across the community come to Woodford Park each year with stalls, entertainers, carnival float parade, live music, vintage car show, children's activities, funfair and firework display. Woodford Park is the ideal venue for the event



*Woodley Carnival in Woodford Park*



## Remembrance

In 2013 the Woodley War Memorial group was set up by residents with the aim of raising funds and finding a site for a war memorial in Woodley. The Town Council supported the project from the outset and worked closely with the group to achieve this. Funding was raised through donations from local people and organisations, along with Section 106 developers contributions secured by the Town Council. The project was a huge success in terms of the partnership working, community engagement, the delivered project and ongoing use. The memorial was unveiled in May 2014 and provides the venue for the annual Gathering of Remembrance. The gathering is very well attended including around 200 children from the local schools.



*2018 Gathering of Remembrance at Woodford Park Memorial*

In 2018 the Council held a special Remembrance event to commemorate the centenary of the end of the First World War. The event on the Memorial Ground and in the Oakwood Centre drew thousands of local people to the park to take part in a solemn gathering of Remembrance followed by a light hearted community event in the Oakwood Centre with tea & cake served by the local WI, live music from the period, poetry readings from local young people and a film showing in the theatre.



*2018 Commemoration event in the Oakwood Centre*

Every household in Woodley received a postcard invitation to the event. Events such as this serve to strengthen the community's bond with the park, and demonstrate its original and ongoing purpose as an important community space. The location of the Oakwood Centre and its facilities within the park enables us to successfully stage such events and link the park with the other community services provided by the Council.

In 2018 the civic space around the memorial was enhanced with the addition of memorial story panels, wreath laying area and flagpoles as well as the refurbishment of the Memorial Gates to the park.



7.6

### **Social media**

The Council now employs a Communications Officer to manage the social media and marketing output of the Council, as well as managing events and identifying opportunities to link up with partners. The Council's social media and website output has improved significantly over the last few years and this is particularly effective in communicating with residents regarding activities and works in the park.

Woodford Park Leisure Centre and the Oakwood Centre use Facebook and Twitter for marketing and information purposes. These channels have enabled us to reach many more people than would otherwise be possible. This has been particularly useful in answering questions about issues or providing up to date public information. A recent example of this was the temporary closure of the paddling pool due to poor water quality as a result of extremely heavy use during the summer. We were able to notify a large number of users about the temporary closure, the reasons for it and when the facility would be reopened. This generated a very positive response. We were also able to provide updates on the lake regeneration project and advise of pathway closures as the work was carried out.

7.7

### **Memorial seats, trees and plaques**

Residents can apply for a memorial seat or tree in the park, or a memorial plaque in the Garden of Remembrance. This provides another important link with residents and helps to encourage ownership and community involvement in the park. Most of the old seating in the park has now been replaced with new memorial seats.

7.8

### **Community orchard**

The community orchard was planted in 2014 in partnership with Transition Reading. The orchard of 20 fruit trees was planted by local families and volunteers, providing free fruit for the community as well as food and habitat for birds and insects. The project trains volunteers in tree planting and grafting in order to expand the project to other areas in a sustainable way while promoting the benefits of healthy eating and physical exercise. The orchard has since been added to with additional fruit trees.



*Volunteers planting the Community Orchard*

## Events and community

Woodford Park is home to a number of community events throughout the year and the Town Council works closely with these community groups.

### Regular events list

- Park Run / Junior Park Run (Weekly)
- Woodley 10k Run (May)
- Schools Cross Country (October)
- Sports Week (May)
- Woodley Carnival (June)
- Circus Starr (October)
- Funfairs (May, June, October)
- Gathering of Remembrance (November)
- Wokingham schools orienteering event (May)
- Picnic in the Park (August)



*Picnic in the Park Fun day*



*Vintage Funfair in Woodford Park*



### Community links and partnerships

Woodford Park Leisure Centre, situated in the centre of the park is home to Optalis – providing care and support to older people, people with dementia, learning and/or physical disabilities. The park provides a perfect location for outdoor sessions and means that clients can interact with local people in the park and the centre.

Woodley Pre-School is located within the park. This provides a real benefit for the school and another link between the Council, the community and the healthy activities on offer at the leisure centre and in the park.

The Council has a service level agreement with Just Around the Corner (JAC) youth charity to provide outreach work in the town. The JAC van operates from Woodford Park on Friday evenings each week – building relationships with local young people and working with families to address issues of antisocial behavior.

Woodley Town Council works with partners including Wokingham Borough Council and Woodley Town Centre Management Initiative to achieve strategic goals for Woodley as a whole. Current partnership projects include the regeneration of the north end of Woodley town centre, the provision of new public toilets and plans for a new play area in the park. Woodley is developing into a destination town with the arrival of new restaurants, coffee shops and businesses. Woodford Park is a key part of this change due to its location and range of facilities.



**Just  
Around the  
Corner**



**WOKINGHAM  
BOROUGH COUNCIL**



# 8 Marketing

Woodford Park is the 'Jewel in the Crown' of the services provided by Woodley Town Council.

It's central location in the town and it's link between two sites owned and managed by the Council means that it is well known in the area and regularly used by residents both young and old.

The Council has recently appointed a Communications Manager, whose objectives include promotion of Woodford Park and its facilities.

The marketing of the park is a mix of stand-alone and joint marketing with other Council services.

## 8.1 Objectives:

- To promote the park and its facilities to Woodley residents
- To ensure residents are kept up to date with any changes within the park
- To engage local residents and organisations within Woodley in joint projects
- To promote events /activities within the park across the borough
- To use feedback from residents to shape future projects and marketing activity

## 8.2 Marketing activity:

### 8.2.1 Woodley residents survey

We use feedback from our annual residents survey to shape park projects and understand the key uses, issues, and elements of the park that people relate to. Residents are asked to rate the facility which enables us to focus our efforts.

### 8.2.2 Press releases

Park information and events are regularly included in our weekly press releases to the traditional press and online media.



*Local press article following residents survey*

### 8.2.3 Social media

Woodley Town Council and Woodford Park Leisure Centre are very active on facebook and twitter. We use this medium to communicate plans, activities and events held within the park, our park partnerships, as well as interact with park users. This comes with its own challenges and Council has adopted an social media policy to manage its output and responses.



*Woodley Town Council on Facebook*

### 8.2.4 Woodley Town Council newsletter - Woodley Herald

The newsletter is produced 3 times a year, and includes information on new initiatives, facility updates, and promotion of activities and events within the park. **(APP 9)**

### 8.2.5 Events

Having an effective social media presence means that we can reach large numbers of people in a very short space of time. The leisure centre facebook page in particular has a large number of followers and we are able to reach several thousand people in a matter of hours. Events and activities are also publicised on the notice boards around the park, the Council website and through our good relationship with the local press.



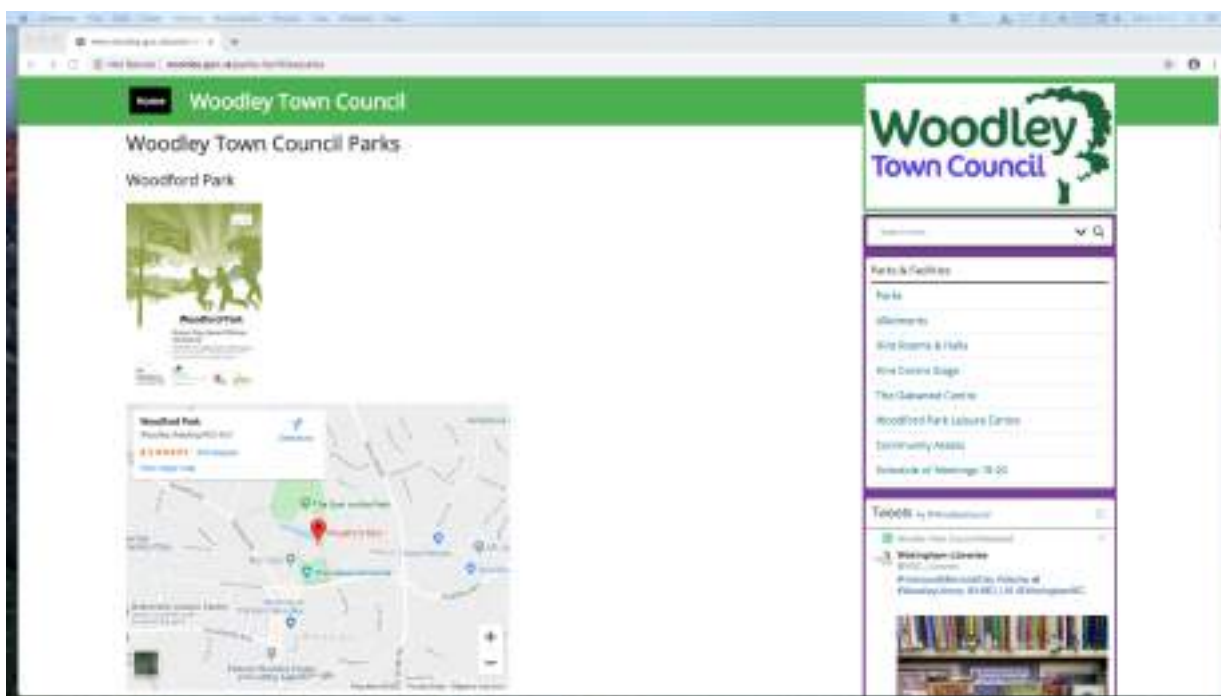
*Picnic in the Park poster*

### 8.2.6 **Open days / consultation**

Residents are consulted on all projects within the park either directly or through partnership organisations or a combination of methods. Open days/ consultations are planned and communicated across the traditional press, social media and through marketing activities. The Town Council has a stall at the annual Woodley Carnival in Woodford Park and uses this opportunity to consult with residents and visitors about park projects.

### 8.2.7 **Website**

Woodley Town Council's website was re-launched in 2018 with specific pages for parks and open spaces. It also has a regularly updated newsfeed and links to our social media channels. We monitor the page views across the website and aim to continually improve the content.



*Woodley Town Council website*

### 8.2.8 **Local listings**

Listed on Travel Reading Live website - listing facilities, directions, bus routes etc. <http://www.reading-travelinfo.co.uk/parks/woodford-park.aspx>. We are working to increase local listings and market Woodford Park as a destination.



*Local listing – Reading travel info*



**THIS PAGE IS INTENTIONALLY  
LEFT BLANK**

## 9 Management

### 9.1 **Structure and process**

The Council's Leisure Services Committee oversees the management and resourcing of the parks and leisure facilities. Officers report to each meeting of the committee with issues, achievements, initiatives and activities in the park. Woodford Park is recognised by the Council as being a key facility serving the entire town.

The Council's management team is responsible for identifying issues and reporting to the Leisure Services Committee.

The Council has specific budgets for the park, tree works, play area etc in addition to an annual capital programme fund for larger works and projects.

The Council applied for a Heritage Lottery Grant in 2008 which was unsuccessful. As part of the process the Council did receive a project planning grant which identified several key projects and a number of areas for improvement. The Council has used this as a framework for achieving these projects and improvements through other funding streams. Projects achieved since 2008 include the skate park, war memorial and civic space, new play area, new paddling pool liner, new car park area and resurfacing of old car park, improved access to the leisure centre and new 3G artificial grass pitch.

#### 9.1.1 **Policies**

The Council's policies are set out in its standing orders and the terms of reference of the individual committees and working groups. These procedures, coupled with a culture of transparency and public inclusion, ensure a responsible and appropriate mechanism for the management of resources and assets.

#### 9.1.2 **Challenges**

The diversity of activities and high numbers of park users create many challenges in terms of maintenance and potential conflict between park users. We aim to continue providing as wide a range of activities as possible while consulting with park users and measuring satisfaction. There are also increasing strains on resources in the sector which highlight the need for an effective and realistic management plan to ensure adequate resourcing in the future.

#### 9.1.3 **Green Flag Award**

We are using the Green Flag criteria as a framework for continuous improvement and a measure of achievement in these key areas. Achieving Green Flag status has provided a benchmark for standards and assist the Council in allocating appropriate resources to maintain those standards.

### 9.2 **Budget and resourcing**

The Council sets the budgets annually for each area of expenditure and income. In addition, the Council operates an annual Capital Programme fund for projects and capital investment. Project items can also be added to the programme during the year if circumstances require.

### 9.2.1

#### **External funding**

The Council maintains a list of projects requiring significant external funding. This list is reviewed at each meeting of the Strategy and Resources Committee (5 per year). The play area in Woodford Park is identified as a priority project on this list and has been allocated £200,000 funding from Section 106 developers contributions. Several park projects have been delivered through this mechanism including the play area near the leisure centre, the war memorial and the skate park.

### 9.3

#### **Staff team**

The Grounds Maintenance Manager has over 30 years of experience within the grounds and machinery maintenance. Two other members of the team have over 20 years service each with the team. This experience and knowledge is extremely valuable and we added a trainee position to the team in 2018. This was in recognition of the raised standard at which we wish to maintain the park and the additional resources required to do this. The Grounds Maintenance Manager reports directly to the Town Clerk enabling the management team to keep up to date with issues and initiatives regarding the Council's parks.

The Grounds Maintenance Manager also works closely with the Buildings Maintenance Manager, Leisure Services Manager and Deputy Town Clerk to ensure a cohesive approach to projects, health & safety and day-to-day operations.

## **Powers and Duties of the Leisure Services Committee**

1. To provide, manage and promote informal and formal sports and recreational facilities within the parks and open spaces for individuals, groups and clubs.
2. To provide, manage and promote the use of Coronation Hall and Chapel Hall by the general public.
3. To provide, manage and promote the use of Bulmershe Leisure Centre and Woodford Park Leisure Centre by the general public.
4. To recommend the fees and charges for the use of the facilities within the Committee's remit.
5. To approve terms and conditions for the use of any of the facilities within the Committee's remit.
6. To have authority to agree one-off applications for free use of facilities, and to approve exclusive use of agreed areas or facilities by other local authorities or voluntary organisations.
7. To identify areas for the development of leisure and recreational facilities and activities and make any recommendations to the Council.
8. To provide and manage children's play equipment in the parks and open spaces managed or leased by the Council.
9. To provide and promote sports and leisure courses and activities, both in-house and through agencies, to residents and the general public.
10. To provide, manage and maintain the Council's parks, recreation grounds and open spaces, encompassing all fixed and loose fixtures and fittings.
11. To promote arts and culture in Woodley through the work of the Committee and act as an enabler to develop and provide art and cultural activities.
12. To co-operate and liaise with Wokingham Borough Council on recreational and associated matters.
13. To co-operate and liaise with other local authorities and organisations on the promotion and development of recreational facilities, which are to the benefit of Woodley residents.
14. To develop new leisure and recreational facilities in the Council's ownership or jointly with other statutory or voluntary bodies.
15. To liaise and co-operate with other bodies who are developing leisure or recreational facilities of benefit to the people of Woodley.
16. To seek grant or other funding towards the costs of new developments or activities within the Committee's remit and make any recommendations to the Strategy and Resources Committee or Council, where appropriate.
17. To recommend to the Strategy and Resources Committee the committee's requirements for revenue estimates, in accordance with the policies and format required by the Strategy Resources Committee.
18. To be authorised to appoint sub-committees and/or working parties to deal with matters delegated to the committee, and to delegate such powers as vested in the committee.
19. To manage the committee's budgets and be authorised to transfer funds between each head within a location to meet unexpected expenditure within the powers delegated to the committee.
20. To consider, where appropriate, the environmental impact on decisions being made by the committee. Reviewed 24 June 2014



**LEISURE SERVICES COMMITTEE - BUDGET SUMMARY 2018/19 Actual**

<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>Actual</b>
Woodford Park Leisure Centre	368253
Grounds Maintenance-Depot	31491
Football	18630
Cricket	10205
Bowling Green	13734
Woodford Park	33003
Memorial Ground	9183
Garden of Remembrance	9688
Play Areas /Open Spaces	12958
Coronation Hall	29114
Chapel Hall	21369
Allotments	24562
Amenities	4407
Events	10013
Youth services	27048
<b>Total</b>	<b>623658</b>

<b>Income</b>	
Woodford Park Leisure Centre	392016
Grounds Maintenance-Depot	332
Football	5947
Cricket	3441
Bowling Green	7280
Woodford Park	6730
Memorial Ground	115
Garden of Remembrance	1266
Coronation Hall	34419
Chapel Hall	34213
Allotments	12040
Amenities	0
Events	0
Public toilet	0
Youth services	0
Capital and Projects	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>497799</b>
<b>Net</b>	<b>125859</b>

## Assessment

The Town Council aims to continually improve Woodford Park and the facilities offered while being mindful of the needs of a very diverse range of user groups.

This assessment outlines the strengths and areas for improvement against each of the Green Flag Criteria.

CRITERIA	STRENGTHS	IMPROVEMENTS/ OPPORTUNITITES/ISSUES
A welcoming place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good access</li> <li>• Diverse range of facilities</li> <li>• Good and appropriate seating</li> <li>• Signage within the park – installed 2018</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signage on approaches to the park.</li> <li>• New, inclusive play area on Memorial Ground</li> <li>• Reinforce desire line pathway across the Memorial Ground</li> </ul>
Healthy, safe, secure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safe facilities</li> <li>• Inspection regime</li> <li>• Neighbourhood Police Team on site</li> <li>• Council Offices and Leisure Centre on site</li> <li>• Active anti-dog fouling campaign</li> <li>• Safer Places Scheme</li> <li>• JAC youth outreach work</li> <li>• Sporting and fitness facilities and activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruit volunteer Park Wardens</li> <li>• Continue to monitor and address dog fouling</li> <li>• Improve lighting</li> </ul>
Well maintained and clean	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Litter &amp; dog bins provided and replaced</li> <li>• Good standard of grounds maintenance</li> <li>• Additional staff member in Grounds Team - 2018</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue and build on volunteer participation (FOWP)</li> </ul>
Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Green waste reused on site</li> <li>• Limited use of herbicide</li> <li>• Ethical suppliers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eliminate use of herbicide</li> <li>• Staff training</li> <li>• Develop Climate Emergency initiatives.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reuse of felled trees on site</li> <li>• Community Orchard</li> <li>• Climate Emergency declared – this will filter through to all Council activities.</li> <li>• Solar Panel project.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore potential re rainwater harvesting and further solar power generation.</li> </ul>
Conservation and heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tree planting</li> <li>• Fruit orchard</li> <li>• Wild Flowers</li> <li>• Lake restoration /Nature trail</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More Bat/bird nest boxes</li> </ul>
Community Involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Friends group</li> <li>• Links with community organisations</li> <li>• Consultation</li> <li>• Wide range of activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential conflicts between user groups</li> <li>• Development of Friends Group</li> <li>• Volunteer Park Wardens</li> </ul>
Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council website</li> <li>• Friends group social media sites</li> <li>• Council Communications Manager in post</li> <li>• Woodley Herald newsletter</li> <li>• Residents survey</li> <li>• New signage/notice boards installed 2018.</li> <li>• Improved website and social media output.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Directional road signage</li> <li>• Published events list</li> <li>• Increased public information listings</li> </ul>
Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management Plan</li> <li>• Grounds team and Council offices based in the park</li> <li>• Committee process and Council commitment to improvement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On-going resources to improve and maintain</li> <li>• Maintain Green Flag standards</li> <li>• Reduced opportunity for external funding e.g S106</li> </ul>

## Woodford Park Action Plan 2020

9.7

CRITERIA	ACTION REQUIRED	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	TARGET DATE	PROGRESS
A welcoming place	Signage within the park and approaches to the park.	DTC / MM / GMM	February 2017	<b>COMPLETE</b>
	New, inclusive play area on Memorial Ground	TC/DTC/S&R /LS/Committee	April 2020	Section 106 funding secured. Design brief and contractor selection underway.
	Pathway across the Memorial Ground	TC/DTC/S&R /LS Committee	Autumn 2020	Capital programme funding allocated for grass reinforcement works.
Healthy, safe, secure	Recruit volunteer Park Wardens	DTC	Ongoing	Under review
	Continue to monitor and address dog fouling	DTC	Ongoing	Campaign launched Sept 2016. Ongoing
	Improve lighting	DTC	2017	<b>COMPLETE</b> All columns replaced and lanterns upgraded to LED
	Improve lake pathway			<b>COMPLETE</b> Pathways repaired and resurfaced as part of lake regeneration project.



Well maintained and clean	Take on a trainee/apprentice in Grounds Team	TC/DTC/S&R /LS Committee	2017	<b>COMPLETE</b> New staff member in post
	Continue and build on volunteer participation (FOWP)	DTC	Ongoing	Attendance and support at FOWP meetings. Meeting space made available free of charge. Recruiting Volunteer Park Wardens.
Sustainability	Council to adopt organisational environmental & energy policy	S&R /LS Committee	2017	<b>COMPLETE</b> Council adopted environmental policy and subsequently declared Climate Emergency.
	Develop Climate Emergency policies and procedures – implement changes to achieve carbon zero by 2030	TC/DTC/S&R /LS Committee	Ongoing	Working party appointed to develop climate change initiatives and achieve carbon Zero by 2030.
	Staff training	GMM	Ongoing	Grounds Officer achieved level 3 NVQ Horticulture January 2020. Consider ongoing training opportunities for team.
Conservation and heritage	Lake restoration / Nature trail			<b>COMPLETE</b>
	Install tree/building mounted bat nesting boxes	GMM	Mar 2020	
	Improve habitat diversity	GMM/DTC	Ongoing	Wildlife/habitat report goes to each Leisure Services Committee meeting for consideration and input.

Community Involvement	Potential conflicts between user groups		Ongoing	Regular consultation days in the park - surveys of park users to understand needs and potential conflicts. Attendance and support at FOWP meetings. Meeting space made available free of charge. Explore volunteer opportunities as part of lake restoration project. Recruit and support Volunteer Park Wardens. Engagement with schools on nature trail as part of lake restoration project.
Marketing	Raise profile of the park. Engage more with the public through press, social media.	DTC / HG / Comms Manager	Ongoing	Regular articles and updates in Woodley Herald, website, press releases, social media regarding activities, events & initiatives in the park.
Management	On-going resources to improve and maintain facilities.  Maintain Green Flag standards.	TC/DTC/S&R Committee	Ongoing	Management Plan will provide framework for standards and inform resource requirements.

**Targets will be added to this action plan as policies and initiatives associated with the Climate Emergency develop, and as improvement opportunities are identified.**

**THIS PAGE IS INTENTIONALLY  
LEFT BLANK**

## 9.8 Recent Projects and Investment

Woodford Park has seen a significant investment in recent years on specific projects to widen the range of activities and create a diverse yet cohesive public space. We have also worked with local community partners to introduce new features for all to enjoy. Investment values are approximate.

### PLAY AREA

2010 £60,000

2012 £28,000

The play area was funded from a combination of government Play Builder funding and Section 106 developers contributions. This play area is located on the site of an old and little used mini golf course. We consulted with local children and parents to ensure that the equipment was appropriate and exciting. The result is a hugely popular play area catering for a wide age range.

### SKATE PARK

2011

£43,000

The skate park project involved a great deal of consultation, both with local young people regarding the design, and with residents living next to the park who had concerns about noise and antisocial behavior. The project was funded from Section 106 developers contributions (£25,000) and a youth capital fund grant (£18,000) and has been a huge success. The skate park offers a focus for young people to engage in physical activity and reduced skateboarding in local car parks which was becoming an issue. Our local youth charity partners JAC and the neighborhood police team use the skate park as a location for engaging with young people and this has been a huge benefit in addressing antisocial behaviour in the park and other areas of the town.



*Skate Park opening*



## JUBILEE OAK TREE

2012

Woodford Park is home to one of two specimen English oak trees, planted by the Council as part of the Diamond Jubilee Tree Planting Project. The project was run in partnership with the Wokingham District Veteran Tree Association.

## CIVIC SPACE & WAR MEMORIAL

2014

£95,000

The civic space and war memorial project was a true community project with the Council working in close partnership with local volunteers and fundraisers. Local people raised £27,000 toward the cost of the war memorial, with £68,000 received from Section 106 developers contributions for the civic space in which the memorial is located. The war memorial was formally unveiled by HRH The Duke of York in July 2014 and now provides a fitting venue for Gatherings of Remembrance and also an attractive area to sit and enjoy the park.

## HERITAGE MEMORIAL TRAIL

2014

Woodley Town Council worked with neighbouring town and parish councils to produce a Heritage Memorial Trail. The new memorial in Woodford Park was listed as a site of interest on the trail and information boards on Woodley's WW1 history were produced and located in the Oakwood Centre, viewable from the park.

## MEMORIAL GATES

2014

£6,500

The entrance gates onto the Memorial Ground were commissioned to coincide with the war memorial and civic space project. These unique gates were created by a local blacksmith and are a piece of art, representing the spirit of remembrance and the history of the Memorial Ground. It is intended that the gates be the first piece of an art trail in the park which will reflect Woodley's history and community.



*Memorial gates and war memorial*

## COMMUNITY ORCHARD

2014

We worked with a local voluntary partner - Transition Reading to plant a community orchard in Woodford Park. The orchard was planted by a group of local families and volunteers and provides 20 fruit trees entirely available to the community and also provide food for birds and insects.

## 3G PITCH

2016

£513,000

This project saw the delivery of a new 3<sup>rd</sup> Generation floodlit artificial grass pitch, new car park and new tennis court surface. The Town Council obtained a grant of £277,200 from the Football Foundation FA Premier League Facilities Fund toward the project, designed to further develop football in Woodley and provide a first class facility in Woodford Park for many years to come. The Council has developed a football development plan and is working closely with partners and local clubs to provide an inclusive, value for money facility with a wide range of users. The Council has a 21 year partner arrangement with the Football Foundation to ensure the success and sustainability of the facility.



*Aerial view of 3G pitch in Woodford Park*

## QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY GARDEN

2016

The Friends of Woodford Park group came together in early 2016. With support from the Council and local sponsors the group has created the Queen's Birthday Garden in the park. The work was carried out by volunteers with support from the Council's grounds team and the result is a wonderful trio of flower beds adjacent to the war memorial.

## CROCUS BEDS

Annual

The Friends of Woodford Park group obtained 2,500 crocus bulbs through a project run by the local Rotary Club. These were planted near the entrance into the park from Haddon Drive.



*Crocuses in Woodford Park*

## SIGNAGE

2018

£12,000

Notice board and way finding signage installed across the park. This project has been a great success and was a key item in the initial Green Flag Award Assessment in 2016.



*Noticeboard and way finding signage*



## MEMORIAL STORY PANELS & FLAGPOLES

2018

£12,000

The Memorial Story Panels were installed as part of the centenary commemoration in 2018. The panels contain stories of Woodley families affected by the conflict and continue to generate a great deal of interest. The flag poles were included to complete this very special area of the park.



*Memorial Story Panels*



## LAKE REGENERATION

2018

£150,000

The lake habitat was in desperate need of intervention to create a more diverse ecosystem and also improve the amenity value. This project has had a massive impact and will continue to develop as the growing seasons progress. We have introduced various native plants which have already seen an increase in amphibians and dragonfly on the lake. We have also introduced several areas of water lilies – in protective cages until sufficiently established.

The new pathways and boardwalk are very popular and make the lake a very special area to visit and spend time. There are purpose built dipping ponds and a nature path along the north bank, which will have reeds and marginal planting on one side and wild flowers on the other – once established.



*Boardwalk across the lake*

## Woodford Park Play Area - Assessment

Woodford Park is located in the centre of Woodley and is recognised as a key community asset, providing crucial open space and activities for all residents in the town and beyond.

The 2015 Residents Survey commissioned by the Council showed 80% of Woodley residents had used Woodford Park in the previous twelve months. A frequent comment from residents is that the older play area needs updating.

The existing play area to the rear of the Oakwood Centre has been in situ for approximately 40 years. The current equipment has been there since that time with periodic repairs and replacement of panels, seats, swing chains etc.

The play area nearer to the leisure centre is extremely busy and serves visitors to the northern half of the park well. This was installed in 2010 with some refurbishment in 2016.

Visitors to the Memorial Ground part of the park however are faced with a very dated play area with limited equipment and play value.

Woodley Town Council is committed to improving Woodford Park and providing an excellent resource for the community both now and into the future. The lack of high quality play spaces and equipment in Woodley is an issue for existing residents and the number of families currently moving into the town.

### Limitations

Despite the age of the equipment the site is fairly well used due to its location on one of the main routes through the park. Play value is limited, non inclusive and does not effectively meet most of the 10 benchmark principles for successful play spaces recommended by Play England.

Play England - 10 Principles for successful play areas	
Bespoke	X
Well located	✓
Make use of natural elements	X
Provide a wide range of play experiences	X
Accessible to both disabled and non-disabled children	X
Meet community needs	X
Allow children of different ages to play together	X
Build in opportunities for risk and challenge	X
Sustainable and appropriately maintained	X
Allow for change and evolution	X

### Aspirations

Woodley Town Council is committed to making Woodford Park a 'Destination Park', which will attract residents from within the town as well as those from outside. The park has seen significant investment in recent years with the installation of a skate park, war memorial, new seating and lighting, 3G football pitch, refurbished tennis court and a new car park at the leisure centre. What is lacking is a first class, carefully designed play space catering for a wide range of ages and abilities.



The Town Council is working with local partners to achieve Green Flag Award status for the park.

## Proposal

The proposal is for a brand new, inspiring and inclusive play area on the site of the existing one but with an extended footprint to maximise the use of space.

## Case Studies

The following projects are recent examples of successful, inclusive, destination play spaces of the kind needed in Woodford Park.

Sol Joel Park, Earley, Berkshire

Cost: c£180,000



Meadowbank Park, Dorking, Surrey

Cost c£230,000







## Woodford Park Play Area Draft Design Brief


<b>Client/Landowner</b>
Woodley Town Council
<b>Project Information</b>
<p>Location: Woodford Park, Woodley, Berkshire, RG5 4JZ          Currently well used but dated play area          Old equipment installed in timber edged bark pit          Historic tarmac paths and hard standing areas          Chain link/weld mesh fencing          Close proximity to outdoor gym equipment, skate park and youth shelter          Residences in Farriers Close to the northwest          New play area can extend beyond existing footprint to suit design. Outdoor gym equipment can be relocated.</p>
<b>Current Site Usage</b>
<p>Mixed age range 2 to 12 yrs          Busy pedestrian and cycle route through public park</p>
<b>Social Issues</b>
<p>Partly overlooked from Council Offices – daytime          Youth shelter subject to vandalism and occasional fires in waste bin          Little vandalism experienced in play area</p>
<b>Consultation</b>
<p>Planned consultation with;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• users of existing play area</li> <li>• users of the nearby play area at the leisure centre</li> <li>• park users</li> <li>• design proposals placed on website and displayed in the Oakwood Centre with comments/feedback forms</li> </ul>
<b>Access</b>
Good vehicle access via gated entrance from Headley Road
<b>Design Principles</b>
<p>Mixed age range 0 – 12 years          Inclusive play experience – physical/sensory/tactile/audio          Ethically sourced materials and labour          Robust equipment and surfacing – compliant with EN1176 and EN1177          Mixed surfacing – bonded rubber mulch / sand / bark          Meets the Play England -10 Principles for Successful Play Area Design          Local heritage reflected in design – Woodley Airfield          Appropriate planting / sensory area</p>
<b>Budget</b>
<p>200k – 250k          Project can be scaled to suit available budget</p>
<b>Timescale</b>





**THIS PAGE IS INTENTIONALLY  
LEFT BLANK**

## Play Area Assessment - Dec 2019

SITE: MEMORIAL GROUND				
ITEM				
Seat				
	<b>CONDITION</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>PLAY VALUE</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A
	<b>INCLUSIVE/ ACCESSIBLE</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>Comment:</b>	Needs re-setting.		
ITEM				
Fencing				
	<b>CONDITION</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>PLAY VALUE</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A
	<b>INCLUSIVE/ ACCESSIBLE</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A
	<b>Comment:</b>			
ITEM				
Gate				
	<b>CONDITION</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>PLAY VALUE</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A
	<b>INCLUSIVE/ ACCESSIBLE</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>Comment:</b>	Threshold access poor – requires levelling		
ITEM				
General Surface				
	<b>CONDITION</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>PLAY VALUE</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>INCLUSIVE/ ACCESSIBLE</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>Comment:</b>	Poor access – high, timber kerbed edge with loose fill bark pit		

SITE: MEMORIAL GROUND				
ITEM				
Bins				
	<b>CONDITION</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>PLAY VALUE</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A
	<b>INCLUSIVE/ ACCESSIBLE</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A
	<b>Comment:</b> Corroded.			

ITEM				
Seat				
	<b>CONDITION</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>PLAY VALUE</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>INCLUSIVE/ ACCESSIBLE</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>Comment:</b> Access via grass only			

ITEM				
Multi play with swings/slide				
	<b>CONDITION</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>PLAY VALUE</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>INCLUSIVE/ ACCESSIBLE</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>Comment:</b> Panels replaced in 2018. Bark surface/kerbed edging			

**Site information:**

Play area is well used due to its location on a busy route through the park. Woodford Park (Including The Memorial Ground) is a destination park with regular visitors from across Woodey and beyond.

**Summary:**

Some equipment is old (30yrs+) but in good condition and has been maintained and repainted as required. There is nearby parking, public transport routes and good access to the play area site, however access to the play equipment is greatly hindered by the bark pit design.

Condition and play value is generally satisfactory or good. Inclusivity/accessibility is poor, with limited access and non inclusive equipment.

**Recommendations:**

Funding of £200,000 has been agreed from Section 106 developers funds towards the creation of an entirely new play space. This project is currently in the design discussion stages.

**Notes:**

*Some individual items of equipment may be graded poor for inclusive/accessible due to the nature of the activity for which they are designed. The overall inclusiveness and accessibility of the site should consider the mix of equipment for different abilities. An independent Rospa safety audit is carried out annually. All items are identified as Low-Medium risk.*



## Play Area Assessment - Dec 2019


<b>SITE: WOODFORD PARK</b>				
<b>ITEM</b>				
General surface				
	<b>CONDITION</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>PLAY VALUE</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>INCLUSIVE/ ACCESSIBLE</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>Comment:</b>			
<b>ITEM</b>				
Bins				
	<b>CONDITION</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>PLAY VALUE</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A
	<b>INCLUSIVE/ ACCESSIBLE</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A
	<b>Comment:</b>			
<b>ITEM</b>				
Seat				
	<b>CONDITION</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>PLAY VALUE</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A
	<b>INCLUSIVE/ ACCESSIBLE</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>Comment:</b>			
<b>ITEM</b>				
Fencing				
	<b>CONDITION</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>PLAY VALUE</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A
	<b>INCLUSIVE/ ACCESSIBLE</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A
	<b>Comment:</b>			

SITE: WOODFORD PARK				
<b>ITEM</b>				
Gate				
	<b>CONDITION</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>PLAY VALUE</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A
	<b>INCLUSIVE/ ACCESSIBLE</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>Comment:</b>			
<b>ITEM</b>				
Boulders				
	<b>CONDITION</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>PLAY VALUE</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>INCLUSIVE/ ACCESSIBLE</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>Comment:</b>			
<b>ITEM</b>				
Multi play with swing				
	<b>CONDITION</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>PLAY VALUE</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>INCLUSIVE/ ACCESSIBLE</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>Comment:</b>			
<b>ITEM</b>				
Rocker				
	<b>CONDITION</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>PLAY VALUE</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>INCLUSIVE/ ACCESSIBLE</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>Comment:</b>			

SITE: WOODFORD PARK				
<b>ITEM</b>				
Rocker Arch				
	<b>CONDITION</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>PLAY VALUE</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>INCLUSIVE/ ACCESSIBLE</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>Comment:</b>			
<b>ITEM</b>				
Rocker - Rattling				
	<b>CONDITION</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>PLAY VALUE</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>INCLUSIVE/ ACCESSIBLE</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>Comment:</b>	Timber rotted – item to be removed		
<b>ITEM</b>				
Rocker - Ringing				
	<b>CONDITION</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>PLAY VALUE</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>INCLUSIVE/ ACCESSIBLE</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>Comment:</b>	Poor condition – item has been removed		
<b>ITEM</b>				
Embankment slide / sandpit				
	<b>CONDITION</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>PLAY VALUE</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>INCLUSIVE/ ACCESSIBLE</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>Comment:</b>			

SITE: WOODFORD PARK				
<b>ITEM</b>				
Toddler Bridge				
	<b>CONDITION</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>PLAY VALUE</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>INCLUSIVE/ ACCESSIBLE</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>Comment:</b>			
<b>ITEM</b>				
Basket Swing				
	<b>CONDITION</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>PLAY VALUE</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>INCLUSIVE/ ACCESSIBLE</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>Comment:</b>			
<b>ITEM</b>				
Toddler Swing				
	<b>CONDITION</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>PLAY VALUE</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>INCLUSIVE/ ACCESSIBLE</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>Comment:</b>			
<b>ITEM</b>				
Tunnel / sandpit				
	<b>CONDITION</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>PLAY VALUE</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>INCLUSIVE/ ACCESSIBLE</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>Comment:</b>			



SITE: WOODFORD PARK				
<b>ITEM</b>				
Zip Wire				
	<b>CONDITION</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>PLAY VALUE</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>INCLUSIVE/ ACCESSIBLE</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>Comment:</b>			
<b>ITEM</b>				
Carousel				
	<b>CONDITION</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>PLAY VALUE</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>INCLUSIVE/ ACCESSIBLE</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>Comment:</b>			
<b>ITEM</b>				
Rock Climber				
	<b>CONDITION</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>PLAY VALUE</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>INCLUSIVE/ ACCESSIBLE</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>Comment:</b>			
<b>ITEM</b>				
Climber Net				
	<b>CONDITION</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>PLAY VALUE</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>INCLUSIVE/ ACCESSIBLE</b>	Poor	Satisfactory	Good
	<b>Comment:</b>			

**Site information:**

Play area was installed in 2010 and added to with toddler equipment in 2012. Ample parking, park location and proximity to the leisure centre and paddling pool make this a very busy play area.

**Summary:**

The equipment is in good condition and the safety surfacing has been replaced around the zip wire due to heavy use. The site is very well used by a large age range. Equipment offers a variety of activities. Climber items combined with the mounds and landform provide a unique 'height' and vantage point with views across the lake and park.

Inclusivity/accessibility is generally poor/satisfactory – partly due to the sloping nature of the site and the deliberate mounding of areas to provide height.

**Recommendations:**

Consider funding of inclusive equipment items and look at possible access improvements.

*Suggested investment £10,000*

**Notes:**

*Some individual items of equipment may be graded poor for inclusive/accessible due to the nature of the activity for which they are designed. The overall inclusiveness and accessibility of the site should consider the mix of equipment for different abilities. An independent Rospa safety audit is carried out annually. All items are identified as Low-Medium risk.*

**THIS PAGE IS INTENTIONALLY  
LEFT BLANK**

## WOODLEY TOWN COUNCIL

**JOB DESCRIPTION**

<b>Post:</b>	<b>PARK WARDEN - VOLUNTEER</b>
<b>Responsible to:</b>	Deputy Town Clerk
<b>Hours of Work:</b>	To suit – (Possibly 5 -10 hours p/w)
<b>Job Scope:</b>	To be a presence in Woodford Park Provide information to park users Forward enquiries from park users to the Council Discourage dog fouling by providing information to dog walkers Litter picking, weeding, and other tasks
<b>Training Provided:</b>	Lone Working/Manual Handling/First Aid
<b>Equipment Provided:</b>	Hi Vis waterproof clothing/litter picker/gloves/bags/dog waste bags
<b>Post Holder</b>	Must be 18+ yrs

**Main Duties:**

1. To assist the Council in engaging with park users e.g. survey questionnaires, leaflets, information.
2. To report observations of dog fouling to the Council.
3. To report instances of antisocial behaviour / vandalism etc to the Council.
4. To be an easily identified presence in the Park and provide information or forward enquiries to the relevant officer of the Council.
5. To assist with litter picking, watering flower beds, weeding and any other activities - dependent on hours of availability.
6. To ensure the health and safety of resources within the post holder's responsibilities and personal health and safety responsibilities, as laid down in the Health and Safety at Work Act, 1974.



**THIS PAGE IS INTENTIONALLY  
LEFT BLANK**



## ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

### Policy Statement

Woodley Town Council recognises its environmental responsibilities in its many roles including;

- Consumer of goods and services
- Employer
- Service provider
- Landowner and manager
- Custodian of community assets
- Public body

### The environmental objectives of the Council are:

- a) To conserve energy and other resources
- b) To reduce the amount of waste generated by the Council
- c) To increase the amount of Council waste that is recycled
- d) To provide information to the public on environmental issues and promote environmental initiatives
- e) To work with partners e.g. Wokingham Borough Council in delivering environmental improvements and initiatives
- f) To encourage environmental best practice amongst contractors, employees and the community

### These objectives will be met by:

- Operating within all appropriate legislation and regulatory requirements
- Considering environmental impacts and sustainability in procurement and operational decisions
- Developing and maintaining links with partner organisations e.g. Wokingham Borough Council
- Regularly reviewing energy and water consumption, waste generation and use of pesticides and seeking alternatives to limit environmental impact
- Using only licensed waste contractors for waste disposal
- Reusing and recycling materials on site wherever possible and practical to do so
- Minimising the potential for release of pollutants into the environment through review of the risk register / risk assessments and working practices
- Using drought resistant planting alternatives where appropriate
- Encouraging reuse of rain water at the allotment site
- Considering and prioritising biodiversity and ecosystem health in park projects operations e.g. lake restoration, wild flower planting

**THIS PAGE IS INTENTIONALLY  
LEFT BLANK**

## Woodford Park Lake – Restoration project overview

<p><b>Information</b></p>
<p>The lake (large pond) sits in Woodford Park in Woodley, adjacent to the Leisure Centre. It has a pathway around it's perimeter and is a fairly busy route for walkers from the housing areas to the North of the park, to the shopping precinct. It is used by many dog walkers and is part of the weekly Park Run route.</p> <p>The lake has three islands with tree and scrub growth and provide habitat for ducks. The overhanging trees were reduced significantly in 2012 and have been managed since then to reduce the leaf fall into the water, which was considered to be contributing to the build up of silt. The water level of the lake is balanced by a feed pipe from a surface water sewer that runs adjacent to it.</p> <p>An assessment of the lake was carried out in July 2008 by Thames Valley Aquatic Services (attached).</p> <p>The Park is very well used by the community for leisure activities, dog walking, sport, as well as a pedestrian route across the town. The Council receives complaints and comments about the condition of the lake, particularly in the summer when the ends of the lake begin to smell unpleasant.</p>
<p>Location: Woodford Park, Woodley, Berkshire</p>
<p>Area: Approx 1.25 acres</p>
<p>Funding: Potential 50k from Biffa Awards Council Reserves/projects fund S106 contributions</p>
<p><b>Issues/challenges</b></p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Significant silt build up over many years.</li> <li>2. Both ends of lake smell in the summer months as the water level lowers slightly exposing the silt.</li> <li>3. Pathways around lake in poor condition in some areas.</li> <li>4. Poor biodiversity.</li> <li>5. Dwindling fish population.</li> <li>6. Timber edging damaged in places.</li> <li>7. Lake is next to new 3G football pitch – currently under construction. Impact on view across the lake through the park.</li> <li>8. Unknowns – water quality, silt content.</li> <li>9. Overall - Poor amenity value.</li> <li>10. Cost of works – particularly removal/disposal of silt.</li> </ol>



<p><b>Project Aims</b></p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reduce/eliminate smell during summer period.</li> <li>2. Remove/reuse silt.</li> <li>3. Improve pathways, seating, signage, information, amenity value.</li> <li>4. Improve biodiversity, planting, fish population.</li> <li>5. Improve health of the lake.</li> <li>6. Reduce/limit silt build-up over coming years – sustainability.</li> <li>7. Make the lake somewhere to spend time, sit/walk and enjoy.</li> <li>8. Include volunteers/Friends Group in works, fundraising and educational opportunities.</li> <li>9. Work towards Green Flag status for the Park.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Opportunities</b></p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Involvement with Friends of Woodford Park and other volunteers and groups.</li> <li>2. Educational opportunities – involvement with schools (biodiversity/habitat).</li> <li>3. Work with Earley Town Council Wildlife Officer to develop and sustain biodiversity and educational elements.</li> <li>4. Training/educational possibilities for Town Council staff.</li> </ol>

# Woodley Lake Restoration

## Feasibility Study

## Contents

1	Executive Summary .....	3
2	Introduction .....	4
2.1	Site Location and Description .....	4
3	Background.....	5
3.1	Ponds and People.....	5
3.2	A Healthy Pond .....	6
3.3	Pond Flora and Fauna .....	6
4	Methodology .....	9
4.1	Silt Volume Estimate .....	9
4.2	Silt Sample Collection & Analysis .....	9
4.3	Aquatic Habitat Condition Assessment.....	9
4.4	Fish Population Assessment.....	10
5	Results .....	11
5.1	Silt Volume Estimate .....	11
5.2	Silt Sample Analysis.....	11
5.3	Aquatic Habitat Condition Assessment.....	11
5.4	Fish Population Assessment.....	12
6	Recommendations .....	13
6.1	Silt Management .....	13
6.2	Aquatic Habitat Management & Enhancement.....	16
6.3	Fishery Management .....	17
6.4	Amenity Value .....	18
	Appendix A – Silt Transect Locations and Depth.....	19

## 1 Executive Summary

- The aquatic habitat at Woodley Lake is poor due to the lack of submerged, marginal, floating and emergent macrophyte species. Aquatic invertebrates are reliant on an abundant and diverse macrophyte community. Invertebrates are an essential element of all ecosystems, an improved community would benefit aquatic and terrestrial fauna that this standing water habitat has the potential to support (i.e. fish, foraging bat species, birds, reptiles and amphibians).
- The fish population at Woodley Lake consisted of one native species rudd *Scardinius erythrophthalmus* and two non-native species, carp *Cyprinus carpio* and channel catfish *Ictalurus punctatus*.
- The profile of Woodley lake banks has restricted the presence of shallow marginal habitat, an essential and ecologically diverse area of standing water habitat. The lake would significantly benefit from creation of habitat of this type. Marginal habitat planted with native flowering marginal species would significantly improve the aesthetics of Woodley Lake.
- The preferred option for management of the silt in the areas of concern is to accelerate the natural process of succession for creation of valuable wetland habitat. The actions described in Chapter 6 will greatly improve the ecological status of the lake, amenity value and stakeholder engagement.
- The laboratory analysis of the silt sample collected from Woodley lake shows all contaminants are within the guideline values for residential and allotment use and can therefore be disposed of on-site if required.
- The silt volume estimate showed that there is ~538m<sup>3</sup> of silt across the bed of Woodley Lake.
- Removal of silt by dredging is deemed disproportionate to the benefits provided to the ecology and amenity value of Woodley Lake.



## 2 Introduction

In April 2016 Five Rivers Environmental Contracting Ltd were contracted by Helen Palmer, Landscape Director, Land Shape Ltd to provide a feasibility study for the restoration of Woodley Lake, Woodley, Reading. The feasibility study is required for funding application for the restoration of the lake.

### 2.1 Site Location and Description

Woodley Lake is located in Woodley Park, Reading and is owned / managed by Woodley Town Council. The pond is managed as a duck feeding pond for local residents and there is no angling permitted on the pond. The pond has footpath around its perimeter which provides access to the park entering the site from the west. The west corner of the lake has accumulation of silt that produces foul smelling odour during the summer months when the water levels are low; the same is occurring in the eastern corner of Woodley lake. Both these areas of sediment deposition are shaded by surrounding trees, including those on the islands. The anaerobic conditions in these areas have led to comments from park users regarding the impact this noxious gases have on the amenity value of Woodley Lake. The pond has three tree covered islands, these islands are well used by the water fowl populating Woodley Lake. There is an area of concrete on the south east bank where a pipe enters Woodley lake; the pond has been designed to act as a balancing pond. This pipe may be a source of organic matter and sediment inputs. The aquatic habitat at Woodley lake is considered to be poor due to the lack of macrophytes. The pond is surrounded by a rail that is constructed of railway sleeper; this is failing in some areas. Considerable amounts of tree works have been undertaken at Woodley Lake to decrease shade. The southern bank is populated by alder trees which have been coppiced and are re-generating.

## 3 Background

### 3.1 Ponds and People

Ponds and wetland habitats provide not only habitat for a range of wildlife but also as a valuable amenity resource for local communities. Amenity value of wetland habitats significantly increases in urban environments where access to natural spaces is limited. Ponds are an excellent educational resource providing an interactive location for persons in education to engage with the environment and learn about environmental science, conservation and ecology. Providing optimal wetland habitats increases the diversity of fauna and flora a site can support. Damselfly and dragonflies are indicators of water chemistry and habitat quality of wetland habitat; encouraging these large, colourful and visually aesthetic invertebrates is a useful tool for engaging the public and increasing amenity value of a site. Duck feeding also provides amenity value to the public, however uncontrolled inputs of nutrients can lead to a decline in water quality. Lack of knowledge can lead to incorrect perceptions of aquatic ecosystems; providing education on the natural processes of these habitats and impacts that people have on them is essential element in improving and sustaining amenity value for people and a healthy wetland environment. Providing safe access to waterbodies via dipping platforms is an excellent option for encouraging the use of a wetland site as an educational resource. In addition to dipping platforms the creation of board walks increases engagement of the public with habitats difficult to access (i.e. wet and soft marginal habitat).



Photo 1: Example of pond dipping platform.

## 3.2 A Healthy Pond

Ponds provide habitat for a range of aquatic and terrestrial wildlife. For some wildlife, such as amphibians and dragonflies, pond habitat is essential for the completion of their lifecycle; for others such as the grass snake and some bat species they provide optimal foraging habitat. A healthy and biologically diverse pond typically has all of the following characteristics;

- Good water quality – free from excessive nutrients and/or pollution;
- Diverse and abundant macrophyte community;
- Diverse and abundant aquatic invertebrates;
- No fish or a natural low stock of fish;

### 3.2.1 Water Quality

Good water quality is essential for maintaining a healthy and diverse pond ecosystem. The diversity of species a pond can support is associated with both the habitat and water quality. Water quality can be negatively impacted by;

- Point and diffuse pollution from surface water (i.e. drains, streams) and ground water sources (i.e. water table); and
- Excessive nutrients associated with overstocking of fish and feeding of water fowl;

Macrophytes are essential component in aquatic ecosystems whose role is to utilise nutrients during growth. If excess nutrients are available algal bloom and die back can occur. Decomposition of organic matter is a natural process. undertaken by bacteria, during which these bacteria use dissolved oxygen present in the water for respiration. When there is a mass die back of living organisms (i.e. algae) this can negatively impact water quality in the short term by reducing dissolved oxygen (DO) available for fauna reliant on DO content of the water (i.e. fish, aquatic invertebrates).

Decomposition of organic matter can be undertaken by either aerobic or anaerobic bacteria. Anaerobic bacteria are slower at the breakdown of organic matter than their aerobic counterparts. During anaerobic breakdown of organic matter, the bacteria produce toxic gases such as ammonia, methane and hydrogen sulphide; these gases are what causes the 'rotten egg' odour that can occur in stagnant areas of a waterbody.

## 3.3 Pond Flora and Fauna

### 3.3.1 Macrophytes

Macrophytes are a key component of a healthy and diverse pond environment. Their roles in aquatic ecosystems are significant and include; uptake of nutrients and pollutants; release of dissolved oxygen through photosynthesis; habitat for breeding, foraging and cover from predators for a multitude of wildlife.

Macrophytes are divided into four groups: emergent, submerged, floating and marginal. Emergent macrophytes are defined as plants that are rooted in shallow water with vegetative parts emerging above the water surface. Submerged macrophytes are defined as plants that are usually rooted in the substrate with the vegetative parts predominantly submerged. Marginal macrophytes are rooted in soil in either very shallow water or along the banks of wetlands where soil is wet.

A diverse pond will have a range of macrophyte types and species. Each species has its own requirements and tolerances of water depth, aspect, shade and water quality, water chemistry and turbidity. Each group of macrophytes are important for different wildlife; emergent reeds are used by emerging dragonfly nymphs; submerged vegetation is essential for newt egg laying; marginal vegetation is important for invertebrates and provides cover from predators for amphibians. Each type of macrophyte has a role in the aquatic environment; a healthy pond has a mosaic of different macrophyte types.

Abundant macrophyte coverage of a pond is generally considered beneficial for wildlife. However, maintaining a small areas of open water is beneficial for groups such as dragonflies, bats and great crested newts. Management of macrophytes should be targeted towards preventing the domination of one species and maintaining an area of open water.

### 3.3.2 Fish

The stocking density (number of fish) in a pond can affect the diversity and abundance of aquatic invertebrates (macro-invertebrates) and macrophytes (aquatic vegetation); ponds with large quantities of fish typically have a reduced diversity of aquatic invertebrates (macro-invertebrates) and macrophytes (aquatic vegetation). Some species have a more significant effect than others. Carp are benthic feeding fish, rooting through the pond bed sifting edible items from the substrate, uprooting vegetation through feeding activity and disturbing sediment. When present in high numbers the impact can be significant and macrophytes struggle to establish. The extent of damage depends on the density of carp and the types of macrophytes present.

### 3.3.3 Aquatic Invertebrates

Aquatic invertebrates are an essential component of any aquatic ecosystem and found in nearly every body of inland water. Invertebrates are involved in important functions, such as breakdown of detritus, grazing of algae, nutrient cycling and provide valuable food resources to aquatic and terrestrial fauna. Invertebrates require macrophytes to accommodate their different life stages; ponds with a poor macrophyte community will have a poor invertebrate community.

Ponds are host to a range of invertebrate species. Some are found permanently below the surface such as snails, whilst others have an aquatic larval life (i.e. dragonflies and damselflies). Aquatic invertebrates are commonly used as biological indicators of water quality; some species high quality water, while others can be found where the water is polluted. Dragonflies are large and vivid in colour, making them a useful species for assessing water and habitat quality.

The greatest diversity of invertebrate species will be associated with ponds that provide the greatest diversity of habitat. Essential elements of pond habitat for invertebrates are; varied and abundant macrophyte community; shallow marginal habitat with abundant marginal macrophytes. Fish should be absent or at low densities as they predate on invertebrates; when present at high densities fish cause damage to the macrophyte community by reducing light penetration and increasing nutrients. Dragonflies have additional habitat requirements which include;

- Open water – adults of many species hold territories over open water fringed by emergent macrophytes where they catch flying insects on the wing and attract a mate;
- An open aspect – dragonflies prefer sunshine and avoid areas of shade;
- Submerged macrophytes – provides cover for dragonfly nymph from predators, habitat for nymph prey and adult spawning substrate; and
- Emergent vegetation – essential for emerging dragonfly nymphs that climb up emergent macrophytes and hatch into adults.

### 3.3.4 Amphibians

Amphibians have a complex lifecycle that has interaction with both aquatic and adjacent terrestrial habitat; although they breed in ponds they spend much of their time on land. The UK is home to seven native species of amphibian; some have specific habitat requirements whilst others are more widespread. Adult amphibians migrate from their overwintering terrestrial habitat to ponds in spring to breed. The adults can remain in and around the pond during the summer, their terrestrial habitat requirements are damp cover which can be found in grassland, scrub and woodland. Come the end of summer the larvae leave the pond to spend autumn foraging in preparation for winter. Adults and juveniles spend winter at over wintering sites; these are damp terrestrial habitats that provide shelter from the elements. Adult amphibians can migrate distances of up to 500m to a breeding pond; this should be considered when managing terrestrial habitat in winter within close proximity of pond habitat. Overwintering habitat includes; tree stumps, piles of large woody debris, stone piles and old burrows excavated by mammals.



## 4 Methodology

### 4.1 Silt Volume Estimate

To estimate the volume of silt in Woodley lake the waterbody was divided into twelve areas. Within each area a transect was located approximately in the centre of the section. The locations of each of the transects is shown in Appendix A. Along each transect the silt depth was measured at ~2m intervals and recorded.

### 4.2 Silt Sample Collection & Analysis

#### 4.2.1 Sample collection

A 1.5kg silt sample was collected from the bed of the lake, stored in an appropriate container and sent by courier for laboratory analysis.

#### 4.2.2 Sample Analysis

A sample of silt was sent for laboratory analysis to a UKAS accredited laboratory for the testing of hydrocarbons (speciated PAH, aliphatic and aromatic fractions), metals, asbestos and inorganics.

The primary objective is to assess if any potential contamination sources of contamination are present within the silt sample prior to its removal.

### 4.3 Aquatic Habitat Condition Assessment

A visual assessment of the aquatic habitat was made by an experienced fisheries / aquatic ecologist. Observations were made from the bank, from a small inflatable boat and by wading. The following site characteristics were assessed.

- Bank profiles;
- Water depths;
- Shade;
- Macrophyte diversity and quality;
- Sources of organic matter and nutrient inputs;
- Water turbidity; and
- Field based water quality measurements were taken using a calibrated hand held YSI Pro Plus water quality. The determinands measured, accuracy and resolution of the equipment is provided in **Table xx**.

Determinand	Range	Accuracy	Resolution
pH	-2.60 to 16.60	±0.1 mV (0.01 pH units)	0.1 mV (0.01 pH units)
ORP	-1999 to +1999 mV	±0.5 mV	0.1 mV
Conductivity	0.0 to 200 mS/cm each range	±0.1% FS ±1 digit for $\mu$ S/cm to 0.1 mS/cm (range dependent)	0.0001 mS/cm or 0.1
Dissolved Oxygen	0.00 to 90 mg/L; 0 to 550%	±0.2% FS (550% air saturation) ±1 digit (with 1.25 PE membrane at 10 ° C)	0.01 mg/L; 0.1% air saturation
Temperature	-10 to 100.00° C	±0.2% FS ±1 digit	0.1° C

Table xx: Physico-chemical determinands, with associated ranges, accuracies and resolutions of the YSI Pro-Plus Meter.

#### 4.4 Fish Population Assessment

To assess the fish population of Woodley lake the following was undertaken;

- Visual assessment by an experienced fisheries ecologist, wearing polaroid glasses, of the fish stock present;
- Visual assessment by an experienced fisheries ecologist, wearing polaroid glasses of stock from a boat.
- Electric fishing of the lakes margins and key areas of fish habitat. The use of electric fishing equipment was consented by the Environment Agency.

## 5 Results

### 5.1 Silt Volume Estimate

The results of the silt volume estimate are presented in Table xxx. The greatest volume of silt is present in the Eastern end of the lake; this is likely to be related to the direction of the prevailing winds (south westerly) distributing organic matter which are then deposited. A map of the transect locations and the silt depth at each sample point is provided in Appendix A.

Transect No.	No of sample points	Silt Depth (m)			Area of Transect (m <sup>2</sup> )	Silt volume (m <sup>3</sup> )
		Minimum	Maximum	Mean		
1	9	0.004	0.310	0.134	168	23
2	11	0.001	0.450	0.160	237	38
3	12	0.001	0.310	0.148	244	36
4	11	0.000	0.310	0.148	228	34
5	12	0.000	0.300	0.114	178	20
6	11	0.000	0.260	0.125	173	22
7	12	0.000	0.440	0.217	227	49
8	10	0.000	0.340	0.127	186	24
9	14	0.000	0.520	0.187	523	98
10	14	0.000	0.690	0.213	531	113
11	13	0.000	0.500	0.111	267	30
12	14	0.000	0.590	0.419	126	53
<b>Lake Totals</b>					<b>3088</b>	<b>538</b>

Table 1: Silt depths and volume estimates, Woodley Lake.

### 5.2 Silt Sample Analysis

Laboratory results indicated that concentrations of all potential contaminants are within LQM/CIEH, C4SL and EA guideline values for residential and allotment use. Hence, as this is the most sensitive end use assessment criteria, silt use for agriculture or landscaping will be acceptable. Full results are available on request.

### 5.3 Aquatic Habitat Condition Assessment

The banks were steep and supported by wooden revetment for the majority of the site, which limited the availability of shallow marginal habitat. Marginal macrophyte species were present along the banks of the lake in isolated pockets. Suitable water depth for marginal and emergent macrophyte species was available in the East and West corners of Woodley Lake. However, the shade in these areas has prevented the colonisation and establishment of macrophytes. No submerged or floating macrophytes were observed at Woodley lake. The lack of macrophytes significantly reduces the quality of the aquatic habitat at Woodley Lake; overall habitat is considered to be poor. Water turbidity at the time of assessment was not a factor limiting the growth of submerged macrophytes. The large carp present in

Woodley lake could be clearly seen disturbing sediment during benthic feeding; this increased turbidity in the immediate area. The turbidity of the water throughout the lake indicates that only a small population of carp are present; high density of carp increase turbidity significantly preventing sunlight penetrating the water column, limiting the growth of submerged macrophytes.

A number of water fowl were observed at Woodley lake at the time of assessment and duck feeding is considered to be highly likely. The high numbers of water fowl and supplementary feeding by park users is providing a source of organic matter and input of nutrients. No angling takes place at Woodley lake so the input of angling bait is not of concern. The large carp present are disturbing sediments during feeding; this process releases nutrients locked in the sediment and is a source of nutrients.

The lake has been subject to tree works in recent years and the inputs of organic matter from deciduous trees that border the lake has been reduced. The south bank is lined with alder trees that have been previously coppiced rather than removed; these are re-growing and likely to increase the inputs of leaves in the Autumn as these mature.

## 5.4 Fish Population Assessment

During the electric fishing of the lake margins and key areas of habitat only one species of fish was captured, rudd *Scardinius erythrophthalmus*. In addition to the results of the electric fishing survey visual assessment of the fish population highlighted the presence of three large carp *Cyprinus carpio* (including one ornamental ghost carp), and one non-native albino channel catfish *Ictalurus punctatus*; these species are commonly available in the aquatic pet trade and are illegally introduced by the public once they outgrow their aquarium/pond. The presence of juvenile rudd (50mm) indicates the species are recruiting successfully; habitat for this species is considered to be poor due to the lack of macrophytes. Overall the fish population in Woodley Lake would be considered low stock density which is beneficial in creating and maintaining an ecologically diverse environment.

Species	Fork Length (mm)
RU	138
RU	145
RU	129
RU	117
RU	53
RU	139
RU	50
RU	120
RU	107
RU	118

Table xx: Electric fishing catch data (RU = Rudd *Scardinius erythrophthalmus*)

## 6 Recommendations

### 6.1 Silt Management

The greatest concentrations of silt are found at in the East and West corners of the lake behind the islands. Organic matter has been directly input into these areas from surrounding vegetation and indirectly from sediments disturbed by feeding fish (carp) and water fowl throughout the lake, which are then transported by prevailing wind / wave action and deposited in the sheltered area. The presence of the islands has reduced wind action in these areas and the sheltered conditions provides optimal conditions for deposition of the organic matter and sediment in suspension. The presence of a foul odour is evidence that environmental conditions in this area favours decomposition of organic matter by anaerobic bacteria which produce gas that have a 'rotten egg' odour. Organic silt is accumulating in these areas faster than it is being decomposed due to the anaerobic conditions. Anaerobic bacteria have slower decomposition rates than aerobic bacteria; this allows silt to accumulate at a faster rate, increasing the rate of the natural process of succession. When levels are low during the summer months the silt is exposed and the smell reduces the amenity value for some park users in these areas. The following options and their indicative costs for silt management are targeted towards these areas;

- **Option A** – Do nothing
- **Option B** – Siltex Application
- **Option C** – Mechanical silt removal using excavators
- **Option D** – Wetland habitat creation

#### 6.1.1 Option A - Do nothing

No silt removed or treated in any way and anaerobic conditions left to continue, no reduction in the smell produced by these areas. Organic matter will continue to accumulate and over time the natural process of succession will lead to the shallow corners eventually become terrestrial habitat. This process will be very slow. This option has no cost implication but does not address the issues that have been raised.

#### 6.1.2 Option B – Siltex Application

This option uses a natural product called Siltex that is not harmful to the environment or public. The product assists the natural processes of silt decomposition by improving conditions for aerobic bacteria which are considerably faster at decomposition of organic matter; aerobic bacteria do not produce foul smelling gases (methane etc.) during decomposition. The treatment of Siltex will;

- Reduce the foul smelling gases produced;
- Reduce the quantity of sediment across the whole lake; and
- Provide calcium for invertebrates who play a key role in the initial stages of organic matter breakdown.



This option is low cost, easy to apply and effective; a boat is required to spread the product evenly across the whole of the lake. The cost of Siltex application at Woodley Lake would ~£1000/application, price includes Siltex, labour and equipment required. Siltex can be applied annually in the Autumn and its effects should be monitored before considering a second application. No consent is required for the application of Siltex and has no impact on any protected species.

### 6.1.3 Option C – Silt Dredging

The effectiveness of the use of excavators for the removal of silt is restricted by the depth of water. Ideally a lake would be drained prior to dredging which would allow for effective silt removal using an excavator. Draining a pond is time consuming and requires a suitable location for the water to be pumped to. Dredging silt without draining leads to a proportion of each excavator bucket being lost into suspension, causing the pond to become turbid; the deeper the water the greater the proportion of silt lost and the sediment in suspension will deposit elsewhere in the lake at a later date. Removal of silt from the deepest areas of the lake are therefore not practical using this method unless the lake has been drained.

In addition to the practical restrictions of this method disturbed sediment has potential to create a short term reduction in dissolved oxygen concentration available to the lakes fauna and can cause fish mortality. Fish are an indicator of the dissolved oxygen available and their welfare should be monitored throughout dredging activities. Any sign of fish in distress (i.e. gasping at the surface) and the risk of fish mortality should be assessed, works potentially halted or aeration provided.

This indicative cost for removal of silt from the east and western corners of Woodley Lake, without draining the pond, are in excess of £20 - £25k. This option is expensive and the cost will be greatly impacted by;

- The volume of silt to be removed; and
- Location of the spoil heap.

The removal of silt will provide no direct improvements to the ecology at Woodley lake, unless the removed material is used for other habitat enhancement schemes; these are discussed in Chapter 6.2. Reducing the depth of silt may reduce the odour produced by anaerobic bacteria. Overtime, if there are no changes to the sheltered nature of these areas, silt will begin to accumulate in these again. The cost of silt removal is therefore deemed disproportionate to the perceived benefits of this type of activity; this option is not preferred for the restoration of Woodley Lake. If this option is considered, then the resource available should be targeted to the worst affected areas (east and western corners of the lake) where the water depth allows for the most effective removal without draining. To prevent the silt released into suspension from leaving the working area a silt curtain could be used to isolate the area and removed once the sediment deposits.

The laboratory results show that the lake silt contains no contaminants harmful to the public or environment and can therefore once removed be disposed of on site. The silt removed could be;

- Spread on adjacent terrestrial habitats; or
- Used as backfill for lake enhancement projects described in Section 7.3.

#### 6.1.4 Option D – Wetland Habitat Creation

This option for restoration focuses on working with the natural process of succession for the creation of valuable wetland habitat in the areas most affected by the accumulation of silt (East and West corner). The option provides significant benefits to the aquatic ecosystem, amenity value and aesthetics of Woodley Lake; this is the preferential choice for the restoration of Woodley Lake. The objective is to create optimal habitat for marginal and emergent macrophytes. Creation of this habitat will significantly improve the aquatic ecology of Woodley lake. Improvements to the habitat provide a chain reaction throughout the food web, these benefit other wildlife that the lake has potential to support (i.e. bats, birds, water fowl, amphibians, reptiles). By introducing flowering wetland plant species additional improvements to the aesthetic nature and therefore amenity value of Woodley Lake will be achieved. The following actions are required for restoration works of this nature;

- Tree works to reduce shade surrounding the proposed wetland areas, providing optimal conditions for macrophytes growth and colonisation;
- Constriction of a retaining leading edge created from hazel faggots and chestnut posts;
- Materials won from tree works installed into the lake using an excavator and grapple. A mattress will be created from the material;
- Additional top soil/organic material to be infilled to create a range of water depths;
- The newly created wetland areas to be planted with a diverse range of native marginal and emergent macrophyte species; and
- The installation of water fowl anti-grazing netting to protect plants during initial establishment.

The design would include landscaping the wetland to create a varied range of water depths providing optimal conditions for a diversity of aquatic plants. To achieve this additional infill material will be required to create the desired landscaped design. The allocation of an onsite spoil donor site would provide a low cost option for creation of this wetland habitat feature; creation of a pond elsewhere on site should be considered. If material has to be imported this has cost implications. Another suitable source of organic material is the island themselves, these could be re-graded into the area creating a number of smaller islands, providing nesting habitat for water fowl utilising the site. By redistributing the islands, the sheltered nature of these areas can be reduced and promote aerobic decomposition in the future.

Creation of wetland habitat is estimated to cost **£15 – £25k**. This cost includes the felling of trees and scrub clearance, creation of wetland habitat and planting. The factors impacting the final cost would be;

- Size of the area created;
- The requirement for tree climbers to sectional dismantle a tree, which is more time consuming and therefore expensive than directional felling of trees at ground level;
- Requirement to undertake protected species surveys (i.e. bat roost inspections);

- The source of the organic material required for landscaping; and
- The density of plants introduced.

By improving habitat Option D provides considerable benefits to the amenity value by introducing visually aesthetic flowering aquatic plants and increasing the number of dragonfly, a highly visible and attractive indicator of aquatic habitat quality. This provides future opportunities to increase stakeholder engagement and use of the site as an educational resource. It would be beneficial to in conjunction with the creation of wetland habitat consider the application of Siltex to the remainder of the water body. The use of sustainably sourced site won materials, where possible, will reduce construction costs.

## 6.2 Aquatic Habitat Management & Enhancement

The profile of Woodley lake restricts the availability of marginal habitat; marginal macrophyte species were present at the site in isolated pockets. This habitat can be created and will benefit the ecology and amenity value of the lake. To create this habitat, the following is required;

- Ensure shade is reduced where the habitat is to be created;
- Construction of a retaining front edge using hazel faggots or site won brash, retained between chestnut stakes driven into the lake;
- Back fill behind the structure to the required levels, creating areas of gradual sloping wet marginal habitat.
- Planting of with native marginal and emergent macrophyte species;
- Water fowl anti-grazing fencing will be required to ensure plants can become established.

The cost of materials and labour for the installation of the revetment required for the retention of back fill is **£80 - £100/linear meter**. The features can be created in aesthetically pleasing natural sweeping shapes and should incorporate flowering species. The cost of backfill will be dependent on its source, the following options are available for backfill material;

- Sediment removed during dredging;
- Won on site;
- By re-profiling of the banks; or
- Imported.

The cost of the plants will be **~£5/m<sup>2</sup>** for marginal and emergent species. The cost of labour **~£600/100m<sup>2</sup>**. Installation of plant protection fencing is **~£3/linear m**.

It is recommended that these features are created on the north bank where the greatest amount of sunlight is available. The shallow marginal features should be set at a height of a maximum of 100mm above summer water levels. Ideally the infill would be a graded from the top of the bank to the water, the front edge should be wet. These features should be planted with native species and protected from water fowl grazing. The following macrophyte species are recommended;

- Brook Lime, *Veronica beccabunga*;
- Water mint, *Mentha aquatica*;

- Marsh marigold, *Caltha Palustris*;
- Purple loosestrife *Lythrum Salicaria*
- Soft Rush, *Juncus Effusus*
- Yellow flag iris, *Iris Pseudacorus*
- Reed Canary Grass, *Phalaris Arundinacea*
- Water Figwort, *Scrophularia Aquatica*
- Flowering Rush, *Butomus Umbellatus*

If excess materials from tree works are available the creation of hibernacula's is recommended, an example of is shown below.



Shallow marginal habitat under construction



Example of shallow marginal habitat



Example of hibernacula created using site won woody material

### 6.3 Fishery Management

There is a natural stocking density of rudd at Woodley lake and a small population of non-native species. As the lake has no intention of being used as an angling facility no stocking of fish is recommended. If in the future recruitment of rudd increase because of the improvements made to habitat, then stock removal may be beneficial to maintain biomass at a natural level. If possible the non-native fish species should be removed, however the cost of removal would be disproportionate to the benefit of the removal. These large fish may also provide amenity value to some park users.

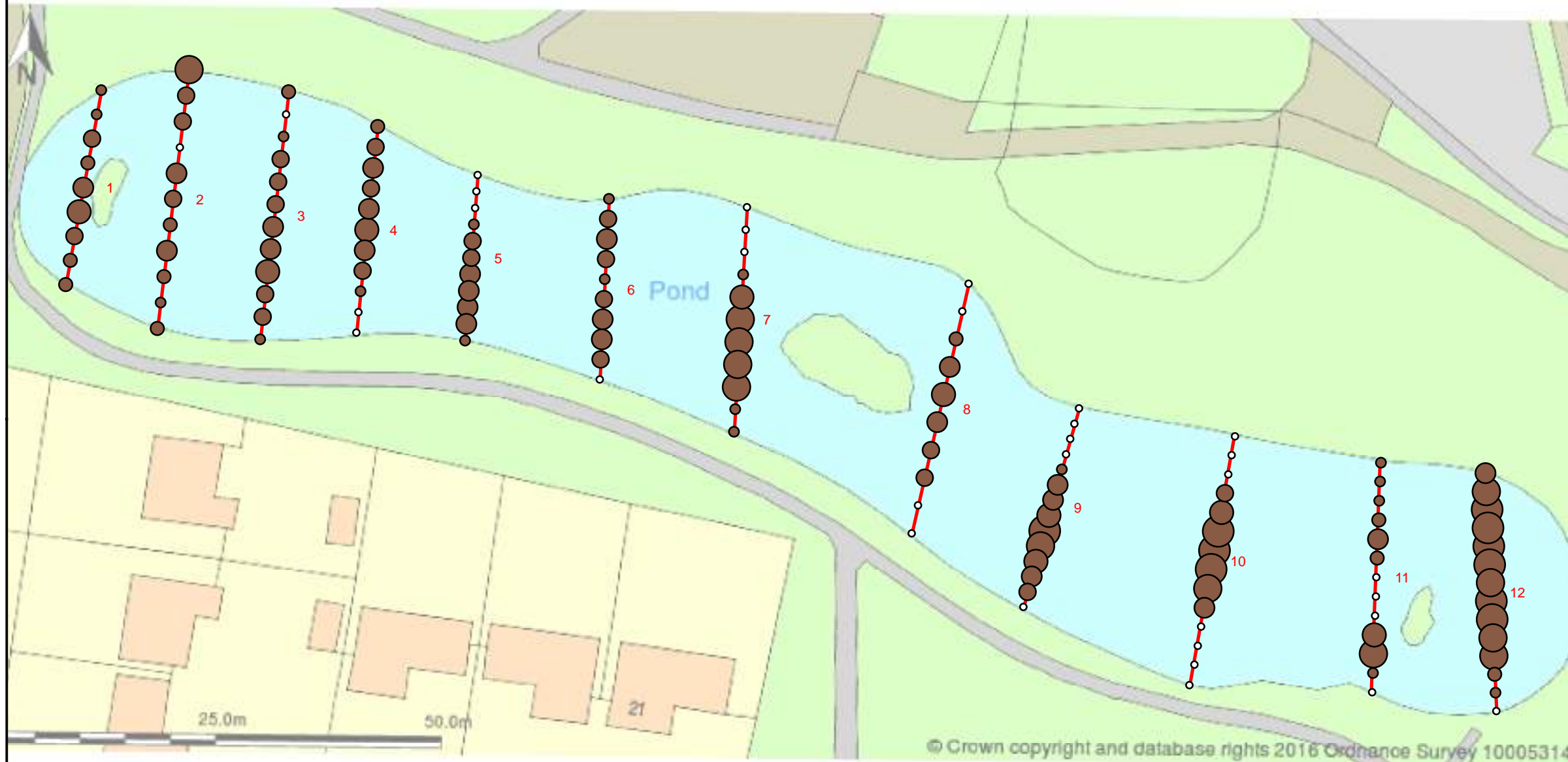
## 6.4 Amenity Value

The following recommendations are made to improve the amenity value of Woodley Lake;

- Pond dipping platform, 6m<sup>2</sup> in size: **£3000 - £5000** (cost dependent on the construction materials).
- Rustic log benches: **£600 - £1000/bench** (cost dependent on design)
- Board walk (15m x 1.2m): **£10,000 - £13,000**



## Appendix A – Silt Transect Locations and Depth



© Crown copyright and database rights 2016 Ordnance Survey 100053143



Contains Ordnance Survey Data © Crown copyright and database right 2013

**Legend**

- Transect
- Silt Depth (cm)**
- 0
- 1 - 5
- 5 - 10
- 10 - 20
- 20 - 30
- 30 - 40
- 40 - 50
- >50

**Five Rivers**  
ENVIRONMENTAL CONTRACTING



Meadow Barn, Lower Woodford, Salisbury, Wiltshire, SP4 6NG  
Tel: 01722 783 041  
www.five-rivers.com

<b>Client</b>	LandShape Design Ltd.						
<b>Project</b>	1272M Woodley Lake						
<b>Title</b>	Woodley Lake Silt Transect Locations and Depths Sheet 1 of 1						
<b>Drawing Status</b>	Final						
<b>Figure No.</b>	1						
<b>Scale</b>	1:559 @ A3						
	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Drawn</td> <td>LH</td> <td>Checked</td> <td>TG</td> <td>Approved</td> <td>TG</td> </tr> </table>	Drawn	LH	Checked	TG	Approved	TG
Drawn	LH	Checked	TG	Approved	TG		

# Woodley Residents' Survey 2018



*HMR*

[www.hminsight.com](http://www.hminsight.com)

## Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>3</b>
1.1	About the Survey.....	3
1.2	Respondent profiles .....	4
<b>2</b>	<b>Survey results .....</b>	<b>5</b>
2.1	Awareness of Woodley Town Council.....	5
2.2	Town Council facilities.....	6
2.2.1	Use of Woodley Town Council facilities by local households.....	6
2.2.2	Awareness of the facilities provided by Woodley Town Council .....	8
2.2.3	The rating of WTC facilities by users.....	9
2.2.4	Aggregated rating for all Town Council facilities .....	10
2.2.5	Improving facilities in Woodley .....	10
2.3	The importance of Woodley Town Council services.....	11
2.4	Service quality .....	13
2.5	Value for money.....	14
2.5.1	Suggestions for other facilities Woodley Town Council could provide .....	15
2.6	Oakwood Centre .....	15
2.7	Woodford Park .....	17
2.8	Woodley town centre.....	20
2.8.1	Recent improvements to Woodley town centre .....	20
2.8.2	Suggestions for types of entertainment .....	21
2.8.3	Likely viewing times at the performance space .....	22
2.8.4	Further Town Centre improvements .....	22
2.9	Communication .....	23
2.9.1	Woodley Town Council website .....	24
2.9.2	Suggestions for improvement to the website .....	25
2.9.3	The Woodley Herald .....	26
2.9.4	Suggestions for improvements to the Woodley Herald .....	27
2.9.5	Social Media .....	28
2.9.6	Improvements to Social Media .....	29
2.10	Living in Woodley .....	30
2.10.1	Satisfaction with Woodley as a place to live .....	30
2.10.2	The sense of belonging to Woodley .....	31
2.10.3	Community spirit .....	31

## **1 Introduction**

The 2018 Woodley Residents' survey was conducted in early December 2018. The survey was commissioned by Woodley Town Council with the aim of understanding residents' experiences of living in the town and their views about the services the Town Council provides. This is a regular survey which the Town Council asks an independent company to conduct, using methods that will obtain a representative sample of views from local people.

### **1.1 About the Survey**

The survey was designed in consultation and agreement with Woodley Town Council, focusing on a set of regular questions and others which reflected council priorities at the time of the survey. It was developed and conducted by HMR, an independent research and consultation company. The survey was carried out with a structured sample of households, across each part of Woodley representing all age groups and household sizes. The sample was selected using an approach that selects households on a random but systematic basis. Interviewers visited 500 households around the town and asked residents questions about their views on the services provided by Woodley Town Council and about living in Woodley. The survey was designed to take between 5 and 15 minutes to complete, depending on how much information people wished to give.

Based on an estimated 11,000 households in Woodley <sup>1</sup>, the survey gives results that are 95% representative of local households to +/- 4.3%. This means that the results can be considered as an accurate guide to local people's views.

<sup>1</sup> NOMIS 2019 (based on 2011 census with estimated addition for new households)



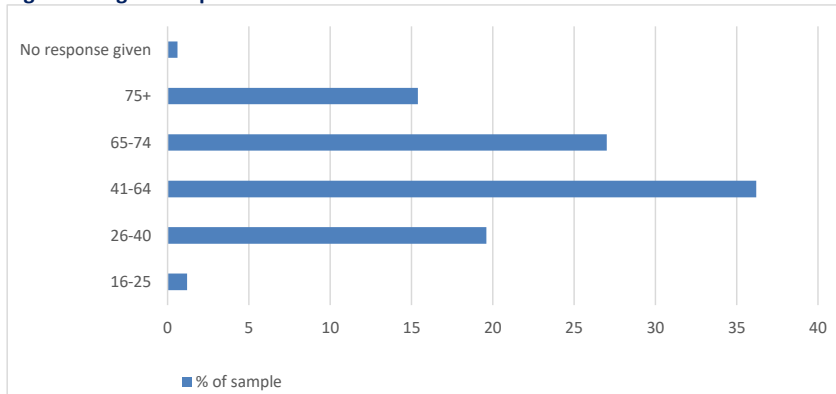
## 1.2 Respondent Profiles

The mean household size in this sample was 2.6 people.

**Table 1: The age of respondents**

Age group	% of sample	Number
16-25	1.2	6
26-40	19.6	98
41-64	36.2	181
65-74	27	135
75+	15.4	77
No response given	0.6	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>500</b>

**Fig 1: The age of respondents**



## 2 Survey Results

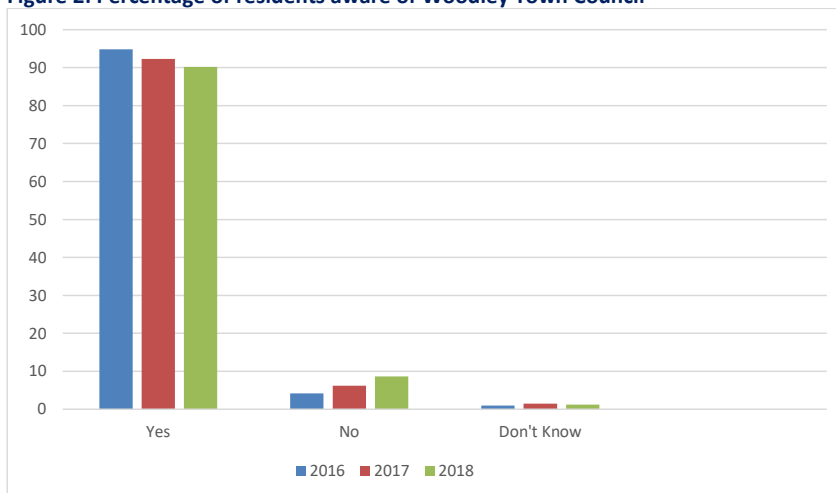
### 2.1 Awareness of Woodley Town Council

There had been a further slight decrease in the percentage of residents aware of Woodley Town Council in 2018, compared to the previous two years. The data showed that there appears to be lower awareness about the Town Council among residents in the newer areas of the town.

**Table 2: Awareness of Woodley Town Council**

Had you heard of Woodley Town Council before?	% Response		
	2016	2017	2018
Yes	94.8	92.3	89.2
No	4.2	6.2	8.6
Don't know	1.0	1.5	2.2
<b>Total</b>	100	100	100

**Figure 2: Percentage of residents aware of Woodley Town Council**



## 2.2 Town Council Facilities

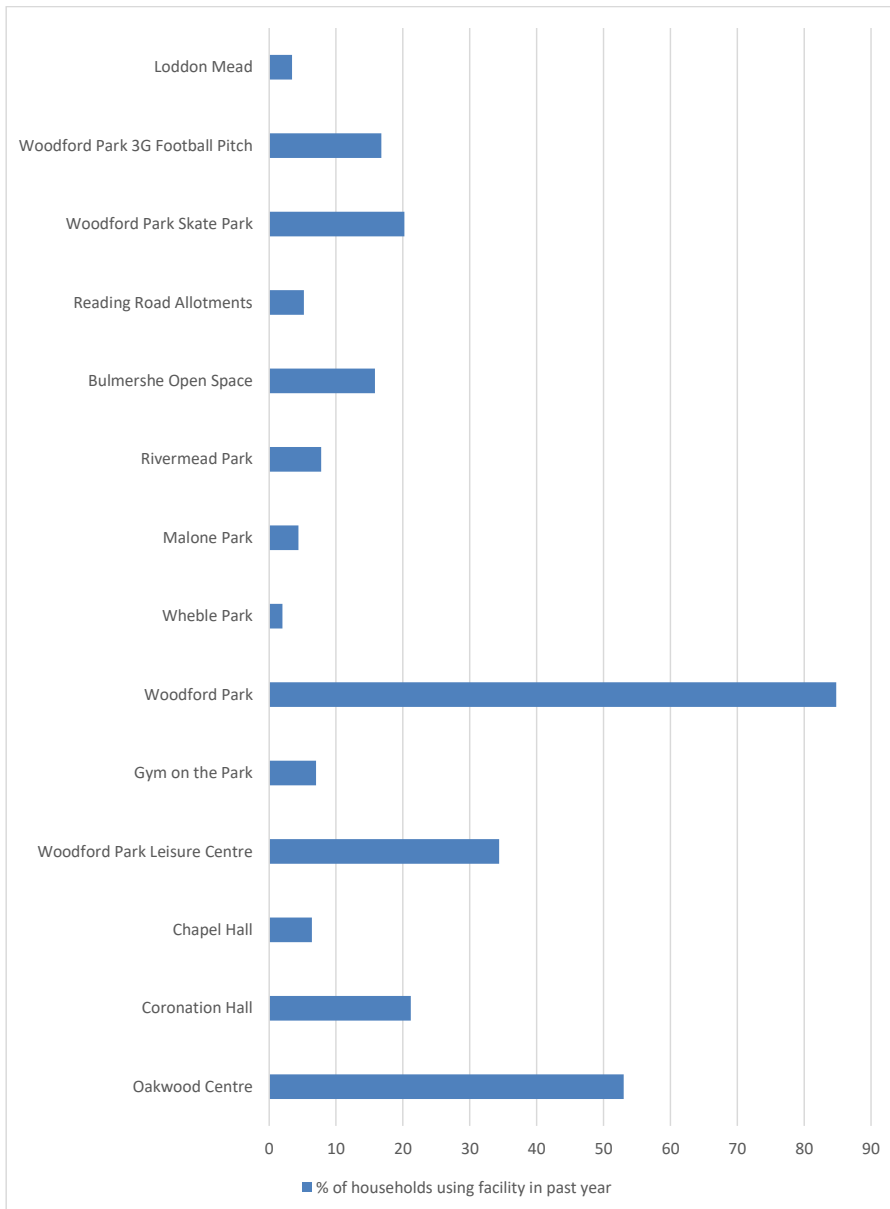
### 2.2.1 Use of Woodley Town Council facilities by local households

Woodford Park was the facility used by most people in Woodley. This is in keeping with the usual trend. Informal comments suggested that Woodford Park had been particularly popular during the warm summer of 2018. The Oakwood Centre was used by 53% of households and Woodford Park Leisure Centre by 38.6% of households. There had been a slight decrease in people using many of the Council facilities in 2018 compared to 2017, but the data did not suggest any underlying cause of this. The café in the Oakwood Centre was particularly popular among users of the centre.

**Table 3: Use of Woodley Town Council facilities by local households**

Facility	% of households using facility in past year (2018)	2017
Oakwood Centre	53.0	53.1
Coronation Hall	21.2	21.2
Chapel Hall	6.4	6.4
Woodford Park Leisure Centre	34.4	38.6
Gym on the Park	7.0	7.1
Woodford Park	84.8	84.9
Wheble Park	2.0	2.1
Malone Park	4.4	4.5
Rivermead Play Area	7.8	7.8
Bulmershe Open Space	15.8	19.1
Reading Road Allotments	5.2	5.2
Woodford Park Skate Park	20.2	19.7
Woodford Park 3G Football Pitch	16.8	17.5
Loddon Mead	3.4	2.8

**Fig 3: Use of Woodley Town Council facilities by local households**



**2.2.2 Awareness of the facilities provided by Woodley Town Council**

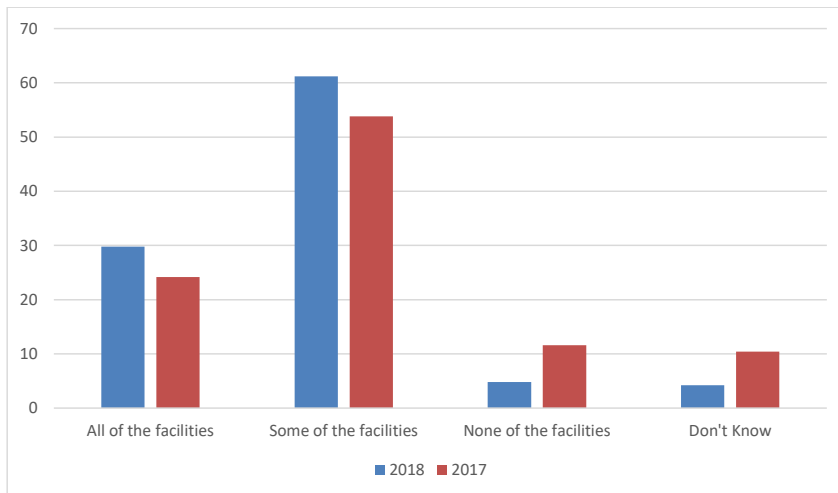
Among those who had heard of Woodley Town Council prior to being asked the survey questions, in 2018 there was a greater level of awareness of the services provided by the Council compared to 2017.

Five and a half percent more respondents were aware that the Town Council provided all the services that were being asked about. Compared to 2017, in 2018 7.4% more people knew that Woodley Town Council provided at least some of the services listed.

**Table 4: Knowledge of facilities provided by Woodley Town Council**

Awareness that Woodley Town Council provided the facilities listed?	% response	2017
All of the facilities	29.8	24.2
Some of the facilities	61.2	53.8
None of the facilities	4.8	11.6
Don't know/Not Sure	4.2	10.4

**Fig 4: Knowledge of facilities provided by Woodley Town Council**





### 2.2.3 The rating of WTC facilities by users

The majority of users rated Woodley Town Council facilities as good or satisfactory. In this survey there was an evening out of opinion about the quality of services, with fewer people, rating services as excellent or poor. Most services remained rated as good or satisfactory, with the Oakwood Centre, Woodford Park Leisure Centre, The Gym on the Park and the 3G football pitch being rated excellent or good by the majority of users.

Though the proportion of users giving a higher rating to facilities had in some cases fallen, the overall pattern of rating remained similar to that in 2017.

**Table 5: How users rated WTC facilities**

Facility	% response			
	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Poor
Oakwood Centre	41.8	34.3	20.4	3.5
Coronation Hall	10.8	36.4	44.1	8.7
Chapel Hall	3.3	28.6	59.2	8.9
Woodford Park Leisure Centre	33.9	31.6	27	7.5
Gym on The Park	45.8	38.2	15.8	0.2
Woodford Park	34.3	49.8	15.3	0.6
Wheble Park	1.2	33	45.4	20.4
Malone Park	14.1	40.3	36	9.6
Rivermead Play Area	12	39.1	42.9	6
Bulmershe Open Space	8.6	50.2	33.1	8.1
Reading Road Allotments	25.1	46.6	27.1	2.2
Woodford Park Skate Park	38.9	41.3	19.6	0.2
Woodford Park 3G Football Pitch	62.1	34.1	3.3	0.5
Loddon Mead	1.5	24.2	67.5	6.8

Most frequent response

Second most frequent response

#### 2.2.4 Aggregated rating for all Town Council facilities

Table 6: Aggregated ratings for Woodley Town Council services

Rating	% response (all data)		
	2018	2017	2016
Excellent	23.8	27.6	18.8
Good	37.7	37.2	39.8
Satisfactory	32.6	26.9	30.5
Poor	5.9	8.3	10.9

The 2018 overall weighted rating score for all facilities rated satisfactory to excellent by their users was 64.9%.

#### 2.2.5 Improving facilities in Woodley

The most popular suggestions for improving facilities in Woodley were:

- Improve planting and greenery in the town centre
- Have local speed awareness signs on busier roads
- Improve signposts around the town
- Have more community noticeboards
- Have a befriending scheme for lonely people, especially people housebound (not limited by age group)
- Have a community choir
- Improve facilities in Rivermead Play Area and Malone Park
- Tidy up under the bridges at Loddon Mead
- Have a youth action group to get local young people involved in helping around the town
- Have a Woodley volunteer organisation to organise volunteers for local people
- Have a community gardening club
- Have more litter bins around the town
- Have more litter picking all over Woodley

- Have a clean Woodley campaign
- Have a green Woodley campaign with more planting of flowers around the town
- Stop cars speeding on the main routes through Woodley
- Get Bulmershe Leisure Centre finished more quickly
- Get the toilet installed in the shopping centre
- Have a child safe place scheme for young people who are out in the town
- Have better policing in Woodley
- Have a place where people can go for drop in and free counselling if they need it
- Have a Town council reception/information desk at the Oakwood Centre when you walk in – so people don't have to walk down to the offices to get what they need
- Improve advertising about community halls
- Make halls easier and cheaper to hire
- Improve décor in community halls
- Make Coronation Hall parking available to people visiting Woodley Town Council
- Encourage young people to run community events
- Have a Woodley nature trail
- Have a history walk around the town to show people places of interest
- Run free courses/give free talks for local people .

### **2.3 The Importance of Woodley Town Council Services**

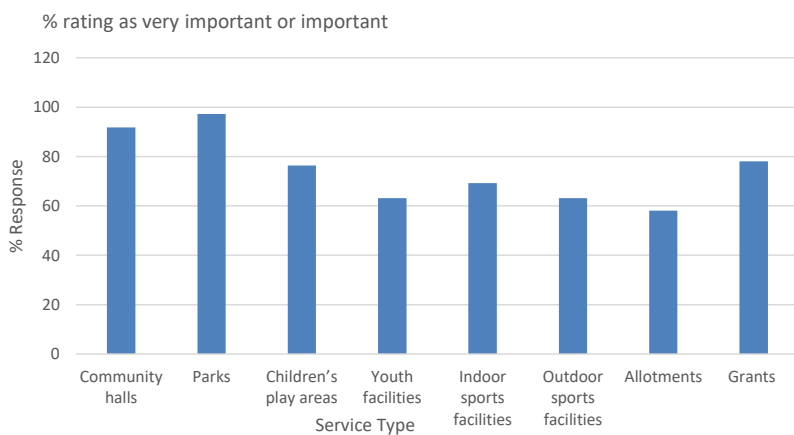
In 2018, there was a marked increase in the proportion of respondents who thought the services provided by Woodley Town Council are either important or very important to people living in the town. Community spaces, especially parks and halls, are important to the people of Woodley. One person said: "I think that we, as people who live here, do not know how lucky we are to have so much greenery and so many places we can use for our interests and clubs. We should make more of this".

In this survey, the importance of outdoor leisure facilities to local people was greater than in previous surveys, with the rating for indoor spaces decreasing slightly, but not significantly. Grants to local people and groups was rated as being more important than in previous years.

**Table 7: The importance of Woodley Town Council services**

Type of service	% rating as very important or important
Community halls (including Oakwood Centre)	91.8
Parks	97.2
Children’s play areas	76.4
Youth facilities	63.1
Indoor sports facilities	69.2
Outdoor sports facilities	63.1
Allotments	58.1
Grants to services for local people and community groups	78.1

**Fig 5: The importance of Woodley Town Council services**



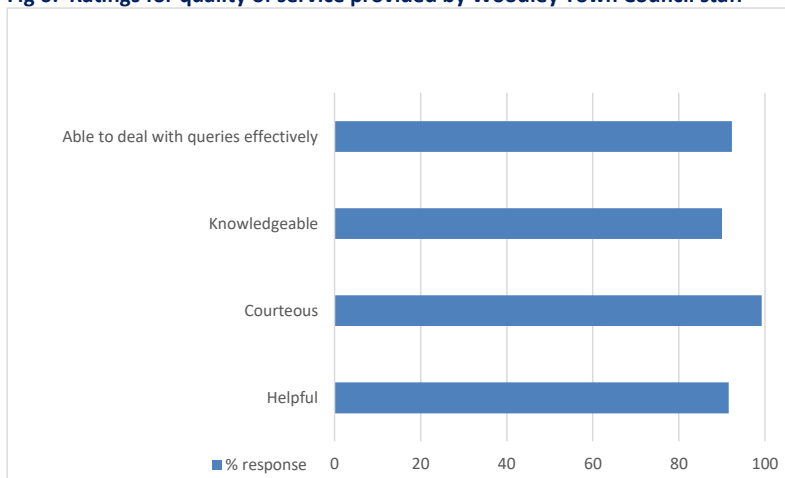
## 2.4 Service Quality

Of those interviewed 13% had had some form of contact with Woodley Town Council staff in the previous two years. The majority of those responding had had a positive experience, finding staff courteous and helpful and usually knowledgeable and able to deal with queries effectively.

**Table 8: The quality of service provided by Woodley Town Council staff**

Characteristic	% response
Helpful	91.6
Courteous	99.2
Knowledgeable	90.0
Able to deal with queries effectively	92.3

**Fig 6: Ratings for quality of service provided by Woodley Town Council staff**





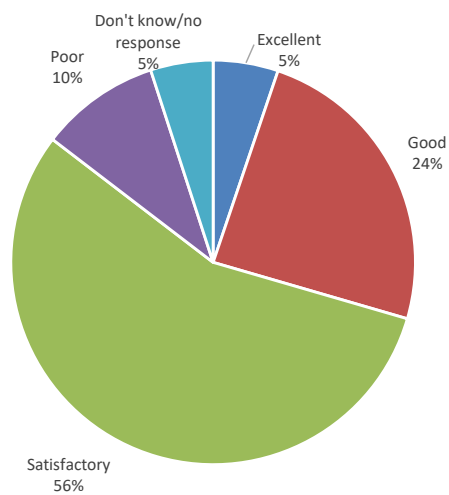
## 2.5 Value for Money

Almost 30% of people thought that Woodley Town Council provides good or excellent value for money. Over half thought that value for money was satisfactory. More than a third of those responding commented that they felt council services as a whole were underfunded and that they thought Council Tax had risen too much. However, this perception appeared to refer to Wokingham Borough Council Tax, rather than Woodley Town Council precept. There was an apparent lack of clarity about the difference between the two and the way that Council Tax payments are split.

**Table 9: Woodley Town Council: rating of value for money**

<i>Value for money rating</i>	<i>% response</i>
<i>Excellent</i>	5.2
<i>Good</i>	24.3
<i>Satisfactory</i>	55.9
<i>Poor</i>	9.6
<i>Don't know/no response</i>	5

**Fig 7: Woodley Town Council: Value for money rating**



### 2.5.1 Suggestions for other facilities Woodley Town Council could provide

The following suggestions were made for other services that the Town Council could provide:

- A community counselling service
- More youth services
- Community befriending scheme
- Community volunteer service
- An information space/council information office in the shopping centre
- A service to take library books to people who can't get out/do not use the internet
- A telephone helpline for local people
- A swimming pool
- Volunteers to give assistance with shopping for disabled people
- Better facilities for blind people.

### 2.6 Oakwood Centre

Seventy four percent of residents knew that it was possible to hire rooms at the Oakwood Centre for business meetings and social occasions. However, there was some uncertainty about whether there were restrictions on the type of social occasions that can be held there. One interviewer reported an extensive conversation with a local small business person who was unaware of the possibilities of renting rooms for business purposes. This person suggested a mail drop to all local houses advertising use of the Oakwood Centre, especially aimed at reaching local home-based small business.

**Table 10: How likely are you to hire a room at the Oakwood Centre in the future?**

	% response
Very likely	10.4
Possibly	45.1
Not likely	40.3
Don't know	5.2

Ten percent of respondents said that it was very likely they would hire a room at the Oakwood Centre in the future. Forty five percent thought that they might hire a room there if they had a function that was suitable. Forty percent said it was unlikely, and when asked why the most usual reasons was that they did not hire rooms for any reason, or were not likely to have an occasion that warranted hiring a room.

The most common factors that would deter people from hiring a room at the Oakwood Centre were:

- Not having a reason to hire a room
- Cost
- Availability of rooms at required time
- Suitability of rooms or venue
- Restrictions on catering, particularly being able to bring in own refreshments
- Restrictions on alcohol consumption
- Restrictions on teenagers having parties
- Too complicated to arrange.

The reasons given for possibly hiring a room are shown below:

**Table 11: Possible reasons to hire a room at the Oakwood Centre**

	% response
<b>Party</b>	53.0
<b>Other social function</b>	18.2
<b>Business meeting</b>	19.1
<b>Training event</b>	5.3
<b>Club or society event or meeting</b>	10.2
<b>Exercise class</b>	3.1
<b>Other class</b>	2.1
<b>Music lessons</b>	8.9
<b>Hire theatre</b>	2.2
<b>Unsure</b>	28.3

Respondents were asked if they knew about certain aspects of hiring rooms at the Oakwood Centre.

**Table 12: Those aware that at the Oakwood Centre**

Aspect	% aware of this
Rooms can be hired to suit your needs	24.1
Rooms will be set up and cleared away for users	11.2
Rooms can be decorated by the hirer to suit the occasion	15.3
Onsite catering is available	28.1
You can use your own professional caterers	9.2
Several of the rooms open on to Woodford Park	58.1
The building is fully staffed at all times	36.3

## 2.7 Woodford Park

### 5a. In general, what do you think of Woodford Park?

In general, local people are positive about Woodford Park. They consider the park to be well maintained and the facilities available to be varied and appealing to a variety of needs. The improved car parking by the playgroup building (old Horticultural Hut) and Leisure Centre was popular, and several people commented that this encouraged them to park there and walk through the park to the town centre.

The paddling pool was popular among those with young children, though some people felt that maintenance of this should be improved. The children’s play areas were a popular attraction, particularly the one close to Woodford Park Leisure Centre, as was the lake and the ducks living there. The wild flower planting and the garden behind the Oakwood Centre were liked by local people and there were comments that the football/cricket field was an asset to the town.

The War Memorial was particularly well liked, thought to be an enhancement and well kept. Those who had attended thought that the Remembrance Day service was very good and suggested this should be better advertised in the future as an important community event.

When asked if they were aware that Woodford Park had Green Flag status only 8.4 % of people knew of this. Many people (this was not formally collected data but a tally showed at least 67%) people do not know what Green Flag status is.

**Improvements suggested for Woodford Park included:**

- Update the playgrounds
- Improve the paddling pool and have sprinklers and sprays – a mini water park?
- A nature trail or trails around the park
- Improve the grass across the memorial ground or put a path in across the field
- Put a memorial path – formed of bricks from local people donating in memory for others, across the memorial field?
- Information boards about wildlife, local history, health and fitness etc
- Art boards for local schools or societies to display their works
- A refreshment kiosk
- An activity centre for events and activities to do with ecology/outdoor living/nature etc
- Getting local people involved in developing and maintaining local green spaces, including the park – a Woodley ranger scheme for all ages?
- Clean up the lake and improve the paths around it
- Maintain the park better after park runs – it gets too muddy
- Better signposting and maps of the park
- Improve the fitness circuit equipment
- Have more community events in the park – summer concerts etc?
- Have more wild flowers and trees
- Improve policing of groups in the park in the evenings.



### **The playground behind the Oakwood Centre**

The playground behind the Oakwood Centre was thought to be out dated and in need of improvement. Suggestions for improvement included:

- Safe equipment made of natural materials
- Equipment that allows adults and children to use it but is safe for children to use alone
- A layout that allows children to play safely whilst being watched by adults from benches etc
- Equipment that allows children to explore and experiment safely
- Hanging bars, roundabouts, climbing equipment, tunnels
- Equipment accessible to disabled children
- A wooden fort
- An area suitable for groups such as schools or preschools to visit and use
- A refreshment vending machine or hut next to the play area.

## 2.8 Woodley Town Centre

Local people said that the town centre is convenient, good for parking and has a useful variety of shops. Typically, residents felt that most basic needs could be bought here. It was also useful as a shopping centre with easily accessible shops and well-placed disabled parking bays, however the disabled parking can sometimes be too busy.

One person commented that “I sometimes think we take our town centre for granted. It is not the prettiest place but is easy to get to and has everything we need day to day”.

Another commented that: “Shops in the precinct (*a common local name for the town centre*) are usually friendly and helpful, local people work here and they care about what they do”.

The buildings, especially the flats above the shops were considered to be shabby in places and needing improvement.

The markets and other events in Woodley centre were liked by local people, especially the Saturday market which was very popular. It was felt that this brings life and character to the town.

### 2.8.1 Recent improvements to Woodley town centre

Ninety six percent of respondents had been to the town centre in the past year and of these 92% had noticed the improvements made at the northern end of the centre (The Headley Road end).

The improvements were popular, although some people commented that they thought more could have been done with the play area. Centre Stage was liked but some people suggested it was under used and that they did not know what it was for. There was a lack of awareness of the seating around Centre Stage. There was a small proportion of people who regretted that the old Pagoda had been taken down and felt that this had been a feature of the town that should have been maintained.

Over half of local people thought that they might possibly attend an event at Centre Stage, if it appealed to them (and if the weather were good enough). The weather was a factor as the viewing area is open air. People would be encouraged to attend events at Centre Stage if they were well advertised, interesting and if they were taking place in good weather.

There was evidence that some local residents did not realise that the Centre Stage was intended as a performance area, as the viewing area is also a play area.

The majority of people thought that they would be most likely to view entertainment at the performance area if they were visiting the town centre for shopping or another purpose.

Several people thought that this might change if the town centre became well known for performances and if performances were well publicised.

**Table 13: How likely are you to attend events at the new Centre Stage in the town centre?**

	% response
Very likely	21.9
Possibly	59.7
Not likely	11.7
Don't know	6.7

### 2.8.2 Suggestions for types of entertainment

- Local musicians and groups
- Craft and art events
- Activities for children while parents shop
- Taster events by local groups and societies wanting to recruit members
- Health and fitness awareness events
- Displays and concerts from local schools and groups
- Local choirs performing
- Busking events
- Contests and best of Woodley events
- Local choirs and bands
- Children's shows
- Charity sales
- Evening concerts in the summer
- Have a 'Woodley Day' and use the Stage and other locations for events.

### **2.8.3 Likely viewing times at the performance space**

The most likely times that people would visit events at the Centre Stage were:

- Weekends
- While out shopping
- Summer evenings
- Near Christmas for Christmas concerts
- Special occasions (e.g. Christmas, Midsummer, May Day, national celebrations, Carnival Day).

### **2.8.4 Further Town Centre improvements**

Further improvements suggested for the town centre included:

- Improve the maintenance and look of the buildings in the shopping centre
- Have more plants and hanging baskets
- Regenerate the whole town centre
- Put in windbreaks by Headley Road
- Have more attractive and noticeable notice boards
- Encourage more small individual shops
- Have pop up shops for local people starting businesses
- Have more restaurants and bars to go to in the evening
- Have free information leaflets about town events in local shops
- Encourage a proper butcher to start in Woodley
- Have an easily accessible public toilet
- Have a crèche/indoor play area for children
- Cover the whole precinct area so that it is protected from the rain
- Improve the walk way to the car park next to Iceland
- Have signs showing if one of the car parks is full.

## 2.9 Communication

If local residents want to know something to do with Woodley the most usually source of information is the internet, including Woodley Town Council and Wokingham Borough Council websites. Other more specific searches typically included 'what's on' websites, local clubs, schools and societies and searching for specific events. Social media was especially popular among those aged under 65, but all ages accessed this. Facebook was the most commonly used method of social media.

Local newsletters from Woodley Town Council, political parties and advertising booklets such as Round and About were also considered helpful.

Use of local papers was limited but two thirds of people thought it was a way they would like to receive information. Several of those questioned suggested a good, regular (monthly?) local paper, possibly available free in the town centre and local places, would be a good source of information.

Local noticeboards were thought to be useful, provided they are attractive, prominent and well maintained.

**Table 14: Preferred methods of communication about Woodley**

Method	% response
Newsletter	71.3
Website	52.6
Email	46.9
Facebook	43.2
Twitter	17.9
Local Press	61.7
Local Magazines	38.4
Other	5.2



Local people had the following priorities in the information they wanted about the town:

- Local facilities and services
- Events/what's on
- Clubs and societies
- Local businesses
- Things to be proud of about Woodley
- Schools and preschool facilities
- Successes for local people
- How to contact local councils
- How to contact councillors and MPs
- Health and social care services, including GPs, dentists, care homes and local hospitals
- How to hire halls and rooms
- How to get help with family problems
- Contacting local police services.

### 2.9.1 Woodley Town Council website

Woodley Town Council website was an important way for local people to find out information about the town. Almost 40% of people had used the site in the past year.

**Table 15: Use of the Town Council website in the past year**

	% response
<b>Have used website</b>	38.7
<b>Have not used website</b>	54.4
<b>Don't know</b>	6.9

Of those who had visited the website, most had found it to be useful, informative and helpful to people living in Woodley. Deleted sentence as it didn't make sense??

Commented [AR1]: D

Commented [AR2R1]:

**Table 16: Experiences of Woodley Town Council website**

<b>% of users who found Woodley Town Council website:</b>	<b>% Response</b>
Useful	84.6
Informative	91.3
Helpful to people who live in Woodley	82.4
Well presented	63.1
Interesting	71.2

### **2.9.2 Suggestions for improvement to the website**

- Make the layout clearer
- Bring the website up to date – looks a bit old fashioned
- Have more about the history of Woodley
- Have a page for community ‘swaps’, of time etc.
- Have a page for volunteer opportunities and people needing volunteers
- Have space for items available free (like freecycle)
- Make it a community hub so that it involves local people
- Keep it regularly up to date
- Improve the images and colours on the website
- Make sure it is fully accessible to visually impaired people
- Allow local people to subscribe/log in to get extra information.

### 2.9.3 The Woodley Herald

The Woodley Herald is the Town Council’s newsletter for local households, produced three times a year. It covers council and community news and gives contact information for some Council services.

Almost two thirds of interviewees were aware of having received a copy of the Woodley Herald. Thirteen percent were not sure, usually saying that they may not have seen it in among other post that had arrived or that another household member may have picked it up. Almost a quarter of those asked thought that they had not received a copy of the newsletter, although it is delivered to all household in the town.

**Table 17: Receipt of the Woodley Herald**

	% response
Woodley Herald received	62.9
Woodley Herald not received	23.8
Don't know	13.3

Of those who had received it, almost 60% of people said that they had read the Woodley Herald. Anecdotal comments showed that some read the whole newsletter, but most people seem to skim quickly through it.

**Table 18: Reading the Woodley Herald**

	% response
Woodley Herald read	59.6
Woodley Herald not read	34.8
Don't know	5.6

Of those who had read the Woodley Herald, over three quarters thought it was useful and helpful to people who live in Woodley. Seventy one percent found it useful, over 90% thought the newsletter was well presented, while 53% thought that the Woodley Herald was interesting.

**Table 19: Opinions about the Woodley Herald**

<b>% of readers rating the Woodley Herald as:</b>	<b>% Response</b>
Useful	75.3
Informative	71.2
Well presented	90.5
Interesting	53.1
Helpful to people who live in Woodley	75.1

#### **2.9.4 Suggestions for improvements to the Woodley Herald**

Suggestions to improve the Woodley Herald included:

- Have more information about local interest groups
- Have a contacts section for local services
- Less information about councillors, more information about local people.

### 2.9.5 Social media

Local residents were asked if they had ever used social media (such as Facebook or Twitter) to find out information about Woodley.

**Table 20: Use of social media for information about Woodley**

	% response
<b>Social media used</b>	36.3
<b>Social media not used</b>	61.2
<b>Don't know</b>	2.5

One third of people had used social media for this purpose, most of whom had used Facebook, and a small proportion, Twitter. It seemed that, among internet users, social media was a popular tool, but that awareness of pages and feeds created by Woodley Town Council was low, and tended to be driven by awareness of a page through existing use of a facility.

However, among those who had used social media for information about the town there was a relatively low level of awareness of local sources. Nineteen percent were aware of the Woodley Town Council Facebook page, 8% aware of the Oakwood page and 9% aware of the Woodford Park Leisure Centre page. Awareness of the Twitter feeds for these sites appeared to be lower than for Facebook, primarily because fewer respondents used Twitter. Most users of social media appeared to use this to find out specific information about local groups, services or events with which they were already connected, rather than as a way of obtaining new information. For instance, those accessing the Woodford Park Leisure Centre Facebook page tended to be frequent users of the leisure centre.

Of those who had used the social media information provided by Woodley Town Council, half found it useful and informative. Comments were made that it tended to look ad hoc and sometimes was out of date. However social media sources were thought to be helpful to local people by 57% of those who had used them.

**Table 21: Awareness of Woodley Town Council social media sources**

	% awareness
Woodley Town Council	19.2
Oakwood Centre	8.1
Woodford Park Leisure Centre	9.3

*(Woodley Town Council: @WoodleyCouncil (Facebook & Twitter)*

*Oakwood Centre - @OakwoodCentreUK (Facebook & Twitter)*

*Woodford Park Leisure Centre – @WoodfordParkLC (Facebook))*

**Table 22: How social media was rated by local people**

% of readers rating Woodley social media as:	% Response
Useful	50.2
Informative	49.5
Well presented	68.1
Interesting	41.7
Helpful to people who live in Woodley	56.9

### 2.9.6 Improvements to social media

Very few people had ideas about how Woodley Town Council’s social media could be improved.

Those that did suggested the following:

- Ensure regular updates – especially for the Oakwood Centre
- Have a clear and cohesive look for each place that has a social media page
- Advertise more extensively to show that Woodley Town Council has social media pages
- Consider advertising with postcards left in shops and local places, sent out to groups and schools etc.
- Ask for contributions from local people to social media sites
- Encourage comments
- Give simple prizes for people taking part in local social media.



## 2.10 Living in Woodley

### 2.10.1 Satisfaction with Woodley as a place to live

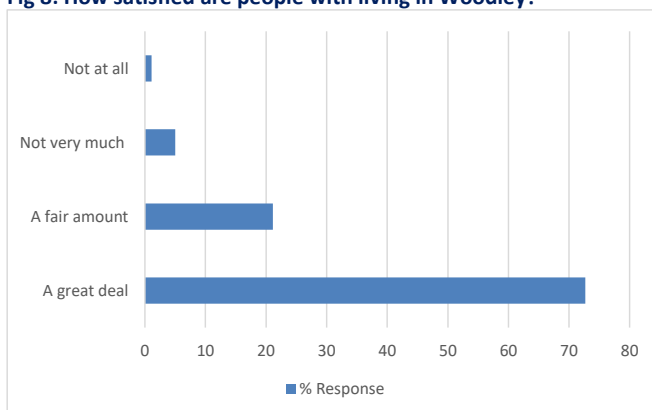
Woodley is a popular place to live. Among other reasons, people choose to live in Woodley because of convenience and local facilities and because of the sense of community. Having good schools and an accessible and well served town centre is also important, as are community facilities such as the leisure centre, and plenty of open spaces.

Almost 3/4 of people living in Woodley like living in the town a great deal, a further 21% like living here a fair amount.

**Table 23: How satisfied are people with living in Woodley?**

Rating	% Response
A great deal	72.7
A fair amount	21.1
Not very much	5.0
Not at all	1.1
Don't know	0.1

**Fig 8: How satisfied are people with living in Woodley?**



### 2.10.2 The sense of belonging to Woodley

Just over a quarter of people felt they belonged to Woodley a great deal, 40% felt they belonged to the town a fair amount. This indicates that there is quite a strong sense of locality among residents. People new to the town tended to say that they liked living in Woodley but that it felt it took a while to feel part of the community, especially if they were working, less so if they had children.

**Table 24: Identifying with Woodley**

Rating	% Response
Great deal	27.6
Fair amount	40.1
Not very much	19.8
Not at all	11.2
Don't know	1.3

### 2.10.3 Community spirit

In general, local people are uncertain how much people in Woodley work together to improve the local area, with 43% of respondents saying that they did not know. A quarter of respondents felt that people work together a fair amount to improve the town.

**Table 25: To what extent do people in Woodley work together to improve the local area?**

Rating	% Response
A great deal	6.7
A fair amount	25.5
Not very much	19
Not at all	2.6
This kind of improvement is not needed	3.1
Don't know	43.1

**THIS PAGE IS INTENTIONALLY  
LEFT BLANK**

## Woodley Heritage Open Days

St John's C of E church, the former primary school and head teacher's cottage in Church Road will be open for Heritage Open Days on 21 September 11.00 – 16.00, including tours by members of the congregation and former pupils. All listed buildings; the church dates back to 1873, while the former primary school and head teacher's cottage date back to 1855.

## Alan Cornish Theatre

### Berzerk Productions

**James and the Giant Peach**  
11 – 12 July 19.30  
& 13 July 14.00 & 17.00  
Box Office:  
www.berzerkproductions.com

### I Am The Manic Whale

**Whalefest**  
7 September 19.30  
Contact:  
michael@iamthemanicwhale.com

## Woodley Theatre

### The Herd

24 – 28 September 19.45  
Box Office: 07939 210121  
or www.woodleytheatre.org

### Jazz – Martin Hart Trio

12 October 19.45  
Box Office: 07939 210121  
or www.woodleytheatre.org

## Town Centre

### Saturday Market

Every Saturday 09.00 – 15.00

### Artisan & Produce Market

17 July, 21 August, 18 September,  
16 October 09.00 – 13.30

### Car Boot and Table Top Sale

14 & 28 July, 11 & 25 August,  
8 & 22 September, 13 & 27 October,  
10 & 24 November 08.00 – 13.00

### French Market 6 September

 @WoodleyTCMI

www.woodleytowncentre.co.uk

## Centre Stage

### Summertime Street Party

6 July 16.00 – 20.00

### Craigevar Ceilidh Band

24 August 10.00 – 12.00

## See Oakwood Centre events and information

 @oakwoodcentreuk

 The Oakwood Centre

www.woodley.gov.uk

## New Mayor and Deputy Mayor



Cllr Kay Gilder was elected Woodley Town Mayor at the first Annual General Meeting of Woodley Town Council and its new councillors. She has chosen Prostate Cancer UK as the Mayor's charity for 2019/20. Cllr Dave Mills was elected as Deputy Mayor.

## Woodley heroes

At its recent annual Citizen's Awards, Woodley Town Council honoured local Woodley heroes who go above and beyond for the community. Bill Rodda was nominated to recognise his commitment to local football during the last 20 years, Sue Twose for her endless generosity and kindness to neighbours and local Woodley residents, and Jackie Yule for generously giving her time to Highwood Primary School for over 15 years. Outgoing Mayor Rahmouni also presented the Mayor's Award to Colin Lott for the generous time and effort he has put into fundraising for various charities over the last 40 years.



## Community grants

At the recent Annual General Meeting of Woodley Town Council, community grants were granted to the following charities and individuals by former Mayor Cllr Rahmouni: 1st Woodley Boys Brigade, 2nd Woodley Scout Group, Emmanuel Church, Friends of Woodford Park, Me2 Club, School Days Project, Woodley Festival of Music & Arts and Woodley United FC. Hannah Evans also received a grant towards the cost of upgrading her archery equipment. Further details are available on the website: www.woodley.gov.uk



## Woodley's football history

Woodley Town Council, along with representatives from Woodley United and others, is hoping to put together a display at the Oakwood Centre about the history of football in Woodley. We're looking for stories, memorabilia, information and photos that we could use – particularly from the 1960s to the 1980s. If you have any information that you think would help show the development of football in our town please contact Mike Lee: mike.lee971@hotmail.co.uk by 1 September. We look forward to hearing from you.

## Help to Claim

Citizens Advice Wokingham has launched a new 'Help to Claim' service to help the residents of Wokingham, Woodley and the surrounding areas to make a Universal Credit claim to provide both advice and support through the application process. This service will be available in Woodley at its offices near the library every Tuesday 09.30-14.30 and in its Wokingham branch Monday to Thursday 09.00-15.00. Alternatively, full support is available through Citizens Advice's free phone line Monday to Friday 08.00 – 18.00: 0800 144 8 444.

## Woodley & District U3a

The Woodley & District U3a has now been formally constituted under this name with nearly 150 'Third Agers' having signed up for membership. Monthly meetings, with speakers, will be held at Christ Church, Crockhamwell Road, Woodley, RG5 3LA on the first Wednesday of every month at 14.00, starting on 3 July. Full details of membership and activities can be found on the website: www.woodleyu3a.org.uk.

## Youth volunteers

Woodley Baptist Church has been running a Youth Club (Aged 11-14) on a Friday night for the last 20 years, and now needs three volunteers to see the group continue. Its aim is to offer a safe place, where young people can come and be with their friends, find a listening ear and try a variety of activities on offer each week. If you are interested in volunteering or finding out more then please get in touch with our Youth Worker - Graham Sumbler: graham.sumbler@woodleybc.org, 07725 905427. The position requires an enhanced DBS with two references.

FREE community fun day to celebrate the centenary of Woodley's Memorial Ground Sunday 11th August 11.00-15.00

FREE entertainment:  
Games  
Dancers  
Emergency Services  
Circus Allstars workshop  
Basil & Crew Farm Animals  
Berkshire Reptile Encounters

FREE PICNIC for the first 100 guests!

Woodford Park Leisure Centre

## Summer Blast Camps

**Week 1** (Weds 24th - Fri 26th July)  
**Monster Madness Blast Camp!**

**Week 2** (Mon 29th July - Thurs 1st Aug)  
**Superhero Blast Camp!**

**Week 3** (Mon 5th - Thurs 8th August)  
**Pesky Pirate Blast Camp!**

**Week 4** (Mon 12th - Thurs 15th Aug)  
**Wild West Blast Camp!**

**Week 5** (Mon 19th - Thurs 22nd Aug)  
**Superhero Blast Camp!**

**Booking Information:**  
Ages 7 - 12 years  
Times: 1:00pm - 2:00pm  
£5.50 (HH) or £6.00 per day / session  
T: 0118 9216969 / E: sports@woodley.gov.uk



# Members elected to Woodley Town Council at the election held on 2 May 2019

## Bulmershe Ward



Cllr Nada Al-Sanjari  
Labour



Cllr Mark Green  
Conservative



Cllr Sam Rahmouni  
Conservative



Cllr Alison Swaddle  
Conservative

## Warren Ward



Cllr Shadi Brindley  
Conservative



Cllr Dave Mills  
*Deputy Mayor*  
Conservative

## Coronation Central Ward



Cllr Juliet Anderson  
Conservative



Cllr David Bragg  
Conservative

## Coronation East Ward



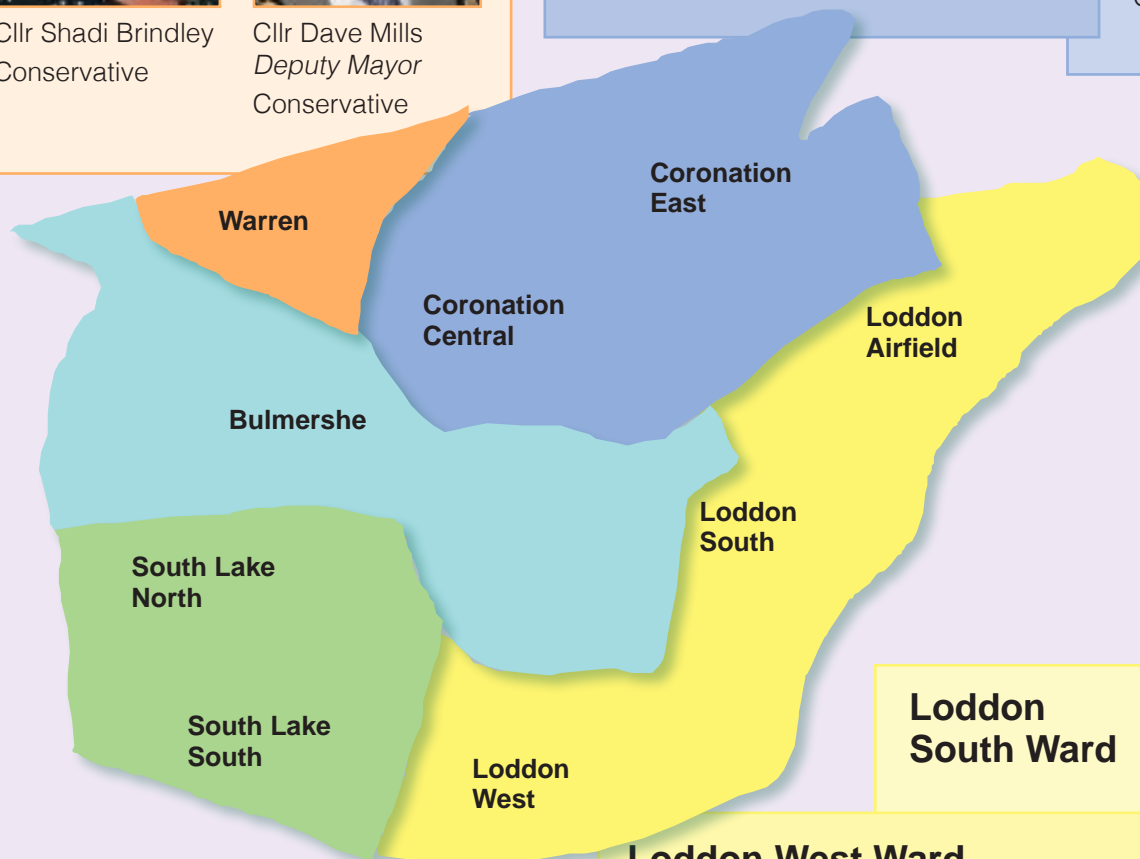
Cllr Keith Baker  
Conservative



Cllr John MacNaught  
Conservative



Cllr David Stares  
Conservative



## Loddon Airfield Ward



Cllr Anne Chadwick  
Conservative



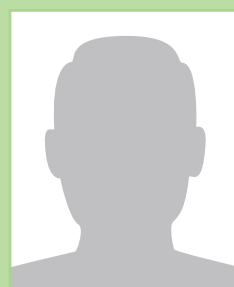
Cllr Alex Heap  
Liberal Democrat



Cllr Philip Wicks  
Conservative

## South Lake North Ward

Cllr Jenny Cheng  
Conservative



Cllr Tom McCann  
Liberal Democrat



Cllr Richard Skegg  
Liberal Democrat

## South Lake South Ward



Cllr Kay Gilder  
*Mayor*  
Conservative



Cllr Carol Jewell  
Liberal Democrat



Cllr Beth Rowland  
Liberal Democrat

## Loddon South Ward



Cllr Majid Nagra  
Conservative



Cllr Janet Sartorel  
Conservative



Cllr Bill Soane  
Conservative

## Loddon West Ward



Cllr Martin Doyle  
Liberal Democrat



Cllr Michael Forrer  
Conservative

**You can contact your local councillor via the Town Council offices.**

**The Oakwood Centre, Headley Road, Woodley RG5 4JZ**

**Tel: 0118 969 0356 Email: [admin@woodley.gov.uk](mailto:admin@woodley.gov.uk)**

### Council meetings

Meetings are held at the Oakwood Centre

### Full Council

1 October 20.00

### Leisure Services Committee

3 September, 19 November 20.00

### Strategy and Resources Committee

17 September, 26 November 20.00

### Planning Committee

16 July, 13 August, 10 September, 8 October, 5 November 19.45

A Town Forum is held before each Full Council meeting at which members of the public can pose questions to the Council on issues affecting the town or on Town Council matters.

## Woodford Park lake refurbishment

Woodley Town Council are tackling the build-up of vegetation and silt at Woodford Park's lake with the help of specialist contractor Ebsford Environmental. The Council is aiming to support existing wildlife by improving the overall biodiversity of the environment, while making improvements to amenity value for visitors by providing accessible points for feeding the ducks and geese and also areas for pond dipping from a new boardwalk and deck.

Nick Hartley, managing director of Ebsford Environmental Ltd comments: "Ebsford are delighted to be collaborating with Woodley Town Council and assisting with reforming the lake to improve biodiversity. It's fantastic to work with councils who are keen to invest in improvements to the environment alongside improving community areas."

Ebsford are tackling the works and desilting using low impact 'on water' machinery, while the water remains in the lake to ensure there is no disruption to wildlife. Extensive surveys ahead of the project start have been carried out to identify what inhabits the lake and surrounding areas with an ecology



management plan implemented to ensure precautions are taken to protect wildlife and safeguard long-term biodiversity benefits.

Woodley Town Council Leader, Keith Baker, comments: "We are very proud of the improvement work which has taken place so far, creating a positive and nurturing environment for the plants and wildlife. We look forward to working with Ebsford Environmental to continue the regeneration of Woodford Park lake and the surrounding area for both the local wildlife and community."

Information boards will be put up around the lake to provide more details about the works to be carried out. Leaflets will also be available from the Oakwood Centre and Woodford Park Leisure Centre.



## WASP recruits

During the last 12 months, (Woodley Adopt a Street Project) WASP has had 32 new volunteers, including over ten families with young children. Many are involved with local community projects through uniformed organisations, while others through their concern for the environment and pride in playing their part in looking after it. WASP reports that volunteers gain great pleasure and a sense of achievement from leaving an area cleaner than it was before.

**The Wokingham Borough Council annual litter-pick will be held in Woodley on Saturday 23 March 10.00 – 12.00. Please meet at Woodford Park Leisure Centre. For more information or to volunteer, please contact Shelagh Flower on: [shelagh.flower@googlemail.com](mailto:shelagh.flower@googlemail.com)**

"I started litter picking because it is fun and it is cool. My favourite thing to pick is the cans!" – Zach

## A sustainable council

Woodley Town Council is working with Reading Community Energy Society (RCES) to install solar panels on the roofs of Woodford Park Leisure Centre, Coronation Hall and the Oakwood Centre.

This partnership will provide solar panel installations at no cost to the Council, and lower cost daytime electricity at a rate fixed for the duration of the 20-year contract. The Council will make savings each year as prices in the energy market rise while generating 'green energy'.







## Woodley launch

Plans to start a Woodley and District (University of the Third Age) U3A are underway, with a launch meeting on 10 April at Christ Church in Woodley. U3A membership is open to anyone in their third age – that is to say no longer in full-time employment. It is a self-help learning co-operative, run by the members for the members. No qualifications are either required or given. Members form interest groups covering as wide a range of topics and activities as they desire. Anything from Archaeology to Zumba is achievable with a few like-minded members. Please attend the launch meeting to find out what U3A is all about. Further information about the meeting will be published on the Woodley Town Council website, as well as local noticeboards.

At present there are more than 1,000 U3As in the UK which collectively have almost half a million members and this is rapidly increasing. For more information about U3A visit [www.u3a.org.uk](http://www.u3a.org.uk)

## Flags flying proud

Woodley Town Council is delighted to have its Green Flag and Town Council flag flying high near the War Memorial, in recognition of the beautiful and well managed green space that the Memorial Ground and Woodford Park provide.



## Woodley Carnival is at the movies!

Lights, camera, action! The theme for this year's Woodley Carnival is 'at the movies' and will be held on Saturday 8 June at the Memorial Ground adjacent to the Oakwood Centre.

## Additional support in our community

The Wokingham Borough Community Navigator Service is available for local borough residents who need help to find the correct local and national organisations and groups for support. The free service provides additional non-medical help and support to give a better sense of well-being, social inclusion and independence. The service can help to source information to help manage a health condition or to find new social networks, sports or music clubs and groups in the local area, or help new parents access parenting support and activities. The service is fully accessible and referrals can be made by a GP, nurse or other professional, as well as by an individual, friend or family member.

For further enquiries please call 01344 304404, email [community.navigation@nhs.net](mailto:community.navigation@nhs.net) or visit <http://www.involve.community>



## Speedwatch

Woodley Town Council, along with help from volunteers, is operating its own Speedwatch in the town. Speeds on several roads in the town have been monitored using the

specialist equipment purchased by the Council. Information from the speeds on these roads means that the volunteer team can then choose roads where there is more speeding and set up the automated camera to record traffic. Any speeding vehicles will then be reported to Thames Valley Police who will take appropriate action against the vehicle drivers.

If there is a road in Woodley where you think cars are regularly speeding you can notify the Speedwatch team via the Town Council offices or website – you can also register to volunteer for Woodley Speedwatch this way too.

[www.woodley.gov.uk](http://www.woodley.gov.uk) / 0118 969 0356

# What's On

## Oakwood Centre

### Blood Donors

6 & 13 March, 3 April, 15 May  
4 & 12 June, 10 July  
To book an appointment call  
0300 123 23 23

### Weight Watchers

Thursdays 09.30

### Woodley & Earley Art Group

Last Thursday in the month  
19.00 – 22.00  
Art Exhibition 12 & 13 April

### Woodley Photographic Club

Mondays 19.45 – 22.15  
From September – June

### Acorn Community Acupuncture

Thursdays 18.00 – 22.00  
Call 07551 726077 for an appointment  
or visit [www.acornacupuncture.org.uk](http://www.acornacupuncture.org.uk)

## Libra Pilates

Tuesdays 09.30 – 10.30  
10.30 – 11.30 & 11.30 – 12.30  
Contact 0118 969 7769

## Revision Bootcamp

Thursdays 18.00 – 21.30  
For more information contact  
07723 822261

## Energy Share Meetings – Various Alternative Therapies

One Wednesday per month  
Contact [lizziejones8384@aol.com](mailto:lizziejones8384@aol.com)

## Jewellery Classes

Mondays 10.00 – 12.00  
13.00 – 15.00, 18.30 – 20.30  
Contact [janetrichardson.co.uk](http://janetrichardson.co.uk)  
07840 538353

## Woodley Women's Club

Every other Monday 19.30 – 22.00  
Contact Sheila Smith  
0118 969 2076

## Alan Cornish Theatre

### Mostly G&S, Ruddigore

28 – 30 March, 19.45  
Box Office: [www.mostlygands.co.uk](http://www.mostlygands.co.uk)

### Reading Operatic Society Closing Time

26 – 27 April  
Box Office: [www.readingops.co.uk](http://www.readingops.co.uk)

## Woodley Theatre

### Talking Heads

9 – 13 April 19.45  
Box Office: 07939 210121  
or [www.woodleytheatre.org](http://www.woodleytheatre.org)

### Jazz – Martin Hart Trio

11 May 19.45  
Box Office: 07939 210121 or  
[www.woodleytheatre.org](http://www.woodleytheatre.org)

### Emma

25–29 June 19.45  
Box Office: 07939 210121 or  
[www.woodleytheatre.org](http://www.woodleytheatre.org)

## Woodley and North Earley Community Forum AGM

Woodley & North Earley Community Forum's next Annual General Meeting will be held on Wednesday, 10 April, 19.30 at the Oakwood Centre. The forum works with Thames Valley Police and the local community to publicise key safety messages, agree local policing priorities and find ways to reduce crime. Current policing priorities are anti-social behaviour and speeding. All local residents are welcome to attend the meeting and in order to continue its work for the community, the forum needs people willing to play an active role in the group.

If you are interested in joining the forum then please come along on 10 April or email [chair.wanecf@gmail.com](mailto:chair.wanecf@gmail.com), <http://wanecommunityforum.weebly.com>

## Woodley 10k road race

This year's race will take place on Sunday 14 April, with a 9am start. Barnes Fitness will be organising the event, alongside several sponsors and partners, including Woodley Town Council and Woodford Park Leisure Centre. Please see [www.barnesfitness.co.uk](http://www.barnesfitness.co.uk) for more information and road closures plus arrangements at Woodford Park and volunteer marshalling opportunities.

Oakwood  
Centre

READY TO  
CELEBRATE  
BUT  
NOWHERE  
TO GO?

HIRE THE OAKWOOD CENTRE FOR  
YOUR NEXT CELEBRATION!

[WWW.OAKWOODCENTRE.COM](http://WWW.OAKWOODCENTRE.COM)

A BIG  
THANK  
YOU

### 2nd Woodley Scout Group

We would like to say a Big Thank You to all those who supported our postal service in December.

For information about boys and girls joining our Beavers, Cubs and Scouts please phone 0118 969 9885



## More recycling opportunities for Woodley

From April 2019, Woodley households will be able to recycle almost all types of food waste, excluding fats and oils. Each household will receive a sealable 23 litre kerbside food waste container, along with a smaller kitchen caddie and liners. Food waste will be collected on a weekly basis at the same time as blue bag and black box collections, as part of Wokingham Borough Council's plans to recycle at least 50% of all household waste by the end of 2020. Households will continue to receive an allocation of 80 blue bags, or more for larger families, on an annual basis and collections will remain the same.

There is also a Recycling App – **Re3cyclopedia** – which is available on Apple and Android devices, alongside a desktop version, to help to clarify what can and can't be recycled.

## Town Centre

### Saturday Market

Every Saturday 09.00 – 15.00

### Artisan & Produce Market

20 March, 17 April, 15 May  
19 June 09.00 – 13.30

### Car Boot and Table Top Sale

10 & 24 March, 14 & 28 April  
12 & 26 May, 9 & 23 June  
08.00 – 13.00

### Waltham St Lawrence Silver Band

6 April 11.00 – 13.00

### French Market

12 April

### 25th Anniversary of Shinfield Shambles

27 April 11.00 – 15.00

### Bracknell & Wokingham Concert Band

18 May, 29 June 11.00 – 13.00

### Children's Fun Day – Free Activities

27 May 11.00 – 15.00



@WoodleyTCMI

[www.woodleytowncentre.co.uk](http://www.woodleytowncentre.co.uk)

## Council meetings

**Annual Meeting** 14 May 20.00

**Full Council** 25 June 20.00

**Leisure Services Committee**

9 April, 4 June 20.00

**Strategy and Resources Committee**

16 April, 11 June 20.00

**Planning Committee**

26 March, 23 April, 21 May, 18 June 19.45

Meetings are held at the Oakwood Centre.

A Town Forum is held before each Full Council meeting at which members of the public can pose questions to the Council on issues affecting the town or on Town Council matters.

See Oakwood Centre events and information



@oakwoodcentrek



The Oakwood  
Centre

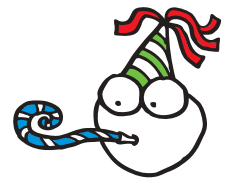
[www.woodley.gov.uk](http://www.woodley.gov.uk)

## Coming soon to Centre Stage!

A Summer Time Street Party  
Saturday 6 July

Further details will be available on:  
[www.woodley.gov.uk](http://www.woodley.gov.uk)

151



# CHILDREN'S BIRTHDAY PARTIES

Why not take away the hassle of organising your child's birthday party and consider celebrating in style at Woodford Park Leisure Centre? Our parties are designed to guarantee your child's special day is packed full of fun and excitement whilst ensuring that yours is stress and hassle free.

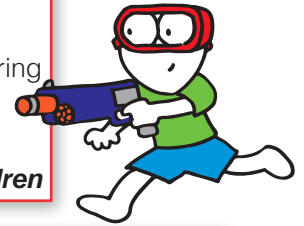
**Email: [sports@woodley.gov.uk](mailto:sports@woodley.gov.uk) Tel: 0118 9216969**

**Please contact us to enquire about dates and make a provisional booking**

## **Blast! Party (Ages 7 – 12 years)**

At last Blast! parties have landed at Woodford Park and we have our sights set on a good time. This action packed, fast paced party is loaded with tactical team games and is packed full of firing fun. Includes all safety equipment such as eye protection and tactical vests as well as our new and improved NERF blasters and bullets.

**£114.00 (HH) or £120.00 (non member), maximum of 16 children**



## **3G Football Party (Ages 6 – 12 years)**

Why not take up the chance to celebrate a birthday by playing on our state of the art 3G football pitch? Our football crazy staff will start off by running some fun warm up drills before moving on to a competitive small sided tournament followed by a penalty shoot-out.

**£94.00 (HH) or £100.00 (non member), maximum of 16 children**

## **Bouncy and Play Party (Ages 4 – 7 years)**

Our famous bounce and play parties are a customer favourite and will ensure your child's special day is full of bouncing fun. With two members of our enthusiastic and fully trained party staff team provided to coordinate the games your party is guaranteed to be bursting with excitement.

**£94.00 (HH) or £100.00 (non member), maximum of 16 children**



## **Soft Play Party (Ages 0 – 4 years)**

Our increasingly popular soft play parties are perfect for keeping little ones entertained and safe for the whole hour of your birthday party. We supply a range of soft play blocks, balls and other exciting equipment as well as our bouncy castle to ensure that your child's imagination runs wild.

**£94.00 (HH) or £100.00 (non member), maximum of 16 children**

## **Pirate Adventure Party (Ages 4 – 7 years)**

Arrrrrgh you ready to have a good time mateys? Celebrate your child's birthday by sending them on a wild and lively pirate adventure party. Full of exciting pirate themed team games and challenges all of the young captains are sure to be hooked as they join in the quest and search for buried treasure. Book now if ye dare...

**£94.00 (HH) or £100.00 (non member), maximum of 16 children**



## **Sporty Party (Ages 6 – 12 years)**

By offering a choice or combination of football, kwik cricket, netball, uni-hockey and general team games our sporty parties definitely have something for everyone. With party games themed around the sports of your choice our party team are experienced at varying the games to ensure that even the most gifted sportsmen and women at the party remain excited.

**£94.00 (HH) or £100.00 (non member), maximum of 16 children**







Speaking on behalf of Launchpad, local Woodley resident Jason McMahon, Corporate Partnerships Manager said: "This is a great way to bring the charity together with local businesses, Woodley Town Council and the community to supply healthy fresh produce to those struggling in our area and accessing food parcels or soup kitchens at homeless shelters. I am very proud of everyone involved in making this happen, creating a fantastic project that has grown into an all year-round service."

Carolyn Davies, a Committee Member of the Reading Road Tenant's Association, is delighted that the plots have been so well cultivated and said: "I would just like to say how proud I am of what we have achieved in a relatively short time on the Launchpad plots."

In addition to the Launchpad volunteers, many tenants have volunteered to provide expertise to assist on the volunteering days, filling in the gaps between sessions, watering in the evenings, providing tools, seeds, plants and seedlings and more, along with local companies and residents donating much needed equipment.

The Reading Road Tenants Association is looking for more volunteers to help run the project, including some expertise knowledge to supervise tending and cultivating the crops. For more information please contact [readingrdallotments@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:readingrdallotments@hotmail.co.uk).

## Fresh produce for the local homeless

Last October, Woodley Town Council, in association with the Reading Road Allotment Tenant's Association, allocated three overgrown community plots for local homelessness prevention charity Launchpad to use with its corporate volunteers to grow crops to supply fresh garden produce to disadvantaged and vulnerable families via foodbanks, soup kitchens and community fridges. Launchpad has worked with over 25 teams of corporate volunteers over the past 12 months, accumulating over 1200 hours.



## Keith Baker MBE

Woodley Town Council leader Cllr Keith Baker has been awarded a Member of the British Empire (MBE) for his contribution to public and political service. Announced in the Queen's Birthday Honours list in June, Cllr Baker received the MBE at Buckingham Palace from Her Majesty the Queen on 10 October. Speaking of the honour, Cllr Baker said: "It is a great honour to be chosen for this award and to be one of only 18 people in Berkshire to receive an award from the Queen's Birthday Honours list."



## HRH The Princess Royal

Following the official opening of the Citizens Advice new offices in Wokingham by HRH The Princess Royal, Woodley Town Mayor Cllr Kay Gilder had the pleasure of meeting the Princess at a reception to mark the work of the local Citizens Advice at Wokingham and Woodley. Woodley Town Council provides significant funding for the Citizens Advice in Woodley. Speaking of the honour, Cllr Gilder said: "It was a great honour to be presented to HRH The Princess Royal; she was a delightful person to speak to. It was a pleasure to be at the ceremony and meet the many staff and volunteers who do such great work for our community."





## David Stares

It is with great sadness we announce that Cllr David Stares passed away peacefully in October, after losing his battle against cancer. David had been active in the community for some time and was a councillor at Woodley Town Council for almost five years. He served as Chairman on the Leisure Services Committee and

was the town's Deputy Mayor in 2018/19. As a councillor, he developed a particular interest and involvement in the ongoing improvements to Woodford Park Leisure Centre and associated facilities. David was an active member of the Bowls Club and a keen allotment holder, serving as a member of the Allotment Tenant's Committee. Our thoughts are with his family.

## Citizens' Awards

Each year, Woodley Town Council celebrates local heroes at its Citizens' Awards ceremony for individuals whose good works and deeds benefit an individual or organisation in Woodley. These might be people carrying out voluntary work, or those who care for people in our community or helpful neighbours who all go above and beyond in their kindness and help. Nominees can be any age and there is a youth category for nominees aged 19 or under. Mayor Cllr Kay Gilder will present the awards at a Civic Reception on the evening of 27 March 2020 to which the award winners, their family and friends, and the nominators will be invited. If you know someone you think deserves recognition for their work in Woodley, you can make a nomination by filling in the form and returning it to the Council offices at the Oakwood Centre by Monday 20 January 2020. Forms are available on the Council website: [www.woodley.gov.uk](http://www.woodley.gov.uk) or please call to request one on 0118 9690356.



## Silver win for Woodley town centre

Woodley Town Centre won Silver at the recent Thames and Chilterns Regional Britain in Bloom competition in the Town Centre category. Delighted with the award, town centre manager Brian Fennelly said: "We've received some great feedback from residents saying that the floral displays have looked better than ever this year. Lots of people were involved in making the town centre look great, however, I wanted to pay a special tribute to the Woodley Adopt a Street Project (WASP) led by Shelagh Flower who worked incredibly hard and with great enthusiasm to get the town centre looking at its very best for the judging day."

## Woodford Park to turn purple

Woodley residents who visit Woodford Park this spring will be in for a delightful display of purple crocus. The Rotary Club of Loddon Vale have once again supplied the crocus bulbs and the Friends of Woodford Park arranged for members of the community to help with the planting. The Rotarians and Friends were particularly delighted that the 1st Woodley Cubs and Beavers could help with the planting and almost 4000 crocus bulbs were planted. The colour purple is chosen to symbolise the Rotary Club's international Purple4Polio awareness campaign, representing the village children who, when given their polio injection, have a finger stained purple to show that they have been immunised.



## New chairperson for WANE

Woodley and North Earley Community Forum have appointed new chairperson Jackie Rance, who took over from the October meeting. Further scheduled meetings will be held at the Oakwood Centre from 19.00-21.00 on 20 November and 12 February 2020. All residents are welcome to attend the meetings to discuss issues in the local area. Minutes of all meetings are available on the Town Council website: <http://www.woodley.gov.uk/partnerships/other-community-partnerships>

### VE Day celebrations in Woodley

8 May 1945 – were you there? If so, we'd love to hear from you. Please email: [admin@woodley.gov.uk](mailto:admin@woodley.gov.uk)

### Woodley Carnival is 60 in 2020!

As part of their work on Woodley's history, the U3A would love to hear local residents' memories and experiences of the Carnival and hope to provide a display at the Carnival in 2020. Please call Ann Smith on 0118 9783430 or email [wokinghamsmith@gmail.com](mailto:wokinghamsmith@gmail.com)

## Climate conscious

At the Full Council Meeting in October, Woodley Town Council adopted a motion to commit to a declaration of a 'Climate Emergency' with the aim of becoming a carbon neutral organisation by 2030, in line with Wokingham Borough Council. The Council will actively participate in the creation of the Borough-wide climate change strategy to ensure we are fully engaged in its creation for the benefit of its residents. We will explore, with all parts of the community, the

development of a local action plan in support of, and to compliment, the Borough Council's climate change strategy plan for those parts relevant to Woodley and invite local residents to email in their ideas and suggestions to: [admin@woodley.gov.uk](mailto:admin@woodley.gov.uk).

We will also continue our commitment to climate change through our current campaigns and initiatives, including supporting local habitat and wildlife, exploring and using renewable energy

and energy efficient products, and reducing, reusing and recycling where possible. The Council was recently awarded Green Flag status at Woodford Park for the second year running, which includes climate conscious maintenance.

A Climate Change leaflet is available at the Oakwood Centre or online: <http://www.woodley.gov.uk/woodley-town-councils-commitment-to-climate-change>



## Christmas Woodley postal service

The 2nd Woodley Scout Group is once again providing an inexpensive, fast and reliable Christmas postal service within Woodley. Anyone can drop off their Christmas post in Woodley Town Centre (near Barclays Bank) on Saturday 7 December and Saturday 14 December, between 10.00 – 13.00 and pay only 20p per letter to be hand delivered in the Woodley area. The post is given a special Christmas stamp and aims to be delivered the next day.

## Useful information

### Citizens Advice Help to Claim Service

is available in its Woodley branch every Tuesday 09.30-14.30 and in its Wokingham branch Monday to Thursday 09.00-15.00.

Free helpline: 0800 144 8 144

### Thames Valley Police's 'Little Book of Scams'

provides guidance on spotting and reporting different types of scam. Please view it at: [www.woodley.gov.uk](http://www.woodley.gov.uk)

### Thames Water Free Priority Service

for customers who find themselves in vulnerable circumstances. Please contact: Extra Care Team on 0800 0093652 option 3, or visit [www.thameswater.co.uk/priorityservices](http://www.thameswater.co.uk/priorityservices)

### Remap Berkshire

provide free innovative, custom-made equipment to help find practical solutions to everyday challenges for people with disabilities that is not available to buy. Please visit: [www.makeability.org.uk](http://www.makeability.org.uk) or [www.berkshire.remap.org.uk](http://www.berkshire.remap.org.uk)

# What's On

## Oakwood Centre

### Blood Donors

6 & 27 November, 22 & 29 January

5 & 26 February

To book an appointment call

0300 123 23 23

### Weight Watchers

Thursdays 09.30

### Woodley & Earley Art Group

Last Thursday in the month 19.00 – 22.00

### Woodley Photographic Club

Mondays 19.45 – 22.15

From September – June

### Acorn Community Acupuncture

Thursdays 18.00 – 22.00

Call 07551 726077 for an appointment or

visit [www.acornacupuncture.org.uk](http://www.acornacupuncture.org.uk)

### Libra Pilates

Tuesdays 09.30 – 10.30, 10.30 – 11.30

& 11.30 – 12.30

Contact 0118 9697769

### Energy Share Meetings – Various Alternative Therapies

One Wednesday per month

Contact [lizziejones8384@aol.com](mailto:lizziejones8384@aol.com)

### Jewellery Classes

Mondays 10.00 – 12.00, 13.00 – 15.00,

18.30 – 20.30

Contact [janerichardson.co.uk](http://janerichardson.co.uk)

07840 538353

### Woodley Women's Club

Every other Monday 19.30 – 22.00

Contact Sheila Smith 0118 9692076

### GymCats

Thursdays 19.00 – 20.00

Contact [GymCatsPT@gmail.com](mailto:GymCatsPT@gmail.com)

### Meditation Class

Tuesdays 19.30 – 20.30

Contact [karenproudfoot@live.com](mailto:karenproudfoot@live.com)

07960 966020

### Yoga

Wednesdays 19.30 – 20.30

Contact Kassi Milne-Smith 07960 858675

## Alan Cornish Theatre

### Woodley Light Operatic Society

#### The Mikado

10 – 13 December 19.45,

14 December 15.00 & 19.45

Box Office: [www.wlos.co.uk](http://www.wlos.co.uk)

### Berzerk Productions

#### Into The Woods

18 – 20 December 19.30,

21 – 22 December 14.00 & 17.00

Box Office: [www.berzerkproductions.com](http://www.berzerkproductions.com)

## Woodley Theatre

### The Thrill of Love

26 – 30 November 19.45

Box Office: 07939 210121

or [www.woodleytheatre.org](http://www.woodleytheatre.org)

### Jazz Concert

25 January 19.45

Box Office: 07939 210121

or [www.woodleytheatre.org](http://www.woodleytheatre.org)

### Things We Do For Love

18 – 22 February 19.45

Box Office: 07939 210121

or [www.woodleytheatre.org](http://www.woodleytheatre.org)

## Town Centre

### Saturday Market

Every Saturday 09.00-15.00

### Artisan & Produce Market

Every 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month

09.00 – 13.30

### Car Boot and Table Top Sale

10 & 24 November, 15 December

12 & 26 January, 9 & 23 February

8 & 22 March, 08.00 – 13.00

### NEW Vegan Market

3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month

from 15 March 2020

**Christmas Lights Switch On  
& Carol Concert**  
Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> November 16.30 – 17.30  
**23<sup>rd</sup> Christmas Extravaganza**  
Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> December 10.00 – 15.00  
(See separate leaflet for more details)



@WoodleyTCMI

[www.woodleytowncentre.co.uk](http://www.woodleytowncentre.co.uk)

## Council meetings

**Full Council** 10 December, 4 February 20.00

**Town Electors** 3 March

**Leisure Services Committee** 19 November, 14 January 20.00

**Strategy and Resources Committee** 26 November, 21 January 20.00

**Planning Committee** 5 November, 3 December, 7 & 28 January, 25 February 19.45

Meetings are held at the Oakwood Centre.

A Town Forum is held before each Full Council meeting at which members of the public can pose questions to the Council on issues affecting the town or on Town Council matters.



@oakwoodcentreuk

155



The Oakwood Centre

[www.woodley.gov.uk](http://www.woodley.gov.uk)

Do you need somewhere to celebrate a special occasion?

Celebrations

Birthdays

Anniversaries

Wedding receptions

Engagements

Christenings

Rooms for up to 150 guests  
Ready to style  
Flexible space  
On-site catering



0118 9690356  
[bookings@woodley.gov.uk](mailto:bookings@woodley.gov.uk)  
[www.theoakwoodcentre.com](http://www.theoakwoodcentre.com)

Oakwood  
Centre



## Children's Activities – January 2020

	<p><b>Silly Soccer</b>          A soccer session just for babies and toddlers. This is a no pressure "free play" session where parent supervision is required. Our on-site staff will hand out simple game cards for parents and little ones to tackle together.</p>	<p><b>Tuesdays</b>  <b>13.00 – 13.45</b>          Ages 'walking' – 4 years          Visit our website to view the latest course dates and prices</p>
	<p><b>Mini Soccer</b>          A fun and engaging session for little ones looking to get their first experience of coaching, with the aim of developing the basic skills of football. Sessions take place indoors.</p>	<p><b>Tuesdays</b>  <b>16.00 – 17.00</b>          Ages 3 – 6 years          £4.00 (HH) or £4.50 per session</p>
	<p><b>Junior Soccer</b>          Our junior soccer is the perfect follow up to the mini soccer session. A more structured session with lesson plans focused on passing, shooting and dribbling mixed in with fun football themed games.</p>	<p><b>Tuesdays</b>  <b>17.00 – 18.00</b>          Ages 5 – 8 years          £4.00 (HH) or £4.50 per session</p>
	<p><b>Mini Movers</b>          A fun-filled, highly interactive toddler class for your mini movers. You can expect exciting games, dancing, music, instruments, bubbles and creative props with relaxation to end.</p>	<p><b>Wednesdays</b>  <b>10.00 – 10.45</b>          Ages 2 – 5 years          Visit our website to view the latest course dates and prices</p>
	<p><b>Racket Pack Badminton</b>          These fun-filled and engaging sessions are led by our very own Badminton England coaches, and are focused on ensuring a positive first experience of badminton.</p>	<p><b>Wednesdays</b>  <b>16.00 – 17.00</b>          Ages 5 – 12 years          £4.00 (HH) or £4.50 per session</p>
	<p><b>Judo Courses</b>          Develop strength, stamina and improve your overall fitness with this fun martial art. Children will learn a variety of Judo techniques including lifts and throws that students can practice safely.</p>	<p><b>Saturdays</b>  <b>09:00 – 10:00 or 10:00 – 11:00</b>          Ages 5 – 18 years          Visit our website to view the latest course dates and prices</p>

**T: 0118 9216969**

**E: [sports@woodley.gov.uk](mailto:sports@woodley.gov.uk)**

**Contact us for more information and to book in for a free trial session**

### Walking netball

Walking Netball for women is a new sport soon to start at Woodford Park Leisure Centre every Thursday at 11.30 – 12.30 from 9 January 2020. The sport has evolved from a growing demand for walking sports and is a slower version of the game – netball but at a walking pace. The game has been designed so that anyone can play it regardless of age or fitness level. Sessions are also available for 8-10 year olds on Monday evenings 17.00 – 18.00 at Woodford Park Leisure Centre.

For more information and to register your interest please contact Liz Creighton on 0784 2111868 or [liz\\_creighton@sky.com](mailto:liz_creighton@sky.com).

### Charity Christmas Open Day

On Monday 23rd December, Woodford Park Leisure Centre will be open to all in support of the Mayor's chosen charity, Prostate Cancer UK.

All are welcome to come along and make use of the Centre's facilities and take part in a selection of our timetabled sessions where the standard fee has been waived.

Instead, we will be asking all who come along and take part to donate a minimum amount of £1.00 to Prostate Cancer UK.

A taste of what's on offer:

- Staff cake and biscuit sale
- Tea and coffee
- Pilates course taster
- Access to The Gym on the Park
- 3G pitch hire
- Silver Circuits Christmas party
- Badminton court hire
- Our Monday evening, Body Balance, Circuits, Boxercise, No Strings and Zumba sessions.

For more information please contact us on: [sports@woodley.gov.uk](mailto:sports@woodley.gov.uk)



## 2. ENVIRONMENTAL, HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY STATEMENT

The management of Woodley Town Council operates an integrated environmental, health and safety management system, which is geared towards the identification and control of key processes in our organisation. It is also our intention to encompass environmental, health and safety best practice into our business activities and decisions and to:

- bring this Policy Statement to the attention of all stakeholders
- carry out regular audits of our environmental, health and safety management systems
- comply with legislation, guidance and approved codes of practice issued at International National and Local levels
- eliminate risks to the environment, health and safety, where possible, through selection and design of materials, buildings, facilities, equipment and processes
- ensure that emergency procedures are in place at all locations for dealing with foreseeable environmental, health and safety incidents
- establish meaningful, measurable targets and goals for environmental, health and safety performance
- maintain an open and constructive dialogue on environmental health and safety issues with our employees, contractors, suppliers, customers and regulatory authorities
- maintain our premises, provide and maintain safe plant and equipment
- minimise waste and increase recycling within the framework of our waste management procedures
- only engage contractors who are able to demonstrate due regard to environmental, health and safety law
- prevent pollution to land, air and water
- promote environmentally responsible purchasing
- provide adequate resources to control the environmental, health and safety risks arising from our work activities
- raise awareness, encourage participation and train employees in environmental, health and safety matters
- reduce the use of water, energy and any other natural resources
- seek opportunities to continuously improve our ability to identify measure and control the environmental, health and safety impacts of our activities

This Policy will be reviewed at least annually and revised as necessary to reflect changes to the business activities and any changes to legislation. Any changes to the Policy will be brought to the attention of all stakeholders

**Signed:**

**Dated:**

**Position:     Director**

**THIS PAGE IS INTENTIONALLY  
LEFT BLANK**

# Green Flag Award Criteria

---

## Green Flag Award® Assessment Criteria

Green Flag Award® applications are judged against eight key criteria. Where certain criteria are not met, applicants can provide justifications that may be taken into account. What's more, if management practice changes are in progress but not yet fully implemented, transitional phases will be acknowledged and viewed positively.

The judging criteria also considers the fact that each park/green space will offer different kinds of facilities, and will be managed and developed to varying opportunities and constraints. Innovation and the way facilities offered are tailored to the needs of the community will also be taken into account.

## Eight key criteria

### 1. A welcoming place

When approaching or entering the park/green space, the overall impression for any member of the community - regardless of the purpose of their visit - should be positive and inviting. There should be:

- Good and safe access
- Good signage to and in the park/green space
- Equal access for all members of the community

### 2. Healthy, safe and secure

The park/green space must be a healthy, safe and secure place for all members of the community to use. Any issues that have come to light must be addressed in the management plan and implemented on the ground. New issues that arise must be addressed promptly and appropriately.

- Equipment and facilities must be safe to use
- It must be a secure place for all members of the community to use or traverse
- Dog fouling must be adequately addressed
- Health and safety policies should be in place, in practice and regularly reviewed
- Toilets, drinking water, first aid, public telephones and emergency equipment where relevant (e.g. life belts by water) should be available in or near the park/green space, and be clearly signposted.

### 3. Clean and well maintained

For aesthetic as well as health and safety reasons, issues of cleanliness and maintenance must be adequately addressed, in particular:

- Litter and other waste management
- The maintenance of grounds, buildings, equipment and other features
- A policy on litter, vandalism and maintenance should be in place, in practice and regularly reviewed.

### 4. Sustainability

Methods used in maintaining the park/green space and its facilities should be environmentally sound, relying on best practices available according to current knowledge. Management should be aware of the range of techniques available to them, and demonstrate that informed choices have been made and are regularly reviewed. Parks/green spaces should:

- Have an environmental policy or charter and management strategy in place, which is in

practice and regularly reviewed

- Minimise and justify pesticide use
- Eliminate horticultural peat use
- Recycle waste plant material
- Demonstrate high horticultural and arboriculture standards
- Have energy conservation, pollution reduction, waste recycling, and resource conservation measures

## **5. Conservation and heritage**

Particular attention should be paid to the conservation and appropriate management of:

- Natural features, wildlife and fauna
- Landscapes
- Buildings and structural features
- These should serve their function well without placing undue pressure on the surrounding environment

## **6. Community involvement**

The park/green space management should actively pursue the involvement of members of the community who represent as many park/green space user groups as possible. The following should be demonstrated:

- Knowledge of user community and levels and patterns of use
- Evidence of community involvement in management and/or developments and results achieved
- Appropriate levels of provision of recreational facilities for all sectors of the community

## **7. Marketing**

- A marketing strategy should be in place, which is in practice and regularly reviewed
- There should be good provision of information to users, e.g. about management strategies, activities, features, ways to get involved
- The park/green space should be promoted as a community resource

## **8. Management**

- A management plan or strategy should be in place
- This should clearly and adequately address all of the above criteria and any other relevant aspects of the park/green space's management
- The plan must be actively implemented and regularly reviewed
- A financially sound management of the park/green space must also be demonstrated





## Green Flag Award 2018

**Name of Site:** Woodford Park  
**Managing Organisation:** Woodley Town Council

### Desk Assessment Feedback (Management Plan and supporting documentation)

Criteria	Strengths	Recommendations
<b>Presentation</b>	The management plan adopts the criteria of Green Flag Award scheme as chapter headings thus making it very easy to read and understand. It is good that the management plan that has a map near the front, photos throughout and a description of planned works. Clear and simple presentation.	Ensure plan is regularly used to guide management of the site.
<b>Comment</b>	<b>The plan is available to all staff and is the reference document for planned improvements and operational changes.</b>	
<b>Health, Safety &amp; Security</b>	This is well covered in the plan which describes the relevant issues and how they are managed.  Good partnership working with JAC outreach workers and neighbourhood police. Good range of healthy activities for young people and adults.	
<b>Maintenance of equipment, buildings &amp; landscape</b>	Again well described. This section also includes a maintenance schedule in table form that shows the month by month work programme for grounds staff.  The work schedule covers landscape maintenance – building maintenance and projects are included at the end in projects /	Ensure ongoing training and staff development of grounds maintenance team.

## Appendix 12

	annexes	
<b>Comment</b>	<b>Grounds Maintenance Officer is continuing with second year of horticulture NVQ. We are looking at opportunities for the new Grounds Maintenance Trainee.</b>	
<b>Litter, cleanliness, vandalism</b>		
<b>Environmental Management</b>	Previous years judges suggested “ <i>Adopting an organisational environment strategy is key and can then be cascaded across all departments</i> ” – it is stated in the Management plan and listed as an annex.	Continue to develop and implement environmental policy and keep under review.
<b>Comment</b>	<b>The policy is reviewed/reported to the Strategy &amp; Resources Committee. In January 2019 we installed solar panels on the leisure centre as part of a long term arrangement with a local community interest company. In January 2020 we installed a similar system at the Oakwood Centre. The Council is currently developing a Climate Emergency Action Plan with the commitment to become a carbon neutral organisation by 2030. Wildlife and habitat actions and initiatives are on-going and are now reported to each meeting of the Leisure Services Committee.</b>	
<b>Biodiversity, Landscape and Heritage</b>	History of the site is described. Again the section is fine – it states the relevant issues and projects.	
<b>Community Involvement</b>	Excellent facilities for a wide range of community groups and good evidence of community involvement in this park.	
<b>Marketing &amp; Communication</b>	Residents’ survey provides very positive evidence of the good involvement. evidence  Good to see the Whats On leaflet as an annex.	
<b>Overall management</b>	Appropriate management structure in place. Good team working with all involved.	

### **Additional comments**

A well written plan that sets out aspirations and actions in a clear and simple manner. Good balance of information, with important issues and works in main text and detail in the appendices. Good to see the leaflet, designs for projects, Green Flag Award response and consultation exercises. The Council are to be congratulated on producing this plan.

The plan is presented in a way that makes it very easy to judge the field visit as it aligns with the Green Flag Award criteria.

**Field Assessment Feedback**

Criteria	Strengths	Recommendations
<p><b>A Welcoming Place</b></p>	<p>We agree with last year's comments that the entrances from Headley Road provide clear site lines into the park. The decorative gates, memorial and decorate beds are welcoming and inviting</p> <p>We are pleased to see that the signs that were proposed last year have been delivered and that they are good quality and fit for purpose where they have been placed.</p> <p>We didn't notice any issues noted last year about root damage to pathways making access problematic.</p>	<p>Signage, fencing and bins at the Haddon Drive entrance and some of the pedestrian entrances at the north of the site would benefit from more attention.</p> <p>Review number and positioning of all signs.</p> <p>Regularly check community noticeboards.</p> <p>Consider further action that can be taken to improve the Reading Road entrance.</p> <p>There is scope for improving entrance and flowerbed near paddling pool as this is a high profile area.</p>
<p><b>Comment</b></p>	<p><b>New welcome sign has been installed at the Haddon Drive entrance and the limited use community notice board removed. The notice board near Coronation Hall has been relocated to a better position in the park. Damaged dog bins scheduled for replacement later in the year.</b></p>	
<p><b>Healthy, Safe and Secure</b></p>	<p>We felt that the park was largely safe and secure. There is a considerable amount of infrastructure to maintain for a local parish council but we didn't observe any issues where safety for the public was a problem.</p> <p>Discussions and observations also impressed on us that the operational staff have a good attitude the health and safety. We observed the 'build' for their annual fair which was all being delivered in a safety and unhurried manner.</p> <p>We were pleased to see that the grounds staff had delivered a lot of overwinter work to the</p>	<p>The views into the memorial garden had been opened up, but the rear of the garden was still quite secretive and prone to 'youths gathering'. Their behaviour might need to be monitored and if they cause damage or concern, further works may need to be considered.</p>

## Appendix 12

	woodlands around the lake and the copse in front of the memorial gardens. This was noted as an aspiration and the team must have worked hard to achieve this.	
<b>Comment</b>	<b>Significant maintenance has been carried out in the Garden of Remembrance to bring the planting under control. Undergrowth in the copse area has been further cleared to improve sightlines and the area has been replanted and is being maintained to a higher standard. Antisocial behaviour has greatly reduced over the last two years.</b>	
<b>Well Maintained and Clean</b>	<p>We were very impressed at just how clear of litter and dog waste the site was. (one judge paid a visit well before the day of judging and the other looked around the quieter end of the site 1 hour before meeting the staff) – Very high standards for litter and dog waste.</p> <p>We found the toilets to be maintained to a standard that is very good for a public park</p> <p>The benches were under a programme of renewal as commemorative benches</p> <p>Flowerbeds near Headley Road entrance looking spectacular.</p>	<p>There was some graffiti on a play shelter that appeared to have built up over time – for the sake of a few hours and a tin of black paint, the site could be made graffiti -free and this would be a quick-win for an extra point next year!! Same for basketball nets.</p> <p>Some of the infrastructure is beginning to look tired and old –. Dog bins, gates and painted posts were still fit for purpose but reaching the end of life. We understand the ‘old regime’ of management was very thrifty and we suspect there is a back log of renewal which has started to be delivered.</p> <p>The weeds were still growing out of the machinery shed gutter and we understand the gutter is due to be renewed!</p> <p>Horticultural standards of planted beds varied a lot throughout the site.</p> <p>Some minor housekeeping improvements could make a big difference.</p>
<b>Comment</b>	<b>Shelter has been repainted. Litter and dog bins on schedule of replacement. Additional litter bin installed outside Oakwood Centre following comments about litter in this area – bin well used and has situation has improved. Weeds removed from guttering.</b>	
<b>Environmental Management</b>	Staff were able to talk knowledgably about the	

## Appendix 12

	<p>pros and cons of chemical use and only apply it in limited situations – so minimal and appropriate use of herbicides. No peat used on site.</p> <p>Friends group were very active with the supply and maintenance of bedding so no known peat in bedding plants but difficult to check suppliers.</p> <p>They had invested in a chipper and had produced large quantities of chip that was now being used as mulch with great effect – well done.</p>	
<b>Biodiversity Landscape and Heritage</b>	<p>We were delighted to see that some areas were taken out of large scale mowing regimes and had been seeded for wildflowers – though not yet established the seeds had germinated well.</p> <p>There was a good stock of trees all, well maintained and there was evidently a sufficient budget for arboriculture maintenance</p> <p>Phase 1 of the lake project had been delivered (woodland thinning) and phase 2 – the lake restoration was very well planned with topo surveys, maps and artists impressions on show.</p>	<p>We are sure future judges will enjoy seeing the lake restoration when complete.</p> <p>Consider population control of wildfowl so as to maintain water quality.</p> <p>The bird and bat box plan was still work in progress and perhaps more appropriate now that woodland work is completed – but this will bring a quick-win for biodiversity benefit in the park.</p> <p>There may be scope to involve the Friends in finding out more about the history of the site.</p>
<b>Comment</b>	<b>Lake project is now complete. Further in – house works are on-going and the lake and surrounds are kept to a higher standard.</b>	
<b>Community Involvement</b>	<p>This site really delivers a great amount for the community as a resource. It is really well used by a wide range of community groups, some of whom organise regular events that provide a focus for community spirit in Woodley and enhance the area as a place to live and play.</p> <p>Really impressed with the Friends group and other community groups) who are positive, enthusiastic and make a real contribution to the standard of the park.</p> <p>The paddling pool is an excellent facility for small children. The youth centre and skate ramps cater for young people. Provision for</p>	<p>Just keep doing what you are doing – well done.</p> <p>The play ground was fine and fit for purpose but looking dated. We were made aware of plans and budget allocation to renew the play facilities. This was early stages and a landscape consultant was being appointed. We are sure this project will produce a destination playground.</p>



## Appendix 12

	active sports is good. There are lots of benches for the elderly.	The play area by the paddling pool was showing signs of wear.
<b>Comment</b>	<b>Play panels on current play equipment have been replaced as the new scheme is still a little way from delivery. WW1 Memorial story panels were installed near the war memorial in time for the Remembrance event on 11 November. Estimated 2000+ people attended the Remembrance event in the park. In addition to the panels we have installed two flagpoles which are the finishing touch to the civic space on Memorial Ground.</b>	
<b>Marketing and Communication</b>	<p>The new notice boards are very good quality and being used well. The project plans and documents were professional and to a high standard and a great communication tool for consultation.</p> <p>The staff were very approachable and visible and we are sure they have a day-to-day rapport with regular visitors.</p> <p>The Oakwood Centre and Leisure Centre are strong assets and act as hubs for visitors.</p>	
<b>Comment</b>	<b>We now have a Communications Officer in post and are improving how and when we get messages out to the public e.g. play area closure for repair work, upcoming events, lake project progress etc.</b>	
<b>Management</b>	<p>The park has evolved as a result of lots of discreet projects (rather than been designed) and this, together with the high level of use, presents ongoing challenges in maintaining a cohesive feel to the site but this is being dealt with this very well.</p> <p>The staff are the key asset to this park. There is definitely renewed sense of energy and enthusiasm for this park's management that is evident on the ground.</p>	<p>We were delighted to hear that an additional post had been created and due to start soon. We also understand the investment in new machinery will make time and cost savings. By this time next year, the improvements made already will have gained momentum and the pace of change will continue to grow.</p> <p>Continue to make funding applications and seek sponsorship for improvements.</p>

### **Additional Comments**

It was a privilege to judge this site on their second year of judging. It was very evident that the park had previously been subjected to 'thriftiness' but now was a couple of years into a period of renewal. After they narrowly missed out on a Green Flag last year, we are very pleased to recommend the award this year. The team can be VERY proud of this achievement and all their hard work, enthusiasm, energy and vision must be celebrated!

## Appendix 12

---

However, gaining this award is not a destination but just one stage of a process. If they are to continue raising the standard even higher and go on to increase their narrow margin, the staff will need to be supported so they can continue with their vision. They have so much energy, enthusiasm and skills that we are sure Woodford Park will meet its potential to score high marks. More importantly, Woodford Park will become an even more valuable community asset, and a destination park for people further afield.




Well done – a pleasure to be your judges for your Green Flag Award this year!

**THIS PAGE IS INTENTIONALLY  
LEFT BLANK**



# Green Flag Award Mystery Shop Assessment

<b>Name of Site</b>	Woodford		<b>Managing organisation</b>	Woodley Town Council	
<b>Weather Conditions</b>	Overcast				
<b>Date of assessment</b>	07/09/19		<b>Time (from – to)</b>	13:30 > 14:30	
<b>Result: (✓)</b>	<b>Is the site of Green Flag Award Standard?</b>				
	Green	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Amber	<input type="checkbox"/>	Red
		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Grading</b>			<b>Comments and Recommendations</b>		
Please mark each section as Green, Amber or Red If there is no evidence or the section is not applicable mark as NG (not graded) and provide an explanation			Comments should be provided to support each grading *Please include photographs to support your grading where applicable **Please refer to Raising the Standard manual if necessary		
<b>A Welcoming Place</b>					
1. Is the site welcoming?	NG	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Clean entrance
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. Is the site easy to find?	NG	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. Is signage in good condition?	NG	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4. Is the site accessible to all users?	NG	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Healthy, Safe and Secure</b>					
5. Are facilities on site in good and safe condition?	NG	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
6. Did you feel safe during the visit?	NG	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Park in use good sight lines
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
7. Are dogs being controlled and the site free of dog fouling?	NG	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Well Maintained and Clean</b>					
8. Is litter, waste and recycling managed?	NG	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Few signs of litter bins had been emptied
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
9. Is there a good standard of horticulture maintenance?	NG	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

10. Is there a good standard of arboriculture maintenance?	NG	<b>G</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>R</b>	
		X			
11. Are buildings and infrastructure such as walls, paths, steps and structures in good condition?	NG	<b>G</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>R</b>	
		X			
12. Is equipment used by the public and staff in good condition?	NG	<b>G</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>R</b>	
		X			
<b>Environmental Management</b>					
13. Is there evidence that the site is managed to have a positive impact on the environment?	NG	<b>G</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>R</b>	
		X			
<b>Landscape and Heritage</b>					
14. Are heritage and/or landscape features in good condition?	NG	<b>G</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>R</b>	
		X			
<b>Community Involvement</b>					
15. Is there evidence of community involvement and engagement?	NG	<b>G</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>R</b>	
		X			
16. Is user feedback positive?	NG	<b>G</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>R</b>	Positive feedback from park users
		X			
<b>Marketing and Communication</b>					
17. Is there evidence of marketing and promotion, including events? e.g. notice boards, in buildings, website & social media.	NG	<b>G</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>R</b>	
		X			
18. Is the correct year flag flying and certificate on display?	NG	<b>G</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>R</b>	
		X			
<b>Overall Result</b> (✓)	<b>Is the site of Green Flag Award Standard?</b> Green  Amber  Red 				
Additional comments: Very popular park, well maintained keep up the good work					

**Insert photographic evidence below and on subsequent pages**