

Hatherley Park Management and Action Plan

2022 - 2027



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CHELtenham
BOROUGH COUNCIL

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1.0 Introduction

Hatherley Park is a 3 hectares ornamental park, surrounded by large properties with generous sized gardens to many of them. In 1934, the council acquired 11 acres of Hatherley Court Estate. The ground work for the new recreation area was initiated in 1938 using out of work labourers who were recruited to dredge and reshape the pond, to level the playing field and to undertake the planting of flowers, an extensive shrubbery and an avenue of standard flowering trees along the path.

The park was opened by the Mayor of Cheltenham on 29th April 1939. The ceremony was performed in front of a large invited audience.

Two gated entrances, one on the northern section of the boundary and the second to the south. The park has railings around the entire boundary; many properties have added fencing to their boundary for privacy.

The main path is lined with mature trees and is laid out in a figure of eight.

This provides a circuit of the lake and pleasant views of Leckhampton Hill, part of the Cotswold Escarpment. In 2016 a 300m section of self-binding gravel was constructed to increase the route around the park to include the open space area which became impassable during the winter months.



Figure 1.1: Cheltenham's largest poplar (*Populus nigra*)



Figures 1.2: Mobility scooter users enjoying extended path route

The lake, formerly the fish pond for the Hatherley Court Estate, is approximately 60m x 20m with variable depths is lined with a number of mature trees.

The small wildlife pond was constructed in summer 2005 with assistance from BTCV. An interpretation panel giving information on the habitat and species within the lake has also been added along with additional seating close by.



Figure 1.4: Wildlife pond



Figures 1.3: Regular users of extended path enjoying one of the recently installed benches



Figure 1.5: Pétanque court and new sign

The park houses a fenced play area for toddlers and infants with swings, slide and a train and house for imaginative play; two circular picnic benches provide a suitable picnic spot for families. A multi-activity unit for older children sits along with junior swings, a new large spinning disc selected through consultation with two local schools and local residents attending the park's 80th anniversary celebrations, adjacent seating area and basketball hoop with more seating. There is also a pétanque court with benches and a new sign. A junior football pitch is marked out during the youth football season and is used regularly by Southside FC; the small changing pavilion with toilet and hot water is available when hiring the pitch.

2.0 Surveys

2.1 Legal Issues

Ownership

Hatherley Park is owned by the council and the legal boundary is shown in figure 2.1. The size of the park is approximately 3ha. Entrances to the park are on Hatherley Court Road and Bournside Road.



Figure 2.1: Aerial view of Hatherley Park

Lease

At the time of writing this document there are no leases in place for the pavilion although a verbal agreement has allowed the Friends of group to store tools and use toilet facilities during events and working parties, and it is also used by the Friends to enjoy refreshments after their working parties.

The Butterfly Box has a temporary licence to operate a café in the park near the play area.

Landscape Maintenance

In 2012 the council's Environmental Maintenance section was transferred to Ubico, a local authority company. Ubico is jointly owned by Cotswold District Council, West Oxfordshire District Council, Forest of Dean, Tewkesbury Borough Council, Stroud District Council and Cheltenham Borough Council. Ubico provides the authorities with a range of services including waste collection, recycling, street cleansing and landscape maintenance of parks and open spaces including sports fields.

<http://www.ubico.co.uk/index>

Byelaws

A copy of the byelaws for all of the parks in Cheltenham is available on request.

2.2 Strategic significance of Hatherley Park

County Structure Plan and Local Plan

Cheltenham is a large Regency spa town in Gloucestershire with a population of 115,700 (Census 2011) located on the edge of the Cotswolds. Cheltenham is the home of the most prestigious race in the National Hunt racing calendar, the Gold Cup, the main event of the Cheltenham Festival in March. The town also hosts a number of cultural festivals featuring nationally and internationally famous contributors and attendees. The town is famous for its Regency Architecture and is said to be "the most complete regency town in England", with many buildings listed. Hatherley Park is adjacent to the central conservation area of Cheltenham.

On the Urban Green Environment, the plan says:

(6.1) "One of Cheltenham's distinctive features is its green and open nature. The council recognises the importance of green spaces and their connectivity in the town and to the surrounding countryside, and particularly the opportunities they provide for recreation and relaxation, contributing to the health and well-being of the residents and visitors. The landscape of the town provides a green network of spaces and wildlife corridors which support a variety of trees, vegetation, and wildlife habitats, assisting in biodiversity conservation throughout the town, and, into the wider countryside".

(6.6) "The council is proud of its parks, gardens and other green spaces and features. In recognition of this the council does not wish to see their loss through development or their deterioration through poor management and lack of resources and funding".

(6.33) Cheltenham is justly renowned for its formal parks and gardens, which are an essential part of the Borough's character, and has gained a reputation as the 'Garden Town of England', see Figure 2.6

The Gloucestershire Structure Plan makes specific reference to the importance of open spaces within urban areas.

Green Space Strategy for Cheltenham 2009 – 2024.

In 2009 the council produced a Green Space Strategy (GSS) for Cheltenham which set out the 15-year vision for the green spaces within the borough. Hatherley Park is identified in the Strategy as having the primary purpose classification of a Park and Garden which provides: “Accessible, high quality opportunities for informal recreation and community events”.

Within the 3-tier hierarchy classification of the Strategy, Hatherley Park is defined as a Neighbourhood Park: “Sites which perform a function that serves a more immediate community. Unlikely to attract people from across the borough”.

Hierarchy Level	Description	Walking Distance (m)
Borough	Those sites whose significance should attract people from across the entire borough. Usually large sites with a range of facilities or designated importance for history or nature conservation.	1200
Neighbourhood	Those sites which perform a function that serves a more immediate community. Unlikely to attract people from across the borough	600
Local	Those sites which perform a function to a small area – typically areas of amenity green space.	400
Local (<0.2ha)		50

Table 2.1: Hierarchy and Walking Distance

Taken from https://www.cheltenham.gov.uk/downloads/file/1389/green_space_strategy

The vision set out in the GSS forms the basis for this 5-year Management Plan which is:

“working together to ensure a comprehensive network of attractive, valued and well used locally distinct green spaces, that are accessible, safe and welcoming, which meet the existing and future needs of the community, enhance biodiversity and are managed sustainably to reduce our impact on climate change.”

Joint Core Strategy

The JCS is a partnership between Gloucester City Council, Cheltenham Borough Council and Tewkesbury Borough Council supported by Gloucestershire County Council. Formally adopted by Cheltenham Borough Council on December 12th 2017 the strategy provides a co-ordinated development plan to show how Cheltenham and the other partners’ areas will develop during the period up to 2031. It means Cheltenham is well placed to ensure the provision of homes and jobs for local people up to 2031 while protecting the things that make Cheltenham an attractive place to live, work and visit. The strategy sets out the approach that the councils will take:

- To protect and enhance the natural and historic environment
- Deal with climate change

- Set out policies for the location and timing of new housing, employment development, key infrastructure, community, leisure and tourism facilities.

Para 2.9 of the Strategy states that “Cheltenham is characterised by its high-quality historic environment, set within a formal garden townscape and a wider open landscape defined by the Cotswolds AONB and the Green Belt.

2.14 states that: “Retail and Tourism will continue to make a major contribution to Cheltenham’s economy”; and finally

Policy INF4: Green Infrastructure states that: “Existing green infrastructure will be protected in a manner that reflects its contribution to ecosystem services (including biodiversity, landscape/townscape quality, the historic environment, public access, recreation and play)”

The relationship of Hatherley Park to other green spaces

Figure 2.6 shows the relationship of Hatherley Park to Cheltenham’s other parks and surrounding features. The park is south of Cheltenham and approximately 20 minutes’ walk from the centre. The nearest green space is part of University of Gloucestershire campus at The Park.



Figure 2.2:– Map of Hatherley area showing park’s location

2.3 Surveys and Assessments Undertaken

Ecological survey

Middlemarch Environmental carried out a biological audit in 2006 as part of Cheltenham's Green Space Strategy which was adopted in 2009. The Park has a classification that its primary purpose is a park and has a biodiversity score of B, "Moderate site with low/moderate existing biodiversity value".

Biodiversity Quality	Description/Rationale
A	Large site with moderate/high existing biodiversity value OR small site with high existing biodiversity value
B+	Large site with low/moderate existing biodiversity value and with moderate/high potential biodiversity OR small site with moderate existing biodiversity value
B	Moderate site with low/moderate existing biodiversity value
C	Small site with low biodiversity value and minimal potential biodiversity

Table 2.2: Biodiversity Grading for Open Space Sites within Cheltenham Borough

From https://www.cheltenham.gov.uk/downloads/file/976/biodiversity_audit

Hard and soft landscape survey

A detailed hard and soft landscape survey has not been carried out.

Tree Survey

A detailed inspection of the trees in Hatherley Park is carried out by the council's Tree Officer every 2 years. The latest survey was conducted on the 20th August 2020. The Tree Officer has put the arising tree surgery works out to tender for subsequent implementation. A full detailed survey of the tree report is available on request.

Management reviews

Management reviews are held annually with key stake holders, these reviews highlight areas where improvements have been carried out and show areas which need to continue improving.

2.4 Community Involvement

Community involvement in Hatherley Park is very active, with Friends of Hatherley Park who have been established since 2001. Also the regular users of the park, including many dog walkers, form part of the group and others, who when out on their daily walk, pick up litter if seen in the park.

A nearby nursery often visits the play area with the children, as well as Bournside School (a secondary school) from where many school children use the park on their way to and from school.

With the areas demographics a number of elderly people are regularly seen enjoying the park whilst using one of the many park benches.



Figure 2.3: Elderly local residents enjoying the park

The Friends group works every Thursday afternoon in the park where they receive many positive comments about the work they do. The group also hold a number of events each year, raising money for local and national causes.

The contribution of the local community through the Friends of Hatherley Park has been invaluable and will continue to be so for future park development. The group have raised over a period of five years almost £50,000 for the park development.



Figure 2.4: Poppy Picnic event organised by Friends



Figure 2.5: Easter egg event organised by Friends



Figure 2.6: Event organised by Friends

Current Management Structure

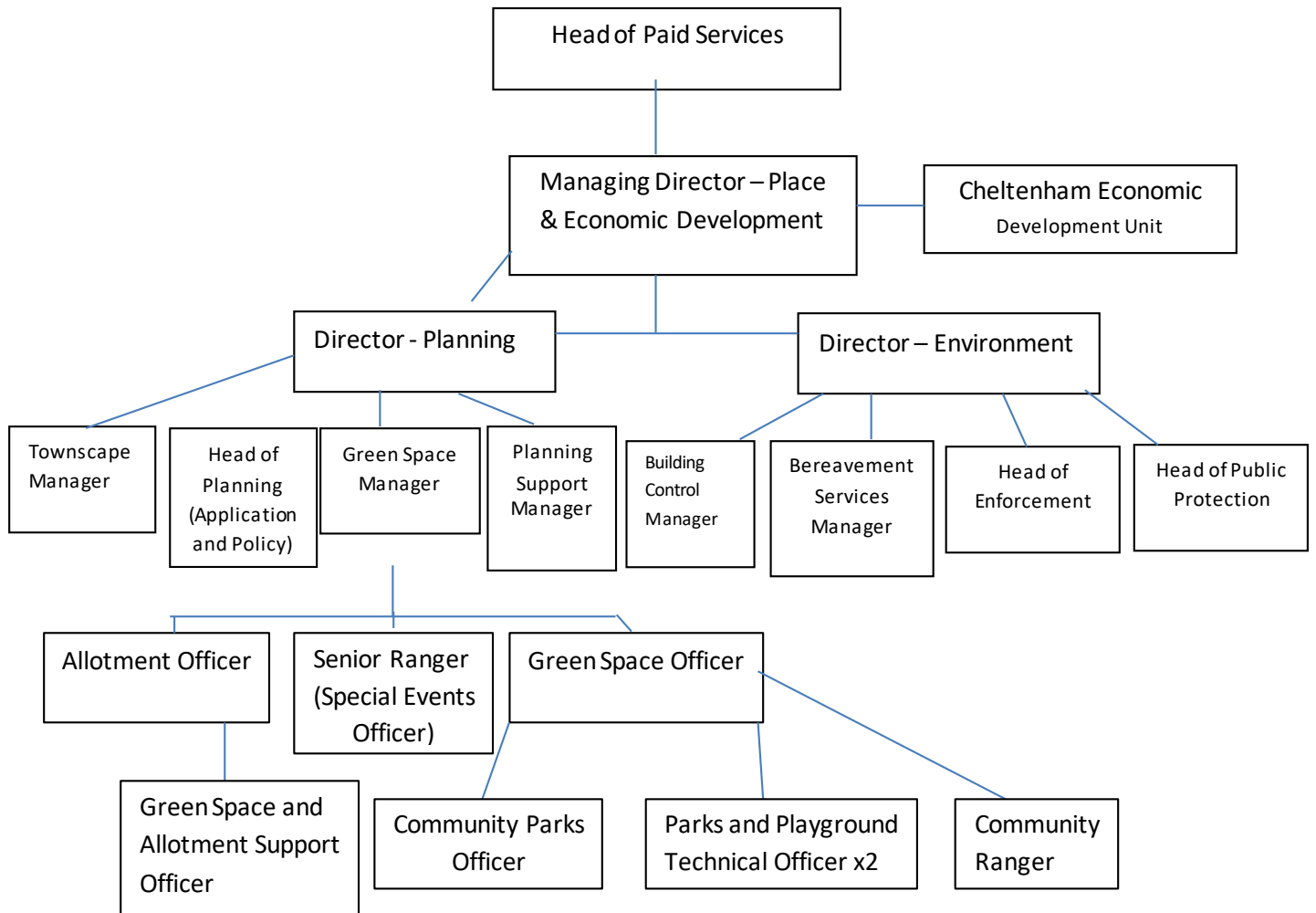


Figure 2.7: Current Management Structure

GreenSpace Development (GSD) team are within the Planning Directorate for CBC and comprises of:

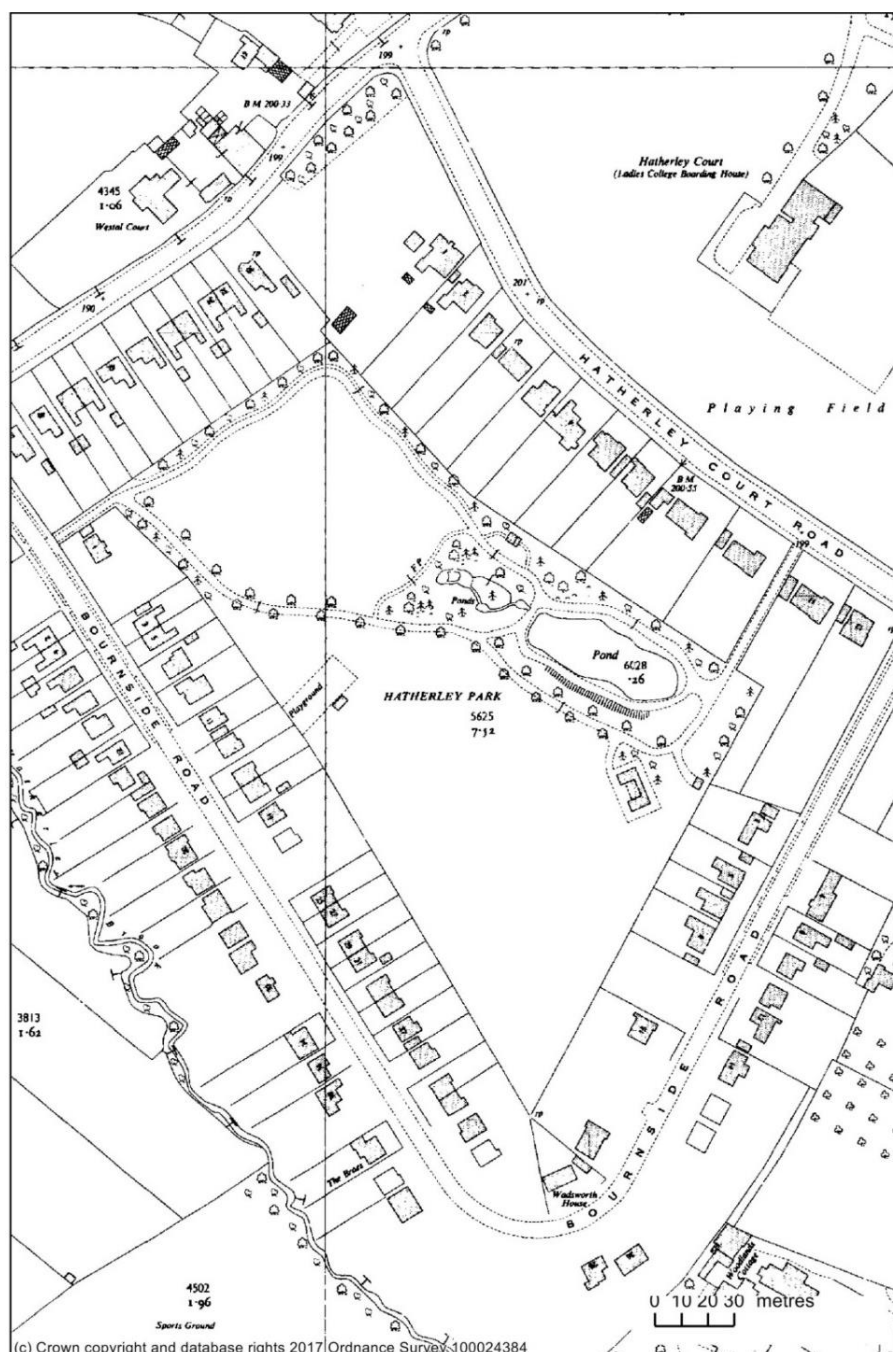
- **The Green Space Manager** is the commissioning officer for Ubico as well as overseeing the GSD officers.
- **The Green Space Officer** is responsible for the development of parks and play areas within the CBC Boundary that are CBC owned, instructing the Parks and Playground Technical Officers to make improvements to the spaces and to increase play value where possible.
- **The Allotment Officer** is responsible for the letting of the borough's allotments and organising repairs, and is the point of contact for tenants if they have concerns or issues.
- **The Senior Ranger** is responsible for the day to day running of Leckhampton Hill, working with tenant grazer to improve the status of the SSSI site. The ranger also over sees events that take place on CBC land to ensure the correct paperwork is submitted and the event is suitable for the site.
- **The Community Ranger** organises and facilitates working parties with local community groups, Friends group, schools and other organisations, as well as attending Local Neighbourhood group meetings and organising the Paws in the Park event.
- **The Community Parks Officer** works alongside Parks Development Officer on new projects and supports Community Ranger on working parties.
- **The Green Space and Allotment Support Officer** assists with the day to day running of the office which involves processing orders and invoices.

3.0 Historical Development

The council acquired 11 acres of the Hatherley Court Estate in 1934, for a purchase price of £2750. Of the 11 acres, 2.5ac were reserved for building purposes and for the creation of Hatherley Court Road. The recreation area ground works were begun in 1938 and were intended to be ‘of special value to the dwellers in the Tivoli district’.

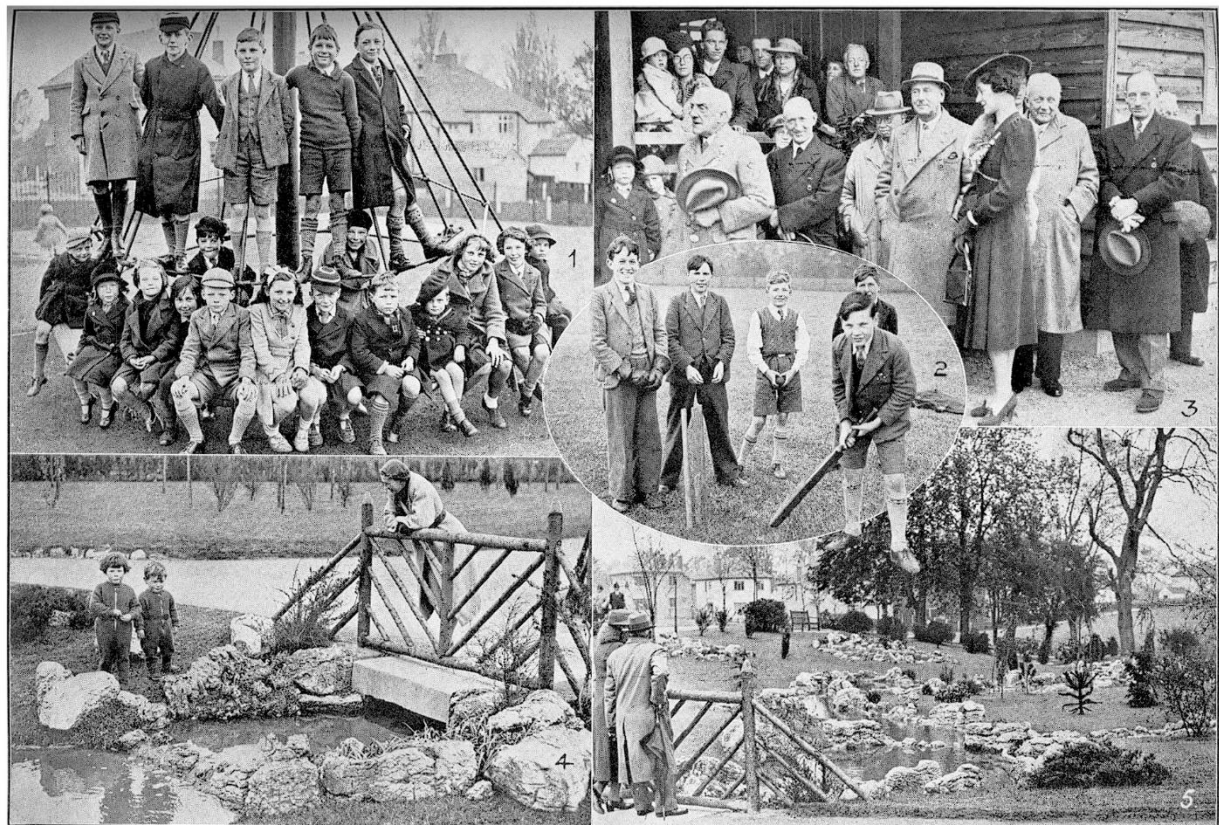
The park was opened by the Mayor of Cheltenham on 29th April 1939 after work had taken place to reshape the pond, level the playing field and plant flowers and trees. The ceremony was performed in front of a large invited audience. The project was deemed “a daring experiment, consisting of a recreation ground and playing field for children on one side of the park “beautifully laid out” for adults on the other.”

Figure 3.1: Historical map of park 1950



3.1 Features of the Historical Landscape

One of the retained features of the former estate is the lake, although changed as part of the development of the area. Out of work labourers were recruited to dredge and reshape the pond, to level the playing field and to undertake planting of flowers, extensive shrubbery and an avenue of standard flowering trees along the path.



CHELTENHAM CHRONICLE AND GLOUCESTERSHIRE GRAPHIC, SATURDAY, MAY 6, 1939

OPENING OF CHELTENHAM'S NEW PARK
 Hatherley Court Recreation Ground, the latest addition to Cheltenham's large number of parks, was formally opened by the Mayor of Cheltenham (Mr. John Howell) on Saturday afternoon.
 1.—Some of the children on one of the new roundabouts.
 2.—Ready for a game of cricket.
 3.—The Mayor (on left) declaring the ground open.
 4.—Mrs. John Howell, jun., with her two children, Joanna and Jonathan, admiring the grounds.
 5.—A view of the laid-out gardens.

Figure 3.2: - Old postcard for the opening of the park 1939

3.2 Research

Limited research regarding the park has been undertaken, although many regular users of the park have mentioned during conversations that they remember visiting the park as a child. An idea for a future community project would be to capture these memories for future generations.

4.0 Vision

Cheltenham Borough Council's vision for green spaces is:

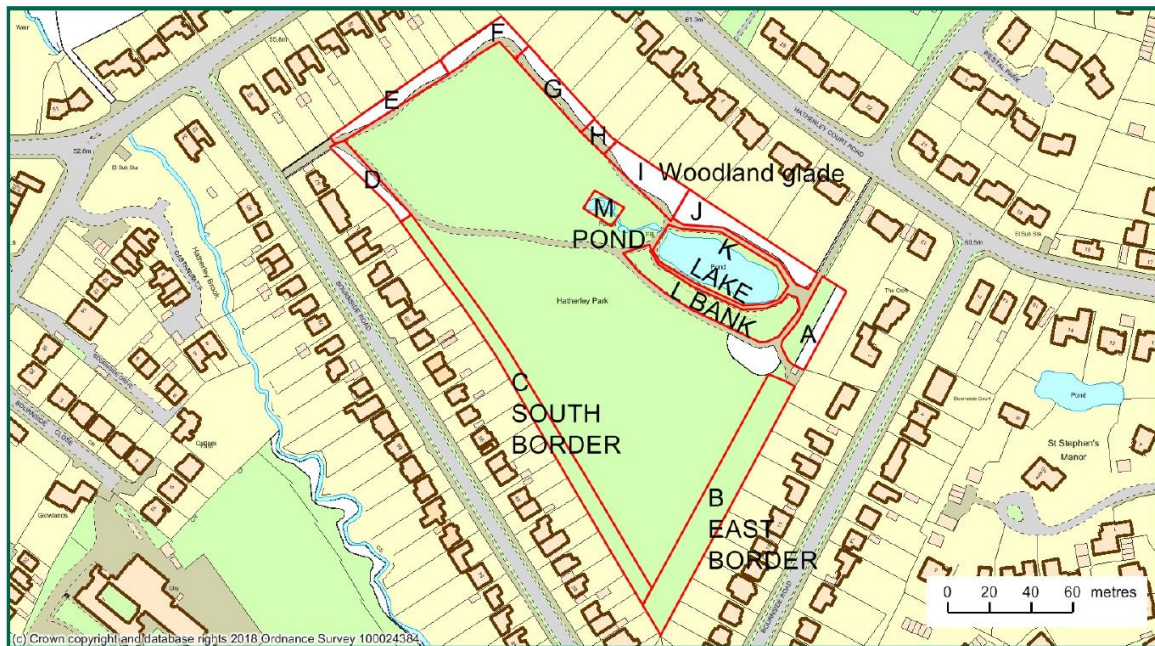
“Working together to ensure a comprehensive network of attractive, valued and well used, locally distinct green spaces, that are accessible, safe and welcoming, which meet the existing and future needs of the community, enhance biodiversity and are managed sustainably to reduce our impact on climate change”.

Criteria	Vision
Welcoming Place	To make Hatherley Park a welcoming park that is accessible to all sections of the community
Health, Safe and Secure	To ensure that Hatherley Park is managed and maintained to high standard to provide a safe and secure environment for all visitors
Clean and Well Maintained	To ensure Hatherley Park is managed and maintained to a high standard and to provide an attractive garden and enjoyable experience for all visitors
Sustainability	To ensure that Hatherley Park is managed and maintained in an appropriate manner so that environmental impact of these operations is minimised
Conservation	To promote biodiversity through appropriate management
Heritage	Maintain the management standards sympathetic to the garden's origins
Community Involvement	To provide an inclusive approach to involving all sections of the community in contributing to the management and development of the park
Marketing	To provide an inclusive approach to the promotion and marketing of the Park and its environment
Management	To provide a co-ordinated and joined up approach to the management, maintenance and development of the park

Table 4.1 Relationship between Green Flag Award criteria and Management Plan aims.

5.0 Management Zones

For ease of management, the park and shrubberies have now been divided up into 13, rather than 16 small workable zones with a view to reducing the number further as the detailed plan continues to be developed, along with a structured, seasonal work plan for the FoHP.



Hatherley Park
Planting Management Zones

1:2000

15 January 2018



Figure 5.1: Map showing the management zones

6.0 Qualitative Analysis

6.1 Welcoming place

Hatherley Park is situated within an urban setting with just two entrances to access the site. Both have green gated entrances with interpretation panels visible from the road. The main, most used entrance is on Hatherley Court Road; the path is on a gentle slope with pebble sections on either side running along the entrance railings. Many children can be seen walking along them and they are a feature of the park's character.



Figure 6.1: View from road into park with new archway

The interpretation panels give information on the history of the park, a map of the park, park code and contact details for Cheltenham Borough Council. Three other noticeboards within the park are used by the Friends, to display information about forthcoming events for the park and information about how to join the Friends group.

6.2 Healthy, safe and secure

The council recognises the important role that parks and green spaces play in the health and wellbeing of residents. The council promotes and facilitates a programme of events aimed at encouraging the maximum use of parks and open spaces by the whole community.

Policy and process

The council has an overall Health and Safety Policy for its parks and a risk assessment is in place specific to Hatherley Park. The council takes a proactive and comprehensive risk assessment approach to the management of health and safety in parks.

The park is looked after by the Community Ranger who checks the park and is a point of contact for the public. The Community Ranger is responsible for initiating improvements to the park in accordance with this plan. Play area and park infrastructure inspections are undertaken on a routine basis and repairs are carried out where required.

The council has a good working relationship with the Neighbourhood Policing Team for the area. Local residents can also report an issue through the council's enquiries number which is found on the entrance panels and on the noticeboard.

Ubico Staff carry out emptying of bins and other maintenance including shrub pruning. For any contracted work on site, the contractor has to supply details of their insurance and a risk assessment for the task they are carrying out.

Anti-social behaviour

Hatherley Park suffers very few episodes of anti-social behaviour; those that do happen tend to be around the end of the academic term for school leavers, and vandalism occurrences are very few and far between.

Dog Control

In July 2020 new Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO) were agreed by Borough councillors. These orders include dog control and exclusion from play areas. These orders replaced a number of previous orders with regards to anti-social behaviour, alcohol consumption and dog control. The next review is due in 2023. The link is as follows:

https://www.cheltenham.gov.uk/info/62/community_safety_and_crime/1387/public_spaces_protection_order_pspo#:~:text=Cheltenham%27s%20public%20spaces%20protecton%20orders%20A%20public%20spaces,require%20or%20restrict%20certain%20behaviour%20in%20that%20area

Vehicles in the garden

Vehicles within the park are restricted to council staff, maintenance staff and contractors. All vehicles are to be driven no faster than 5mph, hazard lights should be on and give way to pedestrians.

Events

To hold an event in the park the host needs to complete a special events application form and submit via the special events team along with a risk assessment. Environmental health and other partners input ensure that the event will keep the impact to a minimum on the local residents and other park users.



Figure 6.2: Friends organised event

6.3 Clean and Well Maintained

Litter and waste management

The programme of reviewing and replacing the existing Big Ben style bins, for new black double capacity bins will continue as and when. Bins are regularly emptied by Ubico. A review is carried out periodically to examine options to separate waste for recycling but is not possible at present. Ubico and Green Space Volunteers (GSV) carry out litter picks regularly with assistance from regular users of the park if required.

Park maintenance

Park maintenance is carried out by the Parks and Playground Technical Officers, Ubico or specialist contractors, as well as the Friends group, with planned desilting of the lake and control of Norfolk reeds upcoming. The CBC Tree Officer carries out tree inspections every 2-3 years within the park. A report on the condition of each tree is produced and if any remedial work is required, the officer employs a tree surgeon. Trees are also checked after high winds for damage and any work carried out to make safe. With no recent significant tree removals, ten new 3m trees have been planted, including five Sargents Cherry trees, two Liquidambar, two Japanese maples and a Persian Ironwood.



Figure 6.3: The Butterfly Box Café

Buildings

Hatherley Park has a sports pavilion, which is available to teams booking the football pitch and by the Hatherley Park Green Space volunteers for tool storage and as a meeting resource for their weekly work parties. Butterfly Box <https://www.thebutterflybox.co.uk/> gained a temporary licence in July 2020 to operate a pavilion café. The council undertook a tendering process in 2021 and the Butterfly Box is now the permanent café operator for the park and utilises its position with a solar panel as a renewable energy source on site.



Figure 6.4: Side view of pavilion

Other structures

A small wooden pump house building is situated within an area of yew; electrics for the lake aerator are sited within and it is locked at all times.

Equipment maintenance

Play equipment including the play surfaces and other equipment used by the public are inspected regularly to ensure cleanliness, maintenance and safety of equipment.

6.4 Sustainability

The council's Climate Change Strategy 2005 was the previous overarching policy to progressing projects and practices designed to improve environmental performance and meet broader sustainability objectives. The main objectives were to:

Raise awareness of the potential impact of climate change;

Establish accurate data of greenhouse gas emissions from activities in Cheltenham;

Propose measures to help prevent the causes of climate change, by aiming to reduce CO2 emissions from activities in Cheltenham by 20% from 1990 levels by 2010 and by 60% by 2050;

Propose measures to help us adapt to the inevitable consequences of climate change;

And engage with external agencies and other stakeholders to gain commitment to addressing climate change issues and delivering the climate change action plan.

On 9 July 2019, Cheltenham Borough Council declared a 'Climate Emergency' and committed to become a net zero carbon council and borough by 2030.

To help the council understand the actions that will be needed to address the climate emergency a 'carbon neutral Cheltenham' report was commissioned, which was approved in October 2019.

The report, 'Carbon Neutral Cheltenham: Leadership through Stewardship', sets out the baseline carbon emissions for the council and the borough and a roadmap to achieving net zero carbon by 2030. The link can be found at:

https://www.cheltenham.gov.uk/info/61/climate_and_sustainability/533/climate_change

Pesticides and herbicide use

Several years ago, an external company was commissioned to review the council's pesticide policy and practice. Since then, the recommendations have been adopted and the council actively pursues a policy to minimise their use. As an alternative to using chemicals, flower and shrub beds are mulched using a 75mm layer of composted wood chippings which is topped up on a yearly basis, and a weed membrane to control the growth of weeds. No insecticides are employed. If deemed necessary any hard-surfaced areas in the park may be spot-treated in April and July for weeds using glyphosate. This is only applied if there is deemed to be no other available option and is undertaken either by trained staff or a suitable contractor.

The council conducted a trial of alternative approaches in controlling vegetation/weeds in public spaces during 2020/21 in order to reduce its reliance upon the use of glyphosate based herbicides. Unfortunately the trial was delayed and more limited than hoped due to COVID-19. The restricted trial concluded that no direct chemical or alternative method of weed control/removal is currently available when considering cost, time and efficacy during trials of such measures as flame throwers, acids, hot foam and electricity. However, continued efforts to limit use of glyphosate remain an important objective. The trial and all updates are appended in the council's Environmental Services. The trial updates can be found at:

https://www.cheltenham.gov.uk/downloads/file/8290/appendix_a_-_use_of_glyphosate_for_weed_control

Materials

The council has adopted a policy on Use of Peat in order to minimise the use of this finite resource and the resulting potential impact on climate change.

This requires that wherever and whenever possible, low or no peat materials are used. When purchasing plants, i.e. shrubs and herbaceous from external suppliers, almost all of the potting media is coir based peat substitute.

The council tries to reuse wood chippings from contractor works, whenever possible in parks or open spaces. Often a request is raised to leave chippings from tree surgery in situ, then it is available for volunteer work parties. Given the much recognised benefits of leaving deadwood in situ, consideration will be given to leaving either standing dead wood or leaving tree trunks in situ when felling or tree surgery is required.

The ecological benefits include providing a habitat for various different decay fungi and wood boring insects, which in turn attract other wildlife further up the food chain. Different decay strategists will colonise standing dead wood and prone trunks. Standing trunks are also suitable sites for nesting birds and perches for birds.

Water

Hatherley Park does not have facilities for drinking water on site for visitors, although a small dog tap is very popular with the dog owners. The tap is turned off during the winter months to prevent frost damage to pipes.

Recycling

The council's waste and recycling objectives are managed according to its Environmental Service Policy, revised for 2020-2030. The policy can be found at:

https://www.cheltenham.gov.uk/downloads/file/3590/waste_collections_service_policy

Ubico is at present unable to recycle any waste collected in litter bins across Cheltenham. A planned recycling update due in 2020 has been delayed due to COVID-19 and we still await further information on this.

The council is also signed up the county's Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy, 2007-2020, it currently remains a live strategy through 2021:

<https://democracy.cheltenham.gov.uk/Data/Cabinet/20071030/Agenda/2007%2010%2030%20Gloucestershire%20joint%20municipal%20waste%20strategy%20headline%20strategy%20adoption%20draft.pdf>

Air quality

The council produced an Air Quality Action Plan in 2014 in accordance with its statutory duties under the Environment Act 1995 and following the designation of the Borough as an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in 2011. The AQMA was declared because five separate locations within Cheltenham did not meet the government's health based limit for the air pollutant nitrogen dioxide. Nitrogen dioxide is a gas formed from fossil fuel combustion. It comes from some industrial processes but mostly from road traffic exhaust emissions.

https://www.cheltenham.gov.uk/downloads/file/3780/air_quality_action_plan_2014_27

Arboriculture management

Hatherley Park has a mix of native and exotic species of trees within the park which are inspected every 2-3 years by CBC Tree officers, the latest inspection report (20.08.20) is available on request.

The park has one of Cheltenham's largest Poplar trees on its northern boundary, along with an avenue of Horse Chestnut trees along one of the main path ways.



Figure 6.5: View north, Cedar of Lebanon and Poplar trees

6.5 Conservation and Heritage

Conservation

Hatherley Park won the Bees Needs Award in 2015 for the work that is carried out to ensure biodiversity and conservation are at the forefront of any management of the park. Since 2010 the Green Space team have incorporated urban meadow planting, opting for nectar rich species in the chosen mixes to increase the food source for pollinators. Over the years the mixes have changed to increase the flora display which in turn has increased the nectar rich species. The areas have been moved every two of years to prevent the numbers of colonising weeds from becoming established.



Suitable standing deadwood logs are drilled to provide nesting locations for solitary bees and lying deadwood provides suitable habitats for insects. Also within the shrub borders ivy is retained to provide ground cover and allowed to creep up trunks of trees to provide suitable nesting spots for small birds such as wren and gold crest.

The sections of shrub borders have many species of shrubs of mixed ages; when replanting areas, plants are chosen to include suitable species for wildlife benefits too. Providing an extended source of nectar is valuable for a range of insects and provides a food source for many garden species of birds which are recorded within the park by Cheltenham Bird Club.

Figure 6.6: Area of Bees Needs meadow

Heritage

The park has a short history compared to a number of other Cheltenham's parks. The layout has remained almost the same since it was opened in 1939; the use of the space is still enjoyed by many in the same way since then. On 13th July 2019 the Friends group celebrated the 80th anniversary of the park opening with a brass band, community events and stalls in the park.



Figure 6.7: 80th birthday celebration cake stall

6.6 Community Involvement

The main community involvement is focused around the Friends of Hatherley Park. Their weekly working groups do not go unnoticed; park users on a Thursday afternoon actively thank the Friends for the hard work they do and how the park looks.

The Friends group was formed in 2001 as part of the residents' association, which has since folded. The Friends have a membership of around 300, many of whom have been members from the start. A core group of between ten and twelve volunteers take part in the weekly working parties carrying out a range of tasks including weeding, planting, litter picking and organising a number of events throughout the year. In 2021, despite COVID-19 restricting group participation, volunteering exceeded 1,190 hours. They have also developed a Guide to the Trees of Hatherley Park, enabling visitors to appreciate the variety on show throughout the park (see Appendix 11.1)

The Friends also encourage park users to feed the ducks, by providing for sale duck food pellets during the working party. Many regulars actively search for the duck food basket.



Figure 6.8: Duck food basket for visitors to buy healthy food



Figure 6.9: Children feeding the ducks

The local nursery school regularly visit the park with the children using the play area and exploring the natural world.

The play area is a regular meeting space for many mums and children meeting friends and in the summer months having picnics.



Figure 6.10: Collection of images describing the park

Dog walkers and people out for a walk can be found in the park at any point throughout the day. School children regularly use the park as a cut through to and from school.

6.7 Marketing and Events

Cheltenham is known as 'the Garden Town of England' on account of its fine parks, gardens, open spaces and tree lined streets with over 150 parks and open spaces. Within this context Hatherley Park is a local destination park where many people visit to relax, meet friends and enjoy the park environment.

Events in recent years have included a celebration of 80 years of Hatherley Park, marketed through Visit Cheltenham: <https://www.visitcheltenham.com/whats-on/hatherley-park-80th-birthday-celebrations-p2723833> tree walks with the council's Senior Tree Officer and bat walks with University of Gloucestershire Bioscience Society.

Events are marketed by the council via its web-site:

https://www.cheltenham.gov.uk/info/33/parks_and_open_spaces/346/hatherley_park

The Friends group carry out their own local marketing of their events through their website: <http://friendsofhatherleypark.org/> posters, newsletters, emails and word of mouth communications, all supported by the Green Space Team.

COVID-19 allowing, the Friends group are planning a 20th Anniversary Celebration of their formation, with events in the park.

Map and directions to the park can be found through the above Cheltenham Borough council website link and includes the access instructions below.

Bus

The 97/98, 94U and 10 bus routes have stops within 5 minutes walking distance of the park.

Road

Street parking is available on Hatherley Court Road (northern entrance) and Bournside Road (southern entrance).

Access

Hatherley Park has [two discreet entrances](#), noticeable by the green park railings and interpretation boards just within the park. Both entrances are suitable for wheelchair users, although the entrance from Hatherley Court Road does have a gentle slope down to the main park area.

6.8 Consultation of Management Plan

The following bodies are consulted with as part of the management plan process:

Councillors, both ward and county

Friends of Hatherley Park

Ubico

7.0 Management Plan

Introduction

In the current financial climate the regime of maintenance has undergone amendments and a new document has been produced for the maintenance of buildings, which is available on request.

The following is a summary of the report.

Existing maintenance arrangement CBC Property – Building

All buildings are inspected in the same way. The table below shows the frequency of inspections

Inspection of	How often	Responsibility of
Roof covering	Every Five Years unless required	CBC Property
Gutters	Every Five Years unless required	CBC Property
Windows and doors	Every Five Years unless required	CBC Property
External walls	Every Five Years unless required	CBC Property
Decoration	Every Five Years unless required	CBC Property
Water and drainage	Every Five Years unless required	CBC Property
Mechanical services	Every Five Years unless required	CBC Property
Heating	Every Five Years unless required	CBC Property
Firefighting equipment	Annually	CBC Property
Electrical	Every Five Years unless required	CBC Property
External Fixtures and Fittings	Every Five Years unless required	CBC Property

Table 7.1 – Building inspection and frequency

Maintenance programme CBC Green Space Development – Infrastructure

Inspection of	How often	Responsibility of
Railings	six times per year starting February	CBC GSD
Gates	six times per year starting February	CBC GSD
Footpath surface	six times per year starting February	CBC GSD
Wooden Benches	six times per year starting February	CBC GSD
Metal Benches	six times per year starting February	CBC GSD
Bins	six times per year starting February	CBC GSD
Interpretation boards	six times per year starting February	CBC GSD
Noticeboards	six times per year starting February	CBC GSD
Tree plaques	six times per year starting February	CBC GSD
Play equipment	Weekly	CBC GSD
	Monthly	CBC GSD
	Annually	CBC GSD /outside body
Park and Open spaces	Monthly	CBC GSD
Fencing	Quarterly	CBC GSD

Table 7.2 –Park Infrastructure inspections regime and frequency

Maintenance Programme Ubico – Soft Landscape

Regime	How often
Close cut grass	2 weekly
Play area grass	2 weekly
Shrub areas	Annually (winter or spring) depending on species
Wildflower areas	Cut, cleared and seeded annually
Pathways swept	Monthly (in autumn increases)
Empty litter bins	Daily (summer twice a day)

Table 7.3 – Soft landscaping regime

8.0 Finance

The council does not separate the parks and landscapes budgets on a per park basis. However, costs for Hatherley Park are broadly divided into two main areas: management and maintenance. A budget cut imposed on the department has led to a small reduction in the overall amount allocated for the management and maintenance of the park; the Green Space team's input will be reduced without significantly impacting the maintenance and standards in the future. Management functions are performed by the council's Green Space Development Team. Maintenance is undertaken by Ubico, the council's environmental maintenance company. In terms of volunteer contributions, FoHP supports Cheltenham Borough council with a range of projects and their fundraising supports new play items, such as a giant spinning disc installed in autumn 2020.

9.0 Monitoring and Reviews

Review processes

The review process is carried out quarterly with a member of the consultees of the management plan. An annual progress and programme plan meeting takes place with Cheltenham Borough Council, and Ubico. After this meeting has taken place a meeting with the Friends group is also scheduled to feed into the plan for working parties for the following year.

10.0 Action Plan

Key:

GSDM - Green Space Development Manager

GSDO – Green Space Development Officer

CPO - Community Parks Officer

FoHP - Friends of Hatherley Park

TO - Tree Officers

PPTO - Parks and Playgrounds Technical Officer

CR - Community Ranger

SRSE- Senior Ranger (Special Events)

WT – Website team/Communication team

MC – Marketing Cheltenham

Ongoing – for tasks or projects that do not have a timeframe or end date

Regularly- for tasks that are carried out periodically

Park Development Plan

CRITERIA	VISION	AIM	ACTION	TARGET	TIMETABLE	ASSIGNED TO	PROGRESS
6.1 Welcoming Place	To ensure that Hatherley Park is welcoming and accessible to all possible users	Maintain inviting entrances to the park	Detailed plan for updating signage	Update signage & install new panel where highlighted	Ongoing	CR, FoHP	Update entrance signs 2022
			Railings & gates in good repair	Repairs and painting carried out when needed	Ongoing	PPTO	Installed 2021
		Provide information on shrubs & trees within park	Install pétanque Court sign		Ongoing	FoHP, GSDO	In progress Some labelling complete
		Continue commemorative bench scheme	Create labels for shrubs and trees within park	Produce a self-guided tree walk	Autumn 2018	FoHP	Completed 2021
			Reviewed due to new pétanque court		FoHP GSDO	Four benches sponsored by the pétanque pitch All bench additions to park completed 2021	

CRITERIA	VISION	AIM	ACTION	TARGET	TIMETABLE	ASSIGNED TO	PROGRESS
6.1 Welcoming Place continued	To promote sustainable travel	Increase access and security for cyclists	Identify suitable locations for cycle racks	Install cycle racks	Summer 2021	CPO	Three bike rack locations installed 2021
	To improve facilities within the park	Provide a café offering within the park	Identify a suitable location & operator	Undertake trial	2020	CPO	Tenders returned Feb 2021
				Open tender to find permanent operator	January 2021		The Butterfly Box now full-time operator
6.2 Healthy, Safe and Secure	To ensure the safety of all staff and users	Minimise hazards	Ensure Risk Assessments are up to date	Review RA programme in place & implemented	Annual	GSDO	
		To ensure all contractors work within H&S guidelines	Before external works, correct paperwork received	Correct paperwork received for all external works	Regularly	GSDO	
		Report H&S incidents, maintain records of breaches	Regular inspections of infrastructure & play equipment	Complete inspection reports & any faults reported & resolved	As per inspection regime	PPTO	
		Continue to work with Ubico & Police	Regular meetings/updates from Police	All parties regularly update by email or quarterly meetings	Regularly	CR	

CRITERIA	VISION	AIM	ACTION	TARGET	TIMETABLE	ASSIGNED TO	PROGRESS	
6.2 Healthy, Safe and Secure continued		Continue with comprehensive formal regime of play area inspections	Weekly visual, monthly detailed, annual external inspections	Documented inspections completed and reports retained	Ongoing	PPTO		
		Park infrastructure inspections	Remedial action inspections	Inspections fulfilled and reports retained	Ongoing	PPTO		
		Public toilet facilities considered	Discuss new provision of public toilet within the park	Assess necessity for toilet provision	January 2022	GSDO, CPO		Not deemed necessary with current demand
		Provide adequate storage for work party activities	Discuss possible additional storage shed	Alleviate any tool/storage issues	Spring 2022	GSDO, CPO, CR, FoHP		Ongoing discussion
6.3 Clean and Well Maintained	To maintain the highest standards of landscape, ground maintenance and cleanliness	Maintain the park free of litter and graffiti at all times	Review the litter and graffiti policy and lead times	Removal of fly tipping and graffiti within 1 day maximum	Regularly	GSDM, Ubico, FoHP	Review due to new café unit 2022	
		Commence the programme of replacing bins	Highlight the priority bins to replace for double capacity units	All bins replaced with double capacity bins	Ongoing	PPTO, CR		
			Ensure that any reports of fly tipping are dealt with promptly	Fly tipping removed within maximum 1 day	Ongoing	Ubico, GSDM		

CRITERIA	VISION	AIM	ACTION	TARGET	TIMETABLE	ASSIGNED TO	PROGRESS	
6.3 Clean and Well Maintained continued		Maintain commemorative benches to prolong longevity	Implement the maintenance plan	Ensure contractor compliance	Ongoing	GSDO		
			External contractor to apply oil twice a year (Oct & Mar)	All benches will have life span of approx. 10 years	Regularly	PPTO		
		Plant up area cleared on western border	Plant up with portatilla, cornus and mahonia	Area planted and mulch applied to reduce weed growth	Spring 2016	GSDO		Completed Apr 2016
		Maintaining Urban Meadow	Convert areas to perennial meadow	Diverse display	Regularly	Ubico		Ongoing
		Develop a more natural looking, native meadow	Reseed southern meadow area	Improve and reduce maintenance	Autumn 2022	CR, FoHP		
		Continue to improve border areas	Planting shrubs	5 cornus planted and mulched	Spring 2016	FoHP		Completed
				Escallonia hedge Himalayan birch planted	March 2020	FoHP		Completed
		Plant 3x Prunus, Liquidamber, Elm	Winter 2017/18	FoHP	Completed Summer 2017			

CRITERIA	VISION	AIM	ACTION	TARGET	TIMETABLE	ASSIGNED TO	PROGRESS	
6.3 Clean and Well Maintained continued			Develop a community orchard	Plant suitable local species as part of a community planting project	Winter 2021/22	CPO, CR, FoHP	Orchard deemed unsuitable	
			Improve planting bed near to pétanque court	Replant with Perennial/Prairie planting	Improve display, lower intensity of maintenance	2022		FoHP
			Maintain a safe lake edge structure	Monitor the lake edge around the horn beam	Ensure any land slippage is minimal	Regularly	PPTO	Repairs undertaken 2019
			Maintain a healthy pond environment	Desilting the lake and marginal improvements	Conduct design and feasibility study.	Winter 2022	GSDO	£27k quote received 2022. Tendering to follow
					Fundraise to undertake desilting work	Spring 2022	GSDO, FoHP	
					Cut back and remove marginal species, esp. Norfolk Reed	Contain successional growth of dominant species	February 2022	CR, FoHP
			Improve access provision	Resurface waterlogged perimeter pathway	Provide suitable multi-use path	Summer 2022	GSDO	

CRITERIA	VISION	AIM	ACTION	TARGET	TIMETABLE	ASSIGNED TO	PROGRESS
6.4 Sustainability	To adopt environmental management principles and therefore reduce the impact of management operations on environment	Produce a maintenance document To adopt an environmental policy for the parks service and therefore HP	Improve maintenance zone structure and create seasonal work plan	Streamline zonal and seasonal management program	Spring 2022	CPR, FoHP	Ongoing in line with new work plan Discussion ongoing for possible sensitively positioned compost bays Potential for composting
			Produce a list of shrubs within the zones	Secure funding and undertake work	Winter 2021/22	FoHP	
			Work within the council's policy for reducing impacts on the environment	Reduce green waste removed from site after work parties & planned maintenance	Ongoing	TO	
			Reuse natural materials whenever possible to minimise material being removed from park	Leaves retained on site in the woodland area.	Ongoing	All	
				Reduction of materials going to landfill	Ongoing	All	
	Leaves from the diseased horse chestnut bagged up and hidden discretely for 2 years	Ongoing	All				

CRITERIA	VISION	AIM	ACTION	TARGET	TIMETABLE	ASSIGNED TO	PROGRESS
6.4 Sustainability Continued		Increase the vegetation interest for longer season through planting plan taking into account climate change	Investigate different planting styles and how to incorporate within park	Bark chip around tree bases to help with water conservation and suppressing weed growth	Ongoing	ALL	
				Create dead hedges and log piles	Ongoing	All	
				Increase in the flowering and vegetation interest across the year	Ongoing	All	
				Increase in the flowering and vegetation interest across the year	Ongoing	GSDO, FoHP	
6.5 Conservation	To promote biodiversity through appropriate management	Where appropriate increase the biodiversity of the park	Identify areas for habitat improvements	Produce proposals for the areas including species if possible	Autumn 2019	CR	Review 2023
				Carry out baseline surveys before improvements	Carry out surveys once improvements carried out	Summer 2019	CR, FoHP, Local schools

CRITERIA	VISION	AIM	ACTION	TARGET	TIMETABLE	ASSIGNED TO	PROGRESS
6.5 Conservation continued		Maintain the health of park's trees	Carry out tree survey	Report produced and any work required scheduled	2020 Ongoing	TO	Completed August 2020
		Promote the Park's trees	Update website with tree list	Species list of range of flora and fauna	Ongoing	TO	
		To involve the community in recording wildlife and improving biodiversity	Continue to work with external organisations and encourage recording of species	An extended species list for a range of species that use the park	Ongoing	CR	
6.6 Heritage	Maintain the historical integrity of the park and its character zones	To promote the park's history and its significance of the park within the local area	To investigate the methods to capture historical information from the local community	Hold event for local residents to share their memories and photographs.	Ongoing	FoHP	
				80 th Birthday Party event to be held	July 2019		Completed July 2019
			Plan event for Queen's Jubilee	Develop a community event to celebrate the Jubilee 2022	June 2022	FoHP	

CRITERIA	VISION	AIM	ACTION	TARGET	TIMETABLE	ASSIGNED TO	PROGRESS
6.6 Heritage continued	Maintain the strategic significance of the green space in the new local plan and community plan	Park in local plan	Continue to ensure that planning service are aware of the significance	Meet with Planners	Ongoing	GSDM	
6.7 Community Involvement	To encourage community involvement in the park through consultation, events and activities and Friends group	Continue to work with the FoHP to support their work	To continue with the quarterly meetings and other communication	The creation of a working programme month to month for the year	Regularly	CR, FoHP	Weekly diary kept shows adherence to CBC annual maintenance plan.
		Continue to support working parties and encourage greater diversity of volunteers	Continue to promote the working parties through social media and word of mouth	Increase in number of volunteers attending working parties and potentially increase in working parties per month	Ongoing	CR, FoHP	22 regular volunteers
		Encourage visitor appreciation of the park	Add FoHP 'A Guide to the Trees of Hatherley Park' to council website	Increase awareness and use of FoHP self-led tree tour guide	February 2022	GSDO, CPO	

CRITERIA	VISION	AIM	ACTION	TARGET	TIMETABLE	ASSIGNED TO	PROGRESS
6.7 Community Involvement continued		Engage with park users for their thoughts	Users information gathering day	Comprehensive insight to park and how used	Summer 2018 Ongoing	FoHP, CR	Survey of pupils from 2 local schools & attendees at 80 th Birthday event selected new roundabout
			Continue to promote events in the Park and encourage more diverse events	Balance the number of activities with the other park users	Regularly	SRSE	
6.8 Marketing	To actively promote the park to all potential users	Increase the awareness of the park and the facilities	Ensure CBC website displays correct information	Up to date website which is easy to use	Regularly	WT	
			Work with Marketing Cheltenham	Wider awareness of Cheltenham's parks through inclusion of marketing of the town to encourage a wider range of users	Ongoing	CPO, MC	

CRITERIA	VISION	AIM	ACTION	TARGET	TIMETABLE	ASSIGNED TO	PROGRESS
6.8 Marketing continued		Raise awareness of the park for holding events	Continue to promote park and events on a range of social media	Encourage event's organiser to share to CBC social media pages	Ongoing	CR, FoHP MC, SRSE	
6.9 Management	To provide a responsive, flexible and high quality management service	Apply for the Green Flag Award	To submit the Green Flag Award application	Application submitted	February 2022	CPO	Completed submission

11.0 Appendices

11.1 A Guide to the Trees of Hatherley Park

FRIENDS OF HATHERLEY PARK



When Hatherley Park first opened in 1939, the newspaper report from the opening ceremony stated 'there is an avenue of trees bordering the main path through the park and there is an extensive shrubbery with standard flowering trees and herbaceous plants.' Today, there is still an impressive collection of stunning trees for everyone to enjoy.

The mature trees and shrubs which line the park's main path and boundary provide an excellent habitat for wildlife. The seeds and berries are an important food source for all the wildlife, including foraging bats, which follow the boundary planting to their feeding grounds.

In Cheltenham's parks, dead and fallen trees are kept to benefit wildlife. Decaying trees provide habitats for lichen, fungi and invertebrates. Insects living there are an invaluable food source for many birds and some mammals.

Holes have been drilled into some of the tree stumps to provide homes for masonry bees.

The tallest tree in the park is the hybrid black poplar (*Populus x canadensis*). It was measured in July 2018 using a laser rangefinder. The girth of the tree, measured at a height of 1.5m, was 6.39m and its height was exactly 35.5m!

Cheltenham Borough Council has a tree sponsorship scheme, which enables individuals to purchase a tree in memory of a loved one. The newest trees – five liquidambar, three elms and the Persian ironwoods have all been bought by individual members of Friends of Hatherley Park so they can be enjoyed by their owners in their lifetime.

Information about the tree scheme can be found on the Council's website: www.cheltenham.gov.uk



The Friends of Hatherley Park was set up in 2002 and became a registered charity in 2011

Funding for park improvements has been raised from membership subscriptions, community events, individual donations and grant applications. This funding has been used for many projects, including: creation of the wildlife pond; installation of additional play equipment; new picnic seating and tables; a boules court; noticeboards; the Cotswold stone boundary path; new trees and additional shrub and herbaceous planting. FoHP works with the council to maintain and enhance the park for all users.

Hatherley Park was awarded its first Green Flag in 2005 and has successfully retained it every subsequent year.

A group of volunteers meets every Thursday afternoon between 14:00 and 16:00 to garden in the park. Please contact us on www.Friendsofhatherleypark.org or just join us one Thursday afternoon. Membership forms may be downloaded from our website.



A GUIDE TO THE TREES OF HATHERLEY PARK



Produced by the
FRIENDS OF
HATHERLEY PARK



