

SECTION 6 – PROPOSALS

6.0 PROPOSALS

The following proposals are intended to apply to Pittville Park as a whole. More detailed proposals are then set out for each character area. This section should be read in conjunction with the landscape masterplan.

Introduction and Vision

The Masterplan (see Figure 155-01) sets out a vision for the future of Pittville Park. This masterplan constitutes the broadest objective for the park as a whole. The vision for the park states that:

‘Pittville Park will be known to all, available to all and loved by all that use it. It will be a special and distinctive place for pleasure and education’

There is limited scope for utilizing existing management and resources in a more structured and defined way. Standards of maintenance will only be improved and the overall visitor experience significantly enhanced by the addition of a new management and maintenance structure dedicated to the park. An ongoing programme of targeted works will focus on specific areas that will gradually be repaired and enhanced and made generally more accessible to public use. This improved maintenance regime will be greatly supplemented by a series of capital projects which it is hoped will be financed through lottery funding and other external sources.

Green Space Strategy for Cheltenham

Cheltenham Borough Council is producing a green space strategy in accordance with best practice guidance which is applied to each of the town’s major parks and urban spaces. The strategy will recognize the key attributes of Pittville Park and accurately identify the resources necessary to restore and enhance the park to a high standard.

The proposed works are not intended to radically alter the fundamental design of the site, which has remained largely unchanged for more than one hundred years. Instead they will gradually build on and improve the existing structure to reveal lost and hidden elements of the historic landscape, as well as enhance recreation and education opportunities all in a way sympathetic to the needs of the people who use the park.

Management

Many of the challenges facing Pittville Park stem from a lack of capital and revenue funding over a number of years. It is imperative that the potential prestige of the site and the interest in Pittville Park is restored and rekindled. Once restored the annual expenditure on the park should be spent on a detailed programme of planned and operational maintenance. The future management and maintenance, which must be cost effective and adequately funded, should set out clear lines of responsibility for meeting standards and achieving improvements in the management of the park. Drawing on existing skills and the demonstrable strengths of the council’s technical and personnel resources, the park should be managed under a single coherent structure capable of achieving Green Flag status. (NB: This Conservation Management Plan is accompanied by an outline ‘Ten Year Management and Maintenance Plan.’)

History

As described in Section 2 of this Conservation Management Plan, the existing physical layout of Pittville Park is the result of approximately two hundred years of development. However it is neither practical nor appropriate to try to restore aspects of the site to a precise date or to set it 'in aspic'. However, there are aspects of the park that remain relatively unchanged and where possible this layout and character should be used to inform future interventions to aid the reinstatement of historic integrity and character. Throughout the proposals where reference is made to historic plans and design it should be noted that the process of repairing and enhancing the grounds at Pittville Park should be seen as sympathetic evolution rather than a historically accurate restoration.

In addition the site has moved on from being a private estate or private pleasure grounds to a public open space and it is this contemporary use that has become a key factor that needs to be taken into account and balanced with any historical considerations.

Access and Circulation

The proposed works, as summarized on the Masterplan, will result in a far broader usage of the park and ensuring full accessibility to the public. This is manifested by the overarching proposals to radically improve the integration of the site by improving links to either side of the Evesham Road. The proposed layouts of new and restored footpaths as well as significantly enhanced entrances aided by the use of appropriate materials will ensure that the entire site is fully accessible to everyone, particularly people who live around the entire perimeter of the park. Circulation around the site will be greatly improved through the proposed, long term completion of continuous footpath circuits. Analysis of the site has identified the need for a significantly improved network of footpaths, but with due regard for public safety when considering formal access across the golf course and the unpredictable nature of ground movement and settlement of the former tip site.

Security

A detailed analysis of the security requirements for Pittville Park has not been undertaken as part of this Conservation Management Plan exercise. However the landscape masterplan proposals seek to:

Increase circulation within all areas of Pittville Park and this will contribute to an improvement in natural surveillance

Minimise potential hiding areas and anti-social uses through appropriate management of vegetation

Where necessary securing boundaries through the use of appropriate planting, gates and fencing

Access and Interpretation

The Access Plan and Audience Development Plan that accompanies this document considers the issues of improving access to the site and should be read in conjunction with this document. However following analysis of the park there is a need for a revised comprehensive system of signage that should be adopted across the park using a simple, robust, sustainable high quality but unobtrusive design.

Tree Management

Pittville Park has an important collection of veteran ornamental trees including horse chestnut, oak, sycamore and cedar. The surviving veteran trees are of regional significance in providing old tree habitat and landscape character and should be protected in order to allow new tree planting to mature.

Surviving veteran trees should be retained to their maximum safe biological life through sensitive management, and tree surgery should be undertaken where essential. The trees should be surveyed regularly and the data from the surveys used to inform management and interpretation. Detailed proposals for the maintenance and management of the trees will be developed in the Management and Maintenance Plan, but the broad principles are:

- An ongoing tree planting programme will ensure a good balance of tree ages for the future.
- An ongoing maintenance programme will ensure the health and longevity of existing trees with any potentially dangerous trees being removed
- Poorly positioned trees, i.e. those causing damage to building or structures or blocking key views and trees deemed to be inappropriate species for their location should be removed or relocated
- Potential veteran trees and those that will make exceptional future specimens will be given the space required to develop
- Where trees have been planted as memorials the provision of memorial plaques should be considered and there is also the potential to provide dedications on future trees. However a strategy for the positioning of new tree planting, combined with an agreed species list, should be worked up and agreed in advance.

Planting

An overall reduction of planted areas will reduce maintenance requirements. However planting that is proposed that requires higher maintenance will be restricted to key areas where it is considered that the net benefit will justify the increased maintenance. (The proposed Community Gardens adjacent to St Paul's is a case in point.)

This historical associations of some of the planted areas will be interpreted through the re-introduction of certain species.

The planting philosophy for Pittville Park will reflect sustainability best practice with careful selection of drought tolerant, long lived species which require low maintenance. Naturalistic planting with a range of colour, form and shape will enhance the park throughout the seasons.

Education and Interpretation

The opportunities for improved education and interpretation within Pittville Park are covered in greater detail in the Access and Audience Development Plan. However in summary there is scope for increased education activity across the park. An education strategy should be prepared for the park with targets including:

- Increased contact with local schools, including sporting events, use of the park for cross-country and orienteering;
- Establish close links with local higher education establishments;
- Education use of the lakes and veteran trees for science, environment and the arts;
- Exploring educational aspects of events, such as subsidising schools tickets for theatre in the park with external funding;
- Addressing special educational needs, for example, with the new community gardens;
- Training, studentships and new apprenticeships in the park and garden.

Public Consultation

In working up this lottery funded application, extensive public consultation has been undertaken. The proposals set out in this and other reports will involve changes to the park which will merit continued public consultation. However given the likely timescale involved in securing major external funding this can lead to unrealistically raised expectations. A programme of continued public consultation should focus on: key issues likely to concern local interest groups; garnering of local support for involvement in the park; ‘marketing’ of the special interest in the park.

The Friends of Pittville have done remarkable work in documenting the local historical interests of the park. A major phase of reinvestment in the park may be the time to encourage the development of the Friends to encourage wider participation, fund raising and activities supported by some formal Council input and with a direct role participating in the management of the park.

Furniture and Signage

At present there is a lack of signage to and within the park, and once in the park there is a poor quality of signage, furniture and access surfaces.

A uniform litter bin should be gradually introduced. The litter situation should be monitored and if litter continues to become a major issue then the need to increase capacity must be considered which should go hand in hand with signage to litter collection points and a review of maintenance practices including resources, capacity of collection vehicles, re-routing of collection routes etc. The siting of new litter bins must be considered with due care to appropriate siting.

Litter collection policies should be reviewed and the practicalities of a recycling system within the park considered.

A greater provision should be made for seating. Seats should be of a style that is suited to the historic setting of Pittville Park and should articulate and punctuate the landscape, located at points around the site where they will benefit key views and not block circulation routes for example.

Future park furniture should be robust and vandal-proof. Seating should be set discreetly and considered as attractive features in their own right.

Traffic Calming

The A435 Evesham Road is a busy route which leads directly into the town centre from the north. The wide open carriage way, especially north of the upper lake, invites higher speeds and makes pedestrian crossing extremely difficult at busy times. This road also effectively dissects the park and this along has led to a fragmentation of facilities and promotes the sense that there are in fact two parks.

Evesham Road has already been identified by Gloucestershire Highways as a road which requires traffic calming measures and it is felt that a sympathetic and sensitive scheme would reduce the dominance of the car and enable safer crossing at designated points.

Volunteers

Existing workforce is limited to the staff within the Cheltenham Borough Council parks department. Wherever possible, and especially for major tasks such as clearance of leaves and litter etc, it would be beneficial to involve voluntary organizations such as the Friends of Pittville or the BTCV. This would enable the masterplan vision to be achieved within a shorter time-frame and would allow the CBC gardeners to concentrate their time on other maintenance issues throughout the year.

Voluntary work could also be used to engage the local community and help to foster a sense of ownership. Initially such input could be organized through local organizations such as the Friends of Pittville or PARA. Eventually this could be extended to the wider community. Voluntary work for local residents would best be realized through tangible focused projects such as bulb planting where the benefits would be relatively instant and identifiable.

6.1 PROPOSALS BY CHARACTER AREA

The following section outlines long term restoration, management and development proposals for each individual character area.

6.1.1 Pump Room Lawns (Character Area 1)

Landscape Setting

- 6.1.1.1 Instigate a revised management and maintenance programme of repair and renewal within this significant historic landscape setting. Key views and vistas which have been identified should be maintained and enhanced.
- 6.1.1.2 The existing setting around the Pump Rooms is out of keeping with the historic setting. There should be softening of the landscape around this building, reinstatement of sympathetic planting in place of dark, bitmac surface which runs directly up to the building.
- 6.1.1.3 Surface treatment – the hard bitmac surface is unattractive and is in visual conflict with the soft landscape of this character area. Replace with softer, informal surface treatment such as 'Naturetex' by Bituchem Asphalt.
- 6.1.1.4 Iron railings and gates – wear and tear is affecting the visual appearance of these features. A rolling programme to restore or replace the railings should be implemented to raise and maintain high quality standards within this area.
- 6.1.1.5 Consider the reinstatement flower beds within this character area.

Accessibility

- 6.1.1.6 Furniture – seating in the form of benches, rubbish bins and interpretation boards should be complementary to each other and to the setting. A pallet of furniture should be agreed and maintained to compliment the overall setting and character of the park as well as this character area.
- 6.1.1.7 Seating opportunities should be provided in a range of spaces, with some isolated seats, some arranged in groups for a variety of social uses. Key views and vistas which have been identified in Figures 3.3 and 3.4 should be the focus of some seating arrangements.
- 6.1.1.8 Rubbish bins should be introduced to a uniform design and appropriate to the setting. Management and maintenance programme must include for regular collections to avoid overflowing onto the paths and grass.
- 6.1.1.9 Interpretation boards should be sited for maximum affect and at an appropriate height. Child's eye level is low and should be accommodated. Signage should be in keeping with the furniture pallet and contribute to the overall visual appearance of the park.
- 6.1.1.10 The exterior stone work of the Pump Room is to be renovated. In addition an investigation into the potential for the balcony to be opened to enable an

appreciation of the setting of Pittville Park within the wider landscape should be considered.

- 6.1.1.11 The Evesham Road play area – conduct an appraisal into the current play value offered by this facility and using the results, rejuvenate the area to offer the widest play value across a wide age range. Small scale improvements were made to the Evesham Road play area during summer 2008 with the provision of new play equipment and surfacing.
- 6.1.1.12 Include quiet planted areas where children can explore their world along or with friends, away from parents and carers. Encourage exploration, discovery and learning through play.
- 6.1.1.13 Consider removing the fence adjacent to the Pump Room drive to encourage play in the wider landscape.
- 6.1.1.14 Improve east-west connectivity by installing a self closing gate adjacent to the aviaries to enable access across Evesham Road into the west park.
- 6.1.1.15 Re-open the gates adjacent to the toilets to the south of the area to create a transitional gateway space between the east and west park. Traffic calming measures along Evesham Road will reduce the dominance of the car and create a pedestrian dominated environment.
- 6.1.1.16 Provide a portable coffee kiosk in the vicinity of the play area, creating opportunities for visitors to remain in the park for longer periods, especially with children using play facilities.
- 6.1.1.17 Rejuvenate the landscape setting surrounding the aviaries, enabling the structures to blend into the landscape. Remove the majority of raised planting beds, although retain or rebuild a proportion to increase accessibility to planting for disabled visitors. Replace remaining planters with softer planting to include perennials and grasses. Aim to create a 'garden experience' especially for younger visitors, with an emphasis on planting which appeals to all the senses. The older aviaries were refurbished with new timbers and shingle roof tiles during summer 2008.

Trees and Vegetation

- 6.1.1.18 It is recommended that a young Ginkgo near the southwest corner of the main lawn be re-located. Re-site the Oak which will obscure views of the lake and beyond.



2007 View from Pump Room (Arrow shows young Oak to be removed)

- 6.1.1.19 Retain trees, where possible. Conservation of the large Turkey Oak (**Target Note 1, Appendix 2**). Consider planting other *native* tree species.
- 6.1.1.20 Control of the species of remembrance trees. Prepare a selection list of trees suitable for the park with native species as a priority.
- 6.1.1.21 Plant native Bluebell bulbs (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*) beneath trees
- 6.1.1.22 Install woodcrete bat and bird boxes in accord with guidance in sections 5.14 and 5.15

Ecology

Grassland and Lawns

- 6.1.1.23 Continue current mowing regime and removal of cuttings to retain existing amenity use.
- 6.1.1.24 Limit or avoid entirely the use of herbicides and pesticides throughout the site during the typical management regime.
- 6.1.1.25 Consider the retention of an unmown strip of grassland along the eastern boundary (3-5 metre wide grassed strip between the eastern edge of the park and the eastern footpath). This will create a more natural sheltered, margin habitat with tall grasses and herbs, ideal for use by butterflies such as Speckled Wood and other invertebrates. Such features are also important for foraging bats. The strips of grassland can be mown once annually in September when the butterflies have bred; all arisings should be removed.

6.1.2 Upper Lake (Character Area 2)

Landscape

- 6.1.2.1 Begin a management and maintenance programme of renewal, restoration and removal for significant character area. Key views and vistas which have been identified should be maintained and enhanced.
- 6.1.2.2 The surface treatment of footpaths surrounding the upper lake is in need of urgent restoration and rejuvenation. Repair and resurface with appropriate surface treatment to compliment the historic setting and soften the landscape, such as 'Naturetex' by Bituchem Asphalt.
- 6.1.2.3 Remove floating reed bed from historic vista between southern lake shore and pump room and re-locate to the east of the lake. Reed Beds were installed to increase the aquatic diversity of the lake environment during winter 2007-08 following extensive de-silting operations and an aquatic survey of the lakes.
- 6.1.2.4 Iron railings and gates – wear and tear is affecting the visual appearance of these features. The management and maintenance programme should identify a rolling programme to restore or replace to raise and maintain high quality standards throughout the park.
- 6.1.2.5 Conduct regular (5–10 year) appraisals into the condition of historic bridges and gate piers, instigating renewal, restoration and removal as necessary.

Accessibility

- 6.1.2.6 Furniture – seating in the form of benches, rubbish bins and interpretation boards should be complementary to each other and to the setting. A pallet of furniture should be agreed and maintained to compliment the overall setting and character of the park.
- 6.1.2.7 Seating opportunities should be provided in a range of spaces, with some isolated seats, some arranged in groups for a variety of social uses. Key views and vistas which have been identified should be the focus of some seating arrangements. New seats were installed around the upper lake between autumn 2007 and summer 2008 in line with the master plan proposal to meet the on-going needs of park users.
- 6.1.2.8 Rubbish bins should be to a uniform design and appropriate for the setting and use. Management and maintenance programme must include for regular collections to avoid overflowing onto the paths and grass.
- 6.1.2.9 Interpretation boards should be sited for maximum affect and at an appropriate height. Child's eye level is low and should be accommodated. Signage should be in keeping with the furniture pallet and contribute to the overall visual appearance of the park.

Trees and Vegetation

- 6.1.2.10 Remove areas of overgrown marginal vegetation from areas adjacent to footpaths along the southern lakeside to enable clear views of the lake and northern lakeside. Whilst retaining areas adjacent to planted pockets which are separated

- from the footpaths by iron railings. Maintain lakeside planting to an appropriate size.
- 6.1.2.11 Shrub planting around the Upper Lake should be subject to a rolling programme of pruning and/or replacement or removal. Sensitive and appropriate seasonal planting, pruning and maintenance will ensure the landscape setting to the upper lake is restored and maintained to a high standard which is visually in keeping with the historic character and setting of the park.
- 6.1.2.12 The general condition of trees within this area is good, although there is a lack of maintenance to some of the more densely planted sections around the lake, where self-set trees have been allowed to establish themselves and one or two undesirable species have been planted e.g. Lombardy Poplar on the south side of the lake.
- 6.1.2.13 The views to and from the Pump Room are partially obscured by trees of low quality and landscape value. In particular there are a number of trees on both the north and south sides of the lake which if removed, would significantly enhance the area, opening up views of the Pump Room from the Long Garden and visa versa, as well as providing better views of the lake itself. This may involve the removal of a number of potential bat trees including the split Willow on the south shore (**Target Note 7, Appendix 2**). The guidance provided under section 6.2.1 of this report will apply for the protection and conservation of bat habitats (including potential bat habitats)
- 6.1.2.14 It is recommended that the mature Lombardy Poplar towards the west end of the southern bank of the lake is removed.
- 6.1.2.15 The pockets of woody species planting in the borders around the Upper Lake could be improved with the introduction of native woodland herb plug plants such as Herb Robert, Lesser Celandine, native Bluebell, Foxglove, Ramsons and Red Campion. All these species will provide colour in the spring and early summer.

Ecology

Aquatic habitats

- 6.1.2.16 Continued monitoring of lake siltation and application of de-silting as applicable. The residuum at the inlet of the upper lake was desilted during spring 2008. This feature acts as a silting pond and reduces silt deposits in the upper and lower lakes and is important for maintaining water and aquatic habitat quality.
- 6.1.2.17 Continued maintenance of the floating, vegetated islands installed to assist in the restoration of the water quality of the lakes by slowing down silt incursion and improving water quality.
- 6.1.2.18 Continued application of advice from Aquascience.
- 6.1.2.19 The lakes would benefit from the introduction of marginal, emergent plant species planted on berms. The berms can be arranged to create shallow backwaters which is inaccessible to the large number of fish. Such areas may become valuable refuges for invertebrates including breeding dragonflies and damselflies. Suitable plant species to introduce include: -

Branched Bur-reed (*Sparganium erectum*)
Common Spike-rush (*Eleocharis palustris*)

Common Water Starwort (*Callitriche stagnalis*)
Rigid Hornwort (*Ceratophyllum demersum*)
Spiked Water Milfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*)
Sweet Flag (*Acorus calmus*)
Water Forget-me-not (*Myosotis* sp.)
Water Mint (*Mentha aquatica*)
Yellow Iris (*Iris pseudacorus*)

Breeding birds (waterfowl)

- 6.1.2.20 The introduction of small, permanent floating islands in the centre of the lakes will provide habitats for use by nesting waterfowl. At the current time waterfowl breeding success may be limited as a result of rat predation on eggs. The use of islands away from the margins of the banks will increase the chances of survival as the islands are less accessible to Brown Rat.
- 6.1.2.21 Bird boxes should also be provided on suitable trees in accord with the guidance in section 5.15

Brown Rat

- 6.1.2.22 Brown Rats around the margins of the lakes should be controlled with the use of techniques which will not increase the risk of fatality to other wildlife

6.1.3 Pittville Lawns (Character Area 3)

Landscape

- 6.1.3.1 Begin a management and maintenance programme of renewal, restoration and removal for this sensitive but significant historic landscape setting. Key views and vistas which have been identified should be maintained and enhanced.
- 6.1.3.2 Surface treatment – the hard bitmac surface is visually unattractive and is in visual conflict with the soft landscape of this character area. Replace with softer, informal surface treatment such as ‘Naturetex’ by Bituchem Asphalt.
- 6.1.3.3 Surface treatment for the informal paths which run adjacent to Pittville Lawn to be replaced with a durable yet visually soft finish, which is in keeping with the character and setting of the park, such as ‘Naturetex’ by Bituchem Asphalt.
- 6.1.3.4 Consider the long term future of the Scout Hut which is unattractive and blocks the north-south vista along the lawns. Re-locate the current tenants and demolish the buildings, restoring the building footprint to lawn.

Accessibility

- 6.1.3.5 Furniture – seating in the form of benches, rubbish bins and interpretation boards should be complementary to each other and to the setting. A pallet of furniture should be agreed and maintained to compliment the overall setting and character of the park.
- 6.1.3.6 Seating opportunities should be provided in a range of spaces, with some isolated seats, some arranged in groups for a variety of social uses. Key views across the lawns which have been identified should be the focus of some seating arrangements.
- 6.1.3.7 Rubbish bins should be to a uniform design and appropriate for the setting and use. Management and maintenance programme must include for regular collections to avoid overflowing onto the paths and grass.
- 6.1.3.8 Interpretation boards should be sited for maximum affect and at an appropriate height. Child’s eye level is low and should be accommodated. Signage should be in keeping with the furniture pallet and contribute to the overall visual appearance of the park.
- 6.1.3.9 The future use of the Central Cross Café should be investigated. This is a valuable resource for the park, despite its location to the periphery of activities and the business plan should consider the appropriateness of maintaining this facility. If retained, opening hours should be extended and the amount and design of portable furniture available for customers should be reviewed.

Trees and Vegetation

- 6.1.3.10 The majority of the trees in these areas are in good condition, and there is probably little scope for any major enhancement works. Whilst there seems to be no obvious reason for the open space in the centre of the southern garden, it would seem desirable to keep it this way.

- 6.1.3.11 Since the removal of the Holm Oak at the southern end, there is now some scope for new planting here, and given that the middle-aged Yew, just to the north, is markedly suppressed on its south side, removal of this tree also, is to be recommended (there are currently six Yew trees within this garden).
- 6.1.3.12 In the northwest corner of the northern garden there is a young *Ginkgo biloba* of good potential, and an early mature hybrid Poplar. The latter (undesirable species) should be removed to favour the former, whilst selective removal of some of the prolific Yew trees in both gardens, should be considered.
- 6.1.3.13 Retain trees, where possible. Consider planting other *native* tree species.
- 6.1.3.14 Retain all standing dead wood where it is safe to do so (for woodpeckers, bats and invertebrates).
- 6.1.3.15 Control of the species of remembrance trees. Prepare a selective list of trees suitable for the park with native species as a priority.
- 6.1.3.16 Plant native Bluebell bulbs (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*) beneath trees
- 6.1.3.17 Replacement bird boxes should also be provided on suitable trees. A general bird box constructed from 'woodcrete' and less likely to suffer squirrel damage is presented in the Appendices.
- 6.1.3.18 Install woodcrete bat and bird boxes in accord with guidance in sections 5.14 and 5.15

Ecology

Grassland and Lawns

- 6.1.3.19 Continue current mowing regime and removal of cuttings to retain existing amenity use.
- 6.1.3.20 Limit or avoid entirely the use of herbicides and pesticides throughout the site during the typical management regime.
- 6.1.3.21 Consider the retention of unmown, 3-5 metre wide strips of grassland within the lawns (particularly around the margins). The conservation of areas of tall grasses with flowering herbs will provide habitats suitable for use by butterfly species such as Meadow Brown and Speckled Wood. The strips of grassland can be mown once annually in September when the butterflies have bred; all arisings should be removed.

6.1.4 Agg Gardner (Character Area 4)

Landscape

- 6.1.4.1 Establish a community garden, to include a selection of flowering plants and trees along with vegetables and fruit, along the southern boundary to soften the existing boundary treatment and provide a focus for community involvement in the design, planning, management and maintenance of the park. This involvement will help to promote a sense of stewardship and pride in the local area and will provide educational opportunities for the local communities and visitors to the park.
- 6.1.4.2 Create a series of informal footpaths to link the gateways from the town centre with the Lower Lakeside and parkland beyond. A variety of footpaths will enable a choice of routes, increase legibility and increase perceptions of safety within the park, especially at night. Creating soft, sinuous paths will soften the boundary and restore the intimate park feeling which has disappeared. Footpaths will provide a clean and safe route to the Agg Gardner pavilion, which is currently accessible across a grass surface. Key views and vistas which have been identified should be maintained and enhanced.
- 6.1.4.3 Re-locate the existing hard surfaced footpath which links the main gateways from the St Paul's residential area with the lower lakeside. Currently it runs beneath the canopy of mature Sycamores and its relocation will benefit the health and longevity of these trees and enable the trees to be included into the new play area, providing valuable shade and a natural resource.
- 6.1.4.4 Create a new gateway space in consultation with community groups to announce the arrival into Pittville Park and celebrate the significance of this historic park.
- 6.1.4.5 Some areas of grassland to the periphery of the character area will be left unmown throughout the summer and encouraged to become wildflower meadows, providing greater seasonal interest for visitors along with increasing the range of natural habitats within the park. (See Ecology section below)

Accessibility

- 6.1.4.6 Furniture – seating in the form of benches, rubbish bins and interpretation boards should be complementary to each other and to the setting. A pallet of furniture should be agreed and maintained to compliment the overall setting and character of the park.
- 6.1.4.7 Seating opportunities should be provided in a range of spaces, with some isolated seats, some arranged in groups for a variety of social uses. Key views and vistas across the recreation ground to the north and east have been identified in figure 3.3 and 3.4, should be the focus of some seating arrangements, along with key glimpsed views to the south through the residential buildings of St Paul's.
- 6.1.4.8 Rubbish bins should be to a uniform design and appropriate for the setting and use. The management and maintenance programme must include for regular collections to avoid overflowing onto the paths and grass.
- 6.1.4.9 Signage should be in keeping with the furniture pallet and contribute to the overall visual appearance of the park. Signage should be sited at appropriate points and levels to be accessible to all visitors to the park.

- 6.1.4.10 A football and rugby pitch will be marked out and associated maintenance will be identified in the Management and Maintenance Plan.
- 6.1.4.11 The use and accessibility of the Agg Gardner Pavilion should be considered. The building is ideally situated to provide a permanent base for a small, dedicated team of officers / gardeners to operate from in the event of a successful HLF lottery bid. The proposed facilities within the Agg Gardner area would benefit from accessible changing facilities and the building could become the base for community projects within the park.

The pavilion was upgraded and extended during Spring 2008 to accommodate a local community youth group run by Gloucester County Council Youth Service during the evening and weekends. The changing facilities were also refurbished for their existing use as changing facilities for the adjacent football pitch, and for proposed community activities on Pittville Lake.

Trees and Vegetation

- 6.1.4.12 Some replacement planting along the eastern boundary, where the existing trees have a relatively short safe useful life expectancy, is recommended.
- 6.1.4.13 Retain all trees and dead stumps (*Target Note 10*) Consider planting other *native* tree species in keeping with the landscape setting.

Tree-lined habitat along eastern boundary

- 6.1.4.14 Retain all trees and dead stumps.
- 6.1.4.15 The linear wooded habitat along the eastern edge of the Agg Gardner can be enhanced for use by birds, butterflies and other wildlife by the implementation of the following: -
- Reduce the mowing regime beneath the trees along the eastern boundary;
 - A greater diversity of bird species can be encouraged by increasing the structural diversity of this area. It is recommended that local areas of native shrub underplanting is introduced along this edge of the site. Suitable shrubs species include Hawthorn, Blackthorn, Yew, Hazel and Holly;
 - The under-planting will be suitable for use by breeding passerine birds such as Robin, Blackbird, Mistle Thrush and Song Thrush which will visit the adjacent amenity grassland to feed on earthworms;
 - Consider introducing plug plants and bulbs;
 - Install woodcrete bat and bird boxes in accord with guidance in sections 5.14 and 5.15.

Ecology

grasslands

- 6.1.4.16 Continue current mowing regime and removal of cuttings to retain existing grassland amenity use.
- 6.1.4.17 The amenity grassland habitats (particularly along the interface between the houses off Marle Hill Road and the Agg Gardner) could be enhanced by creating marginal wildflower grasslands. The grasslands can be restricted to 5-10m wide strips around the margins so that the amenity purposes of the Agg Gardner area are not conflicted

6.1.5 Lower Lake (Character Area 5)

Landscape

- 6.1.5.1 Begin a management and maintenance programme of renewal, restoration and removal for this sensitive but significant historic landscape setting. Key views and vistas which have been identified should be maintained and enhanced.
- 6.1.5.2 Surface treatment – the hard bitmac surface is visually unattractive and is in visual conflict with the soft landscape of this character area. Replace with softer, informal surface treatment such as 'Naturetex' by Bituchem Asphalt.
- 6.1.5.3 The western lakeside, including waterfall and Wyman's brook should be restored and accessibility improved. Existing stonework should be restored. Planting with appropriate native species will enhance this feature (see Ecology section below) Seating opportunities will be provided here, along with interpretation about the role of this area in the history of the park. The outfall was refurbished in summer 2008 to offset years of erosion, using Forest of Dean stone to match existing cascade features.

Accessibility

- 6.1.5.4 A new bridge should be designed and installed to replace the Rustic Bridge destroyed by fire. Consider design workshops will be run with local young people to produce an inspiration and design for the bridge.
- 6.1.5.5 Interpretation boards should be sited for maximum affect and at an appropriate height. Child's eye level is low and should be accommodated. Signage should be in keeping with the furniture pallet and contribute to the overall visual appearance of the park.
- 6.1.5.6 Furniture – seating in the form of benches, rubbish bins and interpretation boards should be complementary to each other and to the setting. A pallet of furniture should be agreed and maintained to compliment the overall setting and character of the park. Existing seating opportunities around the lower lakeside are a variety of styles and conditions. These should be removed and replaced with a complementary range to those offered in the east park. New seats were installed around the lower lake between autumn 2007 and summer 2008 in line with the masterplan proposal to meet the on-going needs of park users.
- 6.1.5.7 Seating opportunities should be provided in a range of spaces, with some isolated seats, some arranged in groups for a variety of social uses. Key views and vistas which have been identified in figures 3.3 and 3.4 should be the focus of some seating arrangements.
- 6.1.5.8 Seating opportunities must be provided close to hard surfaced path to enable access for all visitors.
- 6.1.5.9 Rubbish bins should be to a uniform design and appropriate for the setting and use. Management and maintenance programme must include for regular collections to avoid overflowing onto the paths and grass.
- 6.1.5.10 The bollard erected on the bridge over Wyman's Brook will be replaced with a gated entrance to prohibit access to unauthorised vehicles. The gates will enable access to emergency vehicles and maintenance teams when required.

Trees and Vegetation

- 6.1.5.11 There is little justification for drastic changes to the treescape in this area, certain individual trees are worthy of mention. On the southern side of the lake at the northern end, a large mature London Plane is situated beside the footpath. The growth of the crown of this tree is being influenced by its lesser neighbours, not least by a group of four mature Larch on its southern side, which should be removed to favour the Plane. Retain monoliths to provide habitats and standing deadwood.
- 6.1.5.12 On the northern bank of the lake there are several notable trees, including two mature Black Poplar, a Horse Chestnut and several Beech, all of which will require sensitive maintenance if they are to be preserved for the long term.
- 6.1.5.13 Retain all trees and dead stumps (**Target Note 14, Appendix 2**). Consider planting other *native* tree species.
- 6.1.5.14 The pockets of woody species planting could be improved with the introduction of native woodland herb plug plants such as Herb Robert, Lesser Celandine, native Bluebell, Foxglove, Ramsons and Red Campion. All these species will provide colour in the spring and early summer.
- 6.1.5.15 Install woodcrete bat and bird boxes on trees in accord with guidance in sections 5.14 and 5.15.

Ecology

Aquatic habitats

- 6.1.5.16 Continued monitoring of lake siltation and application of de-silting as applicable.
- 6.1.5.17 Continued application of advice from Aquascience.
- 6.1.5.18 Retention and conservation of the existing island as a refuge for breeding water fowl including Mute Swan.
- 6.1.5.19 The lakes would benefit from the introduction of marginal, emergent plant species planted on berms. The berms can be arranged to create shallow backwaters which is inaccessible to the large number of fish. Such areas may become valuable refuges for invertebrates including breeding dragonflies and damselflies. Suitable plant species to introduce include: -
- Branched Bur-reed (*Sparganium erectum*)
 - Common Spike-rush (*Eleocharis palustris*)
 - Common Water Starwort (*Callitriche stagnalis*)
 - Rigid Hornwort (*Ceratophyllum demersum*)
 - Spiked Water Milfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*)
 - Sweet Flag (*Acorus calamus*)
 - Water Forget-me-not (*Myosotis* sp.)
 - Water Mint (*Mentha aquatica*)
 - Yellow Iris (*Iris pseudacorus*)
- 6.1.5.20 The berms with planted emergent vegetation would also assist in the reduction in the extent of bank erosion which is occurring particularly at the western end of the lake.

6.1.5.21 The outfall at the western end of the lake is currently an amalgamation of concrete, stone and reinforcing rods (see **Photo 12, Fig 3.4**). This area should be reinstated by removing and installing a new outfall or enhancing the existing by attaching stone cladding (ideally limestone) to the vertical faces. Gaps between the cladding could be planted with native fern species such as Hart's Tongue, Broad Buckler fern and Male Fern. It is likely that this area will colonise with liverwort and moss species.

Bridge

6.1.5.22 Daubenton's Bat were recorded foraging over the lake in May 2008, this species typically roosts in bridges or culverts over water. The desire to reinstate the bridge over the lake creates an opportunity to encourage roosting Daubenton's Bat. The underarch of the bridge could be fitted with a bat box or more appropriately an internal chamber with bat access from the underarch.

Breeding birds

6.1.5.23 The introduction of small, permanent floating islands in the centre of the lakes will provide habitats for use by nesting waterfowl. At the current time waterfowl breeding success may be limited as a result of rat predation on eggs. The use of islands away from the margins of the banks will increase the chances of survival as the islands are less accessible to Brown Rat.

6.1.5.24 Bird boxes should also be provided on suitable trees in accord with the guidance in section 5.15.

Brown Rat

6.1.5.25 Brown Rats around the margins of the lakes should be controlled with the use of techniques which should not increase the risk of fatality to other wildlife.

Terrapin

6.1.5.26 There are reports of the presence of Terrapin at the Lower Lake. Unfortunately, unwanted pet Terrapins have been released in high numbers in ponds and canals throughout Britain, particularly in areas accessible to the public. Whilst some Terrapin species cannot survive in British habitats owing to the climate and food availability, the red-eared Terrapin from North America has survived. The terrapins at Pittville Park are most likely the red-eared terrapin. The import of this species into the EC is now illegal but the animals can be long-lived. Similarly, it is illegal under the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* to release non-native animals into the wild.

6.1.5.27 The Terrapins can have a harmful effect on the biodiversity of the lakes as Terrapins have been reported to take invertebrates and young birds.

6.1.5.28 It is recommended that further surveys into the prevalence of Terrapin in the Upper and Lower Lakes are carried out, the most appropriate time to spot the terrapins is early in the morning and the late afternoon in the summer months when terrapins can be seen basking on logs and rocks at the margins of the lakes. The surveys will inform the scope and effort involved in an eradication programme. The programme is likely to involve the removal of the Terrapins from the pond habitats by trapping. The terrapins can then be humanely disposed of in

accord with relevant advice from the RSPCA or passed to the RSPCA. Terrapins must not be moved to another pond or wild habitat.

6.1.6 Marle Hill (Character Area 6)

Landscape

- 6.1.6.1 The grassland to the north of the lower lake is predominantly given over to the Approach Golf Course and has no hard surfaced footpaths to link the lakeside with the northern boundary. A series of informal paths will dissect the golf course, to re-create the historic route between the town centre and former site of Marle Hill House along with other gateway locations. Care will be taken in the siting of these footpaths and discreet but clear warning signs should be installed.
- 6.1.6.2 The grassland will be maintained as short throughout the growing season. Large areas to the periphery of this area could be allowed to establish as wildflower meadows (see ecology section below), which would significantly increase the range and nature of wildlife habitats in the park and add to the visual character in an appropriate manner. Key views and vistas which have been identified should be maintained and enhanced.
- 6.1.6.3 Refurbish the landscape and the existing tennis courts and skateboard park. Enhance the landscape with new tree planting. The tennis courts were refurbished in late 2007 with a new porous macadam surface. This work has re-invigorated the use of the courts and the demand for their use which includes a regular block booking arrangement.
- 6.1.6.4 Remove the narrow, straight, hard bitmac surfaced footpath which runs east-west to the north of the tennis courts and replace with an informal, sinuous path surfaced with a suitable material such as 'Naturetex' by Bituchem Asphalt.

Accessibility

- 6.1.6.5 Consider a destination point within the mature trees which once lined the carriage drive to Marle Hill House. This position has excellent views towards the Cotswold escarpment to the east and across the east park. Currently a narrow, hard surfaced bitmac path ends short of this point, with no destination. Creating a destination here within the trees will provide a focal point for visual and physical access from both the east and west park. Seating opportunities will be provided here and the destination could be marked by a sculpture, possible similar in nature to the one which stands in Clarence Square. Interpretation could be considered here?
- 6.1.6.6 An informal footpath will link the destination point with the lower lakeside footpath and will follow the route marked by a current strong desire line.
- 6.1.6.7 Gateway spaces will be re-defined with informal footpaths and appropriate furniture. Views from these northern gateway spaces towards the town centre and wider landscape beyond will be acknowledge with the position of seating and interpretation boards.
- 6.1.6.8 Create a new space for older children and teenagers. A playful space should be created to challenge both physical and mental skills along with providing a valuable space to socialise and 'hang out' with friends in a relaxed, natural environment. This new space must be inclusive for all.

Trees and Vegetation

- 6.1.6.9 In this area the constraints of the golf course will have a bearing on the nature and extent of any additional planting, but there is undoubtedly vast scope for enhancing this relatively barren section of the park. One suggestion would be the planting of further *Wellingtonia*, to create dominant landscape features for the future.
- 6.1.6.10 The eastern edge (adjacent to Evesham Road), and the northern edge (adjacent to Albemarle Gate) would benefit from some carefully chosen specimen trees.
- 6.1.6.11 Remove the young trees which have been planted alongside the tennis courts and replant to the periphery of the park, possible adjacent to Albermarle Road to the north their current location.
- 6.1.6.12 Retain and conserve all trees. Consider planting other *native* tree species.
- 6.1.6.13 Control of the species of remembrance trees. Prepare a selective list of trees suitable for the park with native species as a priority.
- 6.1.6.14 Install woodcrete bat and bird boxes in accord with guidance in sections 5.14 and 5.15.
- 6.1.6.15 There is an opportunity along the old lane to create a ride habitat for use by butterfly species. The selective removal of the younger trees with the retention of unmown grassland along the wooded strip with some linear underplanting of native shrub species such as Hawthorn, Dogwood, Blackthorn and Elder will create a more diverse tier of habitats and a more varied structure for the attraction of wildlife.
- 6.1.6.16 Plant native Bluebell bulbs (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*) beneath trees in the old lane.

Ecology

Grassland and Lawns

- 6.1.6.17 Continue current mowing regime and removal of cuttings to retain existing grassland use as an area for golf.
- 6.1.6.18 Limit or avoid entirely the use of herbicides and pesticides throughout the site during the typical management regime.
- 6.1.6.19 Consider the retention of areas of grassland around the boundaries of the grassland. This will create a more natural margin habitat with tall grasses and tall herbs. Ideal for use by butterflies such as Speckled Wood and other invertebrates. Such features are also important for foraging bats. The strips of grassland can be mown once annually in September when the butterflies have bred; all arisings should be removed.
- 6.1.6.20 If the use of this amenity grassland for golf is ever removed in the future it is recommended that the frequency of the mowing regime over the grassland is reduced. The undulating grassland with plateaus and sheltered hollows provides a range of habitats suitable for use by breeding and foraging invertebrates (if the grasses and herbs are permitted to grow). Hollows within grassland can have a different microclimate to the surrounding area for the attraction of breeding butterfly species.

6.1.7 Agg Gardner West (Character Area 7)

Landscape

6.1.7.1 This character area will be provided with a medium height metal fence which will extend along the boundary with Tommy Taylor's Lane before turning east, running along the edge of the hard surfaced footpath towards the lower lake. A gated entrance will be created above the Wyman's Brook bridge to restrict access to unauthorised vehicles and create a safe play environment for local children and visitors from the wider area.

Accessibility

6.1.7.2 A Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) will be provided.

6.1.7.3 A large natural play area will be created to replace the existing facility which offers low play value in an enclosed and restricted space. This new area will extend into the mature Sycamore trees which currently span the entry / exit footpath to and from the St Paul's residential area. The natural play area will benefit from the shade provided from these mature trees and also the accessibility to natural planting and habitats may inspire explorative play. The fencing will be removed from the play area to encourage play in the wider landscape and to introduce an element of risk in play. Seating opportunities will be provided within, on the periphery and within sight of this play area to enable parents and carers to join with their children in play, retreat and enable children to play independently or to keep a watching eye from a distance.

6.1.7.4 The use of café and toilet facilities within Leisure@Cheltenham should be investigated.

Trees and Vegetation

6.1.7.5 In the future management of the young tree stock, some selective thinning may be appropriate, thus allowing individual trees to spread and develop into reasonable specimens, whilst some additional planting in the south could provide screening to the leisure complex. Key views and vistas which have been identified should be maintained and enhanced.

6.1.7.6 Retain and conserve all trees. Consider planting other *native* tree species.

Ecology

Grassland habitats

6.1.7.7 Continue current mowing regime and removal of cuttings to retain existing grassland use as a golf area.

6.1.7.8 Limit or avoid entirely the use of herbicides and pesticides throughout the site during the typical management regime.

6.1.7.9 Consider the retention of unmown, 3-5 metre wide strips of grassland within the lawns (particularly around the margins). The conservation of areas of tall grasses with flowering herbs will provide habitats suitable for use by butterfly species such as Meadow Brown and Speckled Wood. The strips of grassland can be mown

once annually in September when the butterflies have bred; all arisings should be removed.

6.1.8 Squares and Crescents (Character Area 8)

Landscape

- 6.1.8.1 Instigate a revised management and maintenance programme of renewal, restoration and removal for the squares and crescents at Pittville. Key views and vistas which have been identified should be maintained and enhanced.
- 6.1.8.2 Surface treatment – the hard bitmac surface is visually unattractive and is in visual conflict with the soft landscape of this character area. Replace with softer, informal surface treatment such as ‘Naturetex’ by Bituchem Asphalt.
- 6.1.8.3 Resurface and surface peripheral footpaths, some of which are desire lines which have worn away the grass to reveal a dirt track. Surface treatment to be in keeping with the overall materials pallet for Pittville Park.
- 6.1.8.4 Consider adding an informal surface to the gateway spaces in Pittville Crescent to conserve the grass and enhance the visual character of the setting.
- 6.1.8.5 Iron railings and gates – wear and tear is affecting the visual appearance of these features. The management and maintenance programme should identify a rolling programme to restore or replace to raise and maintain high quality standards throughout the park. Remove railings which have been used to ‘patch up’ the boundary and replace with railings in keeping with the original pallet.

Accessibility

- 6.1.8.6 Furniture – seating in the form of benches, rubbish bins and interpretation boards should be complementary to each other and to the setting. A pallet of furniture should be agreed and maintained to compliment the overall setting and character of the park.
- 6.1.8.7 Seating opportunities should be provided in these squares and crescents which offer choice of locations for visitors and residents.
- 6.1.8.8 Rubbish bins should be to a uniform design and appropriate for the setting and use. The management and maintenance programme must include for regular collections to avoid overflowing onto the paths and grass.
- 6.1.8.9 Signage should be in keeping with the furniture pallet and contribute to the overall visual appearance of the squares and crescents.

Trees and Vegetation

- 6.1.8.10 There is plenty of scope for new planting, particularly in the southern half of Pittville Crescent and in Wellington Square.
- 6.1.8.11 The large and particularly fine mature London Plane in the centre of Clarence Square, albeit currently in good health, nonetheless has a limited life span, and in this respect it may be prudent to plant a replacement tree at this stage.
- 6.1.8.12 The Pittville Crescent gardens are quite narrow, and as such, any new planting would be best located in the centre of these areas.

- 6.1.8.13 The majestic old Holm Oak in the southern garden has already lost a large proportion of its crown, as a result of basal decay, leading one to suppose that it has a significantly depleted safe useful life expectancy.
- 6.1.8.14 In the opinion of TLA, both Wellington Square and Clarence Square would benefit from the addition of at least one bold landscape statement (in this regard we would recommend an evergreen species of columnar form i.e. 'Wellingtonia', planted in a central location).
- 6.1.8.15 Begin a rolling programme of renovation, renewal and repair for all the boundary hedges in the squares and crescents. Sections where the hedge has disappeared should be replanted and the wooden fences which have 'patched up' the boundary removed.

Ecology

Grassland habitats

- 6.1.8.16 Continue current mowing regime and removal of cuttings to retain existing grassland
- 6.1.8.17 Consider the retention of unmown, 3-5 metre wide strips of grassland within the lawns (particularly around the margins) rather than mowing to the hedgerow lined edges. The conservation of areas of tall grasses with flowering herbs along the sheltered hedgerows will provide habitats suitable for use by butterfly species such as Meadow Brown and Speckled Wood. The strips of grassland can be mown once annually in September when the butterflies have bred, all arisings should be removed.
- 6.1.8.18 Plant native Bluebell bulbs (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*) beneath trees
- 6.1.8.19 Install woodcrete bat and bird boxes in accord with guidance in sections 5.14 and 5.15.

6.1.9 Pittville Gates (Character Area 9)

Landscape

- 6.1.9.1 Begin a management and maintenance programme of renewal, restoration and removal for the space around Pittville Gates. Key views and vistas which have been identified should be maintained and enhanced.
- 6.1.9.2 Surface treatment – the hard bitmac surface and paving units which currently surround the historic gates are visually unattractive and are in visual conflict with the setting and character of the Pittville area. Replace the current surface with natural stone paving.
- 6.1.9.3 Iron railings and gates – wear and tear is affecting the visual appearance of these features. The management and maintenance programme should identify a rolling programme to restore or replace to raise and maintain high quality standards throughout the park.

Accessibility

- 6.1.9.4 Consider traffic calming measures to the south of the gates, at the junction of Winchcombe Street, Clarence Road and Prestbury Road, to enable safer pedestrian crossing.
- 6.1.9.5 Close off access between the outermost gate piers and re-direct the footpath between the adjacent piers. The central piers will remain closed with ironwork.

Trees and Vegetation

- 6.1.9.6 Create planting beds to the north and south of the central ironwork and fill with a collection of perennials, grasses and seasonal bulbs.
- 6.1.9.7 Define the gateway space by planting a low, semi-circular, Box hedge to the south of the gates. The hedge should be formally clipped to 300 – 400mm height.

Ecology

There is currently no ecology within this character area