



## SCRUTINY BOARD (ENVIRONMENT, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES)

---

Meeting to be held in Civic Hall, Leeds, LS1 1UR on  
Thursday 2 February 2023 at 10.30 am

(A pre-meeting will take place for all Members of the Board at 10.00 a.m.)

---

### MEMBERSHIP

Cllr B Anderson (Chair)	-	Adel and Wharfedale
Cllr J Akhtar	-	Little London and Woodhouse
Cllr K Brooks	-	Little London and Woodhouse
Cllr E Carlisle	-	Hunslet and Riverside
Cllr R Finnigan	-	Morley North
Cllr P Grahame	-	Crossgates and Whinmoor
Cllr A Khan	-	Burmantofts and Richmond Hill
Cllr S Lay	-	Otley and Yeadon
Cllr A Maloney	-	Beeston and Holbeck
Cllr T Smith	-	Pudsey
Cllr E Thomson	-	Guiseley & Rawdon
Cllr J Tudor	-	Killingbeck and Seacroft
Cllr P Wadsworth	-	Guiseley and Rawdon
Vacancy		

**To Note:** Please do not attend the meeting in person if you have symptoms of Covid-19 and please follow current public health advice to avoid passing the virus onto other people.

**Note to observers of the meeting:** We strive to ensure our public committee meetings are inclusive and accessible for all. If you are intending to observe a public meeting in-person, please advise us in advance of any specific access requirements that we need to take into account by email ([FacilitiesManagement@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:FacilitiesManagement@leeds.gov.uk)). Please state the name, date and start time of the committee meeting you will be observing and include your full name and contact details.

To remotely observe this meeting, please click on the 'To View Meeting' link which will feature on the meeting's webpage (linked below) ahead of the meeting. The webcast will become available at the commencement of the meeting.

[Scrutiny Board \(Environment, Housing & Communities\) 2 February 2023](#)

---

**Principal Scrutiny Adviser:**  
**Rebecca Atherton**  
**Tel: (0113) 37 88642**

# A G E N D A

Item No	Ward/Equal Opportunities	Item Not Open		Page No
1			<p><b>APPEALS AGAINST REFUSAL OF INSPECTION OF DOCUMENTS</b></p> <p>To consider any appeals in accordance with Procedure Rule 25* of the Access to Information Procedure Rules (in the event of an Appeal the press and public will be excluded).</p> <p>(* In accordance with Procedure Rule 25, notice of an appeal must be received in writing by the Head of Governance Services at least 24 hours before the meeting).</p>	
2			<p><b>EXEMPT INFORMATION - POSSIBLE EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To highlight reports or appendices which officers have identified as containing exempt information, and where officers consider that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, for the reasons outlined in the report.</li> <li>2. To consider whether or not to accept the officers recommendation in respect of the above information.</li> <li>3. If so, to formally pass the following resolution:-</li> </ol> <p><b>RESOLVED</b> – That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following parts of the agenda designated as containing exempt information on the grounds that it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the press and public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information, as follows:</p> <p><b>No exempt items have been identified.</b></p>	

3

### **LATE ITEMS**

To identify items which have been admitted to the agenda by the Chair for consideration.

(The special circumstances shall be specified in the minutes.)

4

### **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

To disclose or draw attention to any interests in accordance with Leeds City Council's 'Councillor Code of Conduct'.

5

### **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTES**

To receive any apologies for absence and notification of substitutes.

6

### **MINUTES - 5 JANUARY 2023**

5 - 10

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 5 January 2023.

7

### **PARKS AND GREEN SPACES STRATEGY**

11 -  
64

To receive an update on the delivery of the actions set out in the Leeds Parks and Green Spaces Strategy in the period since its publication in March 2022.

8

### **LONG TERM BURIAL PLAN**

65 -  
68

To receive an update on the Council's long-term supply of burial space.

9

### **WORK SCHEDULE**

69 -  
76

To consider the Scrutiny Board's work schedule for the 2022/23 municipal year.

**DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Scrutiny Board will take place at **10.30am** on **Thursday 2 March 2023**. There will be a pre-meeting for all Board members at 10.00am.

## SCRUTINY BOARD (ENVIRONMENT, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES)

THURSDAY, 5TH JANUARY, 2023

**PRESENT:** Councillor B Anderson in the Chair

Councillors J Akhtar, K Brooks, E Carlisle,  
L Cunningham, A Khan, S Lay, A Maloney,  
T Smith, J Tudor, P Wadsworth, J Lennox  
and K Renshaw

### 43 Appeals Against Refusal of Inspection of Documents

There were no appeals.

### 44 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

There were no exempt items.

### 45 Late Items

There were no formal late items.

### 46 Declaration of Interests

Further to Agenda Item 9 – Performance Monitoring, Councillor L Cunningham made the Board aware that she is a registered nurse employed by Forward Leeds, should the Board discuss drug and alcohol related contracts.

### 47 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

Apologies were received on behalf of Councillor P Grahame and Councillor N Walshaw. Councillors J Lennox and K Renshaw attended the meeting as substitutes.

### 48 Minutes

**RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the previous meeting held Thursday, 10<sup>th</sup> November 2022 be approved as an accurate record, as well as noting the notes of the meeting held on Thursday, 1<sup>st</sup> December 2022.

#### Matters Arising

Further to the remote consultative meeting notes from the meeting held Thursday, 1<sup>st</sup> December 22, it was noted that the request to establish a working group to consider the community committees has been discussed with senior officers and will be scheduled once preparatory work has been completed by the service.

### 49 Financial Health Monitoring

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting  
to be held on Thursday, 2nd February, 2023

The report of the Head of Democratic Services presented Financial Health Monitoring information, performance against strategic priorities that fall within the remit of the Board.

It was noted that it was presented by way of context to the Scrutiny Board's consideration of the initial budget proposals elsewhere on the agenda.

The appended Executive Board report provides an update on financial performance against the 2022/23 budget, which targeted resources towards priorities set out in the Best City Ambition.

The report also sets out some of the specific risks facing the Council as a result of the current financial climate and notes that at the end of month 7 it is anticipated the Housing Revenue Account will be a balanced budget.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Councillor S Arif, Executive Member for Public Health and Active Lifestyles
- Councillor M Harland, Executive Member for Communities
- Councillor M Rafique, Executive Member for Environment and Housing
- James Rogers, Director Communities, Housing and Environment
- Kevin Mulvaney, Head of Finance

Further to a comment raised regarding budget pressures in terms of the cost of living, staff 2022/23 pay agreement and inflation, the Director of Communities explained that in terms of the financial health monitoring as set out in page 24 in the submitted report, this outlines a net saving for the service rather than an overspend.

The Scrutiny Board acknowledged the service commitment to work within the budget across communities and environment services.

**RESOLVED** – To note the contents of the submitted report and the projected financial position of the Authority at the end of Month 7.

## **50 Initial Budget Proposals**

The report of the Head of Democratic Services provided the proposed budget for 2023/24 and provisional budgets for 2024/25 and 2025/26. This report sets out the context for formal consultation on the initial budget proposals that fall within the remit of the Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing & Communities).

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Councillor S Arif, Executive Member for Public Health and Active Lifestyles
- Councillor M Harland, Executive Member for Communities
- Councillor M Rafique, Executive Member for Environment and Housing
- James Rogers, Director Communities, Housing and Environment
- Kevin Mulvaney, Head of Finance

It was noted that the Scrutiny Board will contribute to a composite statement, reflecting on the initial budget proposals, which will be submitted to the Executive Board in February. This will capture comments of Scrutiny Board members during this discussion as well as those made at an initial working group in December.

The Director of Communities, Housing and Environment introduced the report and drew members attention to the significant saving proposals as detailed in the submitted report.

Further to questions from Board Members, the following information was confirmed:

- Consultation around specific proposals will commence over the next fortnight and will be completed prior to the next financial year.
- The capital cost for car parking charges is contained within the financial implications review paper members have been provided with. There are a large number of car parks across Leeds, and implementation will be over the course of 2023 and 2024. In terms of charges, it was confirmed this will be approximately 40 pence for 1-2 hours. However, this will form part of the consultation process. It was also confirmed that an option to purchase season tickets will be explored, as will the timeliness of car park improvements, subject to an individual assessment basis. Information regarding car parking numbers can be provided.
- Discussions are on-going with voluntary groups regarding grants being cut by 10%.

Comments were raised regarding opportunities for the community to be encouraged to bid for funding for public events, i.e., bonfire events. It was acknowledged that more work can be done with local communities and local ward members.

It was noted that the Scrutiny Board had sought various assurances at its budget working group in December. This included assurances as to the progress with delivery of 2022/23 savings, the impact of current economic conditions on the proposals being presented and the way in which BAU productivity savings would be achieved.

**RESOLVED – To:**

- a) Consider aspects of the initial budget proposals for 2023/24 that fall within the remit of the Scrutiny Board.
- b) That comments and recommendations raised by Board Members during the Budget Consultation will be included in a composite statement bringing together the views of all five scrutiny boards. In line with the requirements of the Budget and Policy Framework this is to be provided to Executive Board for its consideration before the final budget proposals are referred to Council.

## **51 Performance Monitoring**

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting  
to be held on Thursday, 2nd February, 2023

The report of the Director of Communities, Environment and Housing provided a summary of performance against the strategic priorities for the council and city and other performance areas relevant to the Environment, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Board.

Appended to the submitted report included:

- Best City Ambition Performance Dashboard (Appendix 1)
- Performance update (Appendix 2)

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Councillor S Arif, Executive Member for Public Health
- Councillor M Harland, Executive Member for Communities
- Councillor M Rafique, Executive Member for Environment and Housing
- James Rogers, Director Communities, Housing and Environment
- Ian Strickland, Business Development Manager
- Lee Hemsworth, Chief Officer Community Hubs, Welfare and Business Support
- Paul Money, Chief Officer Safer, Stronger Leeds
- Gerard Tinsdale, Chief Officer Housing
- John Woolmer, Chief Officer Environmental Services
- Adam Crampton, Head of Property Management
- Tim Rollett, Intelligence and Policy Manager

The Business Development Manager introduced the report and explained that over time specific analytic information relevant to the Scrutiny Board can be provided in the next couple of months.

In responding to a question regarding accessing crime information, the Chief Officer Safer Stronger Leeds explained that elected members are able to access data sets from their Neighbourhood Policing Teams (NPTs), and such information should be provided on a regular basis.

Board members raised the following key points:

#### Housing

**Homelessness** – further detail was sought about the differentiation of street homelessness and those without a home, or in temporary accommodation. To be provided with a breakdown and information on engagement. Officers confirmed that there are currently around 93 people in emergency accommodation, and 30 rough sleepers. It was confirmed that information can be broken down further. It was noted that the city's performance on homelessness is significantly above with core city averages. It was acknowledged that there are a number of 'ghost' tenancies in the city but these can be difficult to identify. Where such contracts have been identified data can be shared with members.

**Claims for disrepair** – it was confirmed they are accurately recorded on a weekly basis, and it is possible to report back to the Scrutiny Board on the number of disrepair cases on a quarterly basis.



## Environmental Services

**Bin collections** – the Executive Member for Environment and Housing noted several persistent challenges for service delivery including obstructive vehicles preventing access, vehicular breakdowns, roadworks, and staff illness. However, the position in 2022 for missed bins, was considered good. Further to a question regarding the use of new technologies, it was confirmed that there will be an opportunity for improved in-cab technology to enable crews to take photographs of offending vehicles, and CCTV will be upgraded across all wagons to enable 5G capability.

Members were informed that the end of day report provides reliable information, and the service are looking to improve communications around the importance of reporting missed bins.

Work is on-going to look at re-designing routes so that they are more co-terminus with Community Committee boundaries, to provide localised performance information. Further to this, a member shared her positive experience of how responsive the crews in her area have been in relation to localised access issues.

**Waste reductions** – officers confirmed that whilst there are issues in terms of size, geography and varied housing types in Leeds, only 0.5% of waste in Leeds ends up in landfill. The service is continuing work to develop its new waste strategy, which will be informed by anticipated national announcements. Recent liaison with DEFRA has been positive, particularly with regard to potential options for new responsibilities for packaging producers.

A suggestion was made that positive information regarding the Recycling and Energy Recovery Facility be incorporated into the narrative of future performance reports.

Further to a suggestion around collecting data about the development of circular economies and reducing waste by re-using, it was confirmed that tonnage information and carbon measures for services the authority are contractually responsible for, is possible in some instances. In terms of statistics for projects where third sector organisations are responsible, it will be confirmed at a later date what information can be made available.

## Safer Stronger Communities

**Anti-social behaviour** – it was acknowledged that ASB issues related to the use of motor carriages (including quad bikes) across Leeds continue to be an issue of concern. The authority is working in partnership with the police to reduce the number of cases and have engaged with a number of young people, including as part of operation Diesel Quest, to tackle motorbike crime specifically in East and South Leeds. The service will continue to take enforcement action where appropriate but prefer a more preventative

approach and to provide diversionary activities, often working with third sector organisations.

Further to a request for clarity on electric scooter guidance, members will be provided with information via e-mail.

The Chair thanked officers for their attendance.

**RESOLVED** – To note the submitted report, as well as the latest performance information as contained within the appendix and the issues which have been highlighted.

## **52 Work Schedule**

The report of the Head of Democratic Services presented the Scrutiny Board's work schedule for the 2022/23 municipal year and therefore the latest iteration of the Board's work schedule for the remainder of the year appended to the report, as well as the latest Executive Board minutes from the meeting held on 14 December 2022.

It was noted that an additional remote, consultative Board meeting has been scheduled for Friday, 20<sup>th</sup> January 2023 at 10:30 a.m. to consider Reducing Gambling Harm.

**RESOLVED** – To note the contents of the report and work schedule.

## **53 Date and Time of Next Meeting**

**RESOLVED** – To note the date and time of the next formal meeting as Thursday, 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2023 at 10.30 a.m. There will be a remote consultative meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2023 at 10.30 a.m.

The meeting concluded at 11:40 a.m.



Report author: Emma Trickett

Tel: 0113 3786002

Leeds Parks and Green Spaces Strategy

Date: 24 Jan 2023

Report of: Chief Officer, Parks and Countryside

Report to: Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities).

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides an update on progress with delivering the actions set out in the *Leeds Parks and Green Spaces Strategy* one year on from its publication. It covers the period March – December 2022.
- 1.2 A copy of the strategy is available in Appendix 1.
- 1.3 A spreadsheet detailing each agreed action and a progress update on those actions is provided in Appendix 2.

## 2. Background

- 2.1 Following an extensive public consultation process, which included the formal Scrutiny process, the *Leeds Parks and Green Spaces Strategy* was published in February 2022.
- 2.2 The strategy sets out a vision for Leeds City Council's Parks and Countryside Service, and the actions that will be undertaken by the service to deliver that vision over the 10 years from 2022 – 2032.
- 2.3 The vision set out in the strategy is for Leeds City Council to '*provide the best parks and green spaces in the UK.*'
- 2.4 To ensure this vision is achieved, eight priorities for the Parks and Countryside Service are outlined in the strategy:
  - i. Quality
  - ii. Climate and biodiversity
  - iii. Access for all
  - iv. Culture
  - v. Child friendly
  - vi. Working with communities
  - vii. Financial sustainability
  - viii. Health and wellbeing
- 2.5 The priorities support the Best Council Plan and are closely aligned with the 3 pillars of the Best City Ambition – Zero Carbon, Inclusive Growth and Health and Wellbeing.

2.6 For each priority, specific goals, and the actions that will be undertaken to achieve them, are identified in the strategy document along with a time scale for delivery (short term - 1-3 years, medium term – 4-6 years; long term – 7-10 years, for each action).

2.7 This report, and the accompanying document in appendix 2, outlines progress on those actions.

### **3. Highlight report**

3.1 Progress on each action listed in the strategy is set out in appendix 2.

3.2 Key developments that have taken place in 2022 towards the goals set out in the strategy are outlined below.

3.3 Quality priority - *Providing high quality parks and green spaces*



Horsforth Hall Park, Japanese Garden September 2022

3.4 All city parks (Roundhay, Middleton, Temple Newsam, Golden Acre, Chevin Forest Park and Kirkstall Abbey) achieved the national Green Flag standard in 2022.

3.5 One of the 2 Key Performance Indicators in the strategy is an aspiration in the Quality priority 'For all community parks to reach the Leeds Quality Park (LQP) standard during the life of the strategy'.

3.6 In 2022, 72% of community parks achieved LQP standard – this was an improvement on all previous years since assessments began in 2010 (when just 22% of community parks passed).

3.7 Efforts continue to be made to source and direct external funding to those parks that are failing LQP to achieve the goal of getting them all to the standard by 2032. For example, in 2022, £400k of S106 was allocated for investment in community parks. In addition, the council was successful in obtaining approximately £3 million for park improvements through the Morley Town Bid and bids were made for substantial investments in 9 community parks through



the Levelling Up fund (a decision on the allocation of Levelling Up funding is still awaited).

- 3.8 All cemeteries and crematoria were judged against the LQP criteria for the first time in 2022, 56% passed.
- 3.9 A '*Plan on a Page*' has been produced for 11 community parks through the Morley Towns and Levelling Up Fund bids.
- 3.10 Climate and Biodiversity priority - *Increasing wildlife and biodiversity and reducing the impact of climate change.*
- 3.11 The second key performance indicator in the strategy is to help combat the climate emergency by planting 50 hectares of trees each year.
- 3.12 We can confirm that 50 hectares of trees were planted in the 2021-22 (autumn-winter) season and that 88 sites have been confirmed as suitable for tree planting in the current season - tree planting is currently underway at these sites.
- 3.13 Peat has been completely eliminated from our operations.
- 3.14 With regards making improvements to our green spaces for the benefit of wildlife, seasonal bedding was reduced by 50% in 2022 and replaced with a mix of pollinator-friendly wildflower mixes which proved popular with the public.



Wildlife-friendly wildflowers that replaced seasonal bedding in Farnley park in summer 2022.

- 3.15 Access for All priority - *Ensuring that parks and green spaces are accessible for everyone who wants to use them.*
- 3.16 In 2022, 69% of community parks and 72% of cemeteries and crematoria achieved 7 or above on the Equal Access for All LQP criteria.
- 3.17 Visitor information about Temple Newsam, the Arium, Tropical World and Kirkstall Abbey was added to the *Euan's Guide* 'accessible venues' website (to promote the sites as accessible venues and enable people with disabilities to plan their visits in advance).
- 3.18 With regards the goal of 'ensuring our parks and green spaces feel safe and welcoming for girls and women,' we were involved in an externally funded 'Safer Streets' research project in partnership with West Yorkshire Combined Authority and others in 2022. We assisted in developing and promoting the research to maximise feedback, and some of the Parks and Countryside team were interviewed. The findings of the research were reported back at a national workshop on 31 October and a Parks and Countryside representative took part in the panel discussion. The findings of the research will contribute to the production of a design-guide that we will use for ensuring future park design is as women-friendly as possible. In addition, we were involved in a small, local research project specifically focussed on Woodhouse Moor and Holbeck Moor as part of this scheme - it identified improvement works that would make the sites feel safer. £10k funding has been allocated to each site and the improvement works (which focus on replacing damaged, old infrastructure such as benches, signs and bins that make the parks look uncared for) are in progress.
- 3.19 Culture priority - *Providing exciting, diverse, interesting and enjoyable green spaces that reflect the history and culture of their local communities.*
- 3.20 We have some very exciting plans in progress to improve the cultural offer of the city by developing the visitor attractions at key parks.
- 3.21 An indoor 'play-barn' is currently being constructed at Temple Newsam Home Farm.
- 3.22 New family visitor facilities based at Temple Newsam golf are awaiting planning permission – these include cycle trails, a 'Learn to Ride' area, a new playground and a new café.
- 3.23 A new flagship play area is planned at Lotherton (subject to Planning permission).
- 3.24 Plans for a natural history-themed indoor play area at Tropical World are being developed.





Indicative plan of *Learn to Ride a Bike* area proposed for Temple Newsam (near golf clubhouse).

- 3.25 Over 800 events have taken place at our parks this year including funfairs, community galas, sponsored walks and rock concerts. Significant events included Live at Leeds and Let's Rock music festivals at Temple Newsam, the Black Music Concert and West Indian Carnival based at Potternewton park and the popular, council-run, Halloween and Christmas events at Lotherton.
- 3.26 Plans are also in place for parks to host many events this year as part of Leeds, City of Culture 2023.



Lotherton Christmas Experience



- 3.27 Child Friendly priority - *Providing green spaces that children and teenagers love to visit so that they can gain the health, wellbeing and educational benefits of spending time in them.*
- 3.28 £530k S106 was approved for investment in playgrounds at 11 sites in 2022.
- 3.29 An independent audit of play facilities in parks is currently being undertaken - this will enable us to prioritise resources for maximum benefit going forward.



New play facilities at Pudsey Park funded by S106, installed September 2022

- 3.30 Working with Communities priority - *Having a positive, open, helpful and collaborative approach to delivering the Parks and Countryside Service.*
- 3.31 Bereavement services achieved the gold standard for cremations and the silver standard for burials in the Charter for the Bereaved (which sets standards of excellence for the industry) in 2022.
- 3.32 The Parks and Countryside Service currently works with approximately 94 *Friends* groups, 40 *In Bloom* Groups, 650 Sports clubs and 58 self-managed allotment sites to care for and improve green spaces across the city.
- 3.33 Volunteers have spent over 2,000 days undertaking a range of tasks (from litter picking to tree planting) at our sites.
- 3.34 Charity partners *Love Leeds Parks* have, with the ongoing support of the Parks and Countryside Service, secured funding for community engagement (including public consultation, volunteering opportunities, developing park plans 'on a page' and events) at 6 community parks over the next 3 years – they plan to start at Burley and Harehills parks in 2023.





Volunteers planting trees at the former South Leeds Golf Course, Dec 2022.

- 3.35 Financial Sustainability priority - *Ensuring that quality green space is available for the long term.*
- 3.36 External funding such as S106 continues to be used for parks and green space improvements (such as new play facilities, benches, re-surfacing paths) alongside smaller pots of external funding like WBI and Veolia. In 2022 £1.3 million of S106 funding was allocated for spending in local parks and green spaces. In addition, a bid to the Town's Fund for a range of work in Morley resulted in £3 million being secured for improvements to parks in the area. Unsuccessful bids were also made to the Levelling Up Fund (LUF) for £16 million for investment in 8 community parks. The work done to create Plans on a Page for community parks in the Morley Town and LUF bids suggested it would cost on average £1.3 million per park to deliver them (with significantly less investment required for parks passing LQP than those failing) – all plans will be costed so it will be clear how much it will cost to deliver them for each park.
- 3.37 Our medium-term attraction development plan, which is in the process of being delivered, sets out our approach for increasing income through our visitor attractions including indoor play at Home Farm and Tropical World, new playgrounds at Lotherton and the Arium and a new café at Temple Newsam
- 3.38 Health and Wellbeing priority - *Providing and promoting a wide range of opportunities for people to get the health benefits of spending time in green spaces*
- 3.39 A number of sports facilities at our sites have been developed or improved through a variety of partnership schemes in 2022. Those that have received significant investment through external funding (e.g. from Sport England and the

Football Foundation) include a new multi-use games area at Street Lane Recreation Ground in Gildersome, a new pump track at The Rein in Seacroft and football pitch improvements at Queens park, Pudsey and King George Playing Fields, Horsforth.



New Multi-Use Games Area, developed with the Parish Council, at Street Lane Rec, Gildersome.

#### **4. Conclusion**

- 4.1 The Parks and Green Spaces strategy was published in February 2022 and officially started being implemented from 1 March 2022.
- 4.2 This report, covering the period March – December 2022, demonstrates how the Parks and Countryside Service have been implementing the actions in the strategy, focussing on the priorities set out in it and working towards achieving the vision of providing the best parks in the UK.

#### **5. Appendices**

- 5.1 Appendix 1 - Leeds Parks and Green Spaces Strategy 2022 - 2032
- 5.2 Appendix 2 - Progress update for each action in the strategy.

# LEEDS PARKS & GREEN SPACES STRATEGY 2022 - 2032

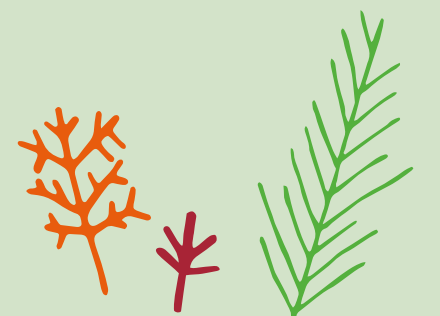
**We aim to provide the Best Parks and Green Spaces in the UK**



# CONTENTS



<b>1</b>	<b>Foreword</b> Councillor James Lewis Councillor Salma Arif
<b>2</b>	<b>Introduction</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Leeds City Council, Parks and Countryside Service</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Vision</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Priorities</b>
<b>5</b>	Quality
<b>7</b>	Climate and biodiversity
<b>10</b>	Access for all
<b>13</b>	Culture
<b>16</b>	Child-friendly
<b>19</b>	Working with communities
<b>22</b>	Financial sustainability
<b>25</b>	Health and wellbeing
<b>28</b>	<b>Key Performance Indicators</b>
<b>29</b>	<b>Implementing the Strategy</b>
<b>30</b>	<b>Conclusion</b>
<b>30</b>	<b>Glossary</b>
<b>30</b>	<b>References</b>





# FOREWORD

***“The measure of any great civilization is its cities, and a measure of a city's greatness is to be found in the quality of its public spaces, its parks and squares”***

**John Ruskin.**

This quote eloquently expresses how important public parks and green spaces are in urban areas – they are an essential component of great cities that people want to live in.

Public parks and green spaces have many benefits, particularly for health and wellbeing as I'm sure we all recognise following our recent experience of the Covid 19 pandemic. And they have also been shown to make positive contributions to climate change, social cohesion, clean air, culture, wildlife, local history and the economy.

I am proud of the fantastic parks, woodlands, nature reserves and other green spaces that we have in Leeds and would like to express my gratitude to the volunteers, partner organisations and staff for all the work they do to maintain and improve them. From the award-winning city parks like Roundhay and Temple Newsam to the local community sites like Cross Flatts park and Springhead park, they provide a wide range of facilities for people with a variety of different interests, from playing sport to bird watching, skateboarding to gentle walking- they have something for everyone.

This strategy sets out how Leeds City Council will manage our parks and green spaces over the next 10 years to build on the excellent provision we already have. I am really looking forward to seeing it implemented to provide good quality, inclusive, enjoyable and sustainable public green spaces for their many benefits for public health and happiness, climate, nature and the wider environment.

I am sure its delivery will make a significant contribution to the achievement of the council's ambition to be the 'Best City in the UK'!

**Councillor James Lewis -  
Leader of Leeds City Council**



As suggested by Councillor Lewis in his comments, parks and green spaces are key to the delivery of our ambition for Leeds to be the 'Best City in the UK,' by ensuring it is a place where people want to live and enjoy visiting.

Leeds City Council, Parks and Countryside Service manages approximately 4,000 hectares of public green space including cemeteries, public rights of way, sports pitches, parks, nature reserves, woodlands and allotments. These sites are distributed across the city so everyone can enjoy their benefits, and research has shown that over 90% of Leeds residents have visited a park at least once in the last year. This is great news given the wealth of evidence highlighting the health and wellbeing benefits of spending time in green spaces.

This strategy sets out how these sites will be managed for the next 10 years to maximise their potential to benefit the people of Leeds.

The goal of getting all our 63 local community parks to a quality standard is particularly important because they are the sites used most often by Leeds residents and they are free to access and provide a wide range of facilities so there is something for everyone. Research has shown that people are more likely to use good quality green spaces and thus gain the health and wellbeing benefits of spending time in them. I welcome the approach of prioritising improving the quality of parks in the more deprived areas of the city (especially in those where many people don't have their own garden) where current health outcomes tend to be worse.

Given the council's Climate Emergency declaration, I also think the commitment to 'Climate and Biodiversity' in the strategy is very important, particularly the ambitious target of planting 200,000 trees a year across the city for the next 10 years.

Without running through the whole document in detail, I would also like to draw attention to a couple of the other initiatives in there. 'Access for All' is highlighted as a priority in the strategy to ensure everyone can easily use the sites and feels welcome when they get there. For example, it is important to ensure green spaces are as physically accessible as possible, so people with disabilities are able to enjoy them and, in light of recent events, I am very pleased that the Parks and Countryside Service will be involved in a project that aims to ensure women and girls feel safe when using green spaces so they are not excluded from them by real or perceived danger.

Again, highlighting the benefits of spending time in green spaces for physical and mental health I very much support the prioritisation of 'Child-Friendly' parks and green spaces – at a time when health problems like obesity and anxiety are reaching concerning levels in young people across the country, I can't think of a better goal for a city that aims to be 'Child-Friendly' than 'Providing green spaces that children and teenagers love to visit.'

I would like to conclude by thanking those individual volunteers and organisations that support the work of the Parks and Countryside service and those people who responded to the consultation on the strategy, we look forward to continuing to work with you to deliver our vision to provide the 'Best Parks and Green Spaces in the UK'.

**Councillor Salma Arif -  
Executive Member for  
Public Health and  
Active Lifestyles**



# INTRODUCTION

## Leeds Parks and Green Spaces Strategy

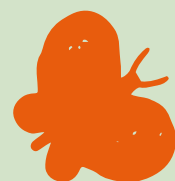
This strategy sets out a vision for Leeds City Council's Parks and Countryside Service, and the actions that we will undertake to deliver that vision over the next 10 years. It focusses on how local public green spaces such as parks, nature reserves and cemeteries, and related facilities (such as playgrounds, tennis courts, animal attractions, footpaths and cafes) will be managed going forward.

In recent times, and especially during the coronavirus pandemic, people in the UK have increasingly come to recognise the value of urban public green space, particularly its huge benefits to health and wellbeing, wildlife and the environment. A parliamentary inquiry into public parks in 2017 concluded that: 'Parks and green spaces are treasured assets and are often central to the lives of their communities. They provide opportunities for leisure, relaxation and exercise, but are also fundamental to community cohesion, physical and mental health and wellbeing, biodiversity, climate change mitigation and local economic growth'. We are keen to ensure that public green spaces in Leeds continue to deliver such benefits and this strategy will help achieve that.

The priorities set out below have emerged from a combination of public consultation, national and local research and other local plans and strategies (see References section).

***"Parks are a vital part of the contemporary city that serve and enable a wide range of public benefits to the environment, health and well-being, education and social cohesion."***

**The Future Prospects of Urban Public Parks,  
University of Leeds, 2017**





# LEEDS CITY COUNCIL PARKS AND COUNTRYSIDE SERVICE



## Sites and facilities:



**4,000+**  
hectares of  
green space



**857km**  
of public  
rights of way



**7**  
major parks



**24**  
cemeteries  
and 3 crematoria



**101**  
allotment  
sites



**200**  
grass football  
pitches



**156**  
nature  
conservation sites



**63**  
community parks



**170**  
playgrounds



**62**  
bowling greens



**73**  
outdoor gyms and  
multi-use games areas



**90**  
tennis courts



**24**  
skate parks



**1**  
plant nursery



**2**  
zoos



**1**  
farm



**10**  
cafés and shops



**6 million+**  
trees

## Natural capital\*



**£598m**  
contributed by Leeds parks  
per year in mental and  
physical health benefits



**£21**  
per park visit delivered on  
average by health and  
wellbeing services



**£831k**  
value of CO<sub>2</sub> removed  
by Leeds parks each year

\*Vivid Economics, 2020

## Communities



**45million**  
adult visits to  
parks every year



**650+**  
public events in  
parks every year



**2,000+**  
volunteers help to care for  
green spaces each year



**30,000+**  
children visit green spaces  
on school trips every year



**88%\*\***  
park users in Leeds describe spending  
time in parks as either 'essential' or  
'important' to their quality of life

\*\*University of Leeds, 2018

# Vision

## Our vision is to provide the best parks and green spaces in the UK

As residents will know, we already have fantastic parks and green spaces in Leeds, with 77% of *Leeds Parks Survey* respondents describing their last visit to a local park as 'very pleasant'.

By focussing on the 8 priorities set out in this document, we believe we can achieve our goal of providing the best parks and green spaces in the UK within the next 10 years.

*"I think the parks in Leeds are brilliant. They are beautiful and have provided many memories for me and my family.*

*I visit the park at least every week. It is a lovely place.*

*Thank you to everyone who works to look after the parks in Leeds."*

Respondent to Parks and Green Spaces Strategy consultation 2020



# Priorities

In this document we have set out 8 priorities for the Parks and Countryside service along with the actions required to deliver them. At times, the actions have benefits that make a significant contribution to more than one of the priorities (for example, supporting walking can benefit both public health and the climate) but we have not repeated them because we wanted to keep the document as succinct as possible.





# Quality

## Providing high quality parks and green spaces.

We aim to deliver high quality parks and green spaces as measured by the international *Green Flag* and local, *Leeds Quality Park* (LQP) standards. These measures use widely accepted criteria such as ‘welcoming’, ‘clean and well maintained’ and ‘healthy, safe and secure’ to assess the quality of green spaces.

In Leeds, we have been using this approach to assess and improve our community parks for over 10 years and, as a consequence of prioritising in this way, we have significantly increased the quality of our most popular green spaces (with 73% of community parks currently achieving LQP standard, compared to 22% in 2010).

**“Our findings indicate that public parks that meet designated quality standards are associated with enriched visitor experiences, satisfaction and wellbeing.”**

Leeds Parks Survey report,  
University of Leeds, 2018

The reasons we have decided to continue to prioritise quality green spaces are as follows:

- Research by the University of Leeds showed a link between park quality and user satisfaction- residents’ favourite parks are more likely to have passed, than failed, LQP and regular users of LQP parks report higher levels of satisfaction than do regular users of parks that do not achieve the LQP standard.
- Prioritising quality will also help tackle some of the key issues highlighted by our public consultation ahead of producing this strategy, including concerns about maintenance, the quality of parks infrastructure and anti-social behaviour.
- Research (by CABE Space) has shown that, as the quality of green space increases, the incidence of anti-social behaviour tends to decrease.
- The number one priority for local green spaces identified in the survey of 6,432 local residents undertaken by University of Leeds in 2016 was ‘Keeping Parks Clean’ – this will be addressed through our focus on quality.
- Residents, volunteer groups and local ward councillors recognise the value of this approach and support it.

**“We recommend that priority is given to raising the standard of parks across the city to ensure access to good quality green space for all residents and visitors.”**

Leeds Parks Survey report,  
University of Leeds, 2018

To provide the resources to get parks to the LQP standard where significant investment is required (e.g. for paths, sports facilities or playgrounds) we will continue to use S106 developers’ contributions where possible. And where such funding is not available (often for inner-city parks, that tend to benefit least from developers’ contributions because there is less space for development in inner city areas) we are keen to establish a ‘strategic investment fund’ to help raise their standards.

As part of this quality aspiration, and to support the delivery of the other priorities in this strategy, we also intend to develop a management plan ‘on a page’ for each community park in consultation with the local community. These plans, set out on two sides of A3, will establish a clear vision for each park and will be used by the council and partners to help us deliver our ‘Best Parks’ vision. The larger, more complex, city parks (like Temple Newsam and Middleton Park) will continue to have full management plans set out in the format required by the Green Flag Award.

In recognition of the fact that the strategy consultation showed that some types of anti-social behaviour (particularly in relation to dogs and litter) are an issue for green space users, we also plan to develop and implement evidence-based approaches to tackling these matters along with key partners, such as *Safer Leeds*, at sites where such problems are particularly acute.

Lastly, as part of our commitment to quality, we are planning to achieve national standards for our visitor attractions (at Tropical World, Lotherton and Temple Newsam) and for animal welfare at our registered zoos and farm.

**“Local authorities should invest in the good design, staffing and maintenance of public spaces to prevent and tackle problems of anti-social behaviour.”**

Preventing Anti-social Behaviour in  
Public spaces, CABE Space, 2004

**“I feel very lucky living near Springhead Park, Temple Newsam and Lotherton Hall, and hope to continue enjoying these spaces for many years to come. It is so important that they are protected and continue to be maintained to such a high standard.”**

**“I would like to see... ‘Investment and commitment to create safe, maintained facilities for the people of Leeds.’”**

**“The parks in Leeds are excellent and in general very well maintained. For me the issue is continuing to maintain the parks well.”**

Respondents to Parks and Green Spaces Strategy  
consultation 2020.

### Quality

Providing high quality parks and green spaces.



Goals	Actions	Timescale*
<b>For all city parks to retain the Green Flag award for the life of strategy.</b>	Continue to use the Green Flag criteria as a best practice guide to managing Temple Newsam, Roundhay Park, Chevin Forest Park, Golden Acre Park, Kirkstall Abbey and Middleton Park.	Ongoing
<b>For all community parks to reach Leeds Quality Park standard during the life of the strategy.</b>	Area based operational teams to prioritise community parks.	Long
	Continue to target S106 and other suitable external funding on community parks where possible.	Ongoing
	Establish a strategic investment fund to improve parks and green spaces in areas most in need.	Medium
<b>For all cemeteries and crematoria to reach Leeds Quality Park standard during the life of the strategy.</b>	Bereavement services and operational teams to work together to get all sites to LQP standard.	Long
	Ensure all relevant staff and apprentices have a good understanding of the LQP standard (through training) and that the LQP judging process involves a wide range of staff from across the service.	Medium
<b>For all community parks to have a 'plan on a page'.</b>	Produce a 'plan on a page' for each community park, setting out a vision for each site in consultation with ward members and the local community.	Long
<b>For Parks and Countryside visitor attractions to meet the Visit England Quality Assurance Standard.</b>	Use the Visit England Quality Assurance Standard as a good practice guide to managing our visitor attractions at Temple Newsam, Lotherton and Roundhay Park.	Short
<b>To have excellent animal welfare standards in our zoos and at Home Farm.</b>	Ensure our zoos meet the standards set out in the Zoo Licensing Act 1981 and that Home Farm meets standards set out in Animal Welfare Act (2006), Welfare of Farmed Animals (England) Regulations 2007 and the Animal Welfare (licencing	Ongoing
<b>To reduce anti-social behaviour and ensure people feel safe in our public green spaces.</b>	Develop an evidence-based approach to tackling issues with dogs to be targeted at problem sites as necessary.	Medium
	Develop an evidence-based approach to tackling litter to be targeted at problem sites as necessary.	Short
	Work with Safer Leeds to target anti-social behaviour hotspots as necessary.	Ongoing

\*Timescale for delivery: Short = 1 – 3 years, Medium = 4 – 6 years, Long = 7 – 10 years.

## Quality case study: Cross Flatts Park

Cross Flatts Park in Beeston is a fantastic example of a local community park that meets the LQP standard. The park contains a range of facilities for visitors including a large playground, accessible paths and benches, an outdoor gym, a community café, a multi-use games area, sports pitches, a community orchard and a bowling green.

The park hosts over 1 million visits a year, and 75% of survey respondents who described Cross Flatts Park as their 'main' park said they were satisfied with it. It also has a very active 'Friends' group who work alongside *Beeston in Bloom* and Leeds City Council, to care for the park.

Various community events take place in the park including the Beeston Festival, a Christmas lantern festival, an annual dog show and Parkrun – these, along with the range of facilities at the park, help to improve social cohesion by bringing people from the diverse local communities together.



# Climate and biodiversity

## Increasing wildlife and biodiversity and reducing the impact of climate change.

We aim to provide green spaces that are full of nature and wildlife and that will help reduce the likelihood and impact of climate change. We will do this by planting thousands of trees on our sites every year and by protecting, enhancing and creating other wildlife habitats such as meadows, ponds and hedgerows.

***“Respondents agreed that tackling climate change (94.3%), becoming a carbon neutral city (91.6%) and protecting the diversity of wildlife (95.5%) should be a priority for the city”***

**Big Leeds Climate Conversation Report (based on the consultation of over 7,000 local residents) 2019**

***“We recognise the range of important services provided by parks, such as air quality improvement, urban cooling, carbon sequestration (and) sustainable urban drainage”***

**Government response to Parliamentary Inquiry into Public Parks, 2017**

The main reasons we have decided to prioritise climate and biodiversity are as follows:

- Parks and green spaces in Leeds provide homes, food and connectivity for much-loved wildlife, from more common species like many native birds, butterflies and bluebells to rarer, more threatened species such as glow worms, harvest mice and bats. As green space managers, we believe we have a responsibility to manage our sites in a way that not only protects wild plants and animals but allows them to thrive.
- At a time when wildlife and biodiversity is threatened in the UK and across the globe (e.g. over 97% of all flower-rich grasslands have been lost in England since the 1930s; 57% of UK butterfly species have declined in abundance since the 1970s and several very common bird species have dramatically declined in numbers- the RSPB have reported that starlings and house sparrows have declined by 71% and 60% respectively since the 1970s), we are keen to do all we can in Leeds to protect and increase our local wildlife.

- Nature and wildlife are very important to the public – for example, in responses to the consultation on this strategy, nature and wildlife was the most popular response to the questions ‘Why are public parks and green spaces important to you?’ and ‘What do you think the best things about public parks and green spaces in Leeds are?’ And answers themed around implementing a more wildlife/environment/climate-friendly approach to management of our green spaces was the most popular response to the question ‘What positive changes would you like to see in our parks and green spaces over the next 10 years?’
- There is evidence that peoples’ mental wellbeing increases along with the species richness of their environment.
- In 2019, Leeds City Council declared a Climate Emergency and committed to make the city carbon neutral by 2030 as our contribution to achieving no more than a 1.5°C global temperature increase. The Parks and Countryside service will contribute to this goal by planting 50 hectares of woodland (around 200,000 carbon-absorbing trees) a year for the life of this strategy and beyond.

- As well as trees and other plants absorbing carbon, green spaces will increasingly be required to play a role in mitigating extreme weather events caused by climate change such as flooding and high temperatures (vegetation slows down water flow and rainwater can be captured in ponds and lakes; trees and shrubs can provide much needed shade in hot weather).

***“Here in the UK, 40% of species are in decline, more than 40 million birds have been lost from our skies over the past 50 years, and a quarter of mammals are threatened with extinction including many once common species, such as the hedgehog. These ongoing declines, on top of earlier losses since the industrial revolution have led to the UK becoming one of the most nature-depleted nations on Earth. We still have many important habitats and species, and beautiful patches of nature to enjoy, but these are a shadow of what we would have if we recovered nature.”***

**Nature Positive 2030 summary report, Joint Nature Conservation Committee, 2021**

### Climate and biodiversity

Increasing wildlife and biodiversity and reducing the impact of climate change.





## Climate and Biodiversity

***“Being in, and observing, the natural world is integral to the wellbeing benefits of parks and green spaces. They should therefore be planted and managed to provide a wide range of habitats and opportunities for people to notice nature. Investments in parks should provide additional opportunities to build human connections with the natural world.”***

**Space to Thrive,  
Heritage Lottery Fund report, 2018**

We are also keen to provide opportunities for people, particularly children and young adults, to learn about local wildlife, the benefits of green space for the environment (e.g. for climate and clean air) and how they can help look after them, with the aim of ensuring our commitment to biodiversity and climate is sustainable and will be maintained by future generations. We will continue to do this through interpretation (e.g. information signs), education sessions and events and activities such as tree planting, pond dipping and bug hunting.

This priority also includes our aspiration to minimise any negative impact the Parks and Countryside service may have on the environment. We will eliminate the use of peat from our gardening operations so we aren't damaging rare peatland habitats, minimise pesticide use and continue to implement council-wide efforts to reduce carbon use and air pollution, save energy, minimise waste (particularly single-use plastic) and recycle.

Lastly, we recognise the benefits of local food-growing for the environment, food security and health and wellbeing so we are going to produce a management plan for our allotment sites to ensure they are managed in a way that maximises their potential as a community resource. In addition, we will continue to support local community food-growing projects (such as community orchards) by identifying suitable spaces for them in our green spaces wherever possible.

***(Leeds parks) “Would be hugely improved if they were more varied, with more woodland, meadows, scrubland, community orchards etc. Obviously keep some mown areas but make them more varied and interesting.”***

***“More trees, more shrubs, more wildflowers, more habitats for wildlife. Log piles, leaf piles, conservation areas...Less mowing, cutting, tiding.”***

***“More scrub, more wildflowers, more nurturing of habitats”***

***“Space for wildlife to thrive with information boards. Not small token gesture areas. More trees! Information on climate emergency in parks. Electric charging points.”***

***“Tree planting schemes and wildflower meadows created along with other habitats so as to improve species diversity”***

**Respondents to Parks and Green Spaces Strategy consultation 2020.**

### Climate and biodiversity case study: Moortown Park

Moortown Park is a relatively small local community park that was opened in December 2018. It was designed in consultation with the local community and has features which benefit both people and the environment.

Climate and biodiversity-friendly features include trees at different stages of maturity, wildflower meadows and having areas of scrub around the edges. Bug hotels and an area to hold water after heavy rainfall were also designed into the park. Facilities for people, which were constructed with environmental considerations in mind, include a timber playground, picnic benches, accessible footpaths and areas of short mown grass for activities like ball games. Since opening, the park has quickly become popular with a wide variety of local people, from children using the playground and making dens among the shrubs, to dog walkers.

An event to celebrate the park's opening was organised by the Friends of Moortown Park. It took place in summer 2019, and was attended by over 500 people, demonstrating how popular this kind of environment-friendly public green space can be.



Goals	Actions	Timescale*
<b>To plant 50 hectares of woodland each year.</b>	Identify and design suitable sites for woodland creation each year in consultation with ward members and the local community.	Ongoing
	Seek external funding to support tree planting.	Ongoing
	Plant 50 hectares of woodland per year.	Ongoing
<b>For all our woodland management to meet the UK Forestry Standard and the UK Woodland Assurance Standard.</b>	Manage woodlands in line with the standards and have them assessed as required.	Ongoing
<b>To increase the quantity, quality, size, variety and connectedness of wildlife habitats (e.g. woodlands, meadows, ponds, hedgerows) on our green spaces.</b>	Management plans for community and city parks to set out minimum of 25% wildlife habitat (where reasonable).	Long
	Reduce the area of seasonal bedding in our green spaces and replace them with more wildlife-friendly alternatives.	Short
	Seek to increase knowledge and understanding of nature conservation in the Parks and Countryside team through recruitment and training.	Medium
	Produce nature conservation management plans for all our green spaces with wildlife designation (SSSIs, LNRs, LWS).	Long
	Work with partners and volunteers to implement management plans at designated sites.	Ongoing
	Regular monitoring of designated sites to ensure valuable habitats are not being lost.	Long
	Seek and use external funding to deliver the management plans from grants and developers' contributions related to Biodiversity Net Gain.	Ongoing
	Develop and implement an Ash Dieback Management & Recovery Plan to ensure the loss of ash trees from the disease doesn't have a negative impact on biodiversity and the climate.	Short
<b>To eliminate the use of peat in our operations.</b>	Stop selling compost with peat in it at the Arium. Only purchase plants from suppliers who don't use peat. (Peat isn't used as a growing medium at the Arium).	Medium
<b>To provide well-managed allotment sites across the city to facilitate local food-growing.</b>	Produce and deliver a Leeds City Council Allotment Management Plan.	Short
<b>To minimise any negative impact the Parks and Countryside Service has on the environment.</b>	Continue to review Parks and Countryside operations (including those of external providers) and implement all viable means to minimise impact on environment e.g. by using electric vehicles where possible, minimising the use of pesticides, stopping using single-use plastic cups and straws at our cafés.	Ongoing
<b>For our zoos to retain the BIAZA (British Association for Zoos and Aquariums) accreditation for conservation of the natural world and education.</b>	Continue to manage zoos to BIAZA standards.	Ongoing
<b>To provide activities (including school visits) for over 5,000 children and adults a year to inspire them about nature and teach them about local wildlife, climate change, and how they can help (including anti-litter message).</b>	Continue to promote and deliver our education programme.	Ongoing
	To promote wildlife-friendly gardening and local food growing at the Arium through selling relevant seeds and plants and providing associated educational information.	Short
	When planning new developments, consider ways to integrate environmental improvements and environmental education into the scheme.	Ongoing

\*Timescale for delivery: Short = 1 – 3 years, Medium = 4 – 6 years, Long = 7 – 10 years.





## Access for all

Ensuring that parks and green spaces are accessible to everyone.

# Access for all

## Ensuring that parks and green spaces are accessible to everyone.

We aim to provide public green spaces that are welcoming and easy to visit so that everyone can use them. We also aim to provide something for everyone, no matter what their interests (which could range from horticulture to tennis, skateboarding to bird watching, running to fishing...and so on) so that everyone can enjoy spending time in our green spaces.

The reasons we have decided to prioritise ‘access for all’ are:

- Leeds City Council manage parks and green spaces as a public service and, as such, it is important to us to provide facilities for *all* the people of Leeds, no matter what their physical abilities, backgrounds and interests are. This fits with the Council’s core value of ‘Treating People Fairly.’ Evidence shows that the vast majority of people of all ages, ethnic backgrounds and physical abilities use our parks and we would like to keep it that way!
- Some respondents to the consultation on this strategy told us that they would like physical access to be improved in some locations, with requests including better paths, improved wheelchair access and more benches and toilets.

- By providing shared spaces where a wide range of people can spend time in each other’s company, evidence suggests that public green spaces can help reduce social isolation and improve community cohesion, contributing to one of Leeds City Council’s priorities of creating ‘Safer, stronger communities’.
- Providing accessible parks also contributes to the Council’s goal of making Leeds an ‘Age Friendly City’ and the ‘best city to grow old in’ by providing opportunities for older people to be ‘healthy, active and included’ and making public spaces ‘accessible, safe, clean and welcoming’. In our consultations with older people we have found that their priorities for green spaces are just as varied as those from other age groups (for example, consultation respondents over 65 were very keen on increasing biodiversity, reducing anti-social behaviour and ensuring parks are well maintained) but that they do also comment on access requirements – particularly the need for benches, good quality paths, wheelchair access and car parking for people with disabilities.

In this priority, we are committing to provide good levels of accessibility as a minimum at all our city and community parks and cemeteries and crematoria. We also aim to ensure good quality information about our sites is available on the internet so people can easily find out what’s available and plan their visits.

***“Urban green spaces can be disabling environments for people with impairments. Studies of the experiences of people with a mobility impairment found that the interviewees placed a high value on physical closeness to nature and that a lack of accessibility could lead to exclusion from green spaces. The constraints included lack of information about accessibility in terms of paths, obstacles, parking and toilets.”***

**Out of Bounds, Equity in Access to Urban Nature, Groundwork, 2021**

At our visitor attractions at Tropical World, Home Farm (at Temple Newsam) and Lotherton, where entry charges are necessary, we will offer concessions to make sure all local residents are able to visit them. We will also work hard to increase the diversity of our workforce with the aim of ensuring our team is representative of the population it serves.



## Access for all

***‘Greens’pace should be designed for a variety of user interests and capabilities.***

***Engaging the community in the design process is important. Often small details can make a big difference to those with health or mobility needs, and these groups can provide valuable insights that might be overlooked by those not directly affected.***

**Improving Access to Green Space - A New Review,  
Public Health England, 2020**

In light of recent national events highlighting issues with the safety of women and girls in public spaces, we are keen to ensure that no one is excluded from our sites because they don't feel safe so we are going to work with partners to explore feelings of safety in local parks and green spaces, and identify and implement means to improve safety where appropriate.

Providing 'something for everyone' in terms of facilities ranging from specialist gardens to playgrounds, cafés to nature reserves, farm animals to bowling greens (and so on) is a theme throughout this document and is covered under a number of priorities, especially Health and Wellbeing, Child-friendly Leeds and Culture.

***“I'd like them (green spaces) to be more inclusive. So more walking routes that are accessible for people in wheelchairs or with reduced mobility.”***

***“More benches for disabled people like me, elderly, parents - for people to rest and relax.”***

***“More spaces for all types of people to enjoy”***

***“Open and accessible to all people of all ages”***

***“That they continue to be used by a large cross-section of the Leeds community”***

**Respondents to Parks and Green Spaces  
Strategy consultation 2020.**

### **Access for all case study: Golden Acre park**

As at all our major parks, we work hard to ensure Golden Acre Park is accessible so it can be enjoyed by everyone. There are accessible parking spaces for Blue Badge Holders, plenty of wide, flat paths dotted with benches, toilets for disabled people including a 'Changing Places' facility, a fully accessible café, and mobility scooters are available to hire for free. The goal is to make it as easy as possible for people of all abilities to enjoy this beautiful green space.



Goals	Actions	Timescale*
<b>All parks and cemeteries &amp; crematoria to be judged as 'good' (score 7) or higher in 'equal access for all' LQP/Green Flag criteria</b>	To develop a process for auditing the accessibility of our sites.	Short
	To undertake an access audit of all city and community parks every 5 years.	Long
	Feed findings from access audits into 'Plan on a Page' for each community park.	Long
	Seek and use external funding for access improvements.	Medium
	Provide training for relevant Parks and Countryside staff on what makes a truly accessible green space.	Medium
	Design all new developments to be fully accessible by applying the guidance set out in BS8300 2018 where possible.	Ongoing
<b>To ensure our parks and green spaces are welcoming and accessible for older people.</b>	Review number of parking bays for people with disabilities, and bench numbers and locations when putting together plans on a page.	Long
<b>To continue to provide well maintained, accessible public toilets in all our city parks and the Arium.</b>	Install a Changing Places toilet as part of new developments at Tropical World.	Short
	New city centre park (Aire Park) will include accessible public toilets.	Short
<b>To provide correct, up to date and easy to understand information about our sites online.</b>	Get correct, up to date information about all our city parks and the Arium on Euan's Guide website.	Short
	Produce and share an access statement (which sets out what people need to know to decide if a site is suitable for them to visit) for all city parks.	Short
	Ensure there is good quality information about all our community and city parks, cemeteries and crematoria and local nature reserves available on the internet.	Short
<b>For access to our visitor attractions to remain affordable</b>	Discounts on entry to be offered at our visitor attractions for those least able to pay e.g through Leeds card Extra.	Ongoing
<b>For our parks and green spaces to feel safe and welcoming for girls and women.</b>	Collaborate on research to find out how safe women and girls feel in our green spaces and how safety might best be improved.	Short
<b>For our parks and green spaces to provide something for all Leeds residents.</b>	Continue to consider access for all when planning all new developments and proposing major decisions.	Ongoing
<b>To increase the diversity of the workforce in the Parks &amp; Countryside team at every level in the service.</b>	Work with Leeds City Council HR team to produce and implement a plan for diversifying our workforce through the recruitment process.	Long

\*Timescale for delivery: Short = 1 – 3 years, Medium = 4 – 6 years, Long = 7 – 10 years.





## Culture

Providing exciting, diverse, interesting and enjoyable green spaces that reflect the history and culture of their local communities.



# Culture

## Providing exciting, diverse, interesting and enjoyable green spaces that reflect the history and culture of their local communities.

We define culture as the distinctive character of a city and its localities, created by what people do there – things like art, music, events, sport, history and science. Our aim is for our parks and green spaces to be cultural hubs – centres of interest, enjoyment and activity that bring communities together and attract visitors from further afield to benefit the economy through tourism.

We believe that having a good cultural offer makes cities more interesting and exciting places to live in and visit, and that parks and green spaces can contribute to that through their visitor attractions, events, specialist gardens, cafés, historical features, walking and cycling routes, play and sports facilities, education and interpretation etc.

The main reasons we have decided culture should be a priority for the Parks and Countryside service are:

- Culture is a priority in Leeds City Council’s Best Council Plan and we believe parks and green spaces can make a significant contribution to ‘ensuring that culture can be created and experienced by anyone’ because they are local, accessible, free and almost everyone uses them.

- We also think we can contribute to the Council’s goal of ‘enhancing the image of Leeds through major events and attractions’. For example, in 2019 (pre-Covid) our parks hosted two of the biggest events in the city with the Ed Sheeran concerts and Leeds West Indian Carnival attracting over 250,000 people between them. In terms of attractions, Roundhay Park and Temple Newsam come second and third on Trip Advisor’s *Top Attractions in Leeds* list, hosting over 11 million (adult) visits a year.
- Evidence suggests that good parks can boost the tourist economy of a city- *Visit Britain* found that, of the 31 million tourists visiting Britain, over a third visit a park or garden.
- Respondents to our consultation on this strategy said that they would like to see more visitor facilities on our sites including more cafés, more art, more cycling routes, more sports facilities and more events and activities.
- The University of Leeds survey of residents revealed that ‘events and activities for local communities’ was a top five priority for residents in relation to parks.
- We believe that making parks and green spaces engaging, exciting and reflective of the communities around them will increase use of them so more people will benefit in terms of health and wellbeing and social cohesion outcomes.

***“Parks are places where history is made, both in terms of major public events–political rallies, mass meetings and civic celebrations– and in terms of people’s intimate lives–their romances, friendships, family outings and personal commemorations...”***

**Leeds Parks Study, University of Leeds, 2017**

***“Parks should be seen as social as well as physical infrastructure. This means that as well as investing in and maintaining high quality physical environments, funders should also support the activities that animate green spaces and encourage people to use them. Investment should support activities that increase community engagement and bring different social groups together.”***

**Space to Thrive, University of Sheffield and Sheffield Hallam University, 2019**



We are committed to sustainably improving and developing a number of visitor attractions in Leeds parks over the next 10 years including creating indoor play facilities at Tropical World and Temple Newsam farm (to improve the winter offer for visitors) and a new visitor hub at Temple Newsam including a 'learn to ride a bike' area, new cycling routes and a café based near the golf facilities. We are also planning to continue to improve Wildlife World at Lotherton with the introduction of some exciting new animal species, and to develop an outdoor water play facility in one of our parks. Many readers will be aware that Golden Acre park has some fantastic gardens and plant collections, and we intend to promote the site as Leeds's own botanical garden in future along with providing more information about the plants and gardens there for those with a keen interest in horticulture, or who just love beautiful places!

As well as developing and improving our visitor facilities, we are aware that we have some really interesting historic features on our sites, and not just at the obvious places like Kirkstall Abbey and Temple Newsam- think Middleton Park with its bell pits and historic railway...or the remnants of the mills in the Meanwood Valley. We are committed to preserving these and telling people about them so they can be understood and appreciated.

Education is also part of the culture priority – we believe that it is key for helping people to get the most from parks and green spaces and ensuring they will be cared for in future – whether it be about the animals in our zoos and farm, the amazing history and heritage of many of our sites, the award winning specialist gardens at places like Roundhay Park, Temple Newsam and Golden Acre Park, or other features of interest such as the war memorials or the geology of Otley Chevin- we are keen to tell people about them through formal school visits, public events and interpretation, and hope that this will increase understanding and enjoyment of these wonderful sites.

Covid restrictions impacted the number of events we could host in our parks in 2020 and 2021 but we look forward to welcoming back hundreds of events ranging from charity fun runs to rock concerts, community galas to food festivals over the next 10 years, particularly in 2023- the designated year of culture for Leeds!

### **Culture case study: Summer bands in the park**

A variety of band concerts take place in parks across Leeds on Sunday afternoons throughout the summer months. They are organised by *Leeds International Concert Season* and enable people to enjoy brass, jazz and concert music (played by local musicians) in the fresh air, for free. These events are popular with people of all ages.

In 2019, concerts took place in 29 different parks ranging from Golden Acre Park to Gledhow Valley Woods, Meanwood to Bramley Park, Wharfemeadows to Farnley Park.



#### **I'd like to see...**

***"More interesting features to give the different green spaces their own character and make them special e.g. innovative and exciting play equipment, nature trails, references to local culture and art installations."***

***'More facilities, more events'***

***"Better integration of arts, culture, recreation and festival activities in parks."***

***"I'd like to see more innovative opportunities for children's and adult's play...for ages 0 - 100"***

**Respondents to Parks and Green Spaces Strategy consultation 2020.**

Goals	Actions	Timescale*
<b>To provide a range of fantastic visitor attractions that contribute to making Leeds a great place to live and visit.</b>	Create a new indoor play barn at Temple Newsam, Home Farm.	Short
	Create new cycle trails, Learn to Ride area, playground and café on the area of Temple Newsam that was previously a golf course.	Short
	Develop an outdoor water play visitor attraction.	Long
	Continue to improve Wildlife World at Lotherton.	Medium
	Create an indoor play centre at Tropical World.	Medium
	Promote Golden Acre Park as a botanical garden.	Medium
	Develop a new public parkland area at the site that was previously <i>South Leeds Golf Course</i> including a covid memorial woodland, new walking routes, viewpoints and education and information points.	Medium
<b>For lifelong learning to be integrated into our parks and green spaces and associated visitor facilities.</b>	When developing/improving our green spaces and visitor attractions, include relevant education and interpretation features e.g. the new cycle trails at Temple Newsam will include signage about interesting historic features along the way.	Ongoing
	To provide activities (including school visits) for over 30,000 people to educate and inspire them about the animals at Temple Newsam farm, Lotherton and Tropical World, and key features (historic, artistic etc) in Leeds parks.	Ongoing
<b>For our city parks and visitor attractions to be recognised as key elements of the local tourism offer.</b>	Continue to refresh and deliver marketing plans for visitor attractions (Temple Newsam, Lotherton, Arium, Roundhay Park/Tropical World).	Ongoing
<b>To preserve, promote and provide information about features of cultural interest (e.g. historic landmarks) found in our parks and green spaces.</b>	The preservation and interpretation of historic and other interesting features in community and city parks should be included in their management plans.	Long
	Seek and use external funding to preserve, and provide interpretation about, features of interest. Includes large-scale HLF bid for Temple Newsam.	Ongoing
<b>To host a diverse range of events in green spaces across the city every year.</b>	Promote our sites as excellent venues for events of all types and sizes.	Ongoing
	Support community event organisers with advice and guidance.	Ongoing
	(Subject to a suitable business case) create a new event space at Temple Newsam to facilitate more events and move larger events away from the historic core of the estate.	Medium
	Work with Leeds 2023 team to ensure parks and green spaces contribute to the year of cultural activity both as event venues and destinations in themselves.	Short
<b>To provide exciting and diverse parks that reflect the history and culture of their local communities.</b>	When planning new developments, consider their context and history, and be creative to cultivate green spaces with their own unique character, that provide for, and represent their local communities resulting in a varied and complementary offer across the city.	Ongoing

\*Timescale for delivery: Short = 1 – 3 years, Medium = 4 – 6 years, Long = 7 – 10 years.



# Child friendly

## Providing green spaces that children and teenagers love to visit.

As all parents and carers will know, parks and green spaces are absolutely essential when bringing up children – they provide hours of entertainment for young people whilst getting them out in the fresh air, being physically active with friends and family. We aim to make green spaces places that all young people feel safe in and love to visit, as a key contribution to making Leeds a child-friendly city.

**“The benefits of playing outside for children and young people include positive impacts on their physical and mental health and wellbeing, improved dexterity and coordination, and the opportunity to build social connections and relationships.”**

**Parliamentary Inquiry into Public Parks, 2017**

The reasons we are planning to prioritise child-friendly parks and green spaces are as follows:

- Following the public consultation on this strategy, we decided to add ‘Child-friendly’ as an extra priority because a significant number of respondents told us that free, outdoor facilities for children and teenagers are important to them when it comes to the future of local parks and green spaces.
- 30% of strategy consultation respondents said that parks and green spaces are important to them because they provide activities for children, and the University of Leeds found that ‘family outings’ are one of the top 5 reasons people visit parks.

- The majority of children access their parks and play areas across the city. A survey of over 17,000 local children and young people in 2017/18 revealed that over 75% of primary school children and 66% of secondary school children had visited a local park or playground in the past four weeks.
- We are aware that, in modern times, there is a temptation for children and young people to stay inside on their computers and that this can be to the detriment of their physical and mental health – for example, cases of obesity and anxiety are rising in under 18s. By providing great parks and green spaces for children and young people we know we can get them outside, being active, having fun and socialising – all things that contribute to reducing these health and wellbeing issues and feelings of social isolation.
- Creating a ‘Child-friendly City’ is a priority in Leeds City Council’s *Best Council Plan* and we believe we can contribute to the goal of ‘improving social, emotional and mental health and wellbeing in young people’.
- By providing child-friendly parks and green spaces we also believe we can make a significant contribution to the outcomes of ‘Enjoying healthy lifestyles’ and ‘Have fun growing up’ that are set out in the council’s *Children and Young Peoples’ plan*.

- When the Child-friendly Leeds team consulted over 14,000 local children about what they thought would make Leeds a child-friendly city, 12 ‘wishes’ emerged. They included some that we are keen to contribute to:
  1. There are places and spaces to play and things to do, in all areas and open to all
  2. Places and spaces where children and young people spend time and play, are free of litter and dog fouling.
  3. Children and young people express their views, feel heard and are actively involved in decisions that affect their lives.
- We also believe that by prioritising children and young people we can contribute to the council’s ‘Commitment to Children’s Play’ by providing opportunities for children to play.

### Child friendly

Providing green spaces that children and teenagers love to visit.

## Child friendly

***“For a child or young person growing up in the concrete jungle, a healthy, biodiverse urban park is much more than just a great place for wildlife; it’s a classroom, an outdoor gym, a playground, a break from work and an oasis, bringing multiple benefits such as happiness, learning and discovery, self-esteem, confidence and exercise.”***

**A Focus on Nature, the UK’s youth nature network**

***“Particularly for young people, there is emerging evidence that spending time in green space is associated with a range of benefits including improved motor skills, better academic performance and increased concentration.”***

**Improving Access to Green Space, A New Review,  
Public Health England, 2020**

We will consult children and young people as well as adults where changes to our green spaces that may affect them are proposed.

In response to a number of comments in the strategy consultation about provision for teenagers, we will carry out a consultation specifically aimed at this age group to find out how we can make our parks and green spaces more teen-friendly.

As well as the child-friendly developments set out in the *Culture* priority, we plan to continue to improve opportunities for children to play in our parks and green spaces across the city, so that good quality outdoor play is accessible to all local children.

And we will ensure there is information available online about how children and young people can enjoy our parks and green spaces.

### **I'd like to see:**

***“Much more provision for teenagers so they feel a valued part of our local community.”***

***“I would like kids getting more active and socialising .... more facilities such as basketball, cricket, golf, tennis, badminton etc.”***

***“More exciting and challenging stuff for kids to play on, safe spaces for teenagers to hang out and be active.”***

***“More facilities to promote keeping fit and keeping children/young adults physically active.”***

***“More diverse play areas”***

**Respondents to Parks and Green Spaces Strategy  
consultation 2020.**

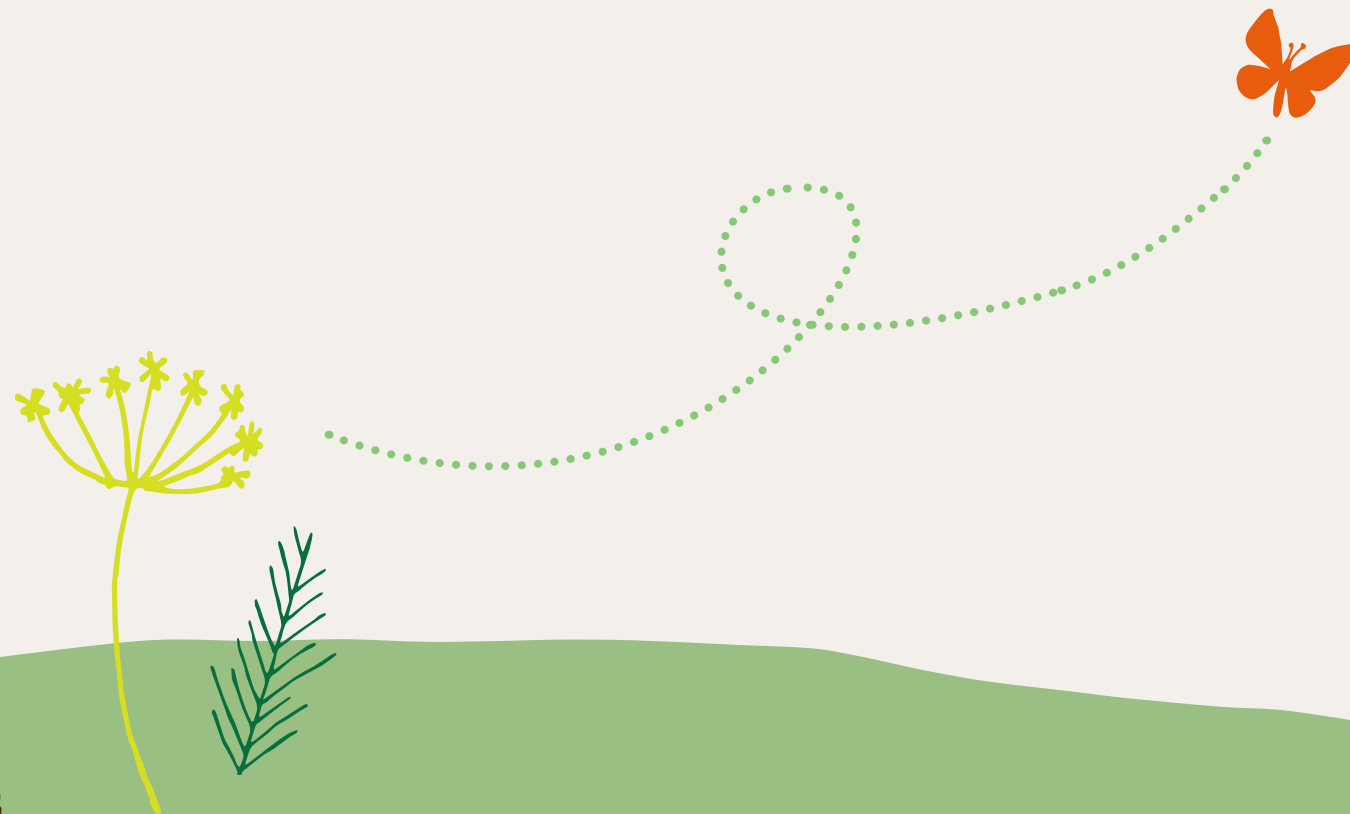
### **Child-friendly case study: Springhead Park**

Another great community park, Springhead Park in Rothwell hosts lots of visitor facilities for people of all ages, including children and teenagers – there’s a playground with equipment for young and older children of all abilities, a multi-use games area, a teen shelter, a skate park, tennis courts, a café, picnic benches, an outdoor gym and an aviary! As well as this, the park itself is very varied with a range of different environments to discover, play and hang out in...from wilder, more natural areas to formal floral gardens, it never gets boring and yet it still feels safe enough for parents to allow their children the freedom to explore.



Goals	Actions	Timescale*
To have child-friendly parks and green spaces.	Consult children and teenagers, as well as adults, ahead of making changes to our sites.	Short
To have a wide range of good quality play facilities for children of all ages and abilities across the city.	Develop a checklist to allow us to assess the quality and accessibility of our playful spaces.	Short
	Audit quantity, location and quality of play facilities across the city so we can prioritise effectively.	Short
	Seek external funding for the creation and improvement of green spaces and related facilities for children and teenagers.	Ongoing
	Top slice income from our chargeable family visitor attractions to improve play facilities in areas where external funding isn't available (often inner city areas).	Short
To ensure there is good provision for teenagers in our parks and green spaces.	Undertake consultation to find out what local teenagers want from green spaces.	Medium
For there to be clear information available on the internet about facilities for children and teenagers in our parks and green spaces.	Provide information about what's available for children and teenagers on green spaces across the city on the internet.	Medium

\*Timescale for delivery: Short = 1 – 3 years, Medium = 4 – 6 years, Long = 7 – 10 years.





# Working with Communities

## Having a positive, open, helpful and collaborative approach to delivering the Parks and Countryside service

We aim to work closely with local communities to deliver great parks and green spaces – using communication and consultation along with community engagement and empowerment to care for parks and green spaces in a collaborative way, because we know that local communities and other partners have a great deal to contribute to the achievement of our goal of providing the best parks and green spaces in the UK.

**“Communities already play an important part in supporting their local parks and green spaces and this is expected to increase. For those groups that are keen to do more, additional support and assistance should be given to make the most of their contribution and ensure this collaboration is of mutual benefit.”**

**State of UK Public Parks report, HLF, 2016**

The reasons that ‘working with communities’ has been chosen as a priority are:

- As a public service we are keen to ensure that service-users are able to get the most from the work that we do, so we aim to provide good, clear information about our facilities and be as helpful as possible in our interactions with the public.
- Public parks and green spaces are there for the benefit of the people of Leeds so it is important that they get a say in how they are managed and developed – that way we can ensure we are providing what users want and need from them.

- We recognise that local people (e.g. in Friends groups), other council departments (e.g. Active Leeds) and organisations outside the council (e.g. Yorkshire Wildlife Trust) have valuable skills, knowledge and experience and that we can achieve a lot more by working with them than we can do by working alone. We already have great partnerships with a number of other organisations and we are keen to continue them.

- ‘Working with communities’ is a core value of Leeds City Council and can contribute towards achieving the Council’s priority of creating ‘Safer, Stronger Communities’ by bringing people together to make positive changes to their local environment.

- Providing volunteer opportunities has a range of benefits for the volunteers, as well as the green spaces they are volunteering at, including work experience, exercise, learning new things, improved mental health and meeting new people.

- Many parks and countryside volunteers are older people and we are keen to continue to benefit from their wealth of knowledge and experience whilst fulfilling some of the Age-Friendly priorities of the council, including ‘promoting opportunities for older people to be healthy, active, included and respected’ and ‘helping older people participate in the city through fulfilling employment and learning opportunities’.

**“Parks friends groups (in the UK) are estimated to raise £50m per year (and the estimated value of volunteering hours given by park friends and user groups is £70m per year.”**

**State of UK Public Parks report, HLF, 2016**

**“We welcome the growth of parks forums, in which friends and community groups can come together to share resources, ideas and learning. We believe that such forums will improve the way in which local authorities can work with their communities in a coordinated and efficient ways.”**

**Parliamentary Inquiry into Public Parks, 2017**

**State of UK Public Parks report, HLF, 2016**

### Working with communities

Having a positive, open, helpful and collaborative approach.

## Working with communities

We aim to provide friendly and helpful customer service whenever we interact with the public on our sites, in our shops and cafés, and when people make enquiries online, over the phone and in person. In particular we understand that our Bereavement Services team are often working with people at a very difficult time in their lives so we are committing to use the *Charter for the Bereaved* as a best-practice guide for our work in this area, with the ambitious goal of achieving gold in the Charter's annual assessment for both cremations and burial-related services (currently our cremations are gold and our burial services are bronze). The Charter has been developed by the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management to set standards of service for the industry and covers a wide range of the work our Bereavement team undertake including provision of good, clear information, responding to enquiries efficiently and providing a range of options for bereaved people to meet the varied needs of diverse communities.

We will review the way we currently undertake public consultations, and develop and implement a best-practice approach, to make certain we get a good understanding of what local people think about proposed changes and help ensure we provide a service that meets their needs.

We are lucky to benefit from working with a number of organisations outside the Parks and Countryside service including Friends and In Bloom groups, local businesses, third sector organisations, sports clubs, educational institutions, allotment associations, other council departments (such as Museums and Galleries and Active Leeds). We look forward to continuing to work with them and developing new partnerships to deliver great parks and green spaces over the next 10 years.

Hundreds of volunteers a year help us to care for parks and green spaces, including one-off corporate volunteers, regular practical volunteers (doing things like nature conservation, gardening work and maintaining footpaths), event organisers and fundraisers. We will continue to support volunteers, promote volunteering and make sure the volunteer experience of working with us is enjoyable so people will want to work with us and volunteer engagement increases over the life of the strategy.

***"I would like to see more local community engagement and support of our green spaces. This includes volunteer support for local 'friends of' and other volunteer/charitable groups."***

***"Use of Green Space to engage socially isolated and lonely members of the community, giving them purpose/agency in taking ownership of the space for their own wellbeing."***

***"Allowing local parish/town councils & action groups to maintain woodland in their areas."***

***"More engagement/consultation with community to help them have ownership of their space, how it looks"***

***"More investment in community groups who support parks and green spaces"***

**Respondents to Parks and Green Spaces Strategy consultation 2020.**

### Working with communities, case study: Volunteers

Without the ongoing support of an army of volunteers, the parks, green spaces and floral displays of Leeds wouldn't be the same.

We are blessed to be supported by over 100 volunteer and community groups (*Friends of* and *In Bloom* groups being the main ones, but plenty of others too) who undertake a range of activities to benefit local green spaces from litter picking to fundraising, tree planting to organising events.

We are also supported by around 1,000 corporate volunteers a year who undertake a range of tasks, from tree planting to painting playgrounds, as a team building exercise, and a way for their company to give something back.

In total, we have estimated that the volunteer hours contributed across Leeds parks and green spaces amounts to the equivalent of 109 full time members of staff!

Research shows that the volunteers themselves also benefit from the time spent volunteering. Volunteering has been shown to benefit mental health, reduce social isolation, improve peoples' employment prospects, increase confidence and self-esteem, plus, volunteering outdoors involves exercise which is why charity TCV have nicknamed it the 'green gym'!





Goals	Actions	Timescale*
To provide good customer service.	To provide customer care training for staff who have public facing elements to their role (includes cafés, shops, rangers, gardeners, technical team, bereavement, admin etc - nearly everyone!).	Medium
	To provide clear and accessible information about the Parks & Countryside service and any changes that might affect service-users.	Medium
To achieve gold in the Charter for the Bereaved annual assessment for both cremations and burial-related services.	Use the Charter as a best-practice guide for the delivery of bereavement services.	Long
To provide parks and green spaces that are valued by local residents.	To develop and implement a 'best-practice' approach to undertaking public consultations when changes to green spaces are proposed.	Short
	Continue to consult Community Committee Environment Sub-groups with regards proposed changes to public green spaces in their areas.	Ongoing
To work in partnership with <i>Friends of, In Bloom</i> groups and other relevant community organisations.	Continue to work with the Leeds Parks and Green Spaces Forum as a key service partner (representing Friends, In Bloom groups and similar).	Ongoing
	Ensure all Friends, In Bloom, outdoor sports clubs, allotment associations and other community groups with an interest in our green spaces have a contact in the Parks & Countryside Service who can support them to achieve shared goals.	Ongoing
	Set out a clear approach to how we will support <i>Friends of, In Bloom</i> and other similar community groups.	Short
To increase volunteer engagement with the Parks and Countryside service and provide volunteer opportunities for everyone who is interested.	Continue to promote and facilitate a wide range of volunteering opportunities.	Ongoing
	Continue to organise and support the following city-wide volunteer groups: Leeds Wildlife Volunteers, Leeds Cemetery Volunteers, Volunteer Rangers and Leeds Voluntary Footpath Rangers.	Ongoing
	To provide training for relevant staff in working with volunteers and communities.	Short
	Seek external funding opportunities for community engagement projects, particularly at sites where communities are currently less involved.	Ongoing
To work in partnerships where they can help us deliver the aims of the Strategy more effectively than we can do alone.	Regularly review current partnerships with external organisations and give due consideration to any new partnership opportunities that arise.	Ongoing
	Continue to work with other council departments such as Regeneration, Active Leeds, Corporate Property Management, Museums and Galleries and Public Health.	Ongoing
To learn from other organisations.	Keep up to date with national research and developments in the public green space sector and attend core cities, APSE and other network events as appropriate to ensure we are applying a best-practice approach to managing green space.	Short

\*Timescale for delivery: Short = 1 – 3 years, Medium = 4 – 6 years, Long = 7 – 10 years.

# Financial Sustainability

**Ensuring that quality public green space is available for the long term.**

This priority is about ensuring we have sufficient funds to be able to deliver our goal of providing the best parks and green spaces in the UK and sustain them for future generations to enjoy.

Public green space has been shown to benefit the local economy by attracting residents, businesses and visitors to an area (for example, Roundhay Park hosts approximately 9 million visits a year) and reducing the costs of poor health to the NHS. A Fields in Trust study in 2018 estimated parks to have an equivalent economic value of £30.24 per person, per year based on several objective government measures of non-market goods including willingness to pay, life satisfaction and health.

***“The wellbeing value associated with the frequent use of local parks and green spaces is worth £34.2 billion per year to the UK adult population (and) parks and green spaces are estimated to save the NHS around £111 million per year in GP visits alone”***

**Revaluing Parks and Green Spaces -  
Fields in Trust, 2018**

***“Park investments create economic benefits through the flow of money into an area. The value of small-scale and foundational economic activities that can be fostered in parks are critical to the wellbeing of communities, as well as to the individuals who gain employment through those activities...parks can in this sense be economic hubs, creating jobs, providing volunteering and training opportunities, hosting enterprises and delivering the foundational services that allow local areas to thrive economically and socially.”***

**Why should we invest in parks? -  
National Heritage Lottery Fund, 2021.**

There is a great deal of evidence for the value of public green space, but, of course, there is inevitably a cost to maintaining it. Leeds City Council is committed to providing core funding for the care of parks and green spaces but, as readers will be aware, we have been facing challenging financial times in recent years.

As highlighted in the National Heritage Lottery Fund report ‘State of UK Public Parks 2016,’ there has been a significant national decline in core funding for parks, and in March 2021 APSE (Association for Public Sector Excellence) reported that 71% of local authorities agree with the statement ‘reductions in funding have resulted in a withdrawal of maintenance from some land and an increase in unmaintained land.’ This decline in core funding is reflected in Leeds where, as a result of central government budget cuts, our core funding has reduced by over 50% in the last 10 years. Clearly, it is a challenge to continue to manage green spaces to a high standard given such financial setbacks, but by carefully planning, prioritising and adopting an enterprising approach, we intend to do so!

The Parks and Countryside service has long been committed to the ‘Civic Enterprise’ approach to managing public services. ‘Civic enterprise’ refers to the idea of individuals and private organisations becoming more Civic-minded (giving something back to their local communities, for example, through volunteering or corporate social responsibility as outlined in the last priority), and local authorities becoming more enterprising. As a service, we have been very successful over the last 10 years in generating an income to invest in public green space through enterprises that are popular with park users such as cafes, gift shops, events like the *Christmas Experience* at Lotherton and visitor attractions like Tropical World. It is this approach that we propose to continue with and refine through this priority.

***“Identify and factor in resilient funding arrangements for the maintenance of greenspace as early as possible so that it can continue to provide benefits in the long term.”***

**Recommendation in Improving Access to Green Space - a new review, Public Health England, 2020**

***“Innovation, adaptation and change are an integral part of successful organisations, including parks services.”***

**State of UK Public Parks report, HLF, 2018**

## Financial sustainability

Ensuring that good quality public green space is available for the long term.



## Financial Sustainability

Like the rest of Leeds City Council, we will continue to judiciously manage our finances; reviewing costs, fees and charges regularly and using enterprise and innovation to ensure we get best value when we procure or provide goods and services.

We will seek opportunities to secure external funding to help us deliver the priorities in this strategy, for example through grants (such as those from the Heritage Lottery or Sport England) and developers' contributions.

We will continue to apply an enterprising approach to the elements of our service that have commercial potential whilst being mindful of the other priorities in this strategy. This will include generating an income from our visitor attractions, cafés, shops, sponsorship, commercial events and concessions.

***“Be creative, assign some resources and plan long term. You might just get your money back!”***

***“Value of green space to big city acknowledged higher, sustainable maintenance and investment plan – council, community and business activities to ensure valuable green space remains in safe, good and usable condition for next ten years.”***

***“Potentially some investment in park areas and/or buildings which can be used to generate income to maintain the parks in the long term. But the vast majority should remain free to use.”***

***“Encourage income producing from cafés and refreshment provision if not already existing.”***

**Respondents to Parks and Green Spaces Strategy consultation 2020.**

### **Sustainability case study: The Arium**

Most of the plants used in parks, flower beds and hanging baskets around Leeds are grown and supplied by Leeds City Council, Parks and Countryside service at our plant nursery, *The Arium*. When it became necessary to move the nursery, because the previous site at Red Hall was required for development, we took the opportunity to make it more sustainable in a number of ways.

The new nursery has been designed so it is more energy efficient, uses rainwater gathered from the glasshouse roof, and treats waste-water and sewage on site (which is more efficient than taking it away).

Because the nursery uses more modern technology to grow the plants, a large number can be grown with less input from staff, which makes it cheaper to run.

Finally, from our experience at Red Hall, we knew people were interested in purchasing surplus stock, so we created a visitor area to make it easier for them to shop, and a café to enable visitors to make the most of the light and airy building. These were complemented by a play area for visitors with children.

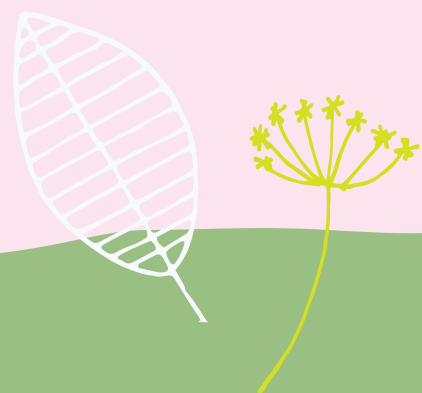
As a result, we have reduced costs and increased income (by over £1 million a year on the best year at Red Hall), making the production of our plants much more financially (and environmentally) sustainable for the future.

In 2020, we began growing trees from seed at the Arium too – thousands of these will be planted across Leeds as part of the climate emergency tree planting scheme mentioned earlier, and we are also selling many of the young trees in bulk to other large scale tree planting schemes across the UK.



Goals	Actions	Timescale*
For public parks and green spaces to continue to be managed and core funded by Leeds City Council as a public service, for the benefit of the people of Leeds.		Ongoing
To balance our budget whilst achieving the aims of the strategy over the next 10 years.	Set a sustainable financial plan and review annually.	Ongoing
	Review costs, fees and charges regularly and use innovation (such as new technology) to ensure we are getting best value where we are purchasing, or providing, goods and services.	Ongoing
	Ensure new developments are sustainable before investing e.g. by checking the business case for commercial developments.	Ongoing
	Seek external funding (e.g. from HLF or developers' contributions) to support the delivery of the priorities in the strategy.	Ongoing
	Continue to explore and develop the income generating opportunities of our service such as visitor attractions, sponsorship, cafés, events, shops and concessions.	Ongoing
	Continue to develop and implement marketing plans for income generating schemes and facilities.	Ongoing

\*Timescale for delivery: Short = 1 – 3 years, Medium = 4 – 6 years, Long = 7 – 10 years.



# Health and Wellbeing

Providing and promoting a wide range of opportunities for people to get the health benefits of spending time in green spaces.

Evidence shows that being in green spaces has significant benefits for people's mental and physical health. We aim to provide good quality parks and green spaces that incorporate a wide range of opportunities for people to be active, so that everyone can enjoy the health and wellbeing benefits of spending time in the great outdoors.

**“Evidence shows that living in a greener environment can promote and protect good health, and aid in recovery from illness and help with managing poor health...Greener environments are also associated with better mental health and wellbeing outcomes including reduced levels of depression, anxiety, and fatigue, and enhanced quality of life for both children and adults.”**

Improving Access to Green Space, A New Review, Public Health England, 2020

**“Access to high-quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and wellbeing of communities.”**

Planning for a Healthy City, Director of Public Health (Leeds) Annual Report, 2015

The main reasons we have chosen health and wellbeing as a priority are:

- **Health and wellbeing** is a priority in the Best Council Plan and evidence shows that parks and green spaces can make a significant contribution to 'supporting healthy, physically active lifestyles' and 'reducing health inequalities'.
- Research shows that regularly spending time in green spaces dramatically reduces incidence and severity of conditions that are a real concern in modern life, such as obesity, heart disease, diabetes, anxiety and depression in people of all ages and backgrounds (but which tend to be more common in deprived neighbourhoods).
- We can contribute to the Get Set Leeds 'Active Environment' goal which was identified following a public consultation involving over 4,000 local people; *In Leeds I am surrounded by things that make it easy and obvious for me to be active.*
- We are responsible for managing a large number of popular outdoor sports facilities (including over 300 sports pitches, 29 outdoor gyms, 62 bowling greens, 90 tennis courts and 2 golf courses) and we need to ensure they are fit for purpose and cater for everyone.

**“Prioritise improving access to greenspace and creating greener communities, especially in areas of deprivation, as an important part of the wider plan to reduce health inequalities locally. Greener neighbourhoods benefit everyone, but appear to disproportionately benefit disadvantaged groups, and socioeconomic-related inequalities in health are lower in areas with greater access to greenspace.”**

Recommendation in Improving Access to Green Space, A New Review, Public Health England, 2020

The University of Leeds research showed that people prefer to use good quality parks, so fulfilling that priority is key to our contribution to public health, as it is one of the best ways to ensure people come to our green spaces. When it comes to investing in getting our parks and green spaces to a quality standard, we will prioritise those in areas of deprivation (especially where the housing is high density and many people don't have their own private gardens) as a way to have the biggest positive impact on public health where resources are limited.

**“With increasing rates of physical inactivity and obesity, there is a growing commitment from the sports and health sectors to use parks as a means to promote more active and healthy lifestyles. Initiatives to promote more regular and active use of parks are on the increase.”**

State of UK Public Parks, HLF, 2018

## Health and wellbeing

Providing a wide range of opportunities for people to receive the health benefits of spending time in green spaces.



## ♥ Health and Wellbeing

**“Parks and green spaces should be managed to support health and wellbeing. Design, maintenance, and activities should encourage physical exercise appropriate of all sections of the population. They should also create restorative spaces and activities that enable people to recover from the stresses of life.”**

**Space to Thrive, University of Sheffield and Sheffield Hallam University, 2019**

We are committed to providing a wide range of opportunities for people to be physically active in our green spaces so everyone can enjoy being active outdoors, no matter what their abilities or interests. In order to deliver this, we will adopt a strategic approach to investing in sports facilities so they are as varied and accessible as possible whilst providing good value in terms of cost to the council per user. We will work with local and national partners such as football and rugby clubs, Leeds Parks Bowls Partnership, the Lawn Tennis Association, Parkrun and England Cricket Board to promote, care for and improve the facilities.

In particular, we recognise the value of walking as a free, accessible, simple and effective form of exercise so we will create and promote at least one signposted ‘healthy walking’ route in every suitable community and city park.

We understand that in many cases green spaces, particularly the public rights of way network, provide ideal settings for active travel like walking and cycling (which benefits both health and the environment), and we will work with partners to promote cycling and walking opportunities at, and through, our sites where it is suitable. An example of this is at Temple Newsam that has several great cycling routes going to, and round it...and there are more to come!

The *Rights of Way Improvement* Plan for Leeds, which sets out a ten-year plan for developing and improving the public rights of way network for walkers, horse riders, cyclists and those with visual or mobility impairments, will be reviewed and updated.

We are also committed to continuing to develop and promote the ‘country parks’ initiative across the city. The idea, which is well developed in West Leeds but needs expanding elsewhere, is to identify, improve and promote walking routes connecting up green spaces and local communities, so people can access and enjoy them easily on foot (or by bike where suitable).

Lastly, with partners, we’ll promote the benefits of spending time in green spaces to raise awareness of how good it can be for mental and physical health, and we’ll encourage people to use them for this purpose. We’ll also improve the information that is available about our sports facilities (from tennis courts to walking routes) so that people can easily find out what’s where.

**“More sports spaces (e.g. free and well-maintained tennis courts with permanent/metal nets).”**

**“It would be good to see more sport equipment integrated in the parks. More robust table tennis tables, and basketball nets spread throughout the city for example.”**

**“The outside gyms are a great idea. Would love to see more of these rolled out across the Leeds parks.”**

**“Some floodlit 5 a side pitches to use in the evening.”**

**“More bike paths, but clearly marked as such, even if experimental.”**

**“More waymarked walking and cycling routes either on site or online to download.”**

**“More connectivity – green walking routes, cycle routes”**

**Respondents to Parks and Green Spaces Strategy consultation 2020.**

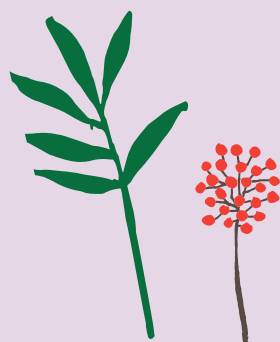
### Health and wellbeing case study: Wyke Beck Valley

The 7-mile long Wyke Beck Valley runs from Roundhay Park to Temple Newsam and is connected by several other public green spaces in between.

Over more than a decade, partners including Sustrans, Leeds City Council, Friends of Wyke Beck Valley, Groundwork, Yorkshire Wildlife Trust and TCV worked to create and promote the green walking and cycling routes that connect communities in East Leeds and provide healthy, sustainable and beautiful options for getting from one place to another.

In addition to the walking and cycling routes, the green spaces along the valley host a range of sports facilities including an outdoor gym, tennis courts, bowling greens, a golf course, football, rugby and cricket pitches and a running track.

By working with local people to improve green spaces, link them up and share walking and cycling routes (e.g. a booklet of walks was produced), we’ve been able to increase the number of people using those green spaces for healthy recreational activity.





Goals	Actions	Timescale*
<b>To provide good quality public green space that people want to visit (see priority 1!) - particularly in areas of deprivation where the positive impact on health will be greater.</b>	As necessary, possible and appropriate, prioritise investment in green spaces in areas of deprivation.	Ongoing
<b>To provide a range of opportunities for people to be physically active in green spaces across the city, so everyone can enjoy being active outdoors, no matter what their level of ability or interests.</b>	Update and publish the <i>Playing Pitch Strategy</i> (which sets out future priorities for football, rugby and cricket pitches) to ensure there is a plan in place for providing an appropriate level of provision across the city.	Short
	Audit and keep a record of the condition of all other sports facilities (tennis courts, bowling greens, outdoor gyms, MUGAs) on our sites so the information can be used to prioritise investment in them in a strategic way.	Short
	Develop new opportunities for people to cycle at our sites (where suitable).	Medium
	To create and promote a measured and signposted walking route in every suitable community and city park (to go in <i>Plan on a Page</i> ).	Long
	To make every effort to accommodate healthy activity, including new sports, on our sites.	Ongoing
	Work with local sporting organisations and national sporting bodies to develop, maintain and promote sports facilities and activities across the city.	Ongoing
	Seek external funding to develop and improve sports facilities in parks and green spaces.	Ongoing
<b>For our green spaces to be used for 'active travel' around the city as a healthier, more environmentally friendly option than driving.</b>	Update and implement the <i>Rights of Way Improvement Plan</i> .	Short
<b>For people to use 'active travel' to get to and from our green spaces.</b>	Work with partners to support the development of off-road walking and cycling routes across the city (where possible).	Ongoing
	Develop and promote walking routes connecting green spaces and communities across the city, prioritising areas of deprivation where the public health benefits of accessing green space will be greater.	Long
	Promote active ways to get to our green spaces on our website e.g. cycling and walking routes.	Short
	Seek funding to install bike stands at all our most popular sites.	Long
<b>To increase awareness of the benefits of spending time in green spaces for health and encourage people to use them for that purpose.</b>	(With partners) promote the mental and physical benefits of spending time in parks and green spaces.	Medium
	Improve the availability of, and access to, information about our sports facilities and walking and cycling routes on the internet and through the use of new technology (such as online bookings and walking apps).	Short
	Sell local cycling & walking route leaflets, maps & books from our shops.	Short

\*Timescale for delivery: Short = 1 – 3 years, Medium = 4 – 6 years, Long = 7 – 10 years.

# Key Performance Indicators

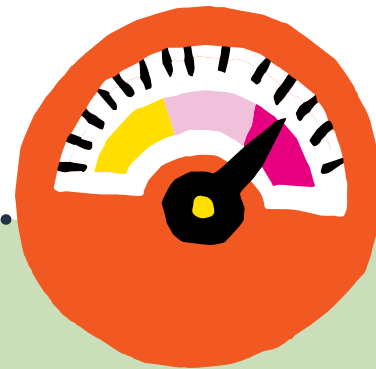
From the priorities set out above, we have identified 2 key performance indicators (KPIs) for the Parks and Countryside service – these are the elements of our work that we think it is *most* important for us to deliver over the next 10 years. They are:

**1. Number of city and community parks at, or above, Leeds Quality Park standard**

There are 70 parks in Leeds including East End Park, Armley Park, Horsforth Hall Park and Middleton Park to name but a few. They incorporate a range of facilities (such as benches, playgrounds, sports pitches, walking routes, cafés and gardens) and are based across the city in local communities. Parks are the most popular green spaces in Leeds- the *University of Leeds* Parks Study found that parks host around 45 million adult visits a year. Because they are local and so relatively easy to access, and also because of the variety of facilities in them which serve a diverse range of people, we have decided that getting them to, and keeping them at, a good quality standard is fundamental for our service. By doing this we are committing to providing welcoming, safe, accessible, well maintained, clean, environmentally friendly parks – the kind of parks that people have told us they want to use, and this is why we have chosen it as a KPI.

**2. Hectares of trees planted**

To help combat the climate emergency, we are planning to plant 50 hectares of trees every year to 2045 (1,250 hectares in total) to absorb carbon and protect the city against some of the other impacts of climate change such as extreme weather. Because it is so important both globally and locally to tackle the climate emergency, we have identified our goal of planting 50 hectares of trees in Leeds every year for the next 10 years as our contribution to the council’s goal of becoming carbon neutral by 2030 and the second key performance indicator in this strategy.



# Leeds Quality Park Criteria

When judging a park, it must be given a score of 0 – 10 on the 26 criteria listed below.

0 1	2 3 4	5 6	7	8	9	10
Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Exceptional

Criteria	Category
<b>A Welcoming Place</b>	1 Welcoming
	2 Good and safe access
	3 Signage
	4 Equal access for all
<b>Healthy, Safe and Secure</b>	5 Appropriate provision of quality facilities and activities
	6 Safe equipment and facilities
	7 Personal security
	8 Control of dogs/ dog fouling
<b>Well Maintained and Clean</b>	9 Litter and waste management
	10 Horticultural maintenance
	11 Arboricultural and woodland maintenance
	12 Building and infrastructure maintenance
	13 Equipment maintenance
<b>Environmental Management</b>	14 Managing environmental impact
	15 Waste minimisation
	16 Chemical use
	17 Peat use
	18 Climate change adaption strategies
<b>Biodiversity, Landscape and Heritage</b>	19 Management of natural features, wild fauna and flora
	20 Conservation of landscape features
	21 Conservation of buildings and structures
<b>Community Involvement</b>	22 Community involvement in management & development
	23 Appropriate provision for the community
<b>Marketing</b>	24 Marketing and promotion
	25 Appropriate information channels
	26 Appropriate educational and interpretational information

# Implementing the strategy

The Parks and Countryside Service will focus on the actions set out above over the next 10 years. We will also consider the priorities outlined whenever changes are proposed. For example, when we receive funding to invest in a park, we will consider how it could be used to increase quality, accessibility and biodiversity; we will look for opportunities to make that park more child-friendly and culturally interesting (e.g. by restoring an historic feature) and how it might be used to promote health and wellbeing. We will look at how the investment might be used to help reduce the impact of climate change (by including tree planting, for instance) and we will also make sure any changes to the site are financially sustainable.

Progress on delivering the strategy will be reviewed annually, and there will be a more detailed review, to check the priorities and actions are still relevant, in 5 years' time.



## Checklist for staff

Before any changes are made to the way the Parks and Countryside Service operates during the life of this strategy, consideration should be given to how they will impact on the delivery of the aims set out in the strategy, with the intention being to help deliver those aims.

This table below can be used to help with that process.

Priorities and aims of Parks and Countryside Service (as set out in Parks & Green Spaces Strategy)	Does the proposed change contribute to the achievement of the aims of the Strategy? <i>Answer: Yes/No/No change</i>	How does the proposed change contribute to, or impact upon, the achievement of the aims of the Strategy?
<b>Quality</b> - Providing high quality parks and green spaces.		
<b>Climate &amp; biodiversity</b> - Increasing wildlife and biodiversity and reducing the impact of climate change.		
<b>Access for all</b> - Ensuring that parks and green spaces are accessible to everyone.		
<b>Culture</b> - Providing exciting, diverse, interesting and enjoyable green spaces that reflect the history and culture of their local communities.		
<b>Child-friendly Leeds</b> - Providing green spaces that children and teenagers love to visit.		
<b>Working with communities</b> - Having a positive, open, helpful and collaborative approach to delivering the parks and countryside service.		
<b>Financial sustainability</b> - Ensuring that good quality public green space is available for the long term.		
<b>Health &amp; Wellbeing</b> - Providing and promoting a wide range of opportunities for people to be get the health benefits of spending time in parks and green spaces.		

# Conclusion

We would like to thank everyone involved in the consultation for taking the time to share your thoughts with us – we hope we have captured the main priorities of the people of Leeds in the strategy and that the people who live, work and visit the city continue to enjoy its parks and green spaces for the next 10 years and beyond. We look forward to fulfilling our ambition to provide the best parks and green spaces in the country and making a significant contribution to Leeds being the Best City in the UK!



# Glossary

**Accessible:** Able to be easily visited and enjoyed by everyone.

**Biodiversity:** The existence of a wide variety of plant and animal species living in their natural environment.

**Community parks:** Parks with a range of facilities (including playgrounds and sports facilities) aimed at local communities e.g. Springhead Park, East End Park, Armley Park, Burley Park. There are 63 community parks in Leeds.

**City Parks:** Parks providing a wide range of visitor facilities that attract both residents of Leeds and visitors from further afield. The range of visitor attractions in these parks generally includes a café, toilets and unique features such as animal attractions and specialist gardens. There are 7 city parks in Leeds as follows: Roundhay park, Temple Newsam, Middleton Park, Golden Acre Park, Kirkstall Abbey Park, Lotherton and Chevin Forest Park.

**Green Flag:** The *Green Flag Award* is the benchmark national standard for publicly accessible parks and green spaces in the United Kingdom. Parks (and other types of public green spaces) and their management plans are assessed against a set of criteria by independent judges from across the UK.

**Interpretation:** When it comes to public spaces, the word *interpretation* refers to a way of providing information about something, for example, a sign about the history of an area or a leaflet about the wildlife on a site.

**Key Performance Indicator (KPI):** A quantifiable measure used to evaluate the success of an organisation.

**Leeds Quality Park (LQP):** Local measure of a good quality park based on the *Green Flag* site assessment criteria and judged by experienced local Parks and Countryside staff and volunteers.

# References

## Leeds Parks and Countryside

*Findings of public consultation into Parks and Green Spaces Strategy*

*Fixed Play Strategy*, Leeds City Council 2002

*Leeds Parks and Green Spaces Strategy 2020*

*Leeds Parks Natural Capital research*, Vivid Economics 2020

*Leeds Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2010*

*Towards a Parks and Green Spaces Strategy to 2030*

*Leeds Parks Survey*, University of Leeds 2018

## Wider research/thinking about public green space

*Charitable Giving to Parks and Green Spaces*, University of Leeds, 2018

Green Flag Standard

*Improving Access to Green Space*, Public Health England, 2020

*Monitor for Engagement with Natural Environment*, Natural England 2019

*Out of Bounds, Equity in Access to Urban Nature*, Groundwork, 2021

*Parliamentary inquiry into public parks (and government response) 2016-17*

*Preventing Anti-social Behaviour in Public spaces*, Cabespace, 2004

*Revaluing Parks and Green Spaces*, Fields in Trust, 2018

*Space to Thrive*, University of Sheffield and Sheffield Hallam University, 2019

*State of Nature report*, National Biodiversity Network, 2019

*State of UK public parks*, National Heritage Lottery Fund, 2016

*Thriving with Nature guide*, Mental Health Foundation

*Why Should We Invest in Parks*, HLF, 2021

## Local strategies

Leeds Biodiversity Action plan

Leeds Playing Pitch Strategy (draft)

Vision for Leeds 2011- 2030

White Rose Forest Strategy 2021

## Leeds City Council strategies and plans

*Age friendly Leeds Strategy and Plan*

*Leeds Adopted Local Plan*

*Leeds Children and Young People's Plan*

*Leeds City Council, Best Council Plan*

*Leeds Commitment to Children's Play*

*Leeds Culture Strategy*

*Leeds Health and Wellbeing Strategy*

Leeds Transport Strategy consultation document

*Living Well With Dementia In Leeds – our strategy 2020-25*

Our Spaces Strategy

## Other

*Big Leeds Climate Conversation consultation report*, Leeds City Council, 2019

Leeds Observatory website

*Leeds Open Space, Sport and Recreation Assessment*

*Planning for a Healthy City*, Director of Public Health Annual Report, 2015



**Our vision is to provide the best parks and green spaces in the UK**

**Priority 1: Quality**

Providing high quality parks and green spaces

Goals	Actions	Timescale	Measuring success	Proress update January 2023
<b>For all city parks to retain the Green Flag award for the life of strategy.</b>	Continue to use the Green Flag criteria as a best practice guide to managing Temple Newsam, Roundhay Park, Chevin Forest Park, Golden Acre Park, Kirkstall Abbey Park and Middleton Park.	Ongoing	Green Flag Award	All city parks were awarded a Green Flag in 2022.
<b>For all community parks to reach the Leeds Quality Park standard during the life of the strategy.</b>	Area based operational teams to prioritise community parks	Long	Leeds Quality Park Assessment – the percentage of community parks that reach LQP standard - <b>Key Performance Indicator.</b>	72% of community parks achieved LQP in 2022 - an improvement on all previous years since assessments began.
Page 51	Continue to target S106 (and other suitable external-) funding on community parks where possible (and in consultation with ward members and Community Committees).	Ongoing		This work is ongoing with S106 investment totalling £400k spent at 11 community parks in 2022 (additional match funding from WBI, Community Committees and MICE is also often secured). Work has included soft landscaping, refurbishing playgrounds and paths and installing benches and bins. In addition £3 million was secured through the Morley Town bid for investment in parks in that area of the city and unsuccessful bids went in for £16 million of capital funds to deliver plans for 8 community parks through LUF.
	Establish a strategic investment fund to improve parks and green spaces in areas most in need.	Medium		A paper proposing the use of CIL for this purpose went to Strategic Investment Board in May 2022 which estimated the capital costs of delivering plans on a page would amount to approximately £1 million/per park.
<b>For all cemeteries and crematoria to reach Leeds Quality Park standard during the life of the strategy.</b>	Bereavement and operations to work together to get sites to LQP	Long	Leeds Quality Park Assessment – the percentage of cemeteries and crematoria that reach LQP standard	All cemeteries and crematoria were judged against the LQP standard for the first time in 2022. 56% passed.
	Ensure all relevant staff (including apprentices) have a good understanding of the LQP standard (through training) and that the LQP judging process involves a wide range of staff from across the service.	Medium	Number of staff trained in LQP standard	33 members of staff were newly trained in LQP judging in 2022 (50 people are already trained) - 78 of these were involved in the judging process this year.
<b>For all community parks to have a 'plan on a page'.</b>	Produce a 'plan on a page' for each community park, setting out a vision for each site in consultation with ward members and local community.	Long	Plan on a page available for each community park	21 plans (11 of which were for community parks) have been produced through the Levelling Up and Morley Town Bid processes and Groundwork have been commissioned to work with Parks & Countryside to produce plans for all the other community parks over the next 5 years.
<b>For Parks and Countryside visitor attractions to meet the Visit England Quality Assurance Standard .</b>	Use the Visit England Quality Assurance Standard as a good practice guide to managing our visitor attractions at Temple Newsam, Lotherton and Roundhay Park.	Short	Temple Newsam, Lotherton and Roundhay park meeting the VE Quality Assurance Standard	Lotherton and Temple Newsam were assessed in 2022 and passed. We plan to start getting Roundhay park assessed once current development works at Tropical World are complete.
<b>To have excellent animal welfare standards in our zoos and at Home Farm.</b>	Ensure our zoos meet the standards set out in the Zoo Licensing Act 1981 and that Home Farm meets standards set out in Animal Welfare Act (2006), Welfare of Farmed Animals (England) Regulations 2007 and the Animal Welfare (licencing of Activities Involving Animals) (England) Regulations 2018.	Ongoing	All standards met	All these standards were met in 2022.



<b>To reduce anti-social behaviour and ensure people feel safe in our public green spaces.</b>	Develop an evidence-based approach to tackling issues with dogs, to be targeted at problem sites as necessary.	Medium	Approach to dog-related issues agreed and implemented as necessary	Will be undertaken by new Technical Support Officer - recruitment to post currently being undertaken.
	Develop an evidence-based approach to tackling litter to be targeted at problem sites as necessary.	Short	Approach to litter agreed and implemented as necessary	Will be undertaken by new Technical Support Officer - recruitment to post currently being undertaken.
	Work with <i>Safer Leeds</i> to target anti-social behaviour hotspots as necessary	Ongoing		Ongoing work - parks officers regularly attend local Neighbourhood Policing team meetings to discuss issues on site and take positive actions e.g. we recently received Community Safety funding for access controls at Middleton.

Timescales: Short = 1-3 years, Medium = 4-6 years, Long = 7-10 years.

Our vision is to provide the best parks and green spaces in the UK

Priority 2: Climate and Biodiversity

Increasing wildlife and biodiversity and reducing the impact of climate change.

Goals	Actions	Timescale	Measuring success	Progress update January 2023
<b>To plant 50 hectares of woodland each year.</b>	Identify and design suitable sites for woodland creation each year in consultation with ward members and the local community.	Ongoing	50 hectares identified for tree planting each year.	88 sites have been identified for tree planting this year and planting has commenced (due to complete end Feb).
	Seek external funding to support tree planting.	Ongoing	External funding obtained annually.	External funding of £200k has been sourced so far this season for tree planting with several other funding applications pending a decision.
	Plant 50 hectares of woodland per year.	Ongoing	Hectares of new woodland created - <b>Key Performance Indicator</b>	50 hectares planted in 2021-22 season.
<b>For all our woodland management to meet the UK Forestry Standard and the UK Woodland Assurance Standard .</b>	Manage woodlands in line with the standards and have them assessed as required.	Ongoing	% woodlands being managed to the standard.	We have UKWAS accreditation for our woodlands and work is ongoing to retain it.
<b>To increase the quantity, quality, size, variety and connectedness of wildlife habitats (e.g. woodlands, meadows, ponds, hedgerows) on our green spaces.</b>	Management plans for community and city parks to set out minimum of 25% wildlife habitat (where reasonable).	Long	Plans on a page include 25% wildlife habitat	This will be designed in to the 'Plans on a Page'.
	Reduce the area of seasonal bedding in our green spaces and replace them with more wildlife-friendly alternatives.	Short	Area of seasonal/wildlife-friendly bedding	Seasonal bedding was reduced by 50% and replaced by a mix of natural and pictorial wildflower meadows in 2022.
Page 53	Seek to increase knowledge and understanding of nature conservation in the Parks and Countryside team through recruitment and training.	Medium	Training sessions organised and run	This has been added to this year's horticultural apprenticeship training programme.
	Produce nature conservation management plans for all our green spaces with wildlife designation (SSSIs, LNRs, LWS)	Long	Management plans complete and up to date for all sites	28 out of our 50 designated sites currently have a management plan in place (the list of designated sites is currently being updated by WYE). We will develop a process and schedule for producing management plans (possibly adopting the plan on a page approach for the simpler locations) for the other sites in 2023.
	Work with partners and volunteers to implement management plans at designated sites.	Ongoing		Via the ranger service, 1,800 days of volunteer nature conservation work have been undertaken (including tree planting, invasive species removal and pond clearance). A partnership project with the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust in the Wyke Beck and Lower Aire Valleys led on the delivery of an additional 333 days of volunteer work. There is also an 'unmeasurable' number of additional volunteer hours spent at our sites led directly by independent volunteer groups e.g. Friends of Gledhow Valley Woods.
	Regular monitoring of designated sites to ensure valuable habitats are not being lost.	Short	Record of inspections of designated sites.	Natural England monitor SSSIs and other sites are currently monitored by our Natural Environment team & West Yorkshire Ecology on an ad hoc basis. A structured process for ensuring the sites are regularly monitored will be developed in 2023 along with agreeing a process for developing management plans.
	Seek and use external funding to deliver the management plans from grants and developers' contributions related to Biodiversity Net Gain.	Ongoing	Number of SSSIs, LWS and LNRs in favourable condition	Of our 4 formally monitored SSSIs - 2 are in favourable condition and 2 are recovering. We are currently working with colleagues in Planning to establish a process for drawing down funds for Biodiversity Net Gain and a post to lead on it is being created.

	Develop and implement an Ash Dieback Management & Recovery Plan to ensure the loss of ash trees from the disease doesn't have a negative impact on biodiversity and the climate.	Medium	Ash Dieback Management Plan in place.	Forestry have developed a plan based on recommendations from the Tree Council and are implementing it (it involves identifying ash dieback and its severity/risk and removing ash trees when they become hazardous). The woodland creation scheme contributes to mitigating the impact on climate and biodiversity of the unfortunate requirement to remove diseased ash trees.
<b>To eliminate the use of peat in our operations</b>	Stop selling compost with peat in it at the Arium. Only purchase plants from suppliers who don't use peat. (Peat isn't used as a growing medium at the Arium).	Medium	No peat used in our operations.	The work of the Parks & Countryside Service is now completely peat free.
<b>To provide well-managed allotment sites across the city to facilitate local food growing.</b>	Produce and deliver a Leeds City Council Allotment Management Plan	Short	Allotment management plan in place	Work has commenced on this.
<b>To minimise any negative impact the Parks and Countryside Service has on the environment</b>	Continue to review Parks and Countryside operations (including those of external providers) and implement all viable means to minimise impact on environment e.g. by using electric vehicles where possible, minimising the use of pesticides, stopping using single-use plastic cups and straws at our cafes.	Ongoing	Improvements made	We increasingly use electric vehicles (this is coordinated by Transport) and we are planning to purchase electric tools and grass cutting machinery this year to replace diesel-fueled machinery. The locations of EV charging points in parks are on the Zap Map website and will be added to the park's webpages shortly. A new ground source heat pump will power the new indoor play development at Temple Newsam.
<b>For our zoos to retain the BIAZA (British Association for Zoos and Aquariums) accreditation for conservation of the natural world and education.</b>	Continue to manage zoos at Lotherton and Tropical World to BIAZA standards.	Ongoing	Achieving BIAZA standard at regular inspections	Both zoos passed their BIAZA inspection this year and are constantly working to ensure we retain this accreditation.
<b>To provide activities (including school visits) for over 5,000 children and adults a year to inspire them about nature and teach them about local wildlife, climate change, and how they can help (including anti-litter message).</b>	Continue to promote and deliver education programme	Ongoing	Number of children taking part in an educational event/activity.	10,742 school children have attended wildlife, environment and nature conservation-themed education workshops so far this year e.g. tree planting, seed gathering, bug hunting.
Page 54	To promote wildlife-friendly gardening and local food growing at the Arium through selling relevant seeds and plants and providing associated educational information.	Medium	Items available in shop at Arium	Food plants and seeds and wildflower seeds are sold at the Arium.
	When planning new developments, consider ways to integrate environmental improvements and environmental education into the scheme.	Ongoing		Educational interpretation relating to food growing, nature conservation and/or wildlife habitats is planned for the 2 schemes being developed at Temple Newsam (cycling trails and playbarn at Home Farm) and also for the South American and Desert House developments at Tropical World.

Timescales: Short = 1-3 years, Medium = 4-6 years, Long = 7-10 years.



**Our vision is to provide the best parks and green spaces in the UK**

**Priority 3: Access for All**

Ensuring that parks and green spaces are accessible for everyone who wants to use them.

Goals	Actions	Timescale	Measuring success	Progress update January 2023
<b>Access to our visitor attractions will remain affordable</b>	Discounts on entry to be offered at our visitor attractions for those least able to pay e.g through LeedsCard Extra.	Ongoing	Concessions available	Concessions are available for Leeds Card, Breeze Card and Leeds Card Extra.
<b>All parks and cemeteries &amp; crematoria to be judged as 'good' (score 7) or higher in 'equal access for all' LQP criteria</b>	To develop a process for auditing the accessibility of our sites.	Short	Access audit available to use	In 2022, 44 out of 64 community parks (69%) and 18 out of 25 cemeteries and crematoria (72%) achieved 7 or above on the Equal Access for All LQP criteria.
	To undertake an access audit of all city and community parks every 5 years	Long	Record of access audits.	The audit will be undertaken as part of the initial Plan on a Page site assessment
	Feed findings from access audits into 'Plan on a Page' for each site.	Long	Access included in all 'Plans on a Page'	Plans in process of being developed.
	Seek and use external funding for access improvements in parks, cemeteries and crematoria.	Ongoing		Ongoing through S106 and included in Plan on a Page interventions.
	Provide training for relevant Parks and Countryside staff on what makes a green space truly accessible.	Medium	Record of training provided	It's currently part of the LQP training. The training is going to be reviewed and updated in 2023 at which point there will be more emphasis put on access.
	Design all new developments to be fully accessible by applying the guidance set out in BS8300 2018 where possible.	Short		This is included in all plans, proposals and briefs e.g. it's in specification for Home Farm play barn.
<b>To ensure our parks and green spaces are welcoming and accessible for older people.</b>	Increase number of disabled parking bays in parks and review bench numbers and locations when putting together plans on a page.	Long	Number of disabled parking bays and park benches.	This will be part of the process of developing the Plans on a Page. Disabled parking bays have been designed in to plans to upgrade golf club car park at Temple Newsam (as part of the proposed new developments there). A representative of the Parks & Countryside Service sits of the <i>Age Friendly Leeds</i> Board.
<b>To continue to provide well maintained, accessible public toilets in all our city parks and the Arium.</b>	Install a Changing Places toilet as part of new developments at Tropical World	Medium	Accessible toilets in all city parks	A changing places toilet, accessible to all park users, is included in the plans for Tropical World and Home Farm (along with other accessible toilets).
	New city centre park (Aire park) will include accessible public toilets	Short		These are included in designs for pavilion café.
<b>To provide correct, up to date and easy to understand information about our sites online.</b>	Get correct, up to date information about all our city parks and the Arium on <i>Euan's Guide</i> website	Short	Information on website	This task has been completed for the Arium, Tropical World, Temple Newsam and Kirkstall Abbey.
	Ensure there is good quality information about all our community and city parks, cemeteries and crematoria and local nature reserves available on the internet	Medium	Information on internet	A review of web content relating to parks and countryside services will take place in 2023 with most popular sites being prioritised for web content. Moortown Park was added in November 2022 at the request of the <i>Friends of</i> .
<b>For our parks and green spaces to feel safe and welcoming for girls and women.</b>	Collaborate on research to find out how safe women and girls feel in our green spaces and how safety might best be improved.	Short	Research complete	West Yorkshire Combined Authority received funding to undertake research into the safety of women and girls in parks and green spaces across the region. We have been involved in developing and promoting the research and some of our team has been interviewed. The findings of the research were reported back at a workshop on 31 October and a Parks and Countryside representative took part in the panel discussion. The findings of the research will contribute to the production of a design-guide that we will use for ensuring future park design is as women-friendly as possible. There was also a small, local research project specifically focussed on Woodhouse Moor and Holbeck Moor as part of this scheme - it identified improvement works that would make the sites feel safer. £10k funding has been allocated to both the sites and the improvement works (which focus on replacing damaged, old infrastructure such as benches, signs and bins that make the parks look uncared for) are in progress.
<b>For our parks and green spaces to provide something for all Leeds residents.</b>	Continue to undertake thorough equality impact assessments for new developments and major decisions.	Ongoing		Ongoing.

<b>To increase the diversity of the workforce in the Parks and Countryside team at every level in the service.</b>	Work with HR to produce and implement a plan for diversifying our workforce through the recruitment process.	Long	Equality characteristics of workforce	A 'people plan' aimed at Parks & Countryside staff (to include things like equality, training, communications and recruitment) is being developed with the Directorate Support Team.
--	--	------	---------------------------------------	--

Timescales: Short = 1-3 years, Medium = 4-6 years, Long = 7-10 years.

**Our vision is to provide the best parks and green spaces in the UK**

**Priority 4: Culture**

Providing exciting, diverse, interesting and enjoyable green spaces that reflect the history and culture of their local communities.

Goals	Actions	Timescale	Measuring success	Progress update, January 2023
<b>To provide a range of fantastic visitor attractions that contribute to making Leeds a great place to live and visit.</b>	Create new indoor playbarn at Temple Newsam to improve the winter visitor offer at Home Farm.	Short	Playbarn open	Construction has started and the attraction should open Easter 2023. We are also working on improving the experience at the rest of Home Farm through installing new, improved signage and interpretation and creating interactive, educational facilities so children and adults get more from their visits.
	Create new cycle trails, Learn to Ride area, playground and café on area of Temple Newsam that was previously a golf course.	Short	Facilities open	The plans have been finalised (following a public consultation) and are awaiting planning permission with the aim of starting work on site in 2023.
	Develop an outdoor water play visitor attraction	Long	Water play open	FPG have approved the initial business case for this scheme and a feasibility study is due to commence in 2023.
	Continue to improve the visitor offer at Lotherton	Medium	Wider variety of animals and new playground.	The business case for a new, flagship playground has been approved and the procurement process has commenced - the estimated completion date for the scheme is end 2024.
	Create an indoor play centre at Tropical World	Medium	Indoor play centre open	The necessary background surveys and initial designs have been developed for this scheme and the business case has been approved at FPG and SIB. The designs will be developed in more detail in 2023 with an aim to open in 2025.
	Promote Golden Acre Park as a botanical garden	Medium	Golden Acre launched and promoted as 'Leeds Botanic Gardens'	A business case is being developed to fund this.
	Develop a new public parkland area at the site that was previously <i>South Leeds Golf Course</i> including a covid memorial woodland, new walking routes, viewpoints and education and information points.	Medium	New park open to public	The area is now open for public use and access improvements have been undertaken. An overall site plan is in development.
<b>For lifelong learning to be integrated into our parks and green spaces and associated visitor facilities.</b>	When developing/improving our green spaces and visitor attractions, include relevant education and interpretation e.g. the new cycle trails at Temple Newsam will include signage about historic features along the way.	Ongoing		Information signs are provided at sites where there is new tree planting/relaxed mowing/wildflower meadow creation and the like. These have been a great success in terms of reducing enquiries and complaints about site management. Interpretation is being worked up for Temple Newsam cycle trails and Home Farm as part of the developments there.
	To provide activities (including school visits) for over 30,000 people to educate and inspire them about the animals at Temple Newsam farm, Lotherton and Tropical World, and key features (historic, artistic etc) in Leeds parks.	Ongoing	Number of children taking part in an educational event/activity.	14,989 school children have visited Tropical World, 2,193 - Wildlife World and 3,574 - Home Farm in 2022. Over 29,000 people have attended educational events at those sites.
<b>For our visitor attractions and city parks to be recognised as key elements of local tourism offer.</b>	Continue to refresh and deliver marketing plans for visitor attractions (Temple Newsam, Lotherton, Arium, Roundhay park/Tropical World)	Ongoing	Marketing plans in place	Marketing plans for the sites are in place and related work is ongoing with recent marketing campaigns focussing on the school holidays and the Christmas Experience at Lotherton. The Parks & Countryside events and activities leaflet will be re-launched (post-Covid) in spring 2023.
<b>To preserve, promote and provide information about features of cultural interest (e.g. historic landmarks) found in our parks and green spaces</b>	The preservation and interpretation of historic and other interesting features in community and city parks should be included in their management plans/plan on a page	Medium		Conservation Management Plans are being developed for Temple Newsam and Lotherton setting out how the heritage of the sites will be promoted and preserved for the future. For community parks this will be included in Plans on a Page.



	Seek and use external funding to preserve and provide interpretation about features of interest. Includes large-scale HLF bid for Temple Newsam.	Ongoing	Temple Newsam NHLF bid submitted	The aim of the Conservation Management Plans being developed for Temple Newsam and Lotherton is to identify ways to sustainably manage the heritage features at the sites. Having such a plan in place will make it more likely that a planned substantial funding bid to NHLF for the preservation of key heritage features at Temple Newsam will be successful. Elsewhere, charity partners, <i>Love Leeds Parks</i> , have secured NHLF funding to engage communities in heritage at 6 community parks and S106, Morley and LUF funding to improve parks often includes the preservation and interpretation of heritage features.
<b>To host a diverse range of events in green spaces across the city every year.</b>	Promote our sites as excellent venues for events of all types and sizes.	Ongoing	Number of events hosted each year	834 events took place at our events in 2022 including funfairs, community galas, sponsored walks and rock concerts. Significant events included Live at Leeds and Let's Rock at Temple Newsam, the Black Music Concert and West Indian Carnival based at Potternewton park and the popular, council-organised Halloween and Christmas events at Lotherton.
	Support community event organisers with advice and guidance	Ongoing		159 community-led events took place in parks in 2022. Support for them is ongoing through the Bookings and Licensing Team.
	(Subject to a suitable business case) create a new event space at Temple Newsam to facilitate more events and move larger events away from the historic core of the estate.	Medium	New event space created	The Temple Newsam estate manager is currently liaising with a local key event organiser on feasibility study for this scheme.
	Work with Leeds 2023 team to ensure parks and green spaces contribute to the year of cultural activity both as event venues and destinations in themselves.	Short		Parks & Countryside are represented on the City Readiness Team and 2023 Operations Delivery Team. Several events are planned on our parks and green spaces as part of 2023 including a 4-day music concert at Kirkstall Abbey and a 3-day 'Sustainable Music Event' at Woodhouse Moor.
<b>To provide exciting and diverse parks that reflect the history and culture of their local communities.</b>	When planning new developments, consider their context and history, and be creative to cultivate green spaces with their own unique character, that provide for, and represent their local communities, resulting in a varied and complementary offer across the city	Ongoing		This is included in the process of developing the Plans on a Page.

Timescales: Short = 1-3 years, Medium = 4-6 years, Long = 7-10 years.

**Our vision is to provide the best parks and green spaces in the UK**

**Priority 5: Child Friendly**

Providing green spaces that children and teenagers love to visit so that they can gain the health, wellbeing and educational benefits of spending time in them.

Goals	Actions	Timescale	Measuring success	Progress update Oct 2022
<b>To have child friendly parks and green spaces</b>	Consult children and teenagers, as well as adults, ahead of making changes to our sites.	Short	Consultations involve children and teens.	An online consultation was undertaken in 2022 to find out more about what families with SEND members think of our playgrounds and how they could be improved to make them more accessible to people with special educational needs and disabilities. The consultation was advertised widely and 38 responses were received which are currently being analysed. From 2023, children and young people will be consulted on Plans on a Page as they are developed.
<b>To have a wide range of good quality play facilities for children of all ages and abilities across the city</b>	Develop a checklist to allow us to assess the quality and accessibility of our playful spaces.	Short	Checklist in place	All our playgrounds are independently inspected annually to ensure the equipment is safe to use. The playgrounds team also check them weekly for this purpose. In addition, in 2022 our contracted playground supplier was commissioned for the first time to undertake an audit of the condition of our playground equipment too. This is due to be completed in February 2023.
	Audit quantity, location and quality of play facilities across the city so we can prioritise effectively.	Short	Audit complete	All our playgrounds are independently inspected annually to ensure the equipment is safe to use. The playgrounds team also check them weekly for this purpose. In addition, in 2022 our contracted playground supplier was commissioned for the first time to undertake an audit of the condition of our playground equipment too. This is due to be completed in February 2023.
	Seek external funding for the creation and improvement of green spaces and related facilities for children and teenagers	Ongoing	Number of play facilities on our sites judged to be of good quality	£530k S106, plus match funding, was committed for play facilities at 12 sites in 2022. The visitor attraction developments highlighted in the 'Culture' priority section aim to improve children's facilities at Tropical World, Arium, Home Farm and Lotherton.
	Top slice income from our chargeable family visitor attractions to improve access to play facilities in areas where external funding isn't available (often inner city).	Short		The principle of top slicing has been established and has been included in all business cases. The first income to be generated will be from Home Farm play barn when it opens later this year.
<b>To ensure there is suitable provision for teenagers in our parks and green spaces</b>	Undertake consultation to find out what teenagers around the city want from green spaces.	Medium	Consultation complete	Consultations are undertaken locally for new developments and the plan is for a city-wide consultation to get an overview of what teenagers want more generally.
<b>For there to be clear information available on the internet about facilities for children and teenagers in our parks and green spaces.</b>	Provide information about what's available for children and teenagers at green spaces across the city on the internet	Medium	Clear, up to date information provided.	There is some information about facilities in parks on the internet which will be reviewed in 2023. From 2023 we will also use our social media platforms to share information about facilities for children and young people on parks and countryside sites.

Timescales: Short = 1-3 years, Medium = 4-6 years, Long = 7-10 years.

**Our vision is to provide the best parks and green spaces in the UK**

**Priority 6: Working with communities**

Having a positive, open, helpful and collaborative approach to delivering the Parks and Countryside Service.

Goals	Actions	Timescale	Measuring success	Progress update January 2023
<b>To provide good customer service</b>	To provide customer care training for staff who have public facing elements to their role (includes café, shops, rangers, gardeners, technical, bereavement, admin etc - nearly everyone!)	Medium	Training complete	In depth customer care training was provided for visitor services staff (e.g. in parks shops and cafes) last year and will continue to be provided for relevant staff. An introduction to the principles of customer care will be added to the apprenticeship training programme and also to the induction training for all new staff from January 2023. A full training strategy including customer care and dealing with the public will be included in People Plan.
	To provide clear and accessible information about the Parks and Countryside Service and any changes that might affect service users.	Short		Ongoing - we consult on all changes and use a range of communications (social media, direct mailing, press releases) to inform park users of proposed changes to service provision.
<b>To achieve gold in the Charter for the Bereaved annual assessment for both cremations and burial-related services</b>	Use the Charter as a best practice guide for the delivery of bereavement services.	Long	Gold award	Bereavement services currently have a gold award for cremations and a silver award for burials.
<b>To provide parks and green spaces that are valued by Leeds residents and visitors to the city.</b>	To develop and implement a 'best-practice' approach to undertaking public consultations when changes to green spaces are proposed.	Ongoing	Consultations undertaken	The 'best practice approach' will be developed through the Plan on a Page process in 2023. In 2022 extensive consultation was undertaken to identify sites for tree planting, 8 consultations were undertaken about proposed improvements to local parks and a Leeds-wide consultation was undertaken with families with disabilities about our play facilities.
	Continue to consult Community Committee Environment Sub-groups with regards proposed changes to public green spaces in their areas.	Ongoing		Ongoing. Ward members are also consulted about how S106 will be spent in their wards.
<b>To continue to work in partnership with <i>Friends of, In Bloom</i> groups and other relevant community organisations.</b>	Continue to work with the Leeds Parks and Green Spaces Forum as a key service partner (representing Friends, In Bloom groups and similar)	Ongoing		Ongoing - our Outreach Manager is the Forum secretary and Parks & Countryside news updates are provided at the Forum's quarterly meetings
	Ensure all Friends, In Bloom, outdoor sports clubs, allotment associations and similar community groups with an interest in our green spaces have a contact in the Parks & Countryside Service who can support them to achieve shared goals	Ongoing	Number of volunteer groups affiliated with the Parks and Countryside Service	The Technical team, Rangers and In Bloom officer provide this service. There are approximately 94 Friends and other green space community groups, 40 active In Bloom Groups, over 650 Sports clubs and 58 self-managed allotment sites currently affiliated with the service.
	Set out a clear approach to how we will support <i>Friends of, In Bloom</i> and other similar community groups.	Short		Parks and Countryside Volunteer Policy is in place. Proposals for the future of the In Bloom scheme are in development.
<b>To increase volunteer engagement with the Parks and Countryside Service and provide volunteer opportunities for everyone who is interested.</b>	Continue to promote and facilitate a wide range of volunteering opportunities.	Ongoing	Number of corporate volunteer days held per year	862 days have been spent helping to care for our sites by corporate volunteers this year.
	Continue to organise and run the following city-wide volunteer groups: Leeds Wildlife Volunteers, Leeds Cemetery Volunteers, Volunteer Rangers and Leeds Voluntary Footpath Rangers	Ongoing	Number of volunteer days held per year	Over 800 volunteer days have been undertaken by regular volunteer groups across the city with the rangers.
	To provide training for relevant staff in working with volunteers and communities	Short	Record of training provided	The majority of operational staff have been trained and apprentices are trained as part of their development. Training programme to be included in upcoming People Plan.
	Seek external funding opportunities for community engagement projects, particularly at sites where communities are currently less involved.	Medium		Community engagement projects in the Meanwood Valley, Wyke Beck Valley, Lower Aire Valley and Armley and Gotts park are part or wholly externally funded. With the support of the Parks & Countryside Service, partners <i>Love Leeds Parks</i> have recently secured funding for community engagement in 6 community parks across the city to be delivered over the next 3 years.



<b>To work in partnerships where they can help us deliver the aims of the strategy more effectively than we can do alone.</b>	Regularly review current partnerships with external organisations and give due consideration to any new partnership opportunities that arise.	Ongoing		The Groundwork Service Level Agreement has just been updated. Grants for TCV, Meanwood Valley Farm, Middleton Park Equestrian Centre are reviewed annually. Partnerships with RSPB, YWT etc are continually monitored.
	Continue to work with other council departments such as Regeneration, Active Leeds, Corporate Property Management, Museums and Galleries and Public Health to deliver the aims of strategy.	Ongoing		Work is ongoing with a range of other council departments e.g. joint Lotherton & Temple Newsam management boards with Museums and Galleries, joint funding bids such as Levelling Up with Regeneration, Playzones with Active Leeds and the Tropical World indoor play project being coordinated by the Projects and Programmes team.
<b>To learn from other organisations</b>	Keep up to date with national research and developments in the public green space sector and attend core cities, APSE and other network events as appropriate to ensure we are applying a best-practice approach to managing green space.	Ongoing		Officers keep up to date with national research and best practice through attending the national Core Cities Parks Group and conferences and workshops such as the <i>Future Parks Accelerator</i> conference on finding ways to make public parks more sustainable in 2022.

Timescales: Short = 1-3 years, Medium = 4-6 years, Long = 7-10 years.

**Our vision is to provide the best parks and green spaces in the UK**

**Priority 7: Financial Sustainability**

Ensuring that quality green space is available for the long term

Goals	Actions	Timescale	Measuring success	Progress update, January 2023
For public parks and green spaces to continue to be managed and core funded by Leeds City Council as a public service, for the benefit of the people of Leeds		Ongoing		Ongoing
To balance budget whilst achieving the aims of the strategy over next 10 years.	Set a sustainable financial plan and review annually	Ongoing	Budget at year end	Done annually as part of budgeting process.
	Review costs, fees and charges regularly and use innovation (such as new technology) to ensure we are getting best value where we are purchasing, or providing, goods and services.	Ongoing		Done annually as part of the budgeting process and through applying council procurement processes when purchasing goods and services to ensure we get value for money.
	Ensure new developments are sustainable before investing e.g. by ensuring there is a business case for commercial developments	Ongoing	Business cases made	All commercial investments are based on a sound business case checked by the Council's Finance Performance Group. For example, a business case for improving the play facilities at Lotherton was approved early this year and an updated business case for Tropical World indoor play went to FPG in mid November.
	Seek external funding (e.g. from HLF or developers' contributions) to support the delivery of the priorities in strategy	Ongoing	Income from external funding	S106 continues to be used for parks and green space improvements (such as new play facilities, benches, re-surfacing paths) alongside smaller pots of external funding like WBI and Veolia - £1.3 million of S106 funding was allocated for spending in local parks and green spaces in 2022. A bid to the Town's Fund for a range of work in Morley resulted in £3 million being secured for improvements to parks in the area. In addition, unsuccessful bids to LUF for £16 million for investment in 8 community parks were made last year. A system by which parks and green spaces will benefit from the new developer's contribution 'Biodiversity Net Gain,' is in the process of being developed with colleagues in Planning.
Page 62	Continue to explore and develop the income generating opportunities of our service such as visitor attractions, sponsorship, cafes, events, shops and concessions.	Ongoing		Our attraction development plan sets out our plans for increasing income through popular commercial developments such as the indoor play at Home Farm and Tropical World and a new play facilities at Lotherton and the Arium.
	Develop and implement marketing plans for income generating schemes and facilities	Ongoing	Marketing plans implemented	Marketing plans are in place and being implemented for Tropical World, the Arium, Home Farm and Lotherton Hall. The Parks & Countryside events and activities leaflet will be re-launched (post-Covid) in spring 2023.

Timescales: Short = 1-3 years, Medium = 4-6 years, Long = 7-10 years.

**Our vision is to provide the best parks and green spaces in the UK**

**Priority 8: Health and Wellbeing**

Providing and promoting a wide range of opportunities for people to get the health benefits of spending time in green spaces

Goals	Actions	Timescale	Measuring success	Progress Update January 2023
<b>To provide good quality public green space that people want to visit (see priority 1!) - particularly in areas of deprivation where the positive impact on health will be greater.</b>	(If we have limited resources) Where possible and appropriate, prioritise investment in green spaces in areas of deprivation.	Ongoing	Number of sites achieving LQP/Green Flag in areas of deprivation	Where possible e.g. through S106 or unrestricted funding, areas of deprivation are prioritised e.g. Levelling Up Fund bids were submitted for several areas of deprivation - Armley, Bramley, Stanningley and Holbeck Moor.
<b>To provide a range of opportunities for people to be physically active in green spaces across the city, so everyone can enjoy being active outdoors, no matter what their level of ability or interests.</b>	Update and publish the <i>Playing Pitch Strategy</i> (which sets out future priorities for football, rugby and cricket pitches) to ensure there is a suitable level of provision across the city.	Short	Playing Pitch Strategy complete	We are currently seeking funding for the PPS and in discussion with Sport England about what it needs to contain.
	Audit, and keep a record of the condition of, other sports facilities (tennis courts, bowling greens, outdoor gyms, MUGAs) on our sites so the information can be used to prioritise investment in them to provide equal access	Short	Audits complete and up to date	Bowling green and tennis court audits in place. Outdoor gyms and MUGAs still to do.
Page 63	Work with local sporting organisations and national sporting bodies to develop, maintain and promote sports facilities across the city.	Ongoing		Currently working with Active Leeds on the externally funded <i>Football Foundation Local Authority Pitch Improvement Programme</i> (sites are currently being assessed to see what investment is required). Also working on a bid to the Football Foundation for a number of 'Playzones' (which are basically Multi Use Games Areas) across the city. Alongside those city-wide schemes, as landowners, we support sports clubs that are seeking improvements to sports facilities such as changing rooms and pitches - big projects delivered last year included a new Multi-use Games Area at Guildersom Rec, a pump track at The Rein and pitch improvements at Queens park, Pudsey and King George Playing Fields, Horsforth.
	Develop new opportunities for people to cycle at our sites (where suitable) including creating the new cycling trails and Learn to Ride Area at Temple Newsam	Medium	Temple Newsam cycling facilities in place	The proposal for new cycling facilities at Temple Newsam is with Planning awaiting planning permission. Proposals for new cycling facilities on the green space next to Fearnville Leisure Centre are part of a Levelling Up fund bid.
	To create and promote a measured and signposted walking route in every suitable community and city park (to go in Plan on a Page)	Long	Parks with measured walking routes available	Will be included in Plans on a Page - went into those for the Levelling Up Fund bid.
	To make every effort to accommodate healthy activity, including new sports, on our sites (as appropriate)	Ongoing		Ongoing - we are constantly liaising with council colleagues and sports clubs to ensure they have suitable facilities such as changing rooms and pitches and, with regards new sports, we are currently investigating the potential of an unused area of Kirkstall Abbey Park for playing petangue (in response to a request from the local pentangue club).
	Seek external funding to develop and improve sports facilities in parks and green spaces	Ongoing		Several schemes to improve outdoor sports facilities such as football and rugby pitches, changing rooms and multi-use games areas are in development. These schemes are being worked up in partnerships with sports clubs and other council departments as relevant, and have potential to receive funding from organisations like the Football Foundation, World Cup Legacy Fund and Sport England. Some of the key schemes developed and delivered in 2022 are mentioned above.



<b>For our green spaces to be used for 'active travel' around the city as a healthier, more environmentally friendly option than driving.</b>	Update and implement the Rights of Way Improvement Plan	Short	PROW Improvement Plan up to date	A review of the current ROWIP has commenced, and progress on the actions set out in the ROWIP continue to be provided by the Rights of Way team to the Leeds Local Access Forum quarterly.
	Work with partners to support the development of off-road transport routes across the city (where possible)	Ongoing		Works have been undertaken on Rothwell Greenway as part of the Rothwell And Robin Hood Cycling And Walking Improvement Scheme. We are also working with Highways on two new cycle/footways as part of the ELOR development. Parks are represented on the Active Travel and Healthier Streets Board which seeks to improve opportunities for active travel.
<b>For people to use 'active travel' to get to and from our green spaces</b>	Develop and promote walking routes connecting green spaces and communities across the city, prioritising the areas of deprivation where the public health benefits of accessing green space will be greater.	Long	Extension of 'country park' routes to cover the whole city.	Through the plan on a page process, linkages between green spaces and communities will be identified with a view to promoting and enhancing them. We continue to maintain the public rights of way network on an ongoing basis.
	Promote active ways to get to our green spaces on our website e.g. cycling and walking routes	Medium	Information available on internet	Bike stands at Temple, Arium, Middleton and Roundhay have been added to the relevant web pages. Electric vehicle charging locations in parks will be added to Zapmaps in 2023.
	Seek funding to install bike stands at all our most popular sites.	Long		Bike stands were installed at several parks in 2021 and will be included in planned Temple cycle trails scheme.
<b>To increase awareness of the benefits of spending time in green space for health and encourage people to use them for that purpose</b>	(With partners) promote the mental and physical benefits of spending time in parks and green spaces	Medium		Ongoing work with colleagues in Active Leeds and Public Health to provide and promote active lifestyles in parks. For example, in 2022, we supported the development of walks in our parks on the Love Exploring App which is designed to encourage people to get walking in different locations around the city. Also, Public Health recently launched a short film promoting the benefits of spending time outdoors for children including in parks which references Junior ParkRun and the Park Play initiative - we have shared this on our social media sites and will continue to promote it going forward. The health and wellbeing benefits of spending time in parks will increasingly be promoted through social media in 2023.
	Improve the availability of information about our sports facilities and walking and cycling (including PROW) routes on the internet and through the use of new technology (e.g. online bookings and walking apps)	Medium	Information available on internet	Go Explore app routes have been made available for many of our community and city parks.
	Sell local cycling & walking route leaflets, maps & books from our shops	Short		To be implemented in 2023

Timescales: Short = 1-3 years, Medium = 4-6 years, Long = 7-10 years.

## Long Term Supply of Burial Space

Date: 2 February 2023

Report of: Chief Officer Parks and Countryside

Report to: Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities)

Will the decision be open for call in?  Yes  No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?  Yes  No

### Brief summary

This report is in response to the Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities) request for an update on the long-term burial plan for Leeds. In 2008, the Council had 8,485 new graves available across the city, equivalent to 15-16 years supply and it was evident that the east-northeast area of the city had the lowest supply of new graves available. To address this, a new cemetery was developed at Whinmoor and became operational in July 2014 along with extensions to cemeteries at Garforth and Kippax. The focus then turned to the south-southeast of the city with new burial provided at Hunslet Cemetery along with phase 1 of an extension at Cottingley Cemetery. There is the potential to extend Cottingley further on a former playing pitch area subject to planning consent and consultation. The Council also has planning consent on an area of land to the north of Whinmoor cemetery with around 12 acres that could be brought into use along with over 1 acre at land off Elmete Lane, Roundhay. Overall, there is around 35 years availability which is on target given that the 50-year plan commenced in 2008. The east-northeast has sufficient long-term provision with less pressure on the south-southeast area. However, in the medium term there is a need to consider additional burial capacity in the west-northwest area of the city which has estimated availability for a further 17 years.

### Recommendations

- a) The Scrutiny Board Housing, Environment and Communities is asked to note and comment on the update to the long-term supply of burial space in Leeds.

## What is this report about?

- 1 This report is in response to the Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities) request for an update on the long-term burial plan for Leeds.
- 2 On the 3 December 2008, the council's Executive Board received a report which reviewed the long-term supply of burial space in the city. The report included options for meeting demand for the next 50 years and beyond. In essence the policy is to establish a preference for smaller, locally based cemetery sites combined with the extension, where possible, of existing sites thus providing burial provision closer to where people have lived.
- 3 In 2008, the Council had 8,485 new graves available across the city, equivalent to 15-16 years supply and burial provision was distributed across the city as follows:

Area	Number of Graves
East-northeast	1,080
West-northwest	4,289
South-southeast	3,116
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,485</b>

- 4 When the location of graves available was considered in 2008, it was evident that the east-northeast area of the city had the lowest supply of new graves available and therefore was under most pressure, particularly as Harehills was the only active cemetery in this area. To address this, proposals were developed to construct new cemeteries at Whinmoor and Elmete with Whinmoor becoming operational in July 2014 (Elmete has not yet been developed into a cemetery). Cemeteries at Garforth and Kippax were also extended. This had the impact of increasing burial supply in the east-northeast area and highlighted a need to increase supply in the south-southeast of the city.

## What impact will this proposal have?

- 5 To address this shortfall, new burial provision has been provided at Hunslet Cemetery along with phase 1 of an extension at Cottingley Cemetery. This now means that the following projected supply is available as of the end of November 2022:

Area	Number of Graves	Approximate Years Left (based on recent demand)
East-northeast	2,498	13.4
West-northwest	1,713	16.6
South-southeast	1,786	13.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,997</b>	<b>14.2</b>

- 6 There is the potential to extend Cottingley further on a former playing pitch area subject to planning consent and consultation which could increase grave availability by a further 630. This would add an average of 7.1 years to the south-southeast area, thus providing a total of 20.9 years availability.
- 7 As indicated, Whinmoor Cemetery is now operational in the east-northeast area with an initial 5 acres brought into use. The Council does however have planning consent on an area of land to the north of the existing cemetery with around 12 acres that could be brought into use. It is assumed that Whinmoor could be extended in this way and still meet the preference for smaller, local based cemetery sites as determined by Executive Board in 2008. This would add around a further 7,000 graves with availability for a further 54 years based on demand over the last 6 years.
- 8 A further area of land in the east-northeast area is off Elmete Lane, Roundhay and is owned by the Council. Planning approval was obtained for a 7.03-acre cemetery in July 2012 with 1.06 acres of land initially available for burial, with the possibility to extend this to 5 acres in future

years. Further archaeological ground investigative work would need to be undertaken and the necessary planning approvals would also have to be factored in. The 1.06 acres could provide a further 594 graves thus adding 34 years to availability based on overall average demand over the last 6 years.

- 9 The following table projects new grave availability across the city based on all potential new burial space being developed:

Area	Number of Graves	Approximate Years Left (based on recent demand)
East Northeast	10,027	53.9
West Northwest	1,778	16.6
South Southeast	2,581	20.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>14,386</b>	<b>34.3</b>

- 10 Overall, there is availability for around 34 years which is in line with the 50-year plan commenced in 2008. The east-northeast has sufficient long-term provision with less pressure on the south-southeast area. However, in the medium term there is a need to consider additional burial capacity in the west-northwest area of the city which has estimated availability for a further 17 years.

**How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?**

- Health and Wellbeing       Inclusive Growth       Zero Carbon

- 11 The Council’s cemeteries play an important role for those who have been bereaved by providing good quality greenspaces for quiet and spiritual reflection as visitors remember their loved ones.

**What consultation and engagement has taken place?**

Wards affected:
Have ward members been consulted? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

- 12 No specific consultation has been undertaken.

**What are the resource implications?**

- 13 There would be implications for the council capital programme if land acquisition was necessary for burial provision.

**What are the key risks and how are they being managed?**

- 14 There is generally sufficient burial provision to meet projected demand in accordance with the 50-year burial plan approved at Executive Board in 2008. Some consideration will need to be given to identify burial space in the West-northwest area and to a lesser extent the South-southeast.

**What are the legal implications?**

- 15 There are no significant legal implications associated with this report.



## **Options, timescales and measuring success**

### **What other options were considered?**

16 This is not a decision report and therefore alternative options have not been considered.

### **How will success be measured?**

17 As above.

### **What is the timetable and who will be responsible for implementation?**

18 As above.

## **Appendices**

- None.

## **Background papers**

- None.

## Work Schedule

Date: 2 February 2023

Report of: Head of Democratic Services

Report to: Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities)

Will the decision be open for call in?  Yes  No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?  Yes  No

### Brief summary

- All Scrutiny Boards are required to determine and manage their own work schedule for the municipal year. In doing so, the work schedule should not be considered a fixed and rigid schedule, it should be recognised as a document that can be adapted and changed to reflect any new and emerging issues throughout the year; and also reflect any timetable issues that might occur from time to time.
- The Scrutiny Board Procedure Rules also state that, where appropriate, all terms of reference for work undertaken by Scrutiny Boards will include 'to review how and to what effect consideration has been given to the impact of a service or policy on all equality areas, as set out in the Council's Equality and Diversity Scheme'.
- The latest iteration of the Board's work schedule is attached to this report for the Board's consideration.

### Recommendations

Members are requested to consider the Scrutiny Board's work schedule for the 2022/23 municipal year.

## What is this report about?

1. All Scrutiny Boards are required to determine and manage their own work schedule for the municipal year and therefore the latest iteration of the Board's work schedule for the remainder of the municipal year is attached as Appendix 1 for Members' consideration.

### Developing the work schedule

2. When considering any developments and/or modifications to the work schedule, effort should be undertaken to:
  - Avoid unnecessary duplication by having a full appreciation of any existing forums already having oversight of, or monitoring, a particular issue.
  - Ensure any Scrutiny undertaken has clarity and focus of purpose and will add value and can be delivered within an agreed time frame.
  - Avoid pure "information items" except where that information is being received as part of a policy/scrutiny review.
  - Seek advice about available resources and relevant timings, taking into consideration the workload across the Scrutiny Boards and the type of Scrutiny taking place.
  - Build in sufficient flexibility to enable the consideration of urgent matters that may arise during the year.
3. In addition, in order to deliver the work schedule, the Board may need to take a flexible approach and undertake activities outside the formal schedule of meetings – such as working groups and site visits, where necessary and appropriate. This flexible approach may also require additional formal meetings of the Scrutiny Board.

### Developments since the previous Scrutiny Board meeting

4. Members have received invitations to the following remote meetings in line with the agreed 2022/23 work programme for the Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing & Communities):
  - a. Air Quality Action Plan – **Monday 27 February at 2pm**

## What impact will this proposal have?

5. All Scrutiny Boards are required to determine and manage their own work schedule for the municipal year.

## How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?

Health and Wellbeing       Inclusive Growth       Zero Carbon

6. The terms of reference of the Scrutiny Boards promote a strategic and outward looking Scrutiny function that focuses on the Best City Ambition.

## What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted?       Yes       No

7. To enable Scrutiny to focus on strategic areas of priority, it is recognised that each Scrutiny Board needs to maintain dialogue with the Directors and Executive Board Members holding the relevant portfolios. The Vision for Scrutiny also states that Scrutiny Boards should seek the

advice of the Scrutiny officer, the relevant Director and Executive Member about available resources prior to agreeing items of work.

### **What are the resource implications?**

8. Experience has shown that the Scrutiny process is more effective and adds greater value if the Board seeks to minimise the number of substantial inquiries running at one time and focus its resources on one key issue at a time.
9. The Vision for Scrutiny, agreed by full Council also recognises that like all other Council functions, resources to support the Scrutiny function are under considerable pressure and that requests from Scrutiny Boards cannot always be met.
10. Consequently, when establishing their work programmes Scrutiny Boards should:
  - Seek the advice of the Scrutiny officer, the relevant Director and Executive Member about available resources;
  - Avoid duplication by having a full appreciation of any existing forums already having oversight of, or monitoring a particular issue;
  - Ensure any Scrutiny undertaken has clarity and focus of purpose and will add value and can be delivered within an agreed time frame.

### **What are the key risks and how are they being managed?**

11. There are no risk management implications relevant to this report.

### **What are the legal implications?**

12. This report has no specific legal implications.

### **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – Latest work schedule of the Environment, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Board for the 2022/23 municipal year.

### **Background papers**

- None.



This page is intentionally left blank



## Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities) Work Schedule for 2022/2023 Municipal Year

June	July	August
<b>Agenda for 23 June 2022 at 10.30 am</b>	<b>Agenda for 21 July 2022 at 10.30 am</b>	<b>No Scrutiny Board meeting</b>
Co-opted Members (DB) Scrutiny Board Terms of Reference (DB) Potential Sources of Work (DB) Performance Update (PM)	Safer Leeds Update (PSR) West Yorkshire Police & Crime Plan 2021-2024 – Update (PSR)	
<b>Working Group Meetings</b>		
<b>Site Visits</b>		

Page 73

**Scrutiny Work Items Key:**

PSR	Policy/Service Review	RT	Recommendation Tracking	DB	Development Briefings
PDS	Pre-decision Scrutiny	PM	Performance Monitoring	C	Consultation Response



## Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities) Work Schedule for 2022/2023 Municipal Year

September	October	November
<b>Agenda for 15 September 2022 at 10.30 am</b>	<b>Agenda for 17 October 2022</b>	<b>Agenda for 10 November 2022 at 10.30 am</b>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Meeting Cancelled</b></p> <p>Reducing poverty and improving financial inclusion (PSR) – <i>deferred to October meeting</i></p> <p>Local Welfare Support Scheme Review Update (PSR) – <i>deferred to October meeting</i></p>	<p>Reducing poverty and improving financial inclusion (PSR)</p> <p>Local Welfare Support Scheme Review Update (PSR)</p>	<p>Housing Activity Update (PSR)</p>
<b>Working Group Meetings</b>		
	<p>Development of the Waste Strategy (PDS) – 5/10/22 @ 10.30 am</p>	<p>4/11/22 - Understanding the role and responsibilities of the Housing Service (DB)</p>
<b>Site Visits</b>		
<p>Visit to LeedsWatch – 30/09/22 @ 10 am</p>		

Page 74

PSR	Policy/Service Review	RT	Recommendation Tracking	DB	Development Briefings
PDS	Pre-decision Scrutiny	PM	Performance Monitoring	C	Consultation Response



## Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities) Work Schedule for 2022/2023 Municipal Year

December	January	February
<b>Agenda for 1 December 2022</b>	<b>Agenda for 5 January 2023 at 10.30 am</b>	<b>Agenda for 2 February 2023 at 10.30 am</b>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Remote Consultative Meeting – 1 December 2022</b></p> <p>Locality Working &amp; Priority Neighbourhoods (PSR)</p> <p>Ensuring the future resilience of the Third Sector (PSR)</p>	<p>Performance report (PM)</p> <p>Financial Health Monitoring (PSR)</p> <p>2023/24 Initial Budget Proposals (PDS)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>20 January 2023 – Remote Consultative Meeting</b></p> <p>Reducing Gambling Harms (PSR)</p>	<p>Parks and Green Space Strategy 2022-2032 Update (PRS)</p> <p>Review of the Long-Term Burial Plan (PSR)</p>
<b>Working Group Meetings</b>		
<p>2023/24 Initial Budget Proposals (PDS) – 12/12/22 at 3.15pm.</p> <p>Social Progress Index – 14/12/22 at 11.30am [all boards]</p>	<p>Monitoring the strategic approach to migration (PSR) – date tbc</p>	<p>Reviewing the Air Quality Strategy Action Plan 2021-2030 (PSR) – 27 February 2pm</p>
<b>Site Visits</b>		

**Scrutiny Work Items Key:**

PSR	Policy/Service Review	RT	Recommendation Tracking	DB	Development Briefings
PDS	Pre-decision Scrutiny	PM	Performance Monitoring	C	Consultation Response





## Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities) Work Schedule for 2022/2023 Municipal Year

March	April	May
<b>Agenda for 2 March 2023 at 10.30 am</b>	<b>No Scrutiny Board meeting</b>	<b>No Scrutiny Board meeting</b>
Climate Emergency Update (PSR)  End of year statement		
<b>Working Group Meetings</b>		
<b>Site Visits</b>		

Page 76

**Scrutiny Work Items Key:**

PSR	Policy/Service Review	RT	Recommendation Tracking	DB	Development Briefings
PDS	Pre-decision Scrutiny	PM	Performance Monitoring	C	Consultation Response