

EASTFIELD PARK NORTHAMPTON

MANAGEMENT PLAN



Eastfield Park Management Committee

May 2015



**Northampton Borough
Council**



*Friends of Eastfield
Park*

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FOREWORD

Northampton is very fortunate in the Parks and Open Spaces it has. Northampton has the second largest expanse of Parks and Open Spaces in the country and I would argue that it also has some of the best.

In many cases, the Parks and Open Spaces we enjoy today are the legacy of our Victorian and Edwardian ancestors who saw the value in developing these spaces for all of Northampton to enjoy. It is also one of the great legacies of Northampton's shoe making past – as it was often shoe factories that helped to develop many of the Parks and Open Spaces that we enjoy today.

Eastfield Park is one of the parks we have that is steeped in exactly this type of history as the former land of the Manfield family with the lake still forming the central feature of the Park today. The Park reflects its history in many ways and new noticeboards at the entrance ways explain the Park's history to its visitors. Other recent developments include a new pathway stretching across the park taking visitors right past its famous lake. The active friends group organises regular litter picks, park activities and the "Easter at Eastfield" event is now a firm fixture in the local calendar.

The Friends of Eastfield Park were one of the first groups to volunteer to be part of the Council's new strategy of "Park Management Committees" to try to empower local residents in exactly how their parks should develop. Under the excellent leadership of its Chairman, Dr Vic Smith, they have really embraced this process and have come up with a plan to develop the Park even further and allow local residents to enjoy it for many more years to come.

Cllr. Mike Hallam

Deputy Leader, Northampton Borough Council



SECTION A: Eastfield Park

A1. Introduction to Section A

This section of the Management Plan provides a detailed description of Eastfield Park including its location, size, drainage, geology, history, surroundings (including social context and access), landscape & features on an area- by-area basis, facilities and amenities, the activities that take place in the Park, and its wildlife and biodiversity.

While it should be obvious why a detailed knowledge and understanding of the Park's landscape, features and facilities is essential to its effective management, the relevance of its surroundings, particularly the information provided about deprivation in the neighbouring areas, may not be immediately appreciated. However, this information not only serves to explain some of the problems facing the Park, such as vandalism and anti-social behaviour; it also underlines the importance of the Park as a beneficial amenity in a district, part of which suffers a very high level of poverty and hardship.

The Park's social environment needs to be considered when planning how the Park should be developed and managed. It is because of the high level of poverty in some local areas, for example, that the Friends of Eastfield Park (FoEP) do not normally charge for children to take part in its activities. (Equally, because some local residents are well off, voluntary donations are accepted and given to local charities.)

Information about the local area, including the degree of deprivation, is also likely to be of value when applying for funding from some grant-awarding organisations.

Knowledge of the Park's history, apart from being interesting in its own right, is also essential to the management of the Park's heritage. Similarly, a knowledge and understanding of its wildlife and biodiversity is important to the management of its flora and fauna.

Producing an account of this nature also serves to promote our understanding of the Park as a whole and reveals gaps in our knowledge concerning it. The FoEP and EPMC would like to see many of these gaps filled in the coming years. Hence, while most of the Management Plan deals with the development, administration, supervision and maintenance of the Park's material resources, mention is also made of further research into the Park's history and biodiversity and the publication and promotion of the results of such research.

A2. Location & Size

Eastfield Park, Northampton, is a large public open space in the Borough of Northampton in the County of Northamptonshire in the East Midlands of England. It should not be confused with Eastfield Park in Wellingborough, a neighbouring town which lies 14.5km (9 miles) to the east.

The Park is located about 4km (2.5 miles) north-east of the town centre (Fig. A1). It covers an area of just over 24 hectares (around 60 acres) and is very roughly rectangular in shape, measuring approximately 825m long by 200-400m wide.

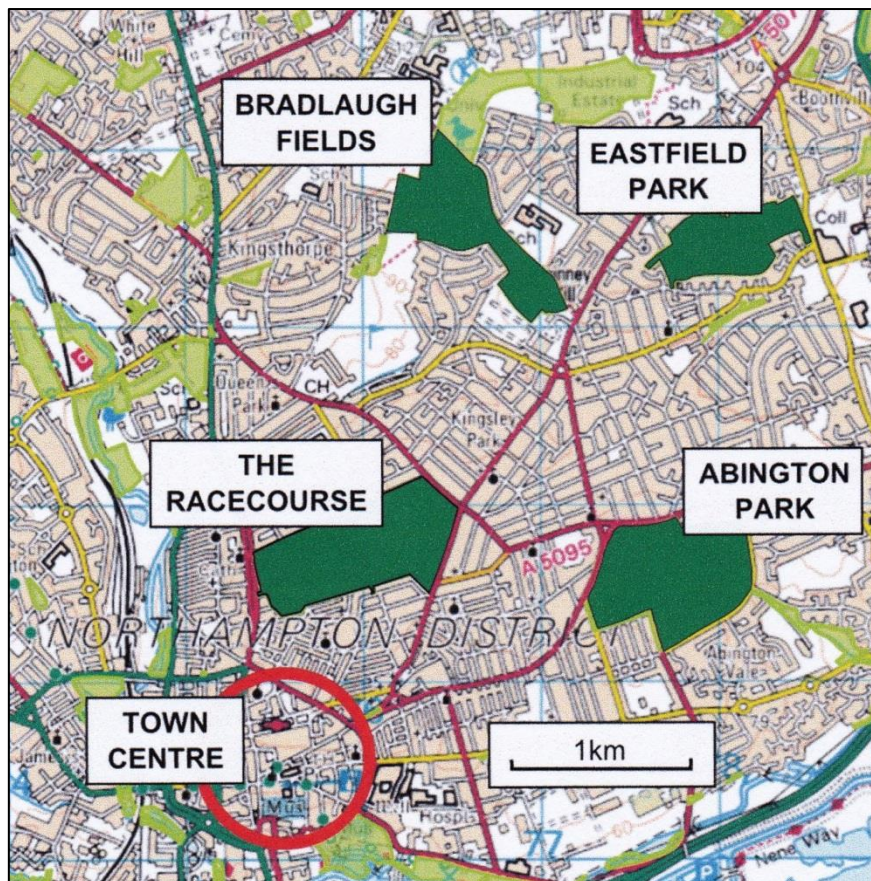


Fig. A1: Eastfield Park in relation to Northampton town centre and other open spaces.

The best approach to Eastfield Park by road is via Skiddaw Walk (Post Code: NN3 6PH) at the end of which is a small car park. The National Grid Reference for the Skiddaw Walk car park is SP 7810 6362 (Latitude: 52.2652°N; Longitude: 0.8570°W).

A3. Landscape, Drainage & Geology

Eastfield Park lies about 110m above sea level at the head of a shallow valley close to the brow of a low hill overlooking the Nene Valley (Fig. A2).

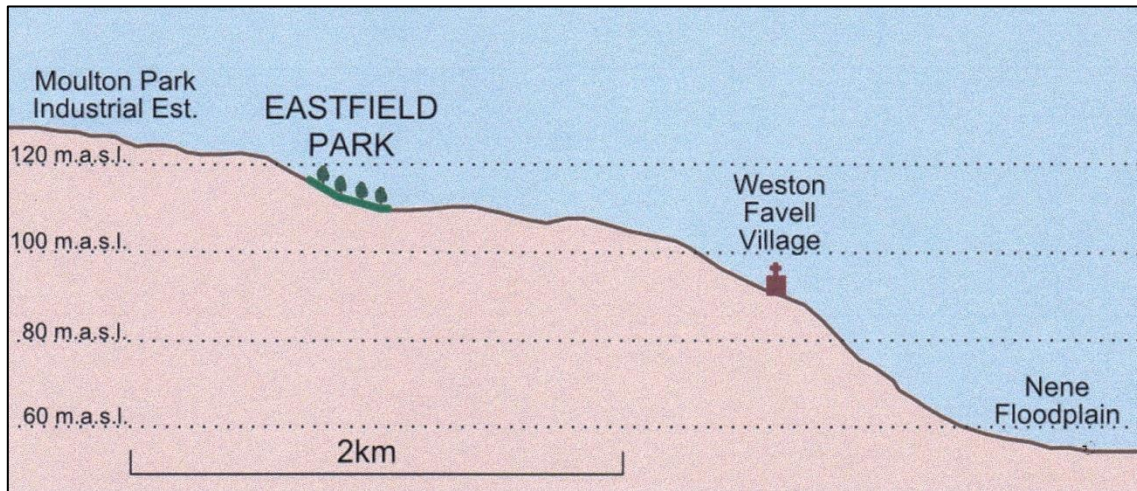


Fig. A2: Exaggerated vertical profile along a line from the Moulton Park Industrial Estate to the Nene Floodplain passing through Eastfield Park and Weston Favell Village. Heights in metres above sea level (m.a.s.l.) are based on Google Earth and may be subject to error.

Although located on a south-facing slope, Eastfield Park is in the catchment of the Walbeck (or Wallbeck) Brook which drains south-westward into the Kingsthorpe Branch of the Nene in Kingsthorpe Hollow, north of Northampton's Town Centre (Fig. A3).

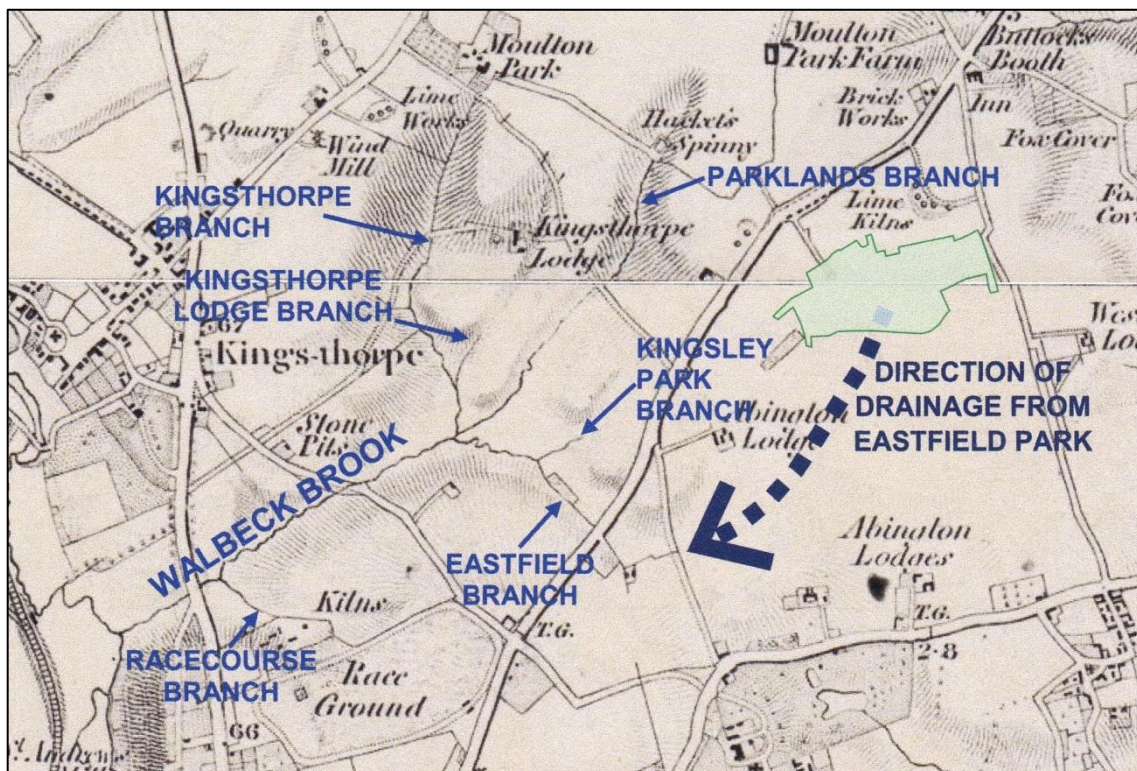


Fig. A3: Location of Eastfield Park within the Walbeck Brook Catchment. Base map: Board of Ordnance 1:63,360 (1 inch) map dated, in part, 1857 (Sheet 52, Bedford). Location of Eastfield Park shown in green; direction of drainage in dark blue; Walbrook Brook and its tributaries labelled in royal blue.

Today, most of the Walbeck Brook is underground in pipes and culverts but, historically, the Eastfield Branch (labelled in Fig. A3) received drainage from a large area including the land that is now Eastfield Park.

The hilltop north of Eastfield Park is capped with Blisworth Limestone, overlain in some areas with glacial till. Moving southwards, down the slope, deeper deposits are exposed: first those of the Rutland Formation, then the Northampton Sand Formation. Underlying the Blisworth Limestone is a layer mainly consisting of mudstone but with the Wellingborough Limestone Member (interbedded limestone and mudstone) running through it. Eastfield Park sits almost entirely on the Rutland Formation mudstones with the Wellingborough Limestone Member forming a horseshoe shaped band around the Lake (Fig. A4).

The Blisworth Limestone is a principal aquifer whereas the mudstones are almost impermeable, accounting for the numerous springs, flushes and seepages that occur close to the interface between these strata. There are numerous reports of springs and seepages in the area immediately to the north of Eastfield Park (in addition to mapped springs to the south and west). These sources of groundwater, coupled with the impermeable nature of much of the underlying rock, help to account for the fact that Eastfield Park is very poorly drained with some areas frequently waterlogged, particularly in winter and spring.

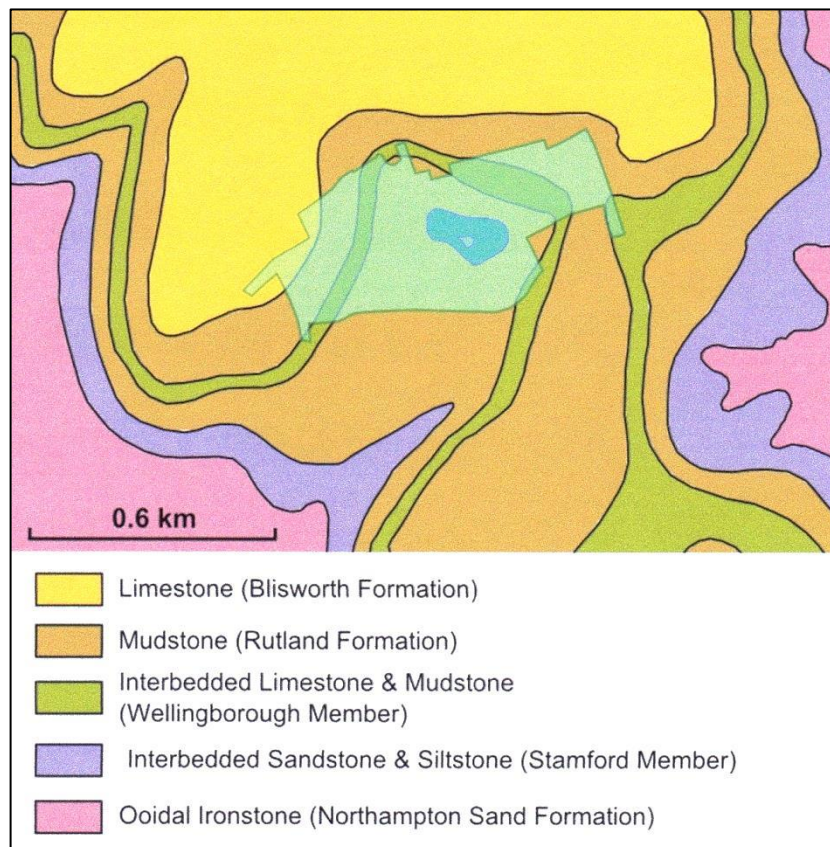


Fig. A4: Solid geology of Eastfield Park (outline in green) and environs.
(Redrawn from British Geological Survey map.)

A4. History

Eastfield Park now lies entirely within the Borough of Northampton's Eastfield Ward but from medieval times to 1900 the land fell within the Parishes of Abington and Weston Favell. A 1671 map of the Abington Estate shows that what is now the western half of the Park was then part of a large wooded enclosure known as 'The Bushie Close'. 'Weston Great Close', in the parish of Weston Favell, covered what is now the eastern half of the Park. By late Victorian times these large fields had been divided into smaller ones (Fig. A5). The presence of areas of conspicuous ridge and furrow within the park is evidence of arable farming in medieval times but in more recent times it would appear that the land was mainly used as permanent pasture.

For the first quarter of the 20th century (Fig A6) the park was part of the grounds of Weston Favell House, built in 1900 by James Manfield (son of Sir Philip Manfield who had founded the first machine-based shoe factory in Northampton). The lake and ponds within the park are artificial features constructed at that time. The lake was originally stocked with rainbow trout and used for boating and fishing. The ponds were part of ornamental gardens that were occasionally opened to the public to raise money for Northampton General Hospital. In May 1913, when the gardens were opened without charge, the Estate employed a Head Gardener with a staff of 14 assistants.

The house and gardens were separated from the rest of the Park by a ha-ha which is still evident along part of boundary between Eastfield Park and the house. Also enclosed within the ha-ha was the Bullring consisting of 26 lime trees surrounding a statue of a man killing a wild boar. The statue was a feature added by James Manfield and is no longer in the Park but the ring of trees is shown on 1886 Ordnance Survey maps and was described in the 1923 Weston Favell House Estate Sale Catalogue as being over 200 years old and possibly associated with bull baiting.

In 1923 the house, its grounds, and the entire Manfield holdings in the area (1500 acres) were put up for auction in 62 lots. Lot 62 included the grounds of the present Eastfield Park, Cynthia Spencer Hospice and Manfield Grange but, with some other lots, remained unsold. A second auction (of 541 acres in 30 lots) was held in 1924 but the house remained unsold. Manfield therefore donated it (with 15 acres of land) to become a hospital for crippled children. For many years the Grade 2 listed mansion served as Manfield Orthopaedic Hospital but it has now been converted into private residences known as Manfield Grange.

During the break-up of the Manfield Estate, Major Arthur Ray (an Honorary Major in the Territorial Army and Mayor of Northampton in 1928) acquired part of the grounds of Weston Favell House including the lake, the ornamental gardens, and much of the present park. He built Eastfield House on the land in 1924 (Fig. A7) and died in 1944.

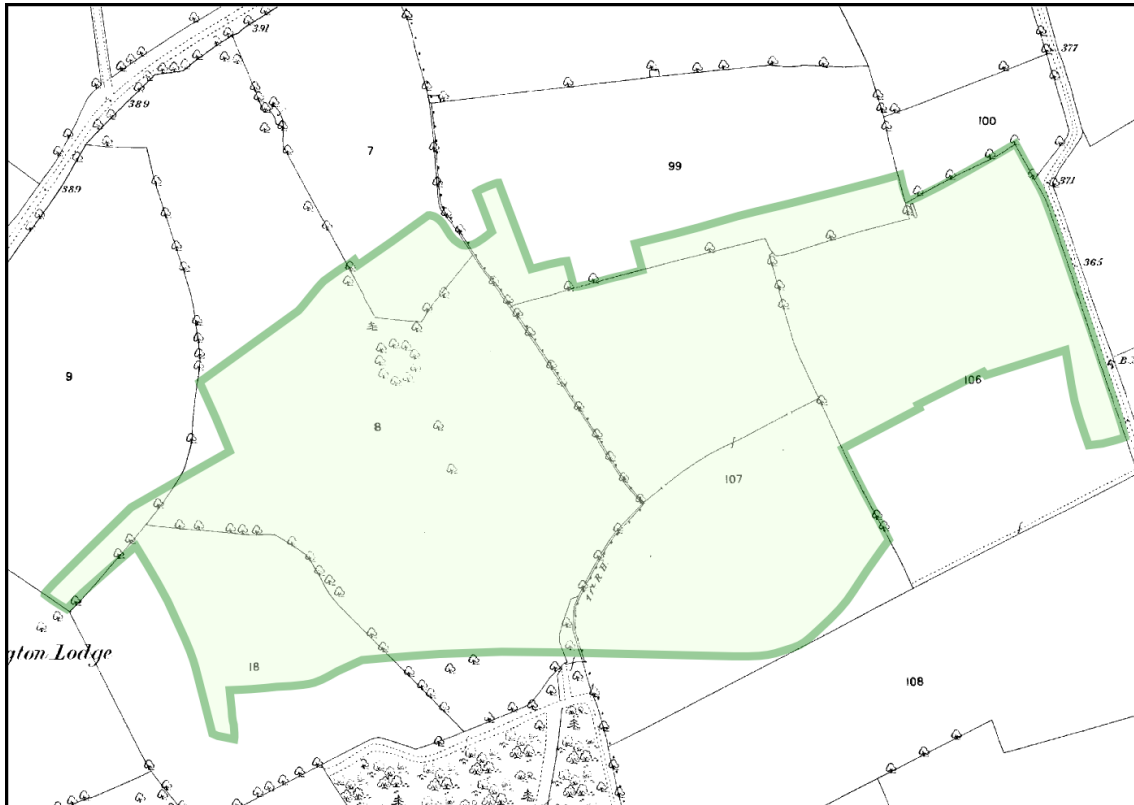


Fig. A5: Outline of present Park superimposed on 1887 map of the area.

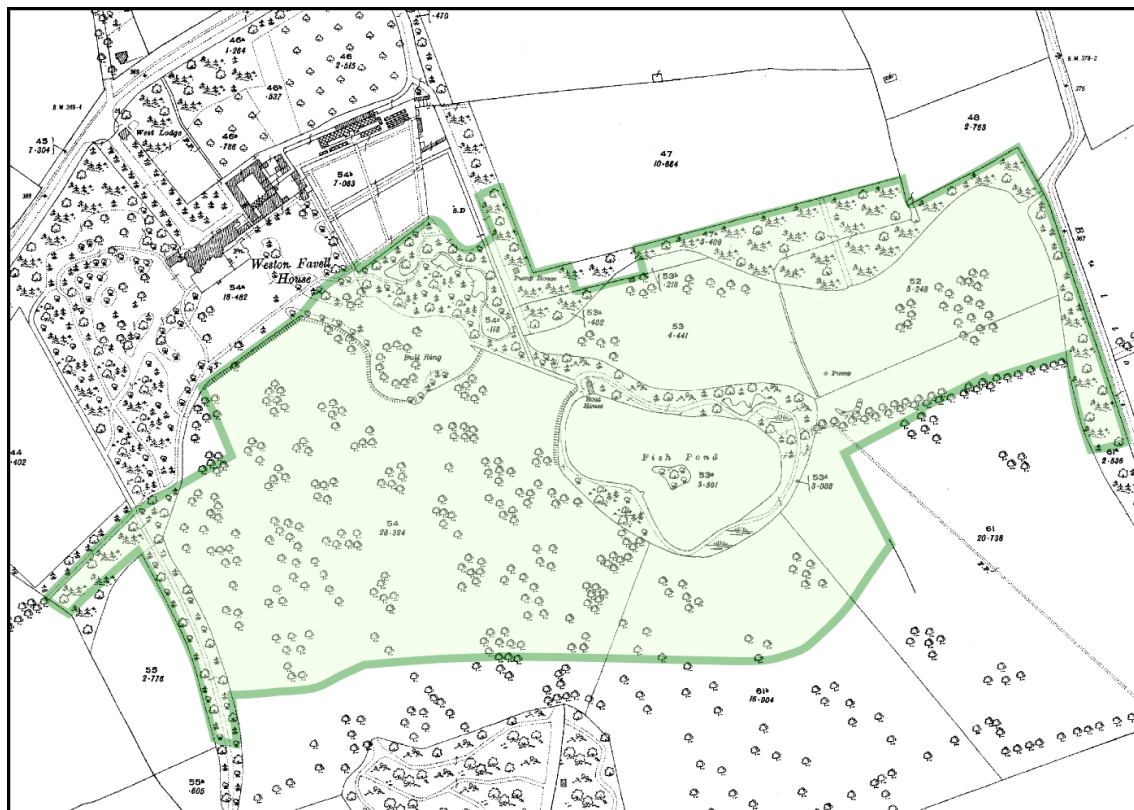


Fig. A6: Outline of present Park superimposed on 1925 map of the area

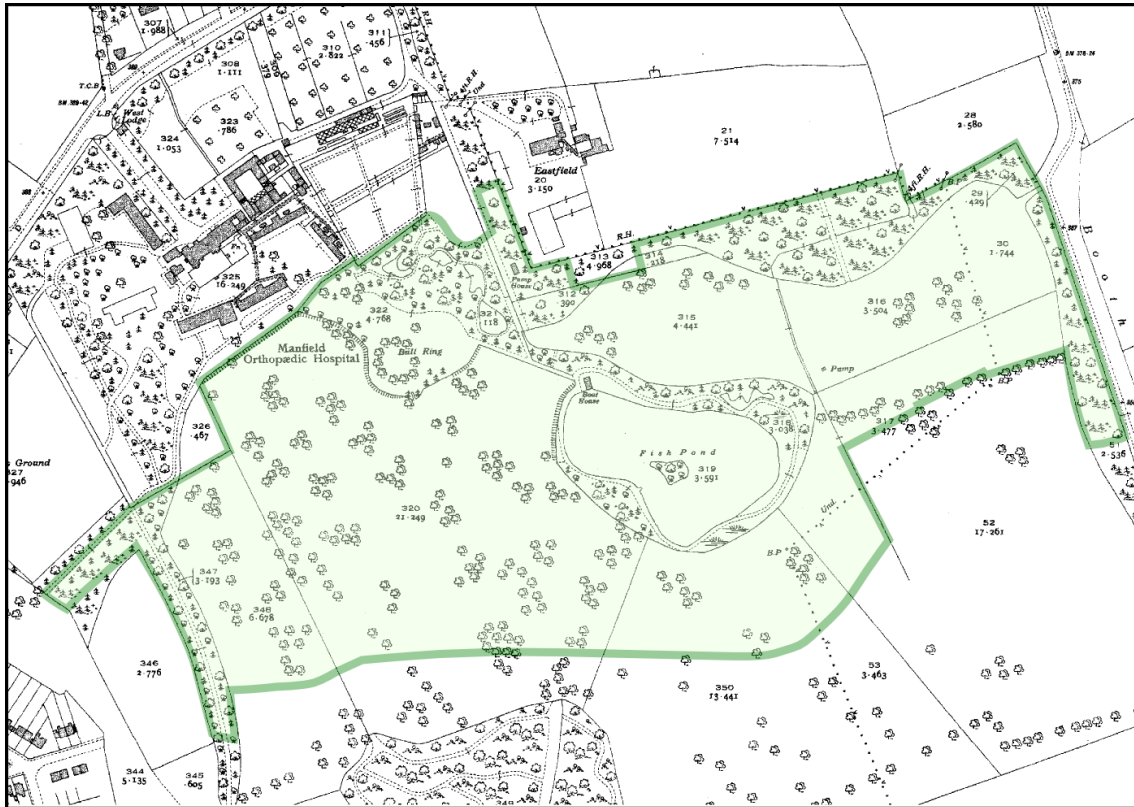


Fig. A7: Outline of present Park superimposed on 1938 map of the area

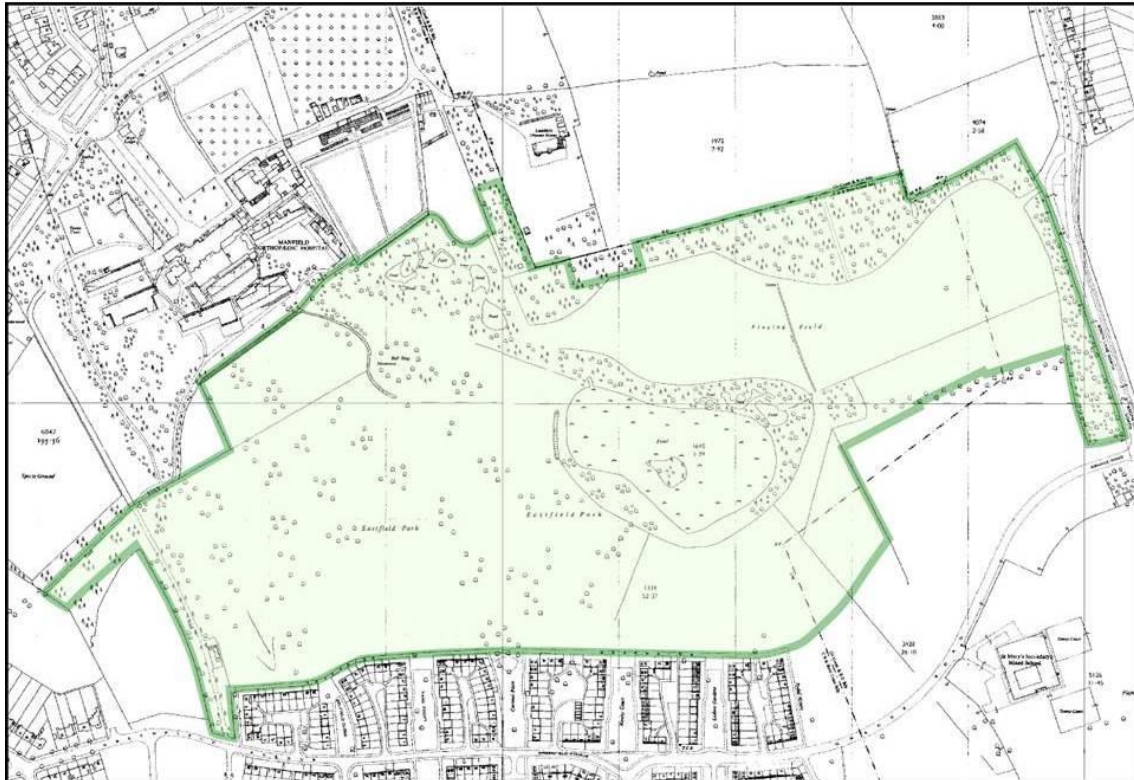


Fig. A8: Outline of present Park superimposed on 1962/64 map of the area

By 1950, the site was on the edge of Northampton's rapidly expanding residential area and the land was acquired by Northampton Borough Council. Much of it had been allowed to go wild. There are reports that the boathouse was in a ruinous condition, the lily ponds were choked and the ornamental gardens overgrown.

The Eastfield Estate was built on the southern part of the land during the following years, thus giving the park more or less its current outline (Fig. A8). In 1957, an article in the local newspaper suggested that the new Eastfield Estate had a 'rural setting' with a beautiful park nearby. However, local residents complained about the lack of safe facilities for children. As time progressed, dangerous buildings were removed and some of the ponds filled in for safety reasons. Eventually, the land that had not been built on was opened to the public as the present Eastfield Park.

A5. Surrounding Areas

Today Eastfield Park lies entirely within the Borough of Northampton's Eastfield Ward. It occupies over 20% of the area of the Ward and runs across its complete width from west to east (Fig. A9). The part of Spinney Hill lying between the Park and the Kettering Road, and bordering on the western margin of the Park, now falls within the the Borough's Parklands Ward although up to 2011 it was included in Eastfield Ward.

The Park is surrounded to the north, south and west by suburban development. To the east is Booth Lane North, the only main road which directly borders the Park. The Booth Lane Campus of Northampton College lies across this road, opposite the Park, in Westone Ward.

Immediately to the south of Eastfield Park is the Eastfield Estate, an area of predominantly social housing with a planned mix of housing types including a relatively high proportion of terraces and flats. The estate was developed in the 1950s according to Radburn principles with green spaces designed to form 'fingers of the Park running into the heart of the layout'. The design also allowed many of the houses to have side-on views of the Park.

To the north of the Park is the area known as Lakeview. Here the housing is more varied in both age and type. A certain amount of 'ribbon development' took place along Kettering Road in the 1930s but most of the area was developed in the mid to late 1960s (first as a private development and then by the Borough Council) and again during the mid-1980s (also as both private and council enterprises). Just over a third of the dwellings in the Lakeview area are terraced, around a quarter are semidetached, with the remainder consisting of detached houses and flats in broadly similar proportions. Despite being part of the Eastfield Ward, many Lakeview residents identify more with Boothville or Spinney Hill and prefer to think of themselves as belonging to one of these communities. (Eastfield Park and Lakeview are included in the Boothville and Parklands County Council Electoral Division whereas the Eastfield Estate is included in the Headlands Division.)

The area between the Park and the Kettering Road was developed from the 1930s onwards. Compared to Eastfield and Lakeview, it has a higher proportion of detached and semi-detached houses and relatively fewer flats and terraces. It is also 'greener' with tree-lined avenues and larger gardens. This has implications for Eastfield Park's wildlife.

The south-west corner of Boothville almost meets the north-east corner of Eastfield Park and many Boothville residents regularly use the Park, especially for dog walking. Information about Boothville is therefore included in the following discussion.



Fig. A9: Eastfield Park in relation to Borough Wards and residential areas.
Eastfield Ward boundary shown in red, other ward boundaries in orange.

The residential areas adjacent to Eastfield Park vary enormously in their levels of social deprivation, some areas falling within the 10% most deprived areas in the country with high levels of crime and antisocial behaviour. This has considerable implications for the Park and its management.

Table A1 gives the multiple deprivation scores for the Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) shown in Fig. A10. These are the areas used by the Office for National Statistics for reporting neighbourhood statistics. Higher scores indicate a greater degree of deprivation. According to the index, of those shown, LSOA 012A (roughly corresponding to the Eastfield Estate) is the most deprived with only 5.32% of the country's LSOAs being more deprived. Boothville is the least deprived with 62.1% of the country's LSOAs being more deprived.

Table A1: 2010 Multiple Deprivation Scores, Rankings and % of LSOAs with lower rankings, for the four LSOAs bordering Eastfield Park.

LSOA:	012A	006A	006B	006D
Closest Corresponding Named Area:	Eastfield	Lakeview	Spinney Hill (Part)	Boothville
Multiple Deprivation Score:	52.75	26.32	15.90	13.18
Rank (out of 32,482):	1,730	9,979	17,428	20,170
% of LSOAs with lower ranking:	5.32	30.72	53.65	62.10

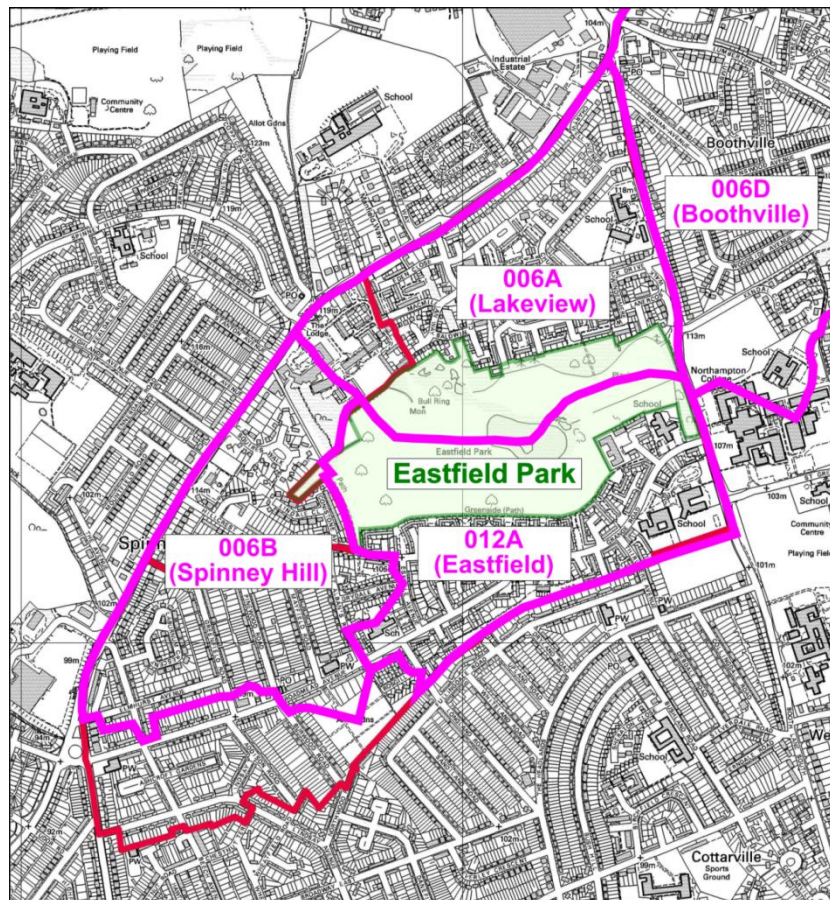


Fig A10: Boundaries of the Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) referred to in text. (Names correspond only roughly to the LSOAs)

However, multiple deprivation indices are aggregations of levels of deprivation measured for a number of separate dimensions or 'domains' including income, employment, health & disability, education skills & training, barriers to housing & services, crime and living environment. The domain level scores represent specific dimensions of deprivation and can be ranked in the same way as the multiple scores. This can lead to some interesting comparisons between LSOAs such as those provided in Table A2.

It is noteworthy that when the domain level scores are ranked, as in Table A2, crime features prominently in the list for all the areas listed, including those which are not particularly deprived. It is therefore safe to conclude that Eastfield Park lies within a relatively high crime area and that this must be taken into account when attempting to deal with the high levels of crime and antisocial behaviour within the Park itself. Educational deprivation, low income and unemployment within parts of Eastfield probably contribute to higher than average crime rates within the area as a whole.

Table A2. Deprivation domains listed in order of ranking for LSOAs bordering Eastfield Park. The figures show the % of English 2010 LSOAs which are more deprived in the stated dimension (domain) than the LSOA named at the head of the column. (The named areas correspond only approximately to the LSOAs.

Boothville		Spinney Hill		Lakeview		Eastfield	
006D		006B		006A		012A	
Crime	16.95	Crime	16.84	Crime	16.28	Education	1.60
Barriers to Housing and Services	49.11	Health	30.23	Health	19.57	Crime	2.30
Living Environment	50.29	Education	50.60	Employment	30.17	Income	7.20
Employment	55.87	Living Environment	51.41	Education	31.75	Employment	8.14
Health	63.74	Income	55.87	Income	35.16	Health	13.42
Education	66.98	Employment	69.43	Barriers to Housing and Services	41.37	Living Environment	27.88
Income	81.82	Barriers to Housing and Services	86.28	Living Environment	61.90	Barriers to Housing and Services	66.72



A6. Access to the Park

Eastfield Park is located in the triangle between three major thoroughfares: the A5123 Kettering Road, Booth Lane North, and Broadmead Avenue/Grange Road (Fig. A11). However, it is only Booth Lane North that actually runs alongside part of the park boundary and people travelling along this road see only sports pitches and rather unkempt woody scrubland. Many do not realise that the Park extends far beyond what can be seen. Anecdotal evidence suggests that people living quite close to the Park are often not aware of its size or, in some cases, even its existence.

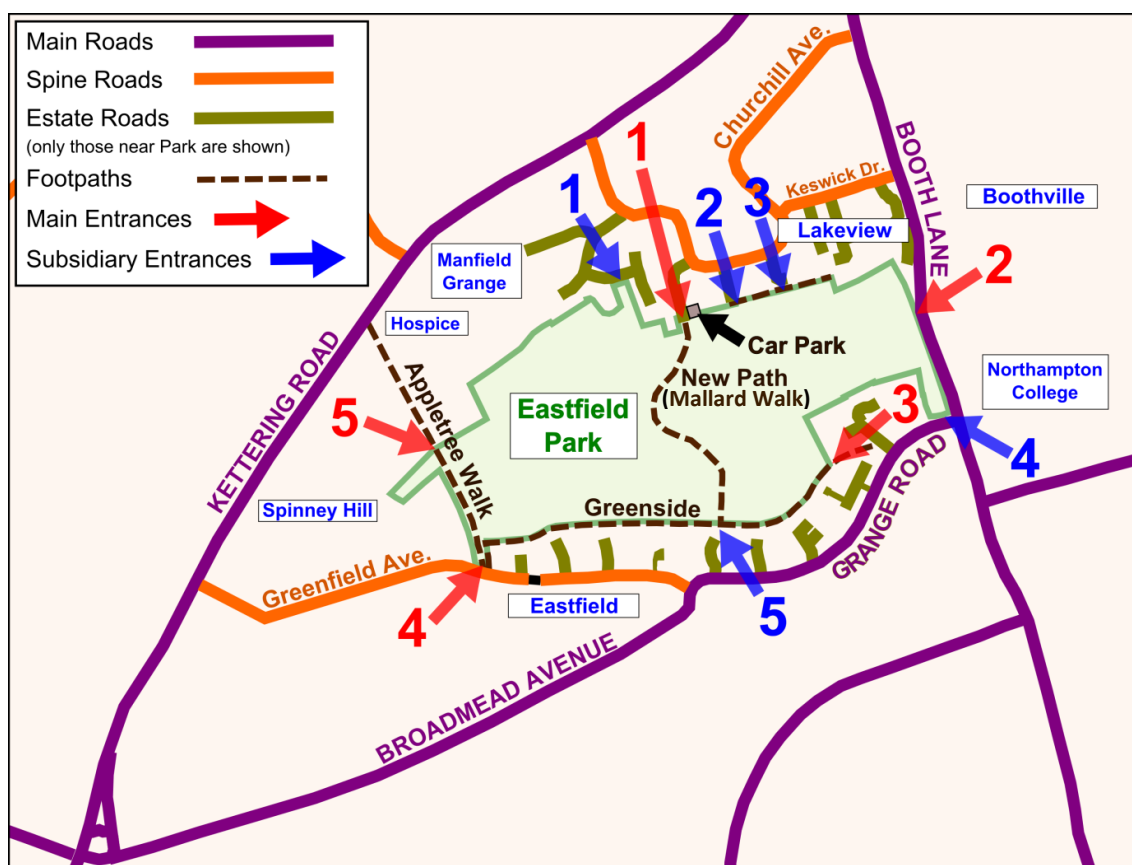


Fig. A11: Access to Eastfield Park showing main roads surrounding the Park and minor roads which provide some access to the Park. Entrance points and the Skiddaw Walk car park are also shown.

The Park has a number of entry points, the five most important of which were improved in 2011. These are indicated by the numbered red arrows on Fig. A11. The improvements included welcome signs with a map showing key features and brief information about the history of the Park. Each entrance was also provided with small paved area marking the Park's threshold.

The improved entrances are illustrated in Figures A12 to A16, each with a short description of the entrance:

Fig. A12



Skiddaw Walk Entrance: This entrance provides the main access point onto the Park for vehicles (once the bollards have been removed). It can be approached via Skiddaw Walk and leads directly onto Mallard Walk (the cross-park pathway). There is a small car Park to the left of the entrance.

Fig. A13



Booth Lane Entrance: This entrance can be used for vehicular access to the Park but it requires crossing a wide grass verge and public footpath. There is very limited car parking in Ambleside Close (a nearby *cul-de-sac*) and users of the Park's football pitches frequently park on the grass verges.

Fig. A14



Greenside (East) Entrance: Located near the eastern end of Greenside, a public footpath, this entrance is unsuitable for vehicular access. There is limited car parking in nearby Buttermere Close but the designated parking area is intended for residents only.

Fig. A15



Greenfield Avenue Entrance: Located at the western end of Greenside on Green-field Avenue, this entrance provides vehicular access to the Park and access for emergency vehicles to the properties on Greenside. Limited parking is available on Greenfield Avenue (but this road is blocked to traffic at the point shown in Fig. A11).

Fig. A16



Kettering Road Entrance: This entrance is located at the Kettering Road end of Appletree Walk, a public footpath leading to and through the Park, rather than at the point where the path enters the Park. It is unsuitable for vehicles and parking is difficult anywhere close to the entrance.

Shortly after these five entrances were improved, blue 'pedestrian route' signs were erected on nearby roads directing walkers to the Park. These were designed to make the general public more aware of the Park. The signs on the Kettering Road and Churchill Avenue may help to achieve this but the other three signs were probably located too close to the entrances to make much difference.

There are also several other 'unimproved' entry points into the Park, the most important of which are indicated by the numbered blue arrows on Fig. A11:

1. Baldwin Close Entrance
2. Lakeview Green Entrance
3. Troutbeck Walk Entrance
4. Grange Road Entrance
5. Newby Court Entrance

All the greens and many service roads on the south side of the Park provide access to the Park; Newby Court is specifically mentioned because of its central location and proximity to the Mallard Walk pathway. It can be difficult to find parking near most of these entrances.

Eastfield Park is well served by public transport (Table A3) particularly the number 7 bus which stops at several locations on both the north and south sides of the Park, and the number 21 which travels along Broadmead Avenue and Grange Road. Several routes serve the Kettering Road.

Table A3: Nearest bus stops to several of the park entrances and the buses which stop at them. (Not all Kettering Road services are included.)

Entrance	Nearest Bus Stop	Route	Itinerary
Skiddaw Walk	Kirkstone Walk CHURCHILL AVE	7	Grange Park - Town Centre – University Park Campus
Booth Lane	Lanercost Walk KESWICK DRIVE	7	Grange Park - Town Centre – University Park Campus
Greenside (East)	Buttermere Close (unmarked) GRANGE ROAD	21	Rectory Farm – Weston Favell – Town Centre
	Rydal Mount GRANGE ROAD	7	Grange Park - Town Centre – University Park Campus
		21	Rectory Farm – Weston Favell – Town Centre
Newby Court	Lodore Gardens (east bound) GRANGE ROAD	7	Grange Park - Town Centre – University Park Campus
		21	Rectory Farm – Weston Favell – Town Centre
	Greenfield Avenue (west bound) BROADMEAD AVENUE	7	Grange Park - Town Centre – University Park Campus
		21	Rectory Farm – Weston Favell – Town Centre
Kettering Road	Stanton Avenue KETTERING ROAD	2	Town Centre – Rectory Farm - Blackthorn
		10	Town Centre - Parklands
		39 / X43	Northampton - Kettering

A7. Landscape & Features

The landscape of Eastfield Park is made up of a number of contrasting areas. For the convenience of this account, the twelve areas numbered in Fig. A17 will be described in this section. Many of the Park's key features are mapped in Fig. A18.



Fig. A17: The twelve areas of Eastfield Park described in Section A7 – 'Landscape & Features'.

1. Eastfield Lake, 2. Eastfield Parkland, 3. Skiddaw Grassland, 4. Greenside Grassland, 5. Booth Lane Recreation Area, 6. The Pond Area, 7. The Lake Margin, 8. Lakeview Spinney, 9. Buttermere Scrub, 10. Booth Lane Spinney, 11. Squire's Spinney, 12. 'Area 12'.



Fig A18: Locations of many of the Park's features.

Area 1: The Eastfield Lake (Fig. A19)

The Lake, located in the centre of the Park, is one of its most important features. It was constructed early in the 20th century by James Manfield as part of the Weston Favell House Estate. It was originally stocked with 1300 rainbow trout and used for boating and fishing. A boathouse, which also served as a tea-house, was located on at its north-west corner but this was demolished many years ago. By the time the area became a public park the trout had been replaced with healthy stocks of course fish.

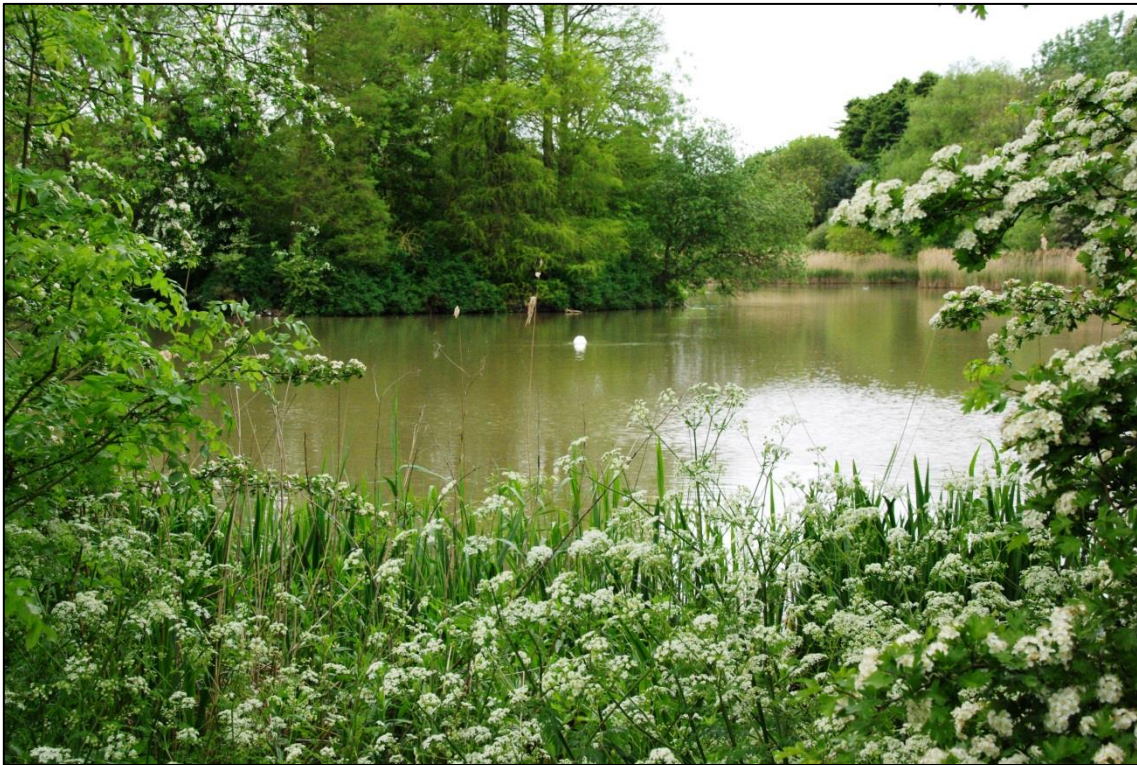


Fig. A19: Eastfield Park Lake in spring

The Lake receives drainage water from the Park's ponds via a pipe which enters the north-east corner of the Lake; it also seems to receive water through another pipe at its eastern end, but the exact current status of this pipe is uncertain. The Lake's outfall is on the south-west shore near to where Mallard Walk passes close to the Lake. The Lake is deepest near the outfall and shallowest at the eastern end where there are extensive *Phragmites* reedbeds. Reeds are also common on the north and south shores of the Lake and reed management is an issue that needs careful consideration.

There is a small wooded **island** on the Lake opposite the outfall. This provides a suitable refuge for some of the Lake's wildfowl.

The Lake vegetation was surveyed by the Wildlife Trust in 1992 and 2005. Eighteen species of wetland plant, including four from the 'Fen, Swamp and Marsh Indicator Species' list, were recorded during the 2005 survey and the Lake was declared a County Wildlife Site.

Angling was once a popular pastime on the Lake and during the late 1990s an Eastfield Angling Club was formed. Its members were represented on the FoEP committee and they played an active part in the FoEP's early clean-up operations in the Park. They were successful in getting the Environment Agency to restock the Lake with fish and helped install fishing platforms around its banks. However, the Club never succeeded in purchasing the fishing rights from the Borough Council and ceased to exist after a few years.

Following the demise of the Angling Club, the Lake was often fished illegally by people who removed their catch, often consisting of large carp. Legitimate anglers complained of declining catches and were seen less frequently, though there seems to have been some resurgence of interest in recent months.

The fishing rights are owned by the Borough Council but in recent years they have not been offered for sale. Practice seems to be to 'turn a blind eye' to legitimate anglers but some clarification of policy is required.

The Lake supports a range of wildfowl and feeding ducks is a popular activity. However, unconsumed food attracts vermin and rats are frequently seen near the outfall. The food also contributes to the eutrophication of the Lake, another potential management issue.

Area 2: The Eastfield Parkland (Figs. A20 & A21).

The Parkland occupies almost the whole of the western half of the Park between **Apple Tree Walk** in the west and the Lake in the east. It consists of parkland vegetation made up of grassland and scattered mature trees including both native and non-native species.

This area is one of the most attractive parts of the Park and retains much of its character from the days when it was part of the Manfield Estate. The area was once cultivated (evidenced by the presence of **ridge and furrow** in parts of the area) but was used as pasture in more recent times. Evidence from old maps suggests that during the 17th century it was wooded and part of 'Bushy Close' (or 'Great Bushy Close'). Probably by the 18th, and certainly by the mid-19th, century most of the trees had gone. Almost all of the present trees were planted when the land was part of the Manfield Estate (since 1900).

In the northern part of the Parkland is a ring of ten lime trees known as the **Bullring** (Fig. A20). This is one of the oldest and most interesting features within the Park. The 1923 Sale Catalogue for the Weston Favell House Estate claims that the Bullring (then a circle of 26 lime trees) was over 200 years old and that it had possibly been used for bull baiting. The ring is not shown on the Abington Estate map dated 1671, when the surrounding area was wooded, but it is shown on Eyre & Jeffery's 1791 large scale map of Northamptonshire. A 1798 map of the Abington Estate shows it at the intersection of two avenues of trees but the avenues are not shown on the Abington Estate map of 1840 though there is a suggestion of a tree lined track leading from the Bullring to the Kettering Road.



Fig. A20: The Bullring is one of the key features in the Parkland

At the centre of the Bullring stands a **stone plinth** that once supported a **statue of a man killing a boar**. Now only the plinth remains. Both the plinth and the statue were features of the Manfield Estate and do not date back further than the beginning of the 20th century. The statue was removed after it had been vandalised and is now considered beyond repair.

Running along the boundary between Eastfield Park and Manfield Grange are the remains of a **ha-ha** (sunken wall) which formerly separated Weston Favell House and gardens from the rest of the Park (Fig. A21). At one time the ha-ha extended into the present Park to separate the Bullring and ornamental rock gardens and ponds from the grazed Parkland but only a shallow depression now marks that part of the ditch.



Fig. A21: The Ha-ha forms part of the Park's northern boundary
(Picture taken in 2011 – the ha-ha is now even more overgrown!)

Area 3: Skiddaw Grassland.

Between the Skiddaw Walk entrance and the Lake is an area of grassland, without trees, that in the 18th century formed part of Weston Great Close. The land gradually slopes towards the Lake and is poorly drained, particularly the lower sections. Linear depressions running roughly north to south reveal earlier attempts to drain the area.

Mallard Walk (the new **cross-park pathway**) crosses the western end of this area and work on the path was made particularly difficult by the saturated nature of the ground in spring.

A football pitch was created on this area a few years ago but was abandoned, presumably because of the drainage problems.

A '**Senior Play Area**' with equipment for older children including a **zip wire**, **pyramid climbing net**, **stand-on see saw** and group disc swing, was installed on the northern fringe of this area in 2009. The equipment was funded by the Government Department for Children Schools and Families (DCSF) through the Playbuilder programme and delivered in partnership with Friends of Eastfield Park and Northampton Borough Council. The equipment has proved very popular with children, less so with some local residents. Unfortunately, the group disc swing was vandalised twice by lighting fires underneath it and eventually had to be removed.

This initiative also included a play trail in the Spinney just to the north of the grassed area. This is discussed further under 'Area 8: The Lakeview Spinney'.

Area 4: Greenside Grassland.

Between the Lake and Greenside is an area of grass with trees only at its fringes (close to Greenside, the Lake and Eleonore House). **Mallard Walk** marks the western edge of the area. This land was also part of Weston Great Close in the 18th century and has an expanse of ridge and furrow.

A row of three isolated bushes across the middle of the grass indicates the line of a hedge that existed within the Manfield estate but apparently not earlier. (One of the hedges that divided Weston Great Close into three smaller fields during the 19th century ran along the line of the present north-south fence between Eleonore House and the Park and is shown on the 1887 OS map. Although a recognised boundary today, it seemed to have had little significance within the Manfield estate and did not form a dividing line between lots when the estate was put up for auction.)

The areas nearer the Lake are poorly drained and often have puddles of standing water during wet periods but, closer to Greenside and Mallard Walk, the land is some-what higher and dryer.

This is the area favoured by the Friends of Eastfield Park for the location of play equipment for younger children. In view of the objections to the play equipment in Area 3, this will clearly require in-depth public consultation.

A garden ('The Eleonore House Border') is also being created along the fence separating the Park from Eleonore House.

Area 5: The Booth Lane Recreation Area.

Between Skiddaw Grassland and Booth Lane is a fairly flat grassed area with **two football pitches**. During the days of the Manfield estate, the area was separated from the Skiddaw Grassland by a drainage ditch which ran from a small pond (now dry) in the spinney to the north of the Sports Field to the Lake.

The area is separated from the spinney to the north and the area of scrub to the south by hedges which seem to have been planted early in the 20th century as part of the Manfield estate.

Area 6: The Pond Area.

This area is centred on the four ponds in the northern part of the Park between the Bullring and the Skiddaw Walk entrance. It includes four ponds surrounded by a mixture of trees, bushes, shrubs and herbs with some grass. Some of the trees were planted as part of the Manfield estate; others are the result of self-propagation.

In the days of the Manfield Estate, this area was a beautifully landscaped rock garden in which the ponds were a key feature. Paved paths ran through the garden and the edges of the ponds were, at least partly, lined with large sandstone blocks. Today, the paving stones and sandstone blocks lie scattered around the area, mostly buried or half buried in the ground or else thrown into the ponds, mixed up with bricks and other debris from the demolition of estate buildings.

In 2007, when FoEP was first formed, the area was vastly overgrown and it was difficult to penetrate through the scrub to reach the upper pond. The ponds were heavily shaded and obstructed with litter, fallen trees and other debris. The two middle ponds were, and remain, heavily silted while the upper and lower ponds were choked with vegetation (particularly *Phragmites* reeds in the upper pond and *Typha*, reed mace, in the lower pond).

The Borough Council carried out limited dredging of the ponds in 2009 and a **dipping platform** was installed on the top pond the same year.

The FoEP have similarly done much to improve this part of the Park. The upper pond, for example, is now easily reached and about a quarter of the emergent vegetation has been removed from the bottom pond.

An attempt has also been made to create new habitats in the area, including the creation of 'log walls', sections of tree trunks half buried vertically in the ground, to provide habitats for invertebrates.

Features that had been covered with vegetation and soil have been exposed. For example, a set of steps (now called the '**Manfield Steps**') on a path leading up from the top pond had become completely covered with soil; they have now been cleared and made available for use.

The rockery between the bottom pond and the Parkland (now called the '**Crescent Rock Garden**') is being restored as a (mainly) native wild flower rock garden with spring bulbs, wood anemones, cyclamen, primroses and other plants that should become naturalised on the garden in time.

Nevertheless, there is still much that needs to be done to regenerate the ponds and the area around them and this should be recognised in the Park's Management Plan.

The vegetation of the pond area was surveyed by the Wildlife Trust in 1992 and 2005 and the aquatic invertebrates in 2005. It was considered that the area did not meet County Wildlife Site criteria. Since then the Friends of Eastfield Park have carried out their own ponds surveys and found the aquatic invertebrate faunas to be more varied than previously thought. This is discussed in more detail in the section on wildlife.

Area 7: The Lake Margin.

The areas immediately surrounding the Lake, particularly to the north, east and west of the Lake, support a mixture of trees, bushes, shrubs and herbs with grassy spaces between. It owes most of its character to having once been part of the Manfield Estate and its vegetation is shown on many maps as being continuous with that of the the Pond Area.

Many maps, even recent ones, show a pond or ponds near the north-east corner of the Lake but none is present today, although there are areas of standing water after wet weather. It is possible that water collects in depressions where ponds were once located as features within the Manfield Estate but that the ponds were filled in for safety reasons when the land became a public park. This requires further investigation.

As with the Pond Area, some of the trees present were planted as part of the Manfield estate whereas others are the result of self-propagation. Some of the trees in this area, notably several *Taxodium distichum* (swamp cypress), are worthy of special attention.

In late 2013, the FoEP planted a number of daffodil bulbs in the grassier parts of this area to the north of the Lake. These produced a good set of blooms in 2014 but the daffodil leaves were mowed down too early in 2014.

Area 8: The Lakeview Spinney.

This area, lying east of the Skiddaw Walk Entrance and between the Lakeview Estate to the north and the Skiddaw Grassland and sports pitches to the south, has also been called the 'Eastfield Park Pines', the 'Eastfield Park Spinney' or 'Spinney Zone' in the past. However, these names are ambiguous because there are other spinneys with pine trees in the Park and the name 'Eastfield' is now more commonly associated with the area to the south of the Park. Hopefully, the 'Lakeview Spinney' designation will remove this ambiguity.

The spinney (probably a shelterbelt originally) is dominated by mature pine trees with a variable shrub and herb layer and dates back to no earlier than the Manfield Estate. It was surveyed by the Wildlife Trust (as 'Eastfield Park Pines') in 1992 and 2005. The first survey concluded that the area was "low in botanical diversity and likely to stay so, but a useful area of mature trees for birds and insects". The second survey concluded that the site did not then meet the selection criteria for County Wildlife Site status but that "opening up small areas of densest shade should encourage development of a richer woodland flora".

In 2008 the FoEP wanted to see the area opened up for adventurous activities by young people with facilities such as a dirt cycle track and an outdoor adventure trail with obstacles, bridges, rope swings, etc. Consistent with this aspiration, a **play trail** (Fig. A22) was installed in the Spinney in 2009 as part of the Playbuilder programme described above (see 'Area 3: the Skiddaw Grassland'). The trail consists of a winding gravel path and has proved more popular with parents and young children than with the teenagers for which it was intended.

Originally, boulders were placed beside the trail but these attracted undesirable activities and noise from youths during evenings, resulting in complaints from local residents who submitted a petition with 21 signatures from 14 addresses objecting to the development. Consequently, the boulders were removed though the play trail remains within the Spinney.



Fig A22: The Lakeview Spinney play trail

Because of the controversial nature of developments within this area and the fact that many of the pine trees are dying and in a dangerous condition, the FoEP no longer believes this area to be suitable for adventurous play facilities but does consider that the enhancement of this area needs careful consideration.

The play trail (Fig. A22) has been maintained by volunteers working with FoEP and, more recently, by Enterprise Management Services. Volunteers have also improved some of the minor tracks through this area but cutting back overhanging branches and encroaching vegetation.

Area 9: The Buttermere Scrub.

This area, immediately south of the sports pitches, has also been referred to as a spinney. However, unlike the other wooded parts of the Park, it was not planted during the days of the Manfield Estate. The hedge that separates it from the sports pitches and a line of trees along part of the park boundary do date back to the Manfield Estate (though not earlier) but most of the small trees and bushes between the hedge and the boundary appear to be the result of self-propagation and natural succession in comparatively recent years. Most maps of the Park, including those recently produced by the Borough Council do not show this area as being wooded.

The scrub has a number of minor tracks running through it and some of these have, on occasions, been partly cleared by volunteers acting with the FoEP. However, this area is little used by the general public and in 2008 the FoEP suggested this area for the possible construction of a car park, changing rooms and indoor sports facilities. The FoEP recently withdrew this suggestion.

Area 10: The Booth Lane Spinney.

This area appears continuous with the Buttermere Scrub (Area 9) though at right angles to it. However, this spinney was undeniably part of the Manfield Estate plantation and was originally an extension of the Lakeview Spinney that ran alongside Booth Lane North. Originally, its character must have been very similar to that of the Lakeview Spinney but it is not used as much by the public and is much more overgrown.

The spinney does have two tracks running through it roughly parallel to Booth Lane. They were opened up and improved by the FoEP a few years ago but have become overgrown again since. The FoEP also installed a number of **nest boxes** on the trees in this area. Otherwise the area has been neglected and is used little by the general public.

Area 11: Squire's Spinney.

This is another wooded area that was planted as part of the Manfield Estate. It was not continuous with the plantations to the east of Weston Favell House (Manfield Grange) since this would have obscured the view from the house but it was continuous with the wooded areas to the west of the house, now the grounds of Cynthia Spencer Hospice.

The area is surrounded on three sides by the rear gardens of houses and is little frequented by the general public. It has tracks running through it but these have not received any attention from the FoEP and remain neglected.

The spinney is probably more important for wildlife than has been supposed. It is known that badgers frequent the area and it deserves to be studied in more detail.

Area 12.

This area has not been given a name and could simply be regarded as part of the Eastfield Parkland (Area 2) with fewer trees than the rest of the area. It does, however, have special features which need to be considered as they present difficulties in deciding the best management regime for this area.

In 2009 the part of the park 'situated just south west from the lake' and extending 'just beyond the play area' was identified by the Wildlife Trust as **species rich neutral grassland**. It was mainly because of this that the whole of Eastfield Park became designated as a Local Wildlife Site (from 3rd April, 2009).

The 'play area' referred to by the Wildlife Trust must be the **MUGA (Multi-Use Games Area)** which had been installed on the Park several years previously and lies within the designated area. The MUGA has a short footpath leading to it from Greenside and is floodlit during summer evenings. It is frequently used by children and teenagers for informal sport.

In March 2011, two years after the sensitive nature of this area had been identified, the '**Eastfield Monster**' was created within it. This consists of a large grassy mound of earth in the shape of a sleeping dragon with sloping and vertical logs for children to climb and balance on. It was originally planned that the dragon would have a tail made of a living hedge coiling round to meet a nearby bench. However, the hedge plants died or were removed within a few weeks of the completion of the structure. A recent attempt by the FoEP to plant the hedge line with daffodils produced only stunted plants that were kicked down soon after they bloomed.

The existence of two sport and play features within a species rich area does present conflicts and issues that need to be addressed within the Park's management plan.

A8. Park Facilities & Amenities

Part of the attraction of Eastfield Park is its 'natural' or 'semi-rural' appearance and many users believe it would spoil the Park to provide too many facilities or public amenities. Some of the Park's facilities have already been referred to as 'features' in the descriptions of the various areas but in this section planned facilities and amenities are grouped in categories according to their purpose. The location of park benches, litter bins and dog bins is mapped in Fig. A22.

a. Paths: Park entrances have been considered in detail in Section A6. Until very recently, the only all-weather paths connecting the entrances ran along the perimeter of the Park: **Greenside**, connecting the Greenside (East) entrance with the Greenfield Avenue entrance and **Apple Tree Walk**, connecting the Greenfield Avenue entrance with the Kettering Road entrance.

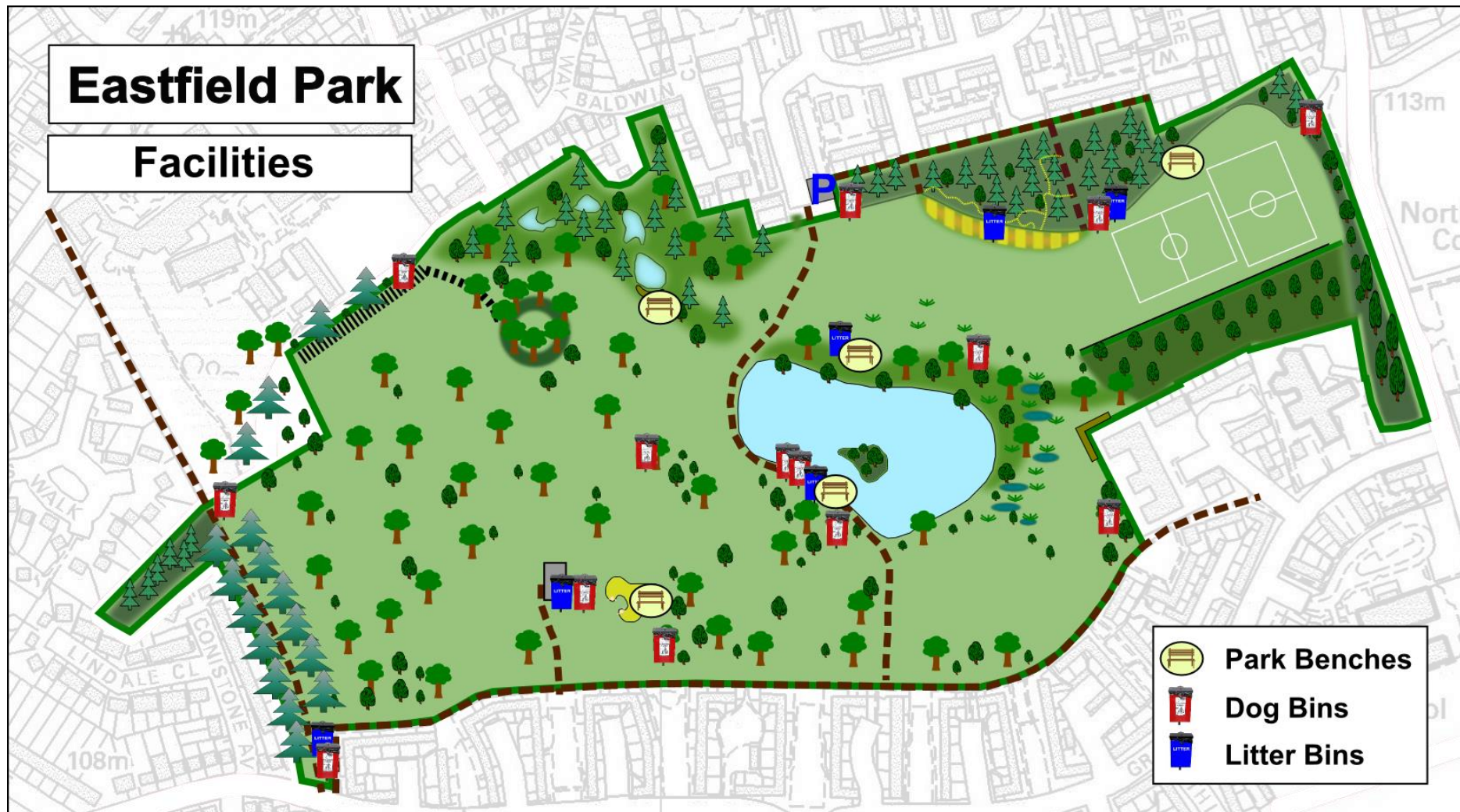


Fig. A22: Locations of park benches, dog bins and litter bins in Eastfield Park.

In spring, 2014, the **cross-park pathway** (Mallard Walk) was constructed linking the Skiddaw Walk entrance with Greenside. Ignoring the **short path from Greenside to the MUGA** and the **play trail** in the Lakeview Spinney, it is the only all-weather path that actually passes through the Park. To get from the Kettering Road entrance to the Lake by path (for example) would require a very circuitous route. There is still no pathway from the Booth Lane entrance to anywhere in the Park.

There are a number of **unsurfaced tracks** through the wooded areas. These are maintained only by voluntary effort.

The lack of paths is made worse by the poor drainage in much of the Park. Not only does standing water lie on parts of the Park for long periods after rain but the wet conditions prevent the grass from being mowed, thus providing an additional obstacle for wheelchairs, buggies and those without suitable footwear.

b. Information Boards: Apart from information boards at the five improved entrances, the only information board in the Park at present is one concerning the Playbuilder programme, at the entrance to the play trail.

c. Seats: Before the construction of Mallard Walk, only four **benches** were provided in the Park. An additional bench was located on the new path near the Lake. This was destroyed by vandals in late 2014 (less than a year after being installed) and has now been replaced. There is a strong demand for additional seating.

d. Litter bins and dog bins: There are **dog bins** at 13 sites within the Park (two at one site) but only six **litter bins** including one new one on Mallard Walk by the Lake. There are dog bins close to four of the main exits from the Park (Skiddaw Walk, Booth Lane, Greenfield Avenue and Appletree Walk (*en route* to Kettering Road entrance) but a litter bin at only one (Greenfield Avenue). Only one seat (excluding the vandalised seat) has a litter bin nearby. There is a strong demand for more litter and dog bins especially at all exits from the Park.

e. Facilities for sport and play: Most of these have already been discussed in some detail in Section A7 (Landscape & Features) including the **play equipment** in the Senior Play Area in Area 3 (Skiddaw Grassland), the **football pitches** in Area 5 (the Booth Lane Recreation Area), the **play trail** in Area 8 (The Lakeview Spinney), and the **MUGA** and the '**Eastfield Monster**' in Area 12.

Additionally there were four **fishing platforms** on the Lake but one of these has been badly vandalised and others are in a poor condition. There is also a **dipping platform** on the top pond.

f. Gardens: Eastfield Park is not a 'gardened park'. Nevertheless, the FoEP have been restoring the 'Crescent Rock Garden', a **rockery** near the bottom pond in Area 6 (The Pond

Area) and are in the process of creating a **wild flower and herbaceous garden** ('The Eleonore House Border') along the fence separating the Park from Eleonore House. (Additionally, daffodils, primroses, cow slips and other wild flowers have been planted in various locations.)

g. Lighting: There are street lights along Greenside and at the north end of Apple Tree Walk but otherwise the Park has no lighting.

h. Buildings and Car Parks: There are no buildings or car parks within the Park. Car parking has been discussed in some detail in Section A6 (Access to the Park).

A9. Park Activities

1. Heritage related activities. The heritage value of Eastfield Park relates mainly to the period when the land was part of James Manfield's Weston Favell House Estate, thus giving the Park a link with Northampton's shoe industry. There are, however, Park features which predate James Manfield's ownership such as the Bullring and ridge and furrow. Some of the Park boundaries also date back to more ancient times when the land fell in the parishes of Abington and Weston Favell.

It would be of interest to know more about the Bullring. How old are the trees that form it? How old is the feature itself (the present trees could be replacements)? Was the ring ever used for bear- or bull-baiting (at one time both popular 'sports' in this country)? Did the ring have some other function such as some kind of memorial?

There is considerable interest in the history of Northampton and members of the FoEP have been researching the history of Eastfield Park in as much detail as possible from the earliest times to the present. There is a wealth of memories relating to the Park's recent history, very little of which has been recorded. Consideration was given to setting up an oral history research project in cooperation with the University of Northampton based on such memories but was abandoned because of lack of time and other resources.

The FoEP have provided schools with information about the Park's history and its members have spoken to children on school visits to the Park. There is considerable scope for local historians to get involved in historical projects related to the Park.

2. Conservation related activities. Eastfield Park is a Local Wildlife Site and the FoEP have tried to manage the pond area as a 'Wildlife Appreciation Area': *'an area where a range of suitable habitats for plants and animals exist alongside an area with easy public access where people can to observe and enjoy the wildlife'*.

The FoEP have also been collecting information about the Park's biodiversity with the help of the Northamptonshire Biodiversity Records Centre at Lings House and other interested groups such as the Northants Bird Club and the Northants Bat Group. Committee members have, for example, accompanied Wildlife Trust staff on newt and bat surveys in the Park. However, progress has been very limited because of lack of time and other resources.

The FoEP have also supported school groups studying the Park's flora and fauna and have organised their own 'mini-beast' activities both independently and in co-operation with the Headlands Children's Centre.

It is known that a number of local amateur naturalists visit the Park to investigate groups in which they have a particular interest and more casual nature lovers enjoy watching wildlife in the Park.

3. Education related activities. Eastfield Park is a valuable educational resource and local schools could make more use of it. The FoEP have tried to encourage this by providing teachers with information and educational support regarding the Park, particularly relating to its history and wildlife.

Some schools have made visits to the Park and the FoEP have organised their own educational activities with varying degrees of success.

4. Walking and Jogging. Most people who walk through the Park are either accompanied by dogs (see below) or are walking through the Park on their way to somewhere else, possibly as part of a much longer walk. Jogging seems less popular than it was a few years ago.

More could be done to encourage walkers and joggers into the Park through the better provision of paths, rest stops with seats, and information boards.

5. Dog Walking. Dog walking is probably the most popular activity in the Park. Adequate facilities are provided for the disposal of dog faeces but a number of irresponsible dog owners fail to use them (much to the annoyance of responsible dog walkers).

Dog excrement has become an increasing problem in Eastfield Park. It poses a risk to human health, particularly in the case of children. People do not seem aware that *Toxocara canis*, a roundworm parasite often found in dog faeces, can infect people causing anything from mild, flu-like symptoms to asthma, epilepsy, serious eye damage and even permanent blindness. It is an offence for a person not to clean up if their dog fouls a public place and Park Rangers issue on-the-spot fines for offenders.

6. Angling. Until recently, angling on the Lake was a popular activity but, as discussed in Section 7 (Area 2. Eastfield Lake), following a period of substantial illegal fishing, catches diminished and angling has declined.

Anglers are usually good custodians of the waters they fish and responsible angling should be encouraged. The downfall of the Eastfield Angling Club was unfortunate and it is pleasing that legitimate angling on the Lake seems to be increasing again.

Currently, NBC does not seem to be offering the fishing rights on Eastfield Lake for sale and the agreement about who is entitled to fish there needs to be clarified.

7. Sport. Apart from the football pitches and the MUGA (Multi-Use Games Area) the Park has no facilities for organised sport.

The football pitches are used by clubs who hire the pitches from the Borough Council. Unfortunately, there has been little contact between the clubs and other Park users. Casual use of the pitches is discouraged and local teenagers have sometimes requested local pitches on which they could play informal football.

The MUGA has open access and is used casually as well as for organised activities. Casual users include local children and students from Northampton College.

8. Play. Play is important for children's development and learning. It is the means by which they demonstrate their desire to explore, investigate and understand their surroundings. With this in mind, probably the most important and productive play in Eastfield Park does not involve the physical facilities provided for play.

The only facilities that are provided (apart from the MUGA mentioned under 'Sport') are the play trail in Lakeview Spinney, the play equipment in the senior play area in Skiddaw Grassland and the 'Eastfield Monster' in 'Area 12'. Such facilities seem rather inadequate for a park as large as Eastfield.

9. Relaxation. Many people simply want to sit down in the Park, relax, possibly have a picnic, and admire the view in peaceful surroundings. Although some people are prepared to sit on the ground, the very poor provision of seating within the Park is, for many, a major disincentive to the relaxed enjoyment of the Park.

10. Special Events. Eastfield Park is an ideal venue for unpretentious community-based events. It is not suitable for large carnivals and events such as fun fairs and shows. This is mainly because of its quiet, almost hidden, location in a residential area, the open access from the Eastfield Estate and the boggy nature of much of the Park. (Local users know the areas to avoid!)

In addition to public 'clean-ups' and conservation activities, the FoEP organise regular community events in the Park, the most successful of which is probably 'Easter@Eastfield' on Easter Sunday afternoons every year since 2008.

Although the exact nature of the Easter family fun afternoon has varied from year to year, it has always involved an Easter Trail for children to follow with a prize for all those who take part (not necessarily successfully). The event is always free to enter (though donations are accepted and there are usually opportunities to spend money on stalls).

11. Other legitimate activities. The Park is spacious and varied and provides opportunities for many other pastimes to be enjoyed within its boundaries. It is possible to find quiet areas even when noisy games are being played in other areas. One person, for example, regularly uses a quieter part of the Park to practice Tai Chi.

12. Unwelcome activities. Vandalism and anti-social behaviour are major problems in the Park. Seats have been wrecked and fishing platforms and play equipment destroyed by fire. Young people riding motor bikes across the grass cause a great deal of damage to the park surface and considerable distress to park users.

A great deal of litter is left in the Park, particularly drinks cans and bottles. Drugs are certainly used in the Park but litter pickers rarely encounter needles. Stolen property, including bikes and motor bikes, are sometimes found but, thankfully, burnt-out cars seem to be a thing of the past. (Access for cars was restricted some years ago.)

In addition to these clearly anti-social activities, a number of pursuits take place that may cause damage or distress but the offenders are largely unaware of this and would hate to be regarded as vandals. Metal detecting and golf practice both come into this category.

A10. Park Wildlife & Biodiversity

The Wildlife Trust for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire has been responsible for the following surveys within Eastfield Park:

Area surveyed	File Code	Year of Survey
Eastfield Park Grassland	N1285	2008
Eastfield Park Lake	N/25.8.92 N713	1992, updated 2005
Eastfield Park Pines ¹	N/25.8.92 N966	1992, updated 2005
Eastfield Park Ponds	N/25.8.92 N1124	1992, updated 2005

(¹The site called 'Eastfield Park Pines' by the Trust includes the area referred to as Lakeview Spinney in this document but also incorporates part of the pond area.)

The Trust's investigations focussed on the plants within the various areas but the study of the ponds in 2005 also included an invertebrate survey. The invertebrate life in the ponds was also studied by Dr Vic Smith from the FoEP in 2010.

It was a result of the 2008 grassland survey that the whole Park became a Local Wildlife Site on 03 April 2009. Previously, in 1992, the Lake, the Pines and the Ponds had been given the status of County Wildlife Sites but when the surveys were updated in 2005 it was found that only the Lake reached the selection criteria for this designation.

The most important results and conclusion from the Trust's studies are as follows:

Eastfield Park Grassland:

- The area of greatest botanical interest lies south-west of the Lake and extends to just beyond the MUGA (Fig. A23).
- Many of the plants in this area are characteristic of herb-rich neutral grassland with some calcareous influence; others are low growing species characteristic of mown grassland.
- Other grassed areas within the Park are not so rich in species.



Fig. A23: Area of species rich and potentially species rich grassland in Eastfield Park.

Eastfield Park Pines: ('Lakeview Spinney' plus part of Pond Area in Management Plan)

- Dominated by Corsican pines, often closely spaced, but allowing ample light through.
- Variable density of shrub layer accounts for differences in degree of ground shading.
- Low botanical diversity but a useful habitat for birds, insects and small mammals.
- Twenty-eight woodland species recorded including two Ancient Woodland indicators, one of which is very poorly represented.
- Opening up small areas of densest shade should encourage development of a richer woodland flora.
- Hedgerow on southern border of spinney is moderately rich in species with 16 wooded species recorded.

Eastfield Park Lake:

- The lake has a sizeable area of *Phragmites* reed swamp on three sides providing a habitat for birds and invertebrates. It would benefit wildlife if the reedbed was allowed to remain dense.

- Eighteen wetland plant species recorded during survey including four from the fen, swamp and marsh indicator species list.

Eastfield Park Ponds:

- All four ponds are shaded by trees and shrubs and have a woodland element in the bank vegetation.
- The ponds are shallow and seem likely to dry up or fill in if left unmanaged.
- The ponds differ in the types and amounts of emergent, floating and submersed vegetation. Taken together, the ponds had a good variety of vegetation in 1992 but did not meet County Wildlife Site criteria in 2005 with only ten wetland species, including only two from the fen, swamp and marsh indicator species list, both of which were rare.
- Only four invertebrate species were recorded from the site in 2005 and it was considered unlikely that further study would significantly alter the assessment of the invertebrate fauna.

The last of the above statements is a little surprising since casual pond dipping by the FoEP in 2007 revealed a much richer invertebrate fauna in the ponds. The FoEP therefore carried out detailed surveys of the ponds on three occasions during 2010, recording a total of 44 invertebrate species and 4 vertebrates.

The Trust's survey concentrated on snails, beetles, bugs and dragon flies whereas the FoEP included all macroscopic groups. Nevertheless, within the four groups examined by the Trust, the FoEP found 14 species, 12 of them in November alone. (The Trust's survey had been carried out in September.)

The FoEP was also able to add the common toad (*Bufo bufo*) to the Northamptonshire Biodiversity Records Centre's list of species found in the area. Common toads have suffered an unexplained decline in numbers in recent years and the FoEP believe their presence should confer on the ponds, and the area around them, a better level of protection and management than they have at present.

The FoEP have attempted to create refuges for amphibians, often partially burying old bricks found in the Park to create spaces where frogs, toads and newts (all found in the Park) can hide away. They have also provided nest boxes for birds and created habits such as compost heaps and partly buried logs for invertebrates.

The FoEP have a clear strategy for managing the pond area. This involves opening up the 'front' of the area (that nearest the open Park) to allow easier access to people who want to enjoy looking at the ponds and the wildlife that live in them, and letting the area behind the ponds develop into a wilder area as a refuge for animal life.



Section B: Ownership and Management of Eastfield Park

In common with the majority of parks and open spaces in Northampton, Eastfield Park is owned by Northampton Borough Council on behalf of the people of the Borough. The Council's Parks and Open Spaces Strategy which sets out the overall framework for improving, protecting and sustaining the town's parks and open spaces, was agreed by the Council's Cabinet on 12 June 2013.

In the Strategy, Eastfield Park is identified as a Neighbourhood Park which offers a range of facilities including play, sports pitches, recreational space and green infrastructure primarily for the benefit of people in the local community.

Since 2011, responsibility for all work in parks within Northampton has been carried out by Enterprise (Amey) working in a partnership contract with Northampton Borough and Daventry District Councils. Contractors carry out grass cutting, grounds maintenance, tree maintenance and other works to maintain the parks in accordance with an output-based specification which outlines the standards to be achieved and maintained. The current contract runs until 2018 and current maintenance arrangements will continue until that time.

Northampton Borough Council employ a number of Park Rangers, each of whom has responsibility for the oversight of a specific park or parks. The role of the Park Ranger is to be the champion of their park and to work with the local community and partner agencies to ensure that the park is maintained and managed to high standards.

In approving the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy, Cabinet affirmed the Council's commitment to giving communities more say in the management of parks and initiated the establishment of Park Management Committees. The Park Management Committees aim to deliver the outcomes that are identified within Northampton Borough Council's Corporate Plan including:

- A clean Town, tidy Neighbourhoods and increased use and enjoyment of our parks and open spaces
- Empowered local communities with a greater capacity to become involved in community life
- Ensuring services are fair, accessible and responsive to individual needs residents and customers feel informed and engaged in service quality and design
- Future developments informed by the views of local people
- Delivery of events to celebrate and enjoy the Town's heritage and culture

The Park Management Committee for Eastfield Park was established in 2014 and held its first meeting on Monday 30 June. The terms of reference for the PMC are shown in the Appendix to Section B following.

Northampton Borough Council is keen to work with local communities and park users through Park Management Committees. Written consent is required from the Council before any major works are carried out in the park. This includes the installation of play equipment and benches, etc. This is in order to ensure that the planning of works takes account of the potential longer term impact on maintenance programmes, that works are carried out to an appropriate standard and that suitable funding arrangements are in place for the ongoing maintenance of any equipment installed since the Council is unable to take on responsibility for the cost of such maintenance. The Park Management Committee will implement the objectives in the five year plan and in this forum the members of the Committee will work together to work up the details of specific projects, to identify sources of funding and to put these plans into action. This process is explained in greater detail in section C following.

APPENDIX to SECTION B

Eastfield Park Management Committee

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Objectives

- 1.1 To produce, maintain and oversee the implementation of a Park Management Plan for Eastfield Park.
- 1.2 To encourage the active participation of the local community and park users, such as sports clubs and other local organisations, in the discussion of issues and the dissemination of information relating to the Park.
- 1.3 To meet at least four times a year to discuss the issues that affect the Park
- 1.4 To provide an active line of communication for local groups, organisations and sports clubs with an interest in the wellbeing and future enhancement of the Park.
- 1.5 To deal with issues of mutual interest to all users and not with specific issues between individuals or parties.
- 1.6 To create strategies for the local management of the Park, providing a listening role and gathering intelligence to link the Council's wider policies and strategies and those of other interested parties.
- 1.7 To develop strategies for the integration of work of volunteers alongside others undertaking practical work in the Park.
- 1.8 To identify and pursue sources of funding for parks, where appropriate completing funding applications.

2. Membership

The management committee may involve some or all of the following, District Councillors representing local wards, members of local community groups, representatives of park user groups, Northants Police, officers of Northampton Borough Council, in particular the Park Ranger, a representative from Amey and the Leisure Trust.

3. Chairing

The Chair will be elected from the voting membership and shall hold the role for one year.

4. Voting

Formal voting should not normally take place, the aim being to achieve a consensus view in developing and delivering plans for the Park. Where voting is unavoidable all present shall be entitled to vote.

5. Venue for Meetings

Meetings will normally take place on site, if facilities are not suitable, another meeting venue shall be found.

SECTION C: The Management of Eastfield Park

C1. Introduction to Section C

This section of the Management Plan discusses the long-term vision for the Park as well as general aims and more specific objectives for the next five-year period. Actions planned for the next one-year period are presented in a separate Action Plan (Section E) which will be updated on a regular basis (at least four times a year). The five-year aims and objectives will be revised annually; the long-term vision will only be revised if and when it is deemed necessary.

The five-year aims are more generally worded than the specific objectives: things to work towards that may be achieved to a greater or lesser extent. The specific objectives are more clearly defined, measurable, realistic and (hopefully) achievable within the specified time frame. Similarly, the intended actions described in the Action Plan are also specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-constrained.

The long-term vision for the Park may evolve over time but, at any particular instant, aims, objectives and planned intentions should be consistent with the long-term vision unless a deliberate decision, agreed by the Management Committee, is made to revise the vision to accommodate new ideas. In a similar way, the regular updating of the Action Plan should always be consistent with the agreed five-year aims and objectives, unless the aims and objectives are themselves revised by the Management Committee (or Northampton Borough Council).

Although many management issues relate to the Park as a whole, others apply only to particular areas or groups of areas. It has long been realised that dividing the Park into areas or zones is a useful aid to management. Therefore, within this Section, management issues are considered separately for each of four zones within the Park, each zone consisting of one or more of the areas described in Section A7 (Landscape & Features) of this document. Finally, a number of issues are considered that apply to the Park as a whole.

The zonation plan used by the Friends of Eastfield Park has changed over the years and, for the sake of clarity, the evolution of the present scheme is described in the next Section.

C2. Park Zonation

It was pointed out in Section A7 (Landscape & Features) that Eastfield Park is made up of a number of contrasting areas. Twelve such areas were described, each with its own characteristics and potential, and each requiring its own approach to management. Nevertheless, it is possible to group areas with similar management goals together into larger areas or zones. Areas within the same zone may have features in common but it is their shared ***primary function*** that places different areas within the same zone.

In March 2007, maps were produced by NBC in consultation with the embryonic FoEP recognising six zones. The maps illustrating these zones are presented in Appendix C1. The approximate equivalence between the six zones and the twelve areas described in Section A7 is described in Table C1 below.

Table C1: Correspondence between the six 2007 park zones and the 12 areas described in Section A7 of this document.

Original Zone	Primary Function	Areas included in zone
Zone 1 – Parkland Zone	Relaxation & Heritage	Areas 2, 11 & 12 but excluding area around and to the west of the Bullring
Zone 2 – Ecological Zone	Wildlife & Biodiversity	Area 2 plus the area between the ponds and the Bullring
Zone 3 – Lake Zone	Relaxation & Play	Areas 1, 4 and 7
Zone 4 – Sport Zone	Sport	Areas 3, 5, 9 & 10
Zone 5 – Spinney Zone	Adventurous Activities	Area 8
Zone 6 – Bullring Zone	Entertainment	The part of Area 2 around and to the west of the Bullring

In 2008, when the FoEP were writing their *Proposals for the Regeneration of Eastfield Park* it became clear that the zones required some adjustments. Squire's Spinney (Area 11) did not fit well as part of the Parkland Zone and was added to the Ecological Zone with a strip along the northern boundary of the Park linking it to the area around the ponds. The island, being inaccessible, was also added to the Ecological Zone while the Lake itself was separated from the rest of the Lake Zone. The Bullring Zone was enlarged towards the Lake. The results of these adjustments are shown in Fig. C1.

In June 2014, before the first meeting of the Eastfield Park Management Committee, the FoEP carried out further revisions to the zonation plan. These took into account developments in the Park since 2008, criticisms of these developments, public response to consultation, and an improved understanding of the Park's structure and usage.

Instead of dividing the Park into six zones only four are now recognised (Fig. C2, Table C2). Each of the new zones consists of one or more areas that together should be managed with the same prime primary function or 'sphere of enjoyment' in mind. These 'spheres of enjoyment' are: Heritage Appreciation, Wildlife Appreciation, Sport & Games, and Play & Activities. The classification is based on the earlier zonation but the Bullring Zone, the Spinney Zone and the Lake have been incorporated into other zones and part of the Parkland Zone has been added to what was the Lake Zone (now the Play & Activities Zone). The new zonation has been mapped to a higher standard in Fig. C3 which also shows the 12 Areas discussed in Section A8 of this document and referred to below

In the latest zonation plan, the Bullring is regarded as a feature within the Heritage Appreciation Zone. The Bullring is one of the most important features of Eastfield Park. It is essential that it is adequately conserved but it is located in the Parkland Area (Area 2) and really forms part of it.

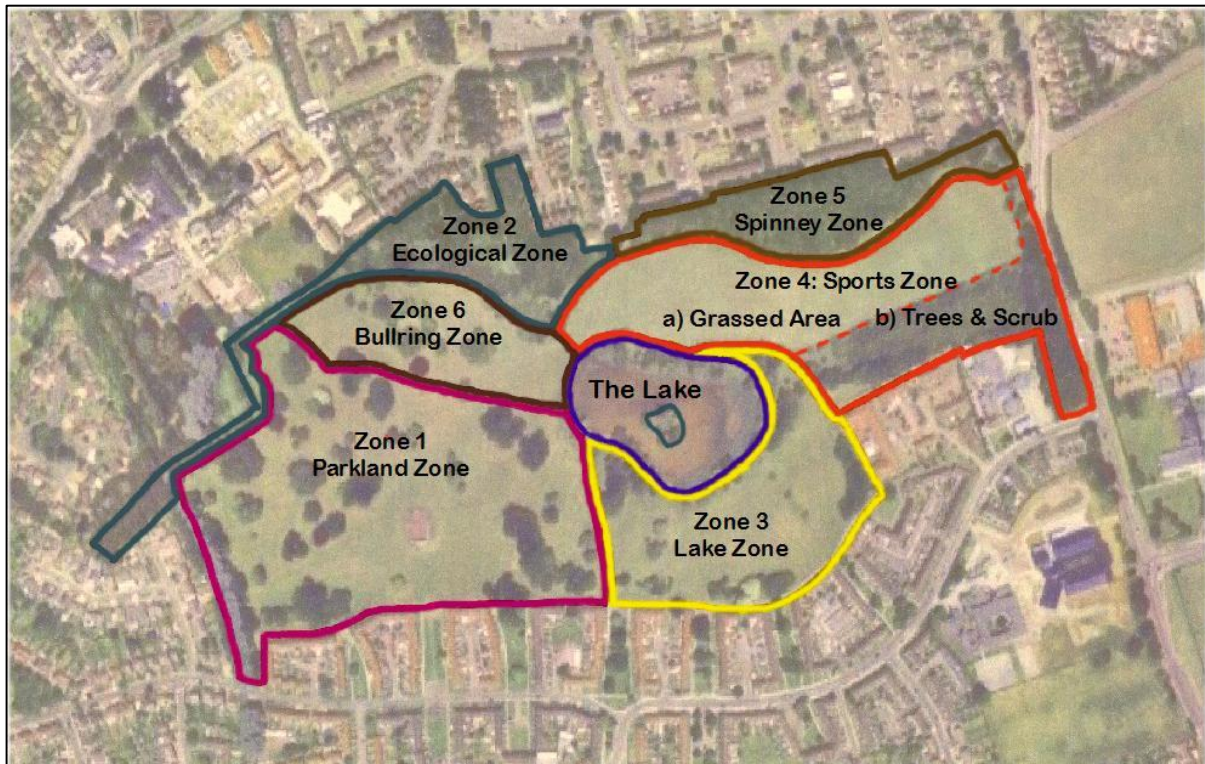


Fig. C1: The Eastfield Park zonation proposed by Friends of Eastfield Park in 2008.

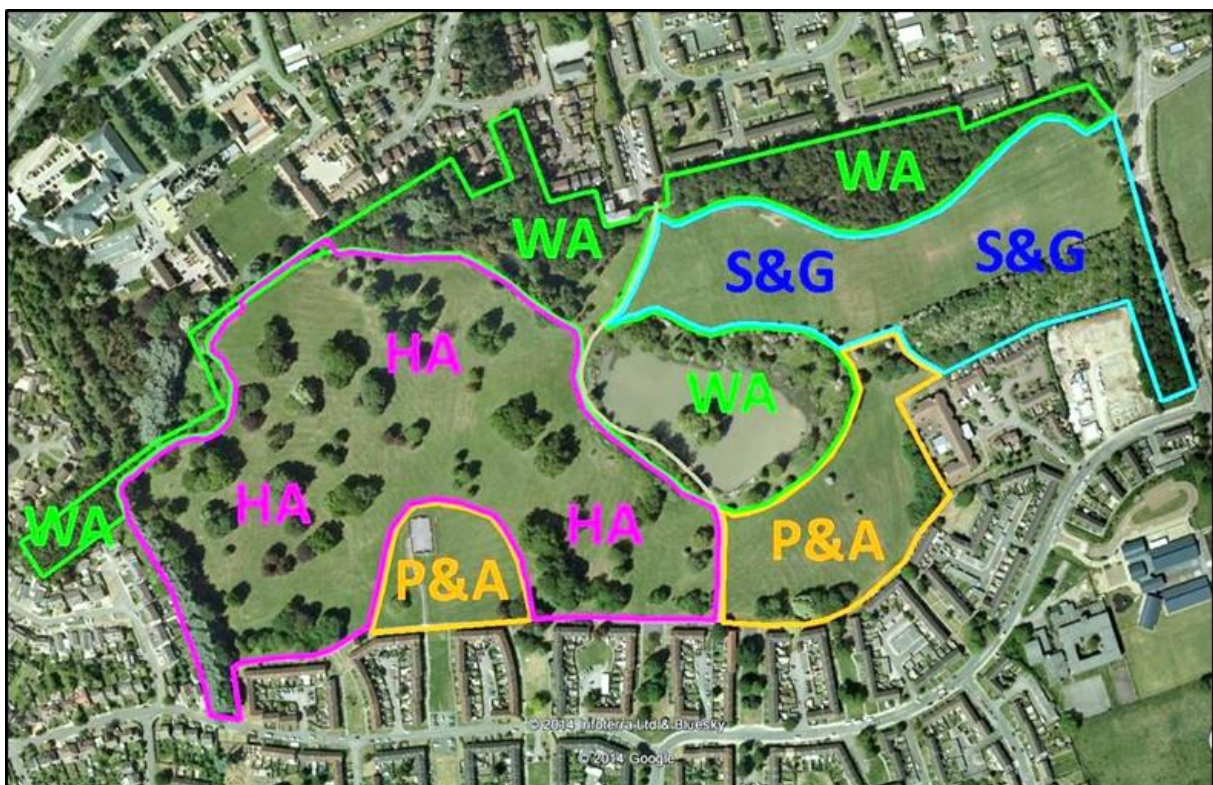


Fig. C2: The Eastfield Park zonation proposed by Friends of Eastfield Park in 2014 and used in this Management Plan. HA: Heritage Appreciation Zone, WA: Wildlife Appreciation Zone, S&G: Sport and Games Zone, P&A: Play and Activities Zone.

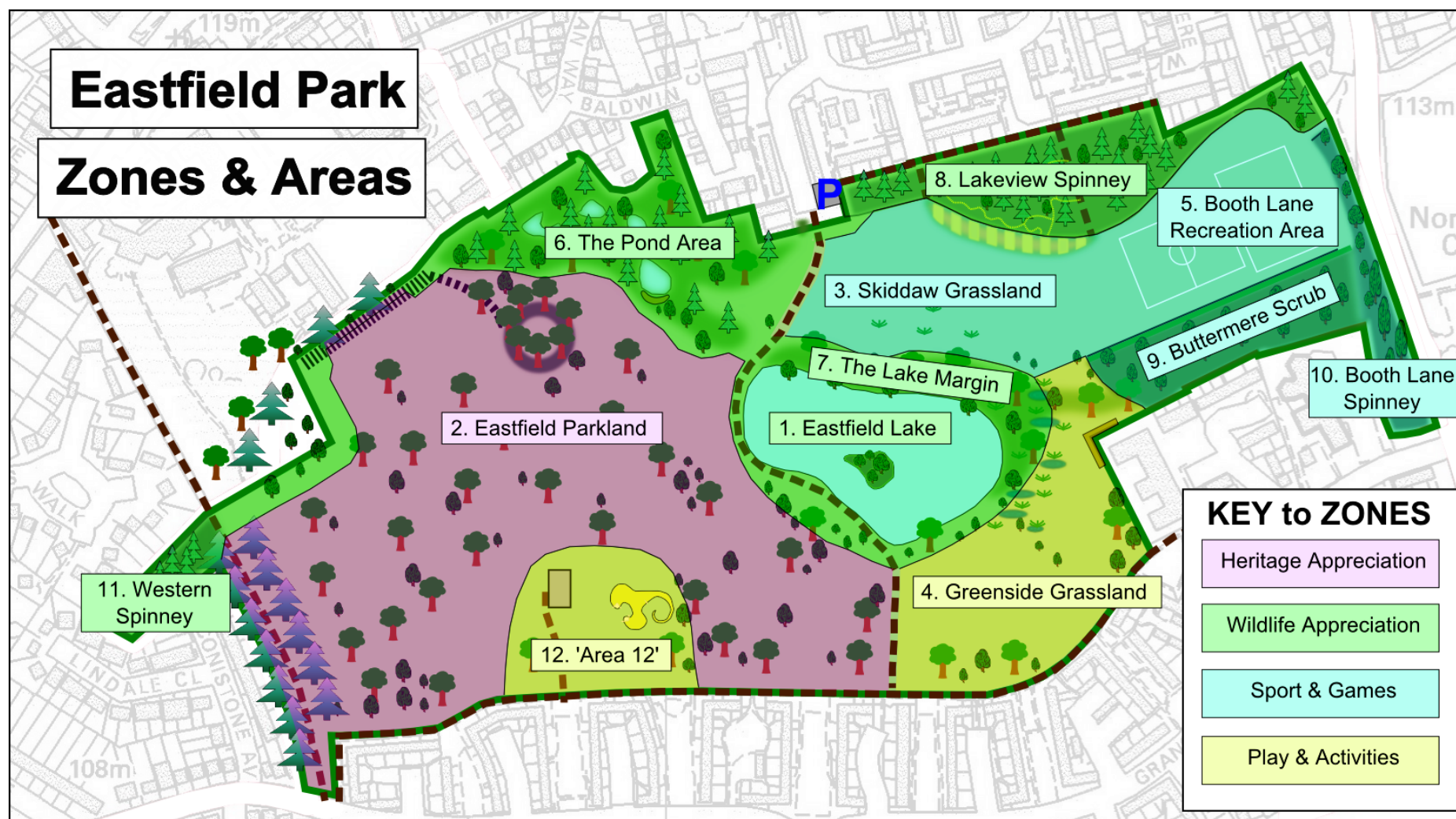


Fig. C3: Map of Eastfield Park showing the Areas and Zones referred to in this document. The twelve areas are the same as those described in Section A7 and referred to in Tables C1 and C2.

Table C2: Correspondence between the six 2007 park zones and the 12 areas described in Section A7 of this document.

Zone	Primary Function	Areas & features included in zone
Heritage Appreciation Zone	Relaxation & Heritage	Area 2, including Bullring & ha-ha.
Wildlife Appreciation Zone	Wildlife & Biodiversity	Areas 1, 6, 7, 8 & 11 including the island, the ponds & the play trail
Sport & Games Zone	Organised Sport & Games	Areas 3, 5, 9 & 10 including the football pitches & senior play area.
Play & Activities Zone	Events, Informal Activities & Play	Areas 4 & 12 including the MUGA and the Eastfield Monster

In 2008, the FoEP thought the Bullring Zone would become a focus for community events. However, despite the FoEP's efforts to use the Bullring for public occasions, people have preferred activities in other parts of the Park, closer to houses or park entrances. This is another reason for including the old Bullring Zone within the Heritage Appreciation Zone.

The Spinney Zone was originally conceived as an area for adventurous play. However this has proved unpopular with residents, the police and tree officers. Many of the trees forming the spinney are in a diseased and dangerous condition and will need replacing in the near future. The area is therefore unsafe for play. The undergrowth prevents the police from having a clear view through the area and thus hampers detection of any offenders causing trouble in the area. Also, any play structures located in the spinney attracts anti-social behaviour, particularly in the evenings. This was the case with the boulders placed close to the play trail in the spinney as part of the Play Builders scheme. They had to be removed.

Therefore, in the revised zonation, the spinney zone has been incorporated into the Ecological Zone (now called the Wildlife Appreciation Zone). This extends the wildlife corridor from one end of the Park to the other, at the same time providing a buffer between the houses on its north side and the sports area to the south.

The Lake, originally part of the Lake Zone, was considered as a separate feature in the 2008 *Proposals* although the island on the Lake was added to the Ecological Zone (now the Wildlife Appreciation Zone). Bird watching and feeding ducks are popular pastimes around the Lake and it therefore seems appropriate to add the whole of the Lake and its immediate surroundings to the Wildlife Appreciation Area. This does not rule out the possibility of angling becoming an important activity on the Lake in the future but does recognise the importance of its wildlife to local residents.

The Parkland Zone (now called the Heritage Appreciation Zone) was intended to be a quiet area of the Park where residents could enjoy the natural beauties of the area with the minimum of disturbance. Nevertheless, by 2008, the MUGA had already been built in the southern part of this area and, since then, the Eastfield Monster has been located nearby, despite the land being in an area of species rich grassland.

Therefore, the area surrounding these features (the 'Area 12' of Section A7) is *de facto* an area for play and games. This area has therefore been added to the Lake Zone (now called the Play and Activities Zone). This is the area, for example, that has been used by the Headlands Children's Centre for summer picnics and story-telling and has been used by the FoEP for the 'Easter@Eastfield' family fun afternoon in 2013 and 2014.

The character and features of each of the zones are as follows (key features in **bold**):

1. HA: Heritage Appreciation Zone – an area for the tranquil appreciation of the Park's history and heritage and its semi-rural parkland landscape.

Features: A remnant of the Weston Favell House landscaped Edwardian park with:

***Parkland landscape** – Scattered mature trees and grassland,*

*Remains of **ridge & furrow** cultivation especially in the northern part of the Zone*

***Ha-ha** – Sunken wall separating parkland from the house and garden,*

View of house (now Manfield Grange) from Park,

***The Bullring** – ring of lime trees probably over 300 years old of unknown purpose,*

***Area of species rich grassland** – in the area between the MUGA and the Lake.*

2. WA: Wildlife Appreciation Zone – an area for the peaceful appreciation of the Park's flora and fauna.

Features: Includes vestiges of the Weston Favell Estate rock gardens & ponds, shelter belts, an artificial lake and surrounding landscaped garden, with:

*Interconnected wooded areas including spinney (**shelter belt**) with **play trail**,*

***Ponds** with three species of amphibians and a range of invertebrates,*

*Remains of **landscaped rock gardens**, including the '**Manfield Steps**' and the area being developed as the '**Crescent Rock Garden**',*

*The **Lake** with its **island**, reedbeds, fish and wildfowl,*

Brambles, nettle beds and a range of wildlife and habitats requiring further study,

Other areas suitable for planting with wildflowers.

3. S&G: Sport & Games Zone – an area for structured physical activity and games with an emphasis on older children and adults.

Features: Two grassy areas (one fairly flat, the other sloping toward the Lake and liable to waterlogging in the lower parts) and two wooded areas (one, part of the Weston Favell Estate shelter belt; the other, a more recently formed area of scrub between a hedge and the Park boundary) with:

***Two football pitches**,*

***Play equipment** for older children,*

***Areas of trees and scrub** for possible future development.*

4. P&A: Play & Activities Zone – an area for informal recreational activities with an emphasis on younger people.

Features: Two grassy areas open to Greenside (one sloping towards the Lake and liable to severe waterlogging in its lower region) with:

Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) & 'Eastfield Monster' (landscaped play mound),
Large area of fairly level space for casual sport and games (with ridge & furrow)
'Eleonore House Border' – wildflower & herbaceous garden being developed along boundary.

It must be stressed that the designated management focus for a particular zone does not rule out the possibility of that zone being used for other purposes. However, any secondary use of a zone should not interfere with its primary focus. For example, informal activities and play may take place in any part of the Park but should not disrupt organised football matches in the Sport & Games Zone, bird watching in the Wildlife Appreciation Zone, or quiet relaxation in the Heritage Appreciation Zone.

Even with an established zonation plan some conflicts of interest are bound to occur and the possibility of conflicting interests will be discussed throughout this section.

C3. The Vision for Eastfield Park

Few people would disagree with the Friends of Eastfield Park's vision for the Park:

"To create a safe and accessible park, with well managed and maintained facilities and amenities, that enhances the well-being of residents living in the area. The park should reflect and retain its natural beauty and heritage and be a place to relax, learn and be inspired."

Inherent within this vision is the widely held opinion that any future provision of facilities, or improvements to existing facilities, should not damage the natural qualities of the Park.

What is likely to prove controversial, however, is the kind of changes to the provision of facilities and amenities that would be considered 'improvements' and what kind of alterations to the Park would be regarded as damaging its 'natural' qualities. Different people will have different views regarding the desirability or acceptability of change and it is the duty of the Management Committee to take these different views into consideration when deciding how the Park should be managed.

Different people will have diverse expectations and make contradictory demands regarding the Park. It is the duty of the Eastfield Park Management Committee to be aware of such differences and to manage the Park, as far as possible, to satisfy conflicting aspirations. All major developments should be subject to public consultation before any changes are made to the Park.

C4. The Heritage Appreciation Zone

The vision for this Zone is that it should be a place for the tranquil appreciation of the Park's history and heritage and its semi-natural parkland landscape. The area should be managed to conserve its present character and existing features. Intrusive structures should be avoided but discrete information boards should be provided to enhance the appreciation of the heritage.

There is only one Area (**Area 2: the Eastfield Parkland**) and five Key Features (the **Bullring**, the **ha-ha**, the **ridge & furrow**, **species rich grassland** and the **parkland landscape**) within the Zone.

Potential conflicts regarding the management of this Zone are likely to arise between those who wish to see the Zone provided with more features and facilities such as sculptures and pathways and those who wish to see it left much as it is. If features and facilities are added it is important that they do not interfere with the peaceful enjoyment of the area or detract from its heritage value.

Management of the grassed areas could also be a point of disagreement. Generally speaking, most people want to see a well-manicured park and there are frequent complaints about the grass not being cut frequently enough. Long grass hampers access to the area particularly in wet weather. Long grass is usually accompanied by excessive weed growth and seeds from the weeds are a source of annoyance for local gardeners. Long grass may also be harder for contractors to deal with. On the other hand, the Park supports a number of important grassland species that would benefit from less regular cutting and the 2014 Royal Horticultural Society *'It's Your Neighbourhood'* Assessor commented that "The site has a significant grassland flora, which could be enhanced, without reducing the community value, by a differential mowing regime over selected areas, and I would recommend that you discuss this with the contractors to see if this can be put in place for 2015." Any areas selected for less frequent mowing should be located far away from gardens and at least one should be in a known species rich area. Provided such areas are kept relatively small they should not interfere with walking across the Park.

The Aims for the Heritage Appreciation Zone are:

1. For the health of the mature trees forming the Parkland and the Bullring to be monitored annually for conservation and Health & Safety reasons. Dangerous branches and trees to be removed immediately; replacement trees to be planted within the year so there is no net loss of trees from the area from one year to another. (Trees removed in recent years should also be replaced to make up the number. Tree officers should be asked to recommend the best choice and source of trees. Planting could be done by volunteers but only after suitable training.)

2. For grass to be cut regularly during the growing season but designated areas set-aside and mowed less frequently according to a schedule agreed with the contractors. One such area to be located in the species-rich grassland area between the Lake and Area 12 (around the MUGA and the 'Monster'). Another to be located in the area to the west of the Bullring. The mowing regime to be maintained from year to year and reviewed after three and five years. The Wildlife Trust to be invited to assist in the monitoring of the set-aside areas. (This recommendation was advocated by the 2014 RHS 'It's Your Neighbourhood' Assessor.)
3. For trees in the Bullring to be monitored and replaced as in 1) above. Epicormic growth to be removed by volunteers, if possible every two years. Consideration to be given to replacing the lost statue at the centre of the ring with a suitable figure in keeping with the parkland setting, bearing in mind cost and the possibility of vandalism.
4. For the vegetation along the northern boundary of the Park, in front of Manfield Grange, to be managed so as expose a short length of the ha-ha and a glimpse of the house to Park users. This should be done as far as possible without damaging the vegetation as a corridor linking Areas 6 and 11 (the Pond Area and Squire's Spinney).
5. For information boards to be erected describing the history and features of the area, especially the Bullring, the ha-ha, the parkland landscape (trees and grass) and the view of Manfield Grange (Weston Favell House). The boards should be placed in suitable locations where they can be clearly seen by members of the public but are not intrusive and do not detract from the natural beauty of the area.
6. For all the trees in the Parkland to be identified and mapped and several provided with labels giving Latin and vernacular names and possibly other information about them.
7. For the FoEP to continue to research the history of the Park and surrounding area making their findings available to the public through one of their websites. Consideration to be given to providing information in local libraries and through the Northamptonshire Record Office.

C5. The Wildlife Appreciation Zone

The vision for this Zone is that it should be a place for the peaceful appreciation of the Park's wildlife, including trees and flowers as well as birds, mammals, amphibians and invertebrate life. The area should be managed to maximise biodiversity while also providing access and facilities for people to enjoy the Park's flora and fauna. Heritage features (such as the 'Manfield Steps') within the Zone should also be conserved. The Zone should be managed to form a continuous 'green corridor' along the northern boundary of the Park helping to link Bradlaugh Fields in the west with Billing Arbours and Lings Wood in the east.

There are five Areas (**Areas 1: Eastfield Lake, 6: the Pond Area, 7: the Lake Margin, 8: Lakeview Spinney and 11: Squire's Spinney**) and eight Key Features (the **Lake** with its **island**, the remains of the landscaped **rock gardens** including the **ponds**, the '**Manfield Steps**', the '**Crescent Rock Garden**' and the **shelter belt** with **play trail**) within the Zone.

Before a definitive long-term management plan can be produced for this Zone further investigation is required concerning its flora and fauna, particularly with regard to the health of the pine trees in the wooded areas and the state of the fish populations in the Lake. Discussions need to be held with relevant professionals and interested parties to determine the type of habitats that should be maintained in the Park over the long term.

In the short term, management should concentrate on protecting the biodiversity that already exists and enhancing it wherever possible. It should be emphasised, though, that the vision for this area has more to do with bringing people into contact with the natural world and helping them to appreciate it, rather than with conservation for its own sake.

There is the potential for conflict between these two aspects of the vision: conservation of biodiversity on the one hand, and the public appreciation of that biodiversity on the other but the FoEP already have clear ideas about how to manage such conflict. A more serious concern is that some of the facilities that could assist the appreciation of wildlife (such as a bird hide or the existing dipping platform on the top pond) might attract unwelcome attention from vandals or people using the facilities for inappropriate purposes. If such facilities were located near some of the park boundaries they could draw complaints from nearby residents (as happened with the boulders along the play trail).

The Aims for the Wildlife Appreciation Zone are:

1. For a decision to be made, within one year, regarding the future of the Lake - whether it should be maintained as a fishing lake or not. If it is to remain a fishing lake, the Environment Agency needs to be consulted regarding the conservation of the Lake and the fish stocks within it; if not, the Lake should be managed for the benefit of its wildlife including residual fish populations. In either case, people should be discouraged from overfeeding the wildfowl, possibly by putting up signs and giving out leaflets explaining the problems caused by excess food entering the Lake (eutrophication, increased rat populations, etc.).
2. For a review to be carried out, within one year, regarding the long-term future of Areas 6, 8 and 11 (the wooded areas along the northern perimeter of the Park). Many of the pine trees in these areas are diseased and will eventually need to be removed. An agreement is needed concerning the nature of the woodland habitats that should replace them. Broadleaved species would benefit biodiversity but would alter the character of the area (though possibly improving it).

3. Within the review process, for consideration to be given to the 2014 RHS *'It's Your Neighbourhood'* Assessor's opinion that 'weed trees' (mainly ash and sycamore) should be removed from the Crescent Rock Garden. The possibility of clearing some of the woody vegetation, including some bushes and small trees, from other parts of these areas (to let more light reach the ground flora and the ponds) should also be included in the review.
4. For the trees in Areas 6, 7 & 8 to be monitored annually and those in Area 11 (less visited by the public) every two years. Dead and dangerous trees should be removed and replaced with species determined according to the long-term plan for the areas.
5. For the water supply to the ponds and Lake to be thoroughly investigated and, if possible, improved. Urgent consideration to be given to further dredging of the ponds followed by increasing the level of the outflow from each of the ponds and the Lake. (This issue has already been discussed between the FoEP and NBC representatives and agreement reached in principle.)
6. For Area 7 (the Lake Margin) to be managed to maintain its present attractiveness. Parts of this area would benefit from improved drainage but, if that is not possible, a dry pathway, such as a board-walk, should be provided around the Lake.
7. The grassy areas among the trees to the north of the Lake are planted with daffodils and these areas should not be mowed until the daffodil leaves have died down. The FoEP should aim to plant more spring bulbs in this area. At present, mainly because it is inaccessible, the island should be left unmanaged.
8. For the Play Trail in the Lakeview Spinney to be maintained by EMS, cutting back encroaching vegetation within 1m of the path and removing any overhanging branches. The FoEP to endeavour to maintain informal paths throughout the Zone by removing encroaching vegetation within 0.5m of the paths and removing overhanging branches. They should also seek to add wood chippings (or other suitable materials) to excessively muddy footpaths.
9. For the FoEP to continue to improve the Crescent Rock Garden by keeping weeds down and adding more plants. The garden should be extended to include the part of the mound facing the Park and possibly the area on the south side of the pond, east of the improved area (near, what is believed to be, the ponds original outflow).
10. For the FoEP to continue to improve the area around the ponds by improving paths, keeping the 'Manfield Steps' tidy, maintaining the dead hedge that protects the culvert leading into the top pond, planting wildflowers, etc., etc. Habitats should continue to be improved and new habitats (such as the 'log walls' already created) added. If possible, as time permits, these activities should be extended to other Areas within the Zone.

11. For the FoEP to resume their attempt to document the Park's recorded biodiversity and to actively become involved in extending the list of recorded species. They should also encourage others to participate in doing this. The FoEP should study the Lake's invertebrate fauna and continue to monitor the pond faunas.
12. For information boards to be erected in strategic locations (such as by the dipping platform on the top pond, near the Crescent Rock Garden, on the path by the Lake facing the island, and on the play trail in the Lakeview Spinney) describing key aspects of the Zone's flora and fauna.

C6. The Sport & Games Zone

The vision for this Zone is that it should be a location for structured physical activity and games with an emphasis on older children and adults. The area should be managed to increase, as far as possible, the opportunities for such activities.

There are four Areas (**Areas 3: the Skiddaw Grassland, 5: Booth Lane Recreation Area, 9: Buttermere Scrub** and **10: Booth Lane Spinney**) and three Key Features (the **football pitches, play equipment** for older children, and **areas of trees and scrub**) within the Zone.

At present, only the Booth Lane Recreation Area is developed as an area for sport, the football pitches being used regularly throughout the season. An attempt was made to establish a football pitch on the Skiddaw Grassland but was abandoned, presumably because of the waterlogged nature of the ground. The grassland is a favoured area for walking but the wooded areas are visited infrequently and rarely for legitimate purposes (though the Buttermere Scrub contains a geocache that is repeatedly visited).

Potential conflicts regarding the management of this Zone surround the option of opening up the wooded areas for public activities. In 2008, the FoEP suggested that the wooded areas could be used to provide a car park, changing rooms and indoor sporting facilities. However, this suggestion is now unpopular with some local residents and the FoEP have removed this suggestion from their list of firm proposals. Such developments do remain a possibility should sufficient funds become available but would require extensive public consultation. Many people do not wish to see any buildings on the Park and a car park would be of doubtful value to an open space which has the status of merely a 'Local Park'.

It might be considered more appropriate to create some kind of activity or adventure trail through the woodland, which could be used by local schools and Northampton College. If equipment was installed it would need to be vandal proof; disturbance to local residents could be an issue.

Criminal activity has been a problem in these overgrown wooded areas in the past. Clearing much of the low vegetation might help to reduce unlawful activity but a strip of thorny vegetation could be encouraged along the fence at the backs of people's gardens to prevent offenders from entering gardens from the Park.

The Aims for the Sport and Games Zone are:

1. For the management of the Booth Lane Recreation Area and the football pitches to continue as at present. The grass should be cut regularly and the pitches maintained in good order.
2. For the Skiddaw Grassland to be mowed frequently during the growing season to facilitate informal sport and games and easy access by walkers.
3. For the equipment in the Senior Play Area to be maintained on a regular basis and consideration given to providing (in the long term) more equipment for older children on the Skiddaw Grassland. Such equipment should be located away from the present equipment yet visible from the Skiddaw Walk flats.
4. For consideration to be given to the possible development of the wooded areas in this Zone, paying attention to the issues mentioned in the discussion above.
5. In the meantime, for the FoEP to endeavour to keep at least one path open through each of the wooded areas (north to south through the Booth Lane Spinney and east to west through the Buttermere Scrub).
6. Pending decisions on the future of the wooded areas, for ground vegetation to be kept low in the wooded areas except for a strip along the boundary behind people's gardens where briars and thorny bushes should be encouraged.

C7. The Play and Activities Zone

The vision for this Zone is that it should be a location for children's play, casual unplanned sport and games, and planned community-based events. The area should be managed to increase, as far as possible, the opportunities for such activities. This is the area preferred by the FoEP for the location of play equipment for younger children.


There are two Areas (**Area 4: the Greenside Grassland**, and the **unnamed 'Area 12'**) and three Key Features (the **MUGA**, the **'Eastfield Monster'** and the **'Eleonore House Border'**) within the Zone. There is an area of ridge and furrow and ample space for informal games and the installation of play equipment.

Only Area 12 has amenities for play and games at present, being the location of both the MUGA and the 'Monster'.

The 'Eleonore House Border' is being developed close to where this Zone meets the Wildlife Appreciation Zone and the Sport & Games Zone. It is not being developed specifically for children but it is hoped that it might be used for educational purposes and that children may be involved in its care. (Students from Northampton College have already been involved in its creation.)

Some residents on the Eastfield Estate may object to the provision of play equipment on the Greenside Grassland because of associated noise from children and the possibility that it will attract antisocial behaviour. However, these problems should prove no greater than those associated with the MUGA and the 'Monster' in a similar location and many parents of young children would see such a provision as a very valuable amenity in a deprived area.

The Aims for the Play and Activities Zone are:

1. For the management of 'Area 12' to continue much as at present. The MUGA (including the floodlights and electricity supply) and the 'Eastfield Monster' to be inspected quarterly and necessary repairs carried out within 3 months. (Anything found to be in a dangerous condition to be repaired or made harmless within one week.)
2. For the grass throughout the Zone to be mowed frequently during the growing season to facilitate play and informal games and easy access by walkers. Grass on the monster could be allowed to grow a little longer than in the rest of the area but should still be kept short.
3. For the 'tail of the Monster', originally planned to be a low hedge but now consisting only of earth and weeds, to be developed with vertical stepping logs, decreasing in size along the length of the tail.  Costing and seeking funds for this project to begin immediately.
4. For a high priority to be given to the possibility of creating of a large fenced play area (similar to the one in Bradlaugh Fields) located on the Greenside Grassland, close to the Mallard Walk about midway between Greenside and the Lake. Public consultation regarding this facility to commence immediately.
5. For the FoEP to continue to develop the garden known as the 'Eleonore House Border'. Following the advice of the RHS '*It's Your Neighbourhood*' Assessor, the border should be developed along the full length of the metal fence between the Park and Eleonore House and at least part of it should be planted with annual wild flowers. The FoEP should attempt to get local schools and/or Eleonore House residents interested in maintaining the garden and possibly extending within the Eleonore House grounds.

C8. Park-wide issues

Various issues apply to the management of the Park as a whole. These are discussed in this section under the following headings:

- a) Awareness of the Park
- b) Access to the Park
- c) Access within the Park
- d) General Facilities within the Park
 - i. Seating
 - ii. Litter Bins
 - iii. Dog Bins
- e) Vandalism & Anti-social Behaviour

a) Awareness of the Park: In 2008, the FoEP stated that people living well within the Park's catchment area were often unaware of its existence. Despite the FoEP's efforts to publicise the Park, and the fact that there are now a number of pedestrian signs pointing to the Park with maps of the Park at five of its entrances, this still remains true. Local residents still ask for directions to the Park and people have failed to turn up to events because they were unable to find the Park or locations within it.

b) Access to the Park: Since 2008, five park entrances have been improved with paved areas and notice boards which include a simple map of the Park. Pedestrian signs point to the entrances from nearby roads. Some of the notice boards are regularly scrawled on and at least one of the pedestrian signs was damaged in an accident.

c) Access within the Park: In 2014, an all-weather cross-park footpath was installed from Newby Court to Skiddaw Walk passing close to the Lake. This is the first major all-weather pathway to be constructed across the Park (as distinct from Greenside and Apple Tree Walk which follow the Park boundaries). This path has improved access within the Park considerably and people in mobility scooters, for example, are now able to cross the Park and visit the Lake. The path has received widespread approval from residents though some people think that any path on the Park detract from its beauty.

Access to the Park, however, remains limited and there have been calls for a pathway from the Booth Lane entrance to Apple Tree Walk, passing between the Pond Area and the Bullring, and another from the Booth Lane entrance to Greenside, passing south of the football pitches and between the Lake and Eleonore House (keeping close to the Eleonore House fence to avoid the wet area). There has also been a request for an all-weather path around the Lake passing through some of the wettest areas in the form of a board walk. If such a path is provided it would naturally make use of Mallard Walk to the west of the Lake and should link to any new paths created on the east side of the Lake. Possible routes for the suggested paths are shown in Fig. C4.

d) General Facilities within the Park

- i. **Seating:** Currently, the Park has inadequate seating for its users (only five seats, one of which is out-of-use).
- ii. **Litter Bins:** The Park has only six litter bins; a fact considered woefully inadequate by most park users, especially as only one entrance/exit (Greenfield Avenue) is equipped with a bin. In summer, students from Northampton College often picnic on the football pitches and leave litter behind. In many cases the litter is dumped in the hedge at the Booth Lane entrance where there is a dog bin but no litter bin. All of the main park entrances should have litter bins which could be located close to the existing dog bins.

Some of the litter bins are frequently seen to be overflowing with litter, with additional bottles, cans, and the like, piled up alongside. Provision of more bins would help the situation but size of bins and frequency of emptying also need to be reviewed.

- iii. **Dog Bins:** The Park has 14 dog bins which most dog walkers seem to think is adequate. There are, however, complaints about the position and condition of some of the bins. It does seem strange that two bins are mounted on one post near the Lake, especially as it seems that one of them is never used.

e) Vandalism & Anti-social Behaviour: In Eastfield Park this includes failure to pick up dog mess, dropping litter, fly tipping, graffiti, riding motor cycles across the Park and deliberately damaging park equipment. The most severe case in recent months involved damaging a new bench and dumping it in the Lake. While it would appear that many people drop litter and fail to pick up dog mess, probably only a few are involved in the worst forms of vandalism. The FoEP would like to see increased presence of Police, Community Support Officers and Park Rangers on the Park and stronger action taken against offenders. The harm caused by delinquents goes far beyond the actual damage done to property; many people feel intimidated, even scared to go into the Park, and volunteers become demoralised when they see their hard work destroyed by wrongdoers.

Ultimately, the whole community is damaged by such behaviour; offenders consider themselves beyond the reach of the law (they have said so) and this can only lead to increased more serious criminal activity. Action against 'low level crime' should not be considered a waste of time; rather it should be considered as a first step in the fight against lawlessness.

The Aims for the Park as a whole are:

1. For the FoEP to renew efforts to publicise Eastfield Park, especially within the Eastfield and adjacent Wards. They should seek to make better use of radio and the local press and increase publicity in libraries, schools, places of worship and shops. Publicity should include information about how to find the Park and locations within it.
2. For pedestrian signs and entrance notice boards to be inspected quarterly and graffiti removed. Damaged signs should be repaired within one month. Additional notice boards should be installed at the Baldwin Close and Newby Court entrances and an additional pedestrian sign pointing to the Park placed at the junction of Grange Road and Broadmead Avenue.
3. For high priority to be given to providing additional all-weather, wheelchair friendly paths within the Park. The public to be consulted regarding the routes that should be followed and the priorities given to different routes but the ultimate aim is to link the Booth Lane entrance with both Apple Tree Walk and Greenside and to provide a walkway around the Lake. Fig. C4 shows the possible routes for such paths. It is strongly recommended that paths should not cut across the middle of the Parkland or the grassed areas but should follow natural boundaries as far as possible. This would preserve the natural beauty of the areas and would also help to reduce objections from those who do not wish to see any paths on the Park.
4. For additional seating to be provided within the Park. The FoEP and NBC should work together to investigate sources of potential funding. Sponsorship from local businesses and individuals to be considered. Any new seats to be, as far as possible, vandal-proof: made of metal and firmly anchored in the ground.
5. For an additional four litter bins to be provided by NBC as a priority. These to be located at the Kettering Road, Skiddaw Walk, Booth Lane and Greenside entrances/exits. The size and frequency of emptying of existing bins should be reviewed.
6. For the location and condition of dog bins in the Park to be reviewed. Those responsible for emptying bins (litter bins and dog bins) should periodically be asked to report on their condition.
7. For the FoEP to do whatever they can to encourage greater use of the Park for legitimate purposes and to work with the authorities to discourage litter and dog fouling. They should also demand a more proactive response from the Police in tackling anti-social activity on the Park, especially by motor cyclists.

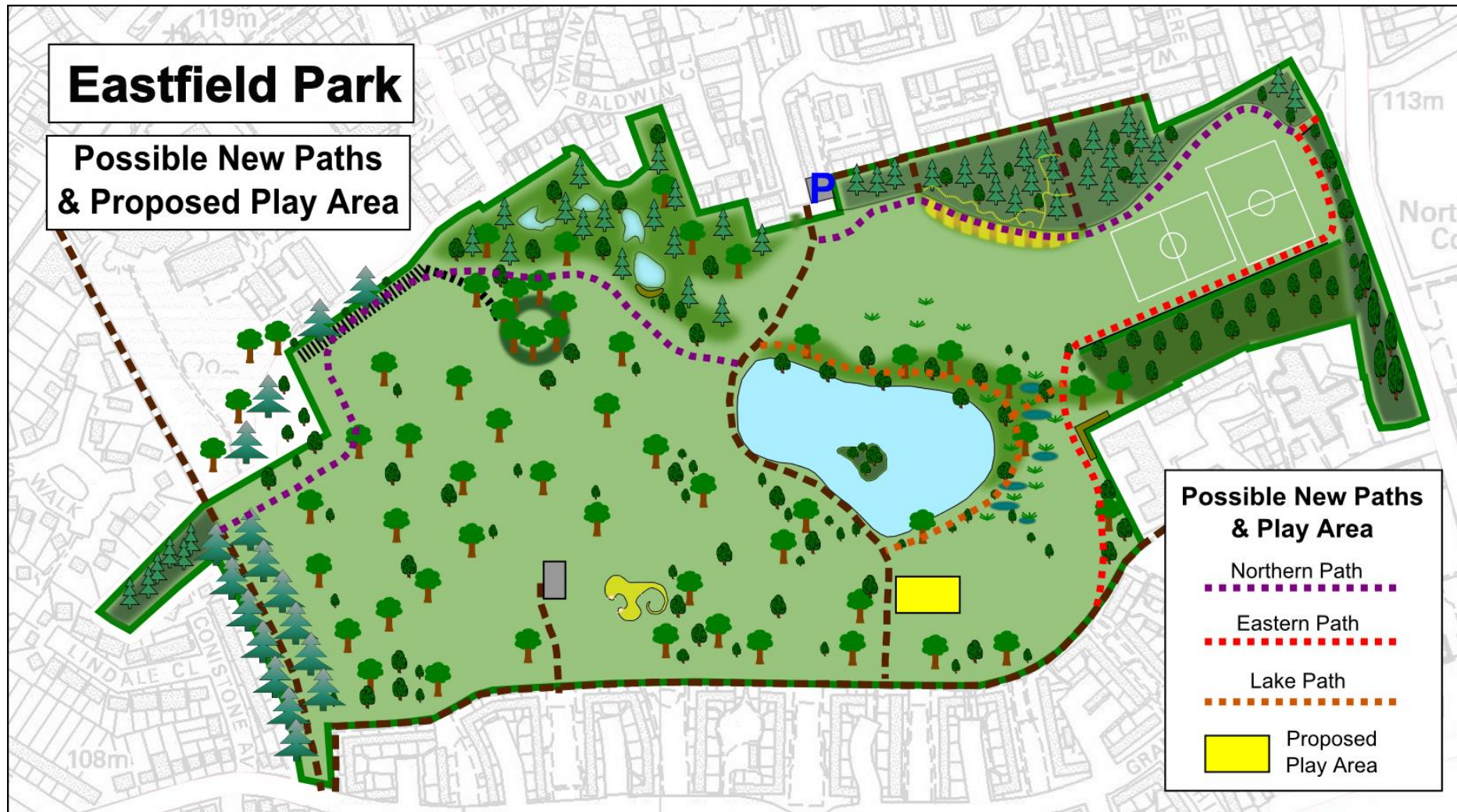


Fig. C4: Possible routes for new paths and possible site for proposed new play area.

C9. Five-Year Objectives

The specific management objectives for Eastfield Park over the next five years, and the lead groups responsible for helping to achieve them, are as follows:

1. Urgent Planning Objectives (all within one year – in order of priority)

- i. Agree mowing regime for the Park including areas set aside for less frequent mowing (EPMC/EMS)
- ii. Agree management policy and plans for Areas 6, 8 & 11, including future of 'weed trees' (EPMC/EMS)
- iii. Agree management policy and plan for the Lake (NBC/EPMC/EA)
- iv. Investigate ways of improving water supply to ponds & Lake; consider further dredging of ponds & ways to increase water level in ponds & Lake (EPMC)
- v. Review size, condition and frequency of emptying of litter and dog bins (EPMC/EMS)
- vi. Consider further drainage options for wet areas of the Park (NBC/EPMC).

2. On-going Maintenance Objectives

a) Weekly (or more frequently)

- i. Inspect and empty litter and dog bins as necessary; inspect and collect litter from grassy areas as necessary (more frequently in summer / less frequently in winter) (NBC/EMS)

b) Monthly (or more frequently)

- ii. Inspect all grassed areas and mow as necessary leaving set-aside areas unmowed until time agreed for mowing(NBC/EMS)
- iii. Inspect football pitches in season and maintain as necessary (NBC/EMS)

c) Three-monthly (or more frequently)

- iv. Monitor all paved paths, remove weeds and cut back any encroaching vegetation (NBC/EMS)
- v. Inspect the MUGA, the 'Eastfield Monster' & play equipment in Senior Play Area and report damage; anything in a dangerous condition to be repaired, replaced or removed immediately; other damage to be repaired as soon as possible (Ranger/NBC/EPMC/FoEP)
- vi. Inspect pedestrian signs and entrance notice boards; remove graffiti and report damage (Ranger/EPMC/FoEP)

d) Annually (or more frequently)

- vii. Monitor health of trees in most of the Park for Health & Safety reasons (NBC/EMS)
- viii. Remove dangerous trees & branches (EMS)
- ix. Replace lost trees with suitable species (EPMC/FoEP/EMS)
- x. Cut back encroaching vegetation on major informal paths in woodland areas (FoEP)
- xi. Weed and maintain Crescent Rock Garden & Eleonore House Border (FoEP)

e) Every two to three years

- xii. Remove epicormic growth from trees in Bullring (FoEP/EMS)
- xiii. Monitor health of any trees not included in 2d) above (NBC/EMS)
- xiv. Keep 'Manfield Steps' & nearby 'dead hedge' maintained (FoEP)
- xv. Reduce low level scrub in Booth Lane Spinney (FoEP)

3. Development Objectives

a) Within 1 Year

- i. Carry out consultation re. provision of play equipment for younger children (EPMC/FoEP)
- ii. Provide 'tail' of 'Eastfield Monster' with vertical stepping logs (EPMC/FoEP)
- iii. Provide additional litter bins (ideally, four) for Park entrances (NBC/EPMC)
- iv. Develop and monitor Eleonore House Border according to plan (FoEP)
- v. Plant additional spring bulbs and wildflowers around the Lake, on Crescent Rock Garden, Eleonore House Border, along Apple Tree Walk and in Pond Area (FoEP/EMS/NBC)

b) Within 2 Years

- vi. Provide large play area with equipment for younger children (EPMC/FoEP)
- vii. Carry out public consultation regarding provision of additional pathways on Park (EPMC/FoEP)
- viii. Manage vegetation along the northern boundary of the Park, in front of Manfield Grange, to expose a short length of the ha-ha (FoEP)
- ix. Implement plan to reduce overfeeding wildfowl on the Lake (EPMC/FoEP)
- x. Extend Crescent Rock Garden (FoEP)

c) Within 3 Years

- xi. Carry out public consultation re. additional provision of play equipment for older children (EPMC/FoEP)
- xii. Provide heritage notice boards in suitable areas (EPMC/FoEP)
- xiii. Provide four additional benches in the Park (EPMC/FoEP)
- xiv. Identify and map all trees in Parkland Area (FoEP)
- xv. Increase water level in ponds and Lake (EPMC/FoEP)
- xvi. Provide two additional notice boards at entrances and one pedestrian sign (NBC/NCC)
- xvii. Subject to public consultation, provide cross-park pathway from Booth Lane to Apple Tree Walk (EPMC/FoEP)

d) Within 5 Years

- xviii. Review mowing regime after 3 and 5 years (EPMC/NBC/EMS)
- xix. Provide name labels on key parkland trees (EPMC/FoEP)
- xx. Create more habitats & refuge areas for wildlife (FoEP)
- xxi. Wildlife notice boards to be provided in suitable areas (EPMC/FoEP)
- xxii. Provide additional play equipment for older children (EPMC/FoEP)
- xxiii. Subject to public consultation, provide pathway from Booth Lane to Greenside (EPMC/FoEP)
- xxiv. Subject to public consultation, provide pathway around the Lake (EPMC/FoEP).

4. Other Objectives

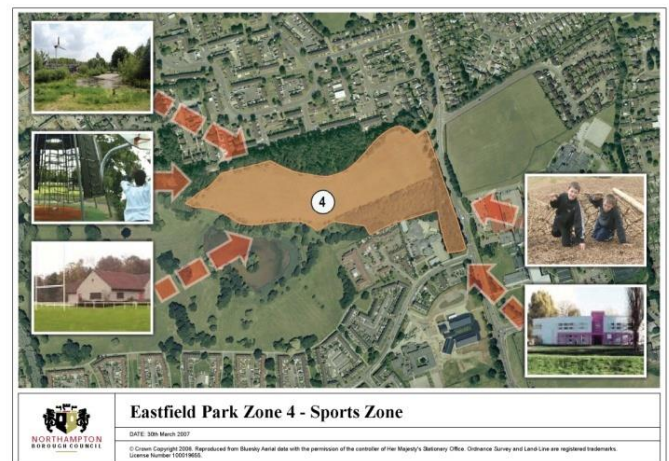
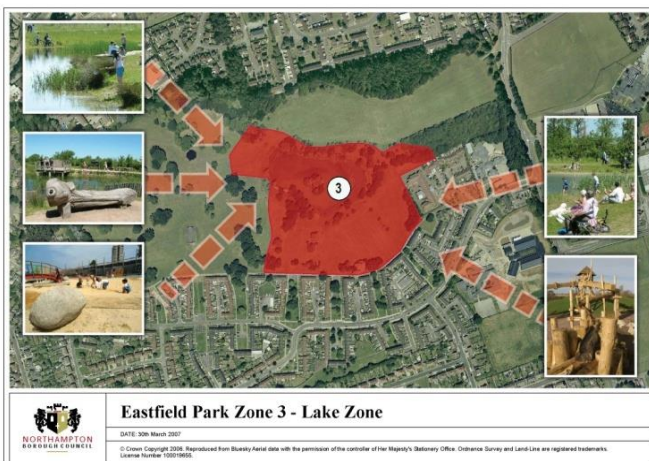
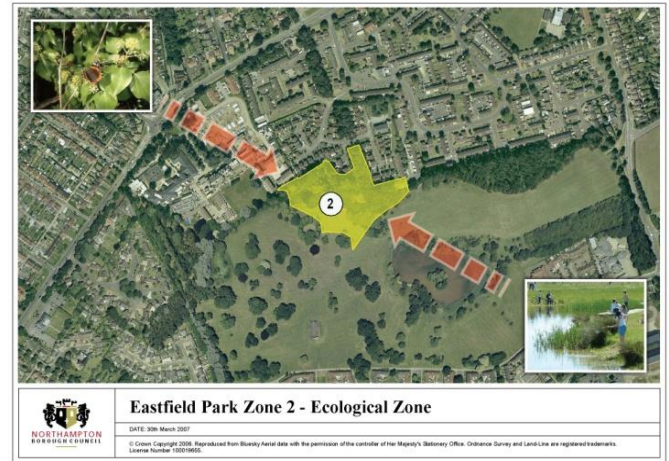
- i. Invite Wildlife Trust to assist in monitoring grassland set aside areas (within year) (EPMC)
- ii. Provide information about history and wildlife of the Park in local libraries (within two years) (FoEP)
- iii. Agree management policy and plan for Areas 9 & 10 (EPMC/FoEP)
- iv. Consider replacing lost statue in Bullring (within period) (EPMC).

5. Ongoing

- i. Continue to publicise the Park and organise events on it (FoEP)
- ii. Continue to research the history of the Park (FoEP)
- iii. Continue to research the biodiversity of the Park (FoEP).

APPENDIX to SECTION C

Zonation maps prepared by NBC in March, 2007



Section D: Consultation and Comments about the Draft Management Plan

A draft version of this Management Plan containing Sections A, B and C, was approved by the Park Management Committee on 9th February, 2015.

An outline of this draft Plan was then presented by Dr V Smith, Chair of the Management Committee, in a talk ('*Eastfield Park: The Future*') preceding the Friends of Eastfield Park's AGM on 16th February, 2015, at 7.30pm in Broadmead Baptist Church in Eastfield. Hard copies of the five-year objectives were given out to those attending the talk and people were invited to read the full Management Plan and submit comments about it and/or the proposed objectives to the FoEP or EPMC via the Internet or by regular mail.

Printed copies of the full draft Plan were made available in the Abington, Weston Favell and Town Centre Libraries during normal library opening hours, and at the St Alban's Church Drop-in on Friday mornings. People could submit comments online using the 'Contact' page on the FoEP website or by writing to the EPMC c/o NBC at the Guildhall.

The draft Management Plan could also be down-loaded from the 'Welcome' or 'Downloads' pages of the FoEP website. Two versions were available: a high resolution version (better for printing but which could take a while to load) or a faster loading low resolution version for reading on screen.

People were informed that comments received before 17th March would be reflected in the final version of the Plan. However, comment on proposed developments or any aspect of the Park or its management could be made at any time. All relevant comments received by the FoEP would be passed on to the EPMC. Further periods of consultation about play equipment and possible new pathways had already been incorporated into the Plan.

The talk had been advertised on-line through the FoEP and NBC websites and the FoEP Facebook page, and in print in the *Chronicle and Echo* and the *In & Around NN3 (Parklands, Boothville & Westone)* community magazine. The *Chronicle & Echo* included information about the talk on two consecutive weeks, first with just a short insert containing basic information but then following up with a 400 word article accompanied by a colour map of the Park taken from the Management Plan. (A link to this article is on the FoEP website).

Flyers advertising the talk were delivered to newly built houses in the Eastfield area and given out from a stand in the entrance to Morrison's supermarket on the Kettering Road for several hours on Thursday 12th February.

In view of all this publicity the public response was rather disappointing. Only 24 people attended the talk although a few others called in to see a display about the Park and the Management Plan that was on show before the talk. Apart from very general comments and comments from FoEP Committee members, only one reasonable specific comment was received about the Management Plan.

Comments from FoEP Committee Members

Renaming the Western Spinney: Bernard Kelly, Vice-Chair of the FoEP, suggested that the spinney referred to as the 'Western Spinney' in the draft Plan should be called '**Squire's Spinney**' reflecting the name given to the road (Squire's Walk) which serves the houses that back on to this spinney. A resident from Squire's Walk thought that this was a good idea and the spinney has therefore been renamed in this final version of the Management Plan.

Name of the Cross-park Pathway: Vic Smith, Chair of the FoEP, suggested that the 'new' cross-park pathway should be called '**Mallard Walk**' since it is used by many people to visit the lake where Mallards are common. Most members of the FoEP Committee thought this was a good idea and it was supported by the EPMC. The path was named 'Mallard Walk' at a brief ceremony during Easter@Eastfield 2015 and the Management Plan suitably amended.

Comments from the General Public

A comment received from Claire Walton via Facebook: *"Will you be considering some disabled access equipment for the disabled children around Northampton? An accessible roundabout or swing for example? So far the disabled children around Northampton are denied the access to inclusive play with their peers."*

Although this idea was not mentioned specifically when play equipment was first discussed, it has always been a priority of Friends of Eastfield Park to open up the Park to disabled people. This is one of the reasons why we want more all-weather pathways in the Park and why in 2013 we supported the Phoenix Wheelchair Basketball Club at our Easter@Eastfield event.

It will therefore be a priority when planning and seeking funding for the children's play area to take account of this suggestion and incorporate one or more pieces of equipment specifically for disabled children. Other equipment should also, as far as possible, be 'disability-friendly'.

Other comments: Few other comments were received and these were mainly by word of mouth. Most were encouraging (e.g. 'keep up the good work') but others were questioning (e.g. 'how are you going to make sure that ...' or 'what are you going to do about ...'). Most concerns were about motor cycles on the park and dogs that were out of control. Some concerns were rather irrational such as those from a lady who came to see the pre-FoEP AGM display and wanted to know what we intended to build in front of her house!

Further Consultation: The FoEP aims to consult with local residents at every opportunity. Further formal consultation about play equipment and pathways is already built into our five-year objectives and will be mentioned in the Action Plans at the appropriate time.

Northampton Borough Council – Eastfield Park Management Plan – SECTION E: Annual Action Plan 2015-16

1. Urgent Planning Objectives:					
5-Year Objective	Action Required (2015/16)	Lead (Partners)	Timescale	Measure	Progress/Updated
i. Agree mowing regime for the Park including areas set aside for less frequent mowing	Set up EPMC sub-group to consider objective with appropriate advice from experts and interest groups and report back to EPMC	EPMC (NBC/EMS/FoEP)	By Sept 2015	Report submitted to EPMC	
	Agree policy and management plan for grassland	EPMC	By Dec 2015	Agreed policy & plan	
ii. Agree management policy and plans for Areas 6, 8 & 11, including future of 'weed trees,'	Set up EPMC sub-group to consider objective with appropriate advice from experts and interest groups and report back to EPMC	EPMC (NBC/EMS/FoEP)	By Sept 2015	Report submitted to EPMC	
	Agree policy and management plan for woodland areas	EPMC	By Dec 2015	Agreed policy & plan	
iii. Agree management policy and plan for the Lake,	Set up EPMC sub-group to consider objective with appropriate advice from experts and interest groups and report back to EPMC	EPMC (NBC/EMS/FoEP)	By Sept 2015	Report submitted to EPMC	
	Agree policy and management plan for Lake	EPMC	By Dec 2015	Agreed policy & plan	
iv. Investigate ways of improving water supply to ponds & Lake; consider further dredging of ponds & ways to increase water level in ponds & Lake,	Set up EPMC sub-group to consider objective with appropriate advice from experts and interest groups and report back to EPMC	EPMC (NBC/EMS/FoEP)	By Sept 2015	Report submitted to EPMC	
	Agree policy and management plan for water management	EPMC	By Dec 2015	Agreed policy & plan	
v. Review size, condition and frequency of emptying of litter and dog bins,	Set up EPMC sub-group to consider objective with appropriate advice from experts and interest groups and report back to EPMC	EPMC (NBC/EMS/FoEP)	By Sept 2015	Report submitted to EPMC	
	Agree policy and management plan for dog and litter bins	EPMC	By Dec 2015	Agreed policy & plan	
vi. Consider further drainage options for wet areas of the Park.	To be considered by group set up to consider water supply to pond & Lake.	EPMC (NBC/EMS/FoEP)	By Sept 2015	Report submitted to EPMC	
	Agree drainage policy	EPMC	By Dec 2015	Agreed policy & plan	

Northampton Borough Council – Eastfield Park Management Plan – SECTION E: Annual Action Plan 2015-16

2. On-going Maintenance Objectives:					
5-Year Objective	Action Required (2015/16)	Lead (Partners)	Timescale	Measure	Progress/Updated
i. Inspect and empty litter and dog bins as necessary; inspect and collect litter from grassy areas as necessary (more frequently in summer / less frequently in winter),	Work by EMS: Frequent inspection by Park Rangers & FoEP members to check progress	EMS Rangers/FoEP	Weekly in season	Work done Positive inspection Lack of complaints	
ii. Inspect all grassed areas and mow as necessary leaving set-aside areas unmowed until time agreed for mowing,	Work by EMS: Regular inspection by Park Rangers & FoEP members to check progress	EMS Rangers/FoEP	Every few weeks	Work done Positive inspection Lack of complaints	
iii. Inspect football pitches in season and maintain as necessary,	Work by EMS: Regular inspection by Park Rangers & FoEP members to check progress	EMS Rangers/FoEP	Every few weeks	Work done Positive inspection Lack of complaints	
iv. Monitor all paved paths, remove weeds and cut back any encroaching vegetation,	Work by EMS: Regular inspection by Park Rangers & FoEP members to check progress	EMS Rangers/FoEP	2-3 mnths	Work done Positive inspection Lack of complaints	
v. Inspect the MUGA, the 'Eastfield Monster' & play equipment in Senior Play Area and report damage; anything in a dangerous condition to be repaired, replaced or removed immediately; other damage to be repaired as soon as possible,	Regular inspection by Park Rangers & FoEP members to check progress	Rangers/FoEP	2-3 mnths	Positive inspection Lack of complaints	
vi. Inspect pedestrian signs and entrance notice boards; remove graffiti and report damage,	Regular inspection by Park Rangers & FoEP members to check progress	Rangers/FoEP	2-3 mnths	Positive inspection Lack of complaints	
vii. Monitor health of trees in most of the Park for Health & Safety reasons,	Annual inspection by tree specialists	EMS/NBC	Yearly	Confirmation of inspection	
viii. Remove dangerous trees & branches,	Annual inspection by tree specialists	EMS/NBC	Yearly	Work done	
ix. Replace lost trees with suitable species,	To be decided		Yearly	Work done	
x. Cut back encroaching vegetation on major informal paths in woodland areas,	Action by FoEP volunteers	FoEP	Yearly	Work done FoEP Report	
xi. Weed and maintain Crescent Rock Garden & Eleonore House Border,	Action by FoEP volunteers	FoEP	Yearly	Work done FoEP Report	
xii. Remove epicormic growth from trees in Bullring,	To be agreed		2-3 yrs	Work done	
xiii. Monitor health of any trees not included above,	Inspection by tree specialists	EMS/NBC	2-3 yrs	Confirmation	
xiv. Keep 'Manfield Steps' & nearby 'dead hedge' maintained,	Action by FoEP volunteers	FoEP	2-3 yrs	Work done FoEP Report	
xv. Reduce low level scrub in Booth Lane Spinney.	Action by FoEP volunteers	FoEP	2-3 yrs	Work done FoEP Report	

Northampton Borough Council – Eastfield Park Management Plan – SECTION E: Annual Action Plan 2015-16

3. Development Objectives:					
5-Year Objective	Action Required (2015/16)	Lead (Partners)	Timescale	Measure	Progress/Updated
i. Carry out consultation re. provision of play equipment for younger children,	Start on-line consultation in June 2015	FoEP	June-Sept	Replies received	
	Summer questionnaire to Park users	FoEP	July-Sept	Replies received	
	Collate responses & report to EPMC	FoEP	Sept/Oct	Report written	
ii. Provide 'tail' of 'Eastfield Monster' with vertical stepping logs,	Permission from NBC for work Award Contract	NBC FoEP	April 2015	Permission recd Work done	
iii. Provide additional litter bins (ideally, four) for Park entrances,	Seek funding for additional bins	FoEP	Within year	Funding obtained	
	Purchase & install bins	NBC	Within year	Bins installed	
iv. Develop and monitor Eleonore House Border according to plan,	Supervise planned work by volunteers	FoEP	April 2015	Work done	
	Monitor & report	FoEP	By year end	Report received	
v. Plant additional spring bulbs and wildflowers around the Lake, on Crescent Rock Garden, Eleonore House Border, along Apple Tree Walk and in Pond Area,	Plan & agree planting regime (with map)	FoEP/NBC	By autumn	Agreed map	
	Plant according to plan	FoEP	Autumn 2015	Work done	
	Monitor plants	FoEP	On-going	Report received	
vi. Provide large play area with equipment for younger children,	Plan for implementation in 2016: Investigate & Secure funding	EPMC	By year end	Funding secured	
vii. Carry out public consultation regarding provision of additional pathways on Park,	Plan for implementation in 2016: Plan consultation	EPMC/FoEP	By year end	Consultation plan	
viii. Manage vegetation along the northern boundary of the Park, in front of Manfield Grange, to expose a short length of the ha-ha,	Plan for implementation in 2016: Plan management regime for 2016	EPMC/NBC/FoEP	By year end	Action plan produced	
ix. Implement plan to reduce overfeeding wildfowl on the Lake,	Plan for implementation in 2016: Plan action for 2016	EPMC/FoEP	By year end	Action plan produced	
x. Extend Crescent Rock Garden,	Plan for implementation in 2016 Plan action for 2016	EPMC/NBC/FoEP	By year end	Action plan produced	
Other 5-year Development Objectives (xi to xxiv)	Leave to 2016-17	-	-	-	

Northampton Borough Council – Eastfield Park Management Plan – SECTION E: Annual Action Plan 2015-16

4. Other Objectives:					
5-Year Objective	Action Required (2015/16)	Lead (Partners)	Timescale	Measure	Progress/Updated
i. Invite Wildlife Trust to assist in monitoring grassland set aside areas (within 1 year),	Invite Trust to send representative to EPMC	EPMC	By May 2015	Invitation & reply	
	Consult with Wildlife Trust regarding Park's woodland and grassland management	EPMC/Wildlife Trust	By Sept 2015	Advice discussed in report	
	Invite Trust to assist in monitoring grassland	Ditto	By Dec 2015	Invitation & reply	
ii. Provide information about history and wildlife of the Park in local libraries (within 2 years),	Research history & produce account	FoEP	By Dec 2016	Written account in libraries	
	Research biodiversity & produce report	FoEP	By Dec 2016	Written report in libraries	
iii. Agree management policy and plan for Areas 9 & 10,	Set up EPMC sub-group to consider objective with appropriate advice from experts and interest groups and report back to EPMC	EPMC (NBC/EMS/FoEP)	During 2016	Report to EPMC received	
	Agree policy and management plan for Areas 9 & 10	EPMC (NBC/EMS/FoEP)	During 2016	Agreed policy & plan	
iv. Consider replacing lost statue in Bullring (within period).	Consider objective with appropriate advice from experts and interest groups and make decision	EPMC	Within 5 years	Recorded decision	

5. On-going Objectives:					
5-Year Objective	Action Required (2015/16)	Lead (Partners)	Timescale	Measure	Progress/Updated
i. Continue to publicise the Park and organise events on it,	Report progress made during year	FoEP	By Jan 2016	Submitted progress report	
ii. Continue to research the history of the Park,	Report progress made during year	FoEP	By Jan 2016	Submitted progress report	
iii. Continue to research the biodiversity of the Park.	Report progress made during year	FoEP	By Jan 2016	Submitted progress report	

Northampton Borough Council – Eastfield Park Management Plan – SECTION E: Annual Action Plan 2015-16

6. Objectives and Proposed Actions added during year: 2015/16

New Objective	Action Required (2015/16)	Lead (Partners)	Timescale	Measure	Progress/ Updated
Fill dangerous & unsightly holes within Park	Survey state & position of dangerous / unsightly holes. Decide course of action.	EPMC			
	Fill / make safe all holes	To be decided			

Notes