

Palewell Common and Fields Management Plan

January 2024 – December 2025

Palewell Common and Fields Management Plan 2024-25: Foreword

Palewell Common and Fields is a vitally important asset for local people and visitors. The London Borough of Richmond upon Thames will maintain and manage the Common and Fields to the highest standards.

This management plan is based on the use of an audit of the park following central government guidance known as PPG 17. This is explained within this document but the approach is based on common sense. We believe that it is important to get the simple things right. Is the green space clean and tidy? Is the grass cut? Are the trees and shrubs well maintained? Is any graffiti removed effectively and quickly?

Working with local communities to deliver the highest quality of service is top priority and it is hoped that this document will provide a framework for continuing and improving dialogue. The site will be maintained appropriately and the local community will be consulted on any proposed changes or improvements to facilities and infrastructure. In particular, the borough works closely with local friends group (Friends of Palewell Common and Fields). We actively encourage suggestions about all aspects of the park.

Parks Officers, working closely with colleagues in Continental Landscapes and using a partnership approach, regularly monitor Palewell Common and Fields. Members of the local community are also encouraged to let us know their impressions about the level of maintenance as well as their ideas. It is hoped that the resulting observations and ideas will result in continually improving management and maintenance practises.

Whilst the Council is open to the changing needs of the local community with regards to facilities within any of the borough's parks, the Common and Fields is a long established local green space that is well maintained. The park has seen major capital investment over the last few years. Major changes to the park or its facilities are not envisaged. The action plan at the end of this document reflects this perspective.

The current financial situation will inevitably have a detrimental affect on the resources available to improve and maintain the borough's parks and open spaces. The borough will continue to work closely with its partners, in this case Continental Landscapes and the Friends of Palewell, to maintain standards. In addition, we will need to look for additional ways of funding to maintain and improve the boroughs parks, one of our most valuable assets.

Section	Contents	Page
1.0	Introduction	1
2.0	National Context	1
3.0	Relationship to Council Aims & Objectives	2
4.0	Site Description	5
5.0	Audit of Facilities	11
6.0	Vision and Objectives for the Gardens	15
7.0	Management of the Gardens	16
8.0	Achievements and Action Plan	23

1. Introduction

1.1 This Management Plan for Palewell Common and Fields provides guidance for the management and any relevant development of the Common and Fields. It utilises the methodology outlined in the Government’s Planning Policy Guidance note 17 (PPG 17) in order to audit the state of provision of features and facilities on the Common and Fields.

The Plan includes an Action Plan, which we aim to achieve within the remit of current budgets. The Plan has been drafted for a broad audience interested in the development of the park namely:

- The Friends of Palewell Common and borough residents;
- The Parks and Open Spaces Service;
- Other services and departments within the London Borough of Richmond;
- Elected members, ward councillors and portfolio holders;
- National agencies;
- Local businesses; and
- Partners and contractors

1.2 The Plan will run from January 2024 to December 2025. An interim progress update will be undertaken in January 2025.

2. National Context

2.1 Parks are managed areas of the green environment which provide opportunities for a range of formal and informal leisure, passive and active sport, recreation and play.

2.2 The significance of parks, open space and countryside provision is clear:

- There are an estimated 27,000 public parks in Britain, visited an estimated 2.6bn times each year (Common Select Committee, 2016).
- There is an estimated 85,847 hectares of Publicly accessible green space in Great Britain, 73,400 in England. (*Natural capital accounts containing information about green spaces in urban areas*, Office for National Statistics, August 2019)
- 18.13 % of Greater London is designated Public Open Space; with 3.5% Local Parks and Open Spaces & 5.2% Metropolitan Parks (Greenspace Information for Greater London CIC, 2023).

2.3 It is widely recognised that the provision of high quality ‘public realm’ facilities such as parks can assist in making an area as an attractive place to live and work, and can result in a number of benefits in terms of economic development and regeneration. A local park can also play a part in promoting healthy living as a place for people to exercise.

2.4 The benefits of safe and accessible parks and open spaces can be summarised as follows:

Social

- providing safe outdoor areas for all members of the local population
- providing opportunities for community events, voluntary activities and charitable fund raising
- providing easily accessible recreation as an alternative to other more chargeable leisure pursuits
- providing opportunities to improve health and take part in a range of outdoor sports and activities
- providing an educational resource or outdoor classroom

Economic

- adding value to surrounding property, both commercial and residential, thus increasing local tax revenues for public services
- contributing to attracting visitors, including using parks as venues for events
- encouraging tourism into the area
- helping to create an attractive local image
- helping to reduce social exclusion and its associated costs to society

Environmental

- providing habitats for wildlife as an aid to local biodiversity
- helping to stabilise urban temperatures and humidity
- absorbing pollutants in the air and ground water
- providing opportunities for the recycling of organic materials
- providing opportunities to reduce transport use through the provision of local facilities, and by providing walking and cycling routes through urban areas

3. Relationship to Council Aims and Objectives

The Council recognises that its parks and open spaces and management of these contribute to the:

- overall vision and priorities of the Council
- quality of life of local people
- physical, social and economic regeneration of the borough
- greening, attractiveness and increasing biodiversity and quality of green space in the area
- tackling the climate emergency; improving air quality and minimising green house gas emissions
- minimising flood risk and sustainable drainage

Accordingly, this Management Plan and the Parks and Open Spaces Service are guided by and are in agreement with the aims, objectives and principles of the Councils’ plans and strategies. These can be found on the webpages below:

[Council policies and plans - London Borough of Richmond upon Thames](#)

[Draft Local Plan: Submission - London Borough of Richmond upon Thames](#)

[Parks and open spaces policies and plans - London Borough of Richmond upon Thames](#)

[Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Assessment 2023 & Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy 2023](#)

3.1 Parks and Open Spaces Strategy

Our borough has the largest area of public open space per head of population of any London borough. We have a local and national reputation for quality and leadership in the delivery of excellent parks. To ensure the quality of our parks and open spaces remains at a high level, following public consultation, we developed a series of strategic principles by which the parks will be managed:

The strategic principles are as follows:

1. Parks and Open Spaces will be a sustainable legacy for future generations.
2. Parks and Open Spaces will continue to define our borough.
3. Parks and Opens Spaces will enrich the life, health and wellbeing of residents and visitors.
4. The Council will lead in the delivery of excellent Parks and Open Spaces services.
5. Parks and Open Spaces will offer positive experiences to all visitors.
6. Through innovation, the future development of Parks and Open Spaces services will be ensured.
7. Increased community participation in Parks and Open Spaces will be encouraged and supported.
8. Parks and Open Spaces will be celebrated as centres of excellence.

The current strategic principles are being reviewed and will be consulted on and updated in spring 2024.

3.3 Local Biodiversity Action Plan for Richmond

The main aims of the plan are:

- To conserve and where possible enhance Richmond’s variety of habitats and species, in particular those which are of international or national importance, are in decline locally, are characteristic to Richmond or have particular public appeal, which can raise the profile of biodiversity

- To ensure that Richmond residents become aware of, and are given the opportunity to become involved in conserving and enhancing the biodiversity around them
- To raise awareness and increase stakeholder involvement in maintaining and where possible, enhancing species and habitats of importance

The Local Biodiversity Action Plan can be found online here: [Richmond upon Thames \(habitatsandheritage.org.uk\)](http://Richmond upon Thames (habitatsandheritage.org.uk))

3.4 Parks Improvements

The Council have a commitment to continued improvement in our Parks and Open Spaces by improving existing infrastructure and developing and installing new facilities. The Council continues to have a cyclical investment programme to ensure that parks and playgrounds are up to standards, this includes £300k a year for park improvements and £150k for play. One aim of the management plan is to maintain the gains that we have achieved in previous years.

The Council list all major improvement projects on our webpage, which can be found here:

[Latest parks updates - London Borough of Richmond upon Thames](#)

4 Site Description

4.1 Outline History of Palewell Common and Fields

The first known reference to Palewell Common, a ‘place called the Pale’, appears in 16th century manorial records. The Common land was part of the interests of the lord of manorship which fell to the Spencer family until these interests were transferred to other local landowners living to the west of the Common. In 1921, following a petition from local residents in 1913, the land was transferred to the Council which has subsequently managed the area. The area known as the Fields formed part of the grounds of Clarence House in Priory Lane, Roehampton until they were purchased by the Council in 1920. Since the 1920’s the facilities within the Common and Fields have changed and developed but the area continues to retain its unique character.

4.2 General Information

4.2.1 Land Tenure

The site is owned by the London Borough of Richmond and is managed by the Parks and Open Spaces Service.

The enabling acts which confer the specified powers to the Council to administer and maintain the land are listed below:

- Open Spaces Act 1906;
- Local Government Act 1972; and
- Local Government, Planning & Land Act 1980.

4.2.2 Location

Palewell Common and Fields are situated on the boundary of Richmond Park in the southwest area of the East Sheen ward on the borders with the London Borough of Wandsworth. Palewell’s eastern boundary is shared with private housing. The Beverley Brook runs along the western perimeter.

In terms of ‘green space’ the provision of Richmond Park and Sheen Common as well as Palewell, means that the area is well provided for. The Common and Fields are regarded very much as a local facility for those people living in the vicinity.

4.2.3 Access

As a free and open facility Palewell Common and Fields has the potential to provide fully inclusive access to local residents and visitors to the area. Pedestrians and those arriving by train and bus and car can currently access the site.

4.2.4 Local Transport

Train: Mortlake Train Station
South West Trains from London Waterloo to Reading, Windsor, Richmond, Twickenham

Bus: 33, 337

4.2.5 Landscape & Topography

The central and western areas of Palewell Common and Fields contain an area of amenity grassland laid out with 10 football pitches in winter and with a cricket field in the summer. In the west and south there are mature woodlands; the area in the west is significant in size. To the east the woodland forms a narrow border between the grassland and Beverley Brook.

The main entrance area to the Common and Fields, from Palewell Common Drive, slopes down to the pavilion, with the pitch and putt course to the north-east, leading down to the allotments and Beverley Brook. This relatively low-lying area becomes saturated with ground water during periods of high rainfall.

4.2.6 Listed Historic Buildings

There are no listed buildings within the Common and Fields.

4.2.7 Ecology

Palewell Common and Fields is approximately 12 Hectares in size with approximately 5.3 Hectares covered by woodland. The Beverley Brook (a site of Borough Importance Grade II) lines the east of the site and the remainder of the area is amenity grassland, sports pitches and a ‘Pitch and Putt course’. Richmond Park, which is a SSSI and National Nature Reserve, adjoins the site to the south and therefore Palewell Common and Fields acts as an important buffer zone between the NNR and the urban area. The woodland acts as an important corridor and sightlines for species such as bats and birds. The woodland is managed by Barnes Common Limited. The Beverley Brook also provides food for foraging bats and acts as a throughway for wildlife to move from Richmond Park to the Thames.

This site has had minimal management and input in the past and information is still being obtained regarding the species present and habitat value. The trees on the site have been managed on a reactive basis since the park was opened, with many of the trees being “self sown”. The dead trees within the woodland provide a valuable source of standing dead wood for woodpeckers, invertebrates and fungi. Various beds of nettles scattered around the periphery of the woodland provide food for the caterpillars of butterflies such as the small tortoiseshell, comma and peacock. Bramble and ivy patches also provide food for birds and insects alike. There are small patches of Himalayan balsam, and Japanese knotweed which are also being managed.

4.2.8 Facilities

Palewell Common and Fields contain the following facilities:

- A children’s play area, including a paddling pool (dog free)
- A nine-hole pitch and putt course (operated under tender by a contractor)
- 10 Football pitches (varying in size)
- A pavilion with café, toilets and sports changing facilities
- A cricket square
- Petanque Piste
- Tennis courts (coaching and a children’s holiday programme is provided by Community Parks Tennis)
- An outdoor gym and fitness area.
- Dog free picnic area

The photos below show the paddling pool before and after the improvement works took place:

Before:



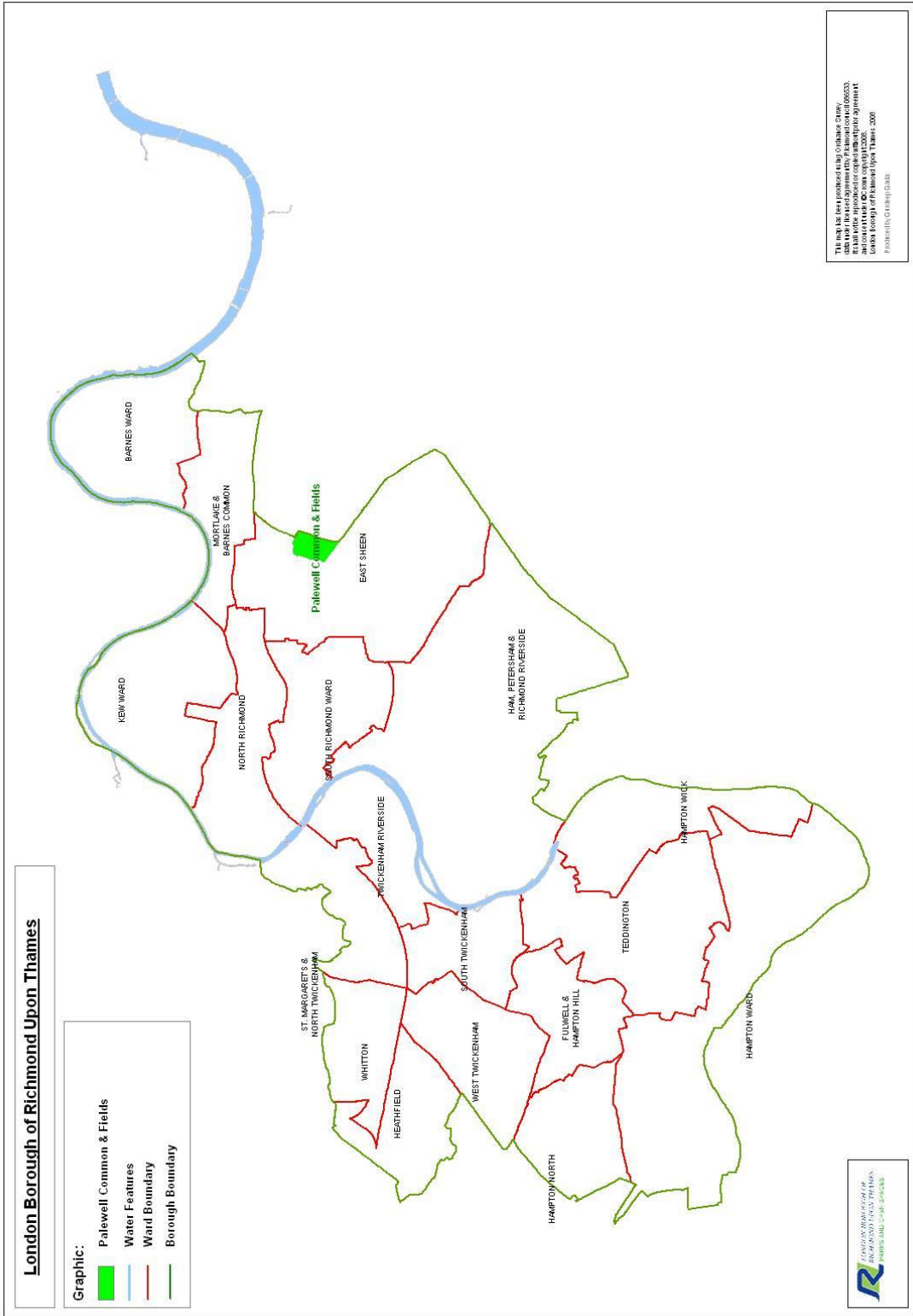
After:



4.2.9 **Maps and Plans**

On the following pages, please find:

- Location map of Palewell Common and Fields within the borough
- Plan map of Palewell Common and Fields
- Aerial photo of Palewell Common and Fields





Graphic Key and Quantity

Site Boundary	153,800m ²	Rubber Tee	81m ²	Safety Surface	857m ²	Concrete Bollard	85
Shrubs	695m ²	Concrete/Tarmac	1090m ²	Scalping (Boule)	75m ²	Bench	22
Hedge	1265m ²	Breerton Gravel	412m ²	Cycle Racks	4	Tree	82
Grass	90,494m ²	Painted Tarmac (Tennis Courts)	2108m ²	Man Hole/ Water Point	22	Vertical Edging	2793m
Palewell Woods	43,400m ²	Crazy Paving	156m ²	Litter Bin	14	Hard Edging	281m
		Hoggin	482m ²	Dog Bin	5	Soft	9m
		Sand (Pitch & Putt)	52m ²	Lamp Post/ Telephone Post	15	Wooden Knee Rail	23m
				Sign Post	14	Metal Fencing	257m



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5. Audit of facilities

5.1 The main reasons for undertaking a Local Assessment are:

- to plan positively, creatively and effectively in identifying priority areas for improvement and to ensure, as much as possible, that there are appropriate types of parks and open spaces required;
- to work towards ensuring an adequate provision of high quality, accessible green space to meet the needs of the community;
- to identify the gap between current and desired levels of need and demand, quality and quantity of provision;
- to assist in achieving standards such as the Green Flag Award

5.2. Desirable Outcomes of the Local Assessment

A local assessment of green space will enable planning to be effective and achieve key outcomes required by National Planning Policy Framework

These are:

- provision of accessible, high quality park space for sport and recreation that meet the identified needs of residents and visitors;
- provision of a park that is ‘fit for purpose’ – the right type in the right place;
- to provide an appropriate balance between new provision and enhancement of existing provision;
- setting locally derived provision standards.

5.2.1 It is intended that this management plan helps to achieve these outcomes in terms of providing an analysis of existing provision and a plan to effectively maintain and, where appropriate, develop the facilities and infrastructure of the Common and Fields.

5.2.2 In addition, it produces a series of actions which will help to achieve the standards laid down for Green Flag Award parks:

- A welcoming place;
- Healthy, safe and secure;
- Clean and well-maintained;
- Environmental Management;
- Landscape and heritage;
- Community involvement;
- Marketing and communication
- Overall Management.

5.3 Methodology

The methodology used was prescribed in the Government’s Planning Policy Guideline note 17 (PPG17) for the provision of public open space. This consisted of a review of the following key areas of provision:

- Main entrance;
- Boundaries;
- Roads, paths, cycleways and access;
- Parking;
- Information available;
- Planted areas;
- Grass areas;
- Cleanliness;
- Provision of litter bins;
- Seating;
- Children’s play space;
- Buildings including toilets;
- Health and safety;
- Nature conservation value; and
- Access for people with disabilities.

5.3.1 Main Entrance

The main entrance to Palewell is down a spur route, Palewell Common Drive, from Hertford Avenue leading down to a wooden barrier gate. The roadway beyond leads down to the adjacent allotment site. The entrance way is in a reasonable condition. The main parks sign is well positioned by this entrance.

5.3.2 Boundaries

The eastern boundary to the Common and Fields is marked by the Beverley Brook. This is separated from the park by chain link fencing which is in reasonable condition. To the south, the Common and Fields borders Richmond Park. This is marked by Richmond Park’s wall. This is in good condition. To the west the edge of the woodland is marked by the fences and walls of private residences. The northern boundary of the Common and Fields is marked by fencing around the pitch and putt course and private fences on Hertford Avenue. This boundary is also in good condition.

5.3.3 Roads, Paths, Cycleways and Access

There has been extensive renovation/repair of the pathways within the Common and Fields in the past few years. The two tarmac paths (one leading to the pavilion and play area, and the other leading down to bridge across the Beverley Brook) are in good condition. The compacted hoggin path from the Roehampton entrance is in

reasonable condition and does not present any trip hazards. The other paths on the site are compacted trackways through the woods and along the boundary with Beverley Brook. These are adequate but would present difficulties for people with disabilities particularly those dependent on using a wheelchair.

5.3.4 **Parking**

There is limited free parking on Palewell Common Drive leading down to the main entrance. Parking is available on neighbouring roads.

5.3.5 **Information**

Information relating to Palewell Common and Fields is available on the parks section of the Richmond Council website: www.richmond.gov.uk

The parks signage is attractive and durable giving appropriate contact details. It uses easily understandable symbols to deter users from inappropriate and anti-social behaviour.

5.3.6 **Cleanliness**

The Common is kept free of litter and graffiti by the Councils Grounds Maintenance and Street Cleansing Contractor, Continental Landscapes. Bins are emptied daily, and the site is litter picked at the same time.

The site is popular for dog walkers. Most dog walkers are local residents and do clean up afterwards. Residents and users can report dog fouling to the Council for it to be removed.

5.3.7 **Planted Areas**

There are limited formally planted areas on the Common and Fields. The area around the pavilion and pitch and putt kiosk has formal planting. The planting is attractive and appears generally well maintained.

5.3.8 **Scenic Quality**

Palewell Common and Fields have great scenic value sweeping down to its border with Richmond Park. This is enhanced by the extensive mature woodland and a pathway alongside the Beverley Brook.

5.3.9 **Grass Areas**

Most of the area is amenity grassland. This is in fairly good condition and well maintained. The pitch and putt is in good condition, there is annual wear around the teeing off points however these are being addressed by the renewal of tee off mats and the provision of a wood chip surround for each tee.

The football pitches are in good condition considering their high usage. They have been subject to recent investment including verti-draining, spiking, harrowing and overseeding.

Areas of longer grass (Pollination Stations) have been designated on site, which have a cut and collect maintenance regime to provide a graded vegetation boundaries with the woodland.

5.3.10 Provision of Litter Bins

Provision of litter bins is adequate, particularly in the main area of the park. Dog waste can now be disposed of in normal litter bins and these bins are emptied daily by the Council’s grounds maintenance contractor. The bins are labelled with QR codes to report when they are full and have lids to stop wildlife from accessing them.

5.3.11 Seating

There is plenty of seating available in the Common and Fields. There are several benches in the playground area and some overlooking the football pitches.

5.3.12 Children’s Play Space

The playground is in good condition and has appropriate signage. There are elements within the playground that are designed for older children most notably a basketball hoop. The play area contains a small paddling pool which is filled in the summer months when the temperatures ‘feels like’ 20 degrees celsius.

5.3.13 Buildings, including toilets

There are two buildings on the site. The pitch and putt kiosk and the refurbished main pavilion.

The Council sold part of this building for private development and, with the money received, renovated the pavilion area, providing a café area. The building is an important hub for local people. Toilets are open to park users and a café opened in the early autumn of 2011.

5.3.14 Health and Safety

The paths and the playground are in good condition and present no obvious dangers to members of the public.

5.3.15 Nature Conservation Value

There is great ecological value in Palewell Common and Fields. The park contains a large area of mature deciduous woodland, with an under-storey of bramble, holly and self-sown saplings which provide a variety of habitats ideal for a wealth of species. In addition, the Beverley Brook acts as a valuable corridor for wildlife to move between Richmond Park and the River Thames. A new pond created in 2015 joint funded by the Council and Froglife and implemented by Froglife will hugely enhance the already wet woodland. This means that the site provides a mosaic of habitats ideal for a thriving ecosystem.

The woodland is now being managed by Barnes Common Limited to aid with nature conservation and preservation of the woodland. Their contract to manage the site was awarded for 1 year beginning on the 1st of April 2023 with the option to renew for 2 years. The contract is being renewed for a further 2 years as of 1st April 2024.

5.3.16 Access for people with disabilities

Access along a tarmac path is good down to the main playground and round to the bridge across the brook where the gateway will enable access in a wheelchair. Access along the hoggin pathway that leads into the park from the Roehampton Gate is possible and there is a gate at the end of the passageway that will enable wheelchair access. However, access beyond this point is problematic as referred to in 5.3.3.

The play area contains some accessible equipment, including a wheelchair accessible roundabout and a DDA compliant swing seat.

6. Vision and Objectives for the Common and Fields

6.1 Vision for the Common and Fields

In line with the wishes of the local community and as a result of the development of this Management Plan, the future vision for the Palewell Common and Fields is to:

- Continue to appropriately maintain and develop this well used parkland with its wide range of amenities for all ages and interest groups
- Maintain use of the Common and Fields so as to improve community safety and reduce vandalism
- Ensure the continued provision of site-based staff in Palewell Common & Fields
- Continue to invest in the facilities and infrastructure of the park by means of this Management Plan

6.2 Aims and Objectives for the Management of the Common and Fields

- To identify and cherish the special character of Palewell Common and Fields;
- To ensure that the management of the Common and Fields protects and enhances the biodiversity of the site;
- To ensure that the management of the landscape maintains the character of Palewell Common and Fields as plants grow and mature;
- To ensure that all landscape improvement works are supported by a commitment to maintenance of the same;
- To ensure that the Common and Fields are promoted and managed in order to provide a high-quality service for the people using them;
- To meet the demands and expectations of the local community primarily as a recreational, diverse and enjoyable place;
- To encourage and promote community involvement in the implementation of the proposals and in the on-going management and development of Palewell

Common and Fields. To this end, to consult and work closely with the Friends of Palewell Park.

7. Management of the Common and Fields

7.1 Introduction

This section sets out guidelines and general principles to be followed in delivering the vision and objectives outlined above.

7.1.1 The Council’s Parks and Open Spaces Service

The Parks Service is overseen by the Head of Culture, assisted by the Parks Service Manager. It is made up of two teams, the Parks Service also use consultants when needed:

- The Operations team is responsible for liaising with contractors and monitoring the parks. The team includes a Parks Operations Manager, two Parks Officers, an Ecology Policy and Planning Manager, an Ecology Policy and Planning Officer, Allotment Officer and a Parks Support Officer.
- The Arboricultural team is responsible for all street trees and arboricultural work in council-managed parks and open spaces, as well as assisting with planning issues. The team consists of a manager, seven tree officers and a technical support officer.

We value diversity and are committed to delivering a service that puts equality of opportunity as a priority.

Management of the park needs to deliver high standards of maintenance of all aspects of the soft and hard landscaping of the park within existing revenue budgets. Developments have been funded by major borough-wide capital investment Parks Improvement Programmes between 2005 and 2010 and 2012 and 2017. In 2022 Public Realm funding allowed improvements in all wards covering – Sports pitches, Outdoor gyms, Playgrounds and pathway access.

7.1.2 Delivery partners

The Council works and consults with the Friends of Palewell Common. This assists the Council to work in harmony with users’ and residents’ views, the facilities offered, and any impact that is made on their lives. Continued working with the Youth Partnership has a very high priority in relation to the continued management of the park. The Council also works with a number of external companies who offer fitness classes in Palewell and other parks. For more information, please visit: http://www.richmond.gov.uk/home/services/parks_and_open_spaces/organise_park_event/fitness_activities_in_parks/fitness_training_in_parks.htm

For parks maintenance, a new approach was introduced from April 2013, with services split into eleven separate lots and being delivered through a framework contract. In broad terms maintenance will be carried out by the contractors’ operatives who have the necessary skills to achieve high and consistent standards. As a framework, the contracts will also be available for other authorities and organisations in London and the south-east of England.

Parks Framework contract: February 2018 – February 2021 (renewed March 2021 – 2025)

Following an open and thorough procurement process that began in spring 2017, contractors were appointed to seven service areas to start 36 month contracts in February 2018 (now renewed to 2025). Evaluation was on an 80% cost and 20% quality basis.

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1 Amenity Landscape Management | 5 Parks Patrol |
| 2 Arboriculture Management | 6 Events Management |
| 3 Oak Processionary Moth management | 7 External Planting |
| 4 Play Inspection & Maintenance | |

Procurement was written in an output style with built-in quality measures and performance indicators and asking qualifying contractors to design excellent services using their knowledge and experience.

Relevance to Palewell Common and Fields

Continental Landscapes are the main grounds contractor, undertaking amenity management (grass cutting, shrubs, hedges, sports bookings and pitch maintenance), small works (hard landscaping, infrastructure and furniture installation, etc.) gate locking operations, plus undertaking play inspection and maintenance. They also undertake parks cleansing alongside existing street cleansing and graffiti removal to create a joined-up operation.

KPS are the arboricultural contractor, working closely with the Council’s tree team who undertake inspections and specify works, with Bartlett Tree Experts undertaking Oak Processionary Moth management.

Events in parks are managed by The Event Umbrella, a company who specialise in managing outdoor events in the public sector.

Park patrols are undertaken by Parkguard, a company specialising in education, support services and enforcement in parks and open spaces.

Our contractors take appropriate actions to ensure their health and safety of their staff and a safe working environment through proper training, risk assessments and inspections. These may vary depending on the contractor, further details of these can be made available upon request.

Barnes Common Limited are now contracted to manage the woodland for nature conservation. Their contract begun on 1st April 2023 and is being renewed for a further two years as of 1st April 2024.

7.2 A Welcoming Place

The following management regimes all play a part in ensuring that Palewell Common and Fields continue to be a welcoming area.

7.2.1 Graffiti removal

As a part of our aim to make the Borough safe, green and clean we are committed to reducing and removing graffiti. The Common will be inspected daily for graffiti.

The full details of the borough’s commitment to the prompt removal of graffiti can be viewed at: www.richmond.gov.uk

There is an agreement with the Council’s street cleansing contractor, Continental Landscapes Ltd, to manage the removal of all graffiti within five working days. Where the graffiti is offensive it will be removed within one working day of notification.

7.2.2 Signage

Signage will be kept clean and will be regularly inspected. Any necessary repairs will be carried out promptly.

7.2.3 Pathways

All paths will be inspected annually with contract monitoring throughout the year. Any necessary repairs will be carried out as promptly as possible. Pathways through the woodland area often become overgrown during the summer months. Arrangements are made for these to be cut regularly through the summer months.

7.3 Healthy, Safe and Secure

The following management regimes all play a part in ensuring that Palewell Common and Fields continues to be a healthy, safe and secure place.

7.3.1 Community Safety

All contractors working on the Common undertake an important role in terms of a visible staff presence on the Common and structure their maintenance work accordingly. All contractors are uniformed and wear highly visible clothing.

In addition, the local Police Safer Neighbourhood team regularly patrols the green on foot.

7.3.2 Dog fouling

The Council and their contractors make efforts to educate dog owners to be responsible for their dog’s waste as the dangers of humans coming into contact with dog faeces are well known.

Signage clearly indicates that dog mess should be picked up and disposed of by those walking their pets.

All general waste bins can be used to dispose of dog waste.

The Council has adopted Public Space Protection Orders relating to Dog Control. These have been renewed in 2023 for a further 3 years. They can be found online here: [Dog Control PSPO \(richmond.gov.uk\)](http://Dog Control PSPO (richmond.gov.uk))

7.4 Clean and well maintained

The following regimes are designed to ensure that the green is clean well maintained.

7.4.1 Grass Maintenance

Grass surfaces within the Common and Fields are mainly classed as amenity grass.

Amenity turf is those areas used for general recreation and formal and informal sports and can include wide-open spaces or those areas planted with trees and shrubs. The height of this grass is kept between 15 and 25mm throughout the year. The level of maintenance will depend on the level of use, with increased repairs, fertilising, and scarifying of those areas subject to heavy wear. Most repair works to turf are carried out in the autumn or spring, with areas either re-turfed or seeded.

Grass edges, whether they are against paths, fences or walls will be cut at the same time as the rest of the grass using strimmers in most areas.

7.4.2 Trees

Trees within parks are subject to inspection by suitably qualified and experienced Arboriculturalists, this is in order to identify and remedy any unacceptable risks to people using the sites, an example of this is the prophylactic treatment of oak processionary moth or the removal of trees that are extensively decayed compromising their structural integrity.

Tree pruning is only carried out where necessary for risk management purposes or where formative pruning is necessary; this approach allows Richmond’s parks to retain a natural landscape with well-formed specimens. Where there is a particular characteristic by way of species composition, size or natural distribution the Council seeks to maintain this through selecting appropriate replacement and new trees. All tree works are in accordance with our Tree Management Policy.

The Ecology Policy and Planning Team have created a woodland management plan where tree works are carried out in the woodland by Barnes Common Limited in the interest of nature conservation. This includes restoring grassland or understory thinning.

Richmond Council encourages the Friends of Palewell Common and Fields to consider the tree population within parks and to communicate with the parks and open spaces team in order to make improvements and ensure that there is continuity in the way that the trees are managed.

Palewell Common contains a mixture of formal planting and woodland. Formal areas include a mixture of native and non-native planting, these include mature plane and Norway maple. The woodland is largely comprised of oak which is colonised by the pest oak processionary moth. The Council manages this through an annual programme of prophylactic treatment by a specialist contractor.

7.4.3 Cleansing

The collection of litter is extremely important in maintaining the appearance of the Green and has a direct effect upon how people treat and respect the site. Litter is collected on a daily basis.

The park cleansing contractors carry out litter picking, emptying of litterbins and the sweeping/blowing of paths. This applies to all surfaces, paths, lawns and beds.

When the Common has high numbers of visitors and large amounts of litter is expected the parks cleansing contractors will carry out additional visits to empty the bins. Additional bins are added to the play area in the summer when the paddling pool is open due to the increase in users. The full litter bags will be collected and removed from the site on the same day. In addition, the bins are cleaned and disinfected quarterly to avoid an unsightly accumulation of dirt.

7.4.4 Park Furniture and Fittings

The grounds maintenance contractors ensure that all furniture is clean and will check benches, notice boards and bins on a regular basis. Items will be cleaned when required. Repairs will be requested by contractors on a Defect Report and carried out promptly. Any single replacement or repair will match the existing furniture, so that the style of the seat remains consistent.

Playgrounds are inspected weekly by the grounds maintenance contractor and any hazards identified are dealt with accordingly. In addition, playgrounds are operationally inspected quarterly and there is an annual inspection to ensure that the playground meets RoSPA standards.

7.4.5 Hard Surfaces

Hard surfaces will be kept clean, with litter swept from surfaces regularly by the Grounds Maintenance Team and site-based attendant

Hard surfaces will be maintained in a weed free state with spot treatment weed spraying between March and November. Paths will be kept in a good state of repair all paths being inspected annually and any repairs ordered to be carried out between March and November.

Drains and gulleys will be inspected regularly by the attendant and Parks Patrol.

7.5 Sports Facility Maintenance

All sports surfaces are maintained in accordance with the needs of each sport.

Football Pitches, 7, 9 & 11 A Side

- The public are able to book the football pitches from September to April.
- During the playing season, they are over-marked weekly and spiked and chain harrowed when needed.
- At the end of the playing season the posts are removed, and sockets covered and goal mouths are inspected to identify necessary maintenance.
- The pitches are over seeded with a rye grass mixture.

Cricket Table

- The public are able to book the cricket table from April to August.
- Our grounds maintenance contractor Continental Landscapes maintains the table.
- The table is cut weekly.
- Wickets are prepared as and when booked.
- It is fertilised in April, July and September.

- At the end of the season the table is scarified in 4 directions, spiked and top dressed with loam soil.

Petanque Piste

- The pistes are open all year around
- The maintenance is carried out in partnership with the Friends of Palewell Park and a suitable contractor.
- The edging and surface material was recently topped up and in the summer friendly matches and tournaments take place.

Pitch and Putt

- The pitch and putt course is open to the general public all year (weather permitting)
- Our grounds maintenance contractor Continental Landscapes maintains the course.
- All tickets and hiring of golf equipment is managed by Continental Landscapes
- The greens are cut twice a week during the summer.
- The fairways are cut weekly.
- Bunkers are topped up with sand as required.
- The greens have pop up sprinklers around them to irrigate them.
- The greens are scarified and spiked monthly.
- In Sept/Oct the greens are top dressed with a sand based top dressing

Tennis Courts

- The courts are jet washed annually to remove moss and debris from the playing surface.
- Nets are replaced when required.

Outdoor Gym

- Weekly, quarterly and annual inspections
- If repairs are identified they are carried out promptly

7.6 Environmental Sustainability

The following regimes are designed to ensure that the Common and Fields are managed in a sustainable way.

7.6.1 Recycling

At present we do not have recycling facilities available in this park. However, residents can recycle at some of our other parks and open spaces as well as the cafes situated within them.

7.6.2 Recycling green waste

The Council’s ground maintenance contractor takes all green waste to Townsmead recycling centre. and KPS the Council’s tree management contractor recycles woodchip where appropriate.

7.6.2 Pesticides

The use of pesticides on the Common will be minimised as much as possible in the interests of nature conservation and ecology. An exception to this is the annual spraying of the [oak processionary moth](#).

The Council have an integrated Pest Management Policy which can be found online at:
https://www.richmond.gov.uk/media/25346/integrated_pest_management_policy.pdf

7.7.1 Biodiversity

Current Management

The management of the woodland area includes path clearance, annual thinning of self-sown trees and holly removal. In addition to this several stag beetle loggeries have been created to contribute towards the Richmond Biodiversity Stag Beetle Action Plan.

The pond requires specific management for the first number of years to allow the new plants to establish encourage the invertebrate and amphibian communities to take.

There is a patch of Japanese knotweed (*Reynoutria japonica*) on the northwest corner of the site, and another small patch in the pitch and putt area next to the Beverley Brook. These are being treated as part of the Borough’s annual knotweed programme. This is being sprayed three times per year with a contact herbicide called Roundup Pro Biactive. This control programme began in 2006 so the stands are very close to eradication.

Future Management/Proposals:

Ecological surveys (for example invertebrates/bats/moths) are being carried out this year which will then feed into the management plan and new enhancement projects.

Following the implementation of a new management plan in 2023 a rotational woodland management regime has started including the removal/control of non native invasives species and dense holly removal.

A long grass area has been created running along the edge of the pitches before the boundary of Richmond Park, this will have an annual cut to ensure it is not allowed to develop into scrubland. This will act as an important buffer zone connecting the woodland with the Beverley Brook, allowing greater space for invertebrates and more foraging areas for kestrels and Owls which have all been recorded at Palewell Common and Richmond Park.

The pond has still room for enhancement including creating a reedbed upstream of the pond through which the water source could flow through. This would help clean the water before it reaches the pond. Works are also programmed to selectively remove overhanging canopy vegetation to allow light to reach the pond; this will encourage marginal plant growth which in turn provides cover, shelter and food for associate wildlife.

Longer grass areas, called Pollination Stations have been established on site with support of the Friends to provide additional habitat and increase biodiversity. The Pollination Stations are managed to naturalise and are cut and collected between two to three times a year to reduce the nutrients in the soil.

Both bird and bat boxes could be erected on the trees around the site to provide additional roosting as many of the trees are not mature enough to provide natural cavities where birds or bats could roost.

Scrub will also be maintained on a rotational basis to provide a variety of habitat structure and cover for birds to nest and feed during the winter months as well as a good range of the younger and older leaves which appeal to different species (for eg caterpillars feast on the younger fresher leaves)

The patches of Japanese knotweed (*Reynoutria japonica*) will be controlled and reviewed annually until such time as the plant has been eradicated. The Himalayan balsam will also be managed on an annual basis.

We will work to the guidelines as set out in our Nature Conservation Policy Statement.

7.8 Community Involvement

This is crucial to the management of the common and fields. Engagement with the local community is carried out by working with the Friends of Palewell Park.

The Friends of Palewell Park were formally established in 2008 and have already done much to promote the park particularly by organising several community events. They have created a dedicated website www.palewellcommon.org.uk

The Council continues to work closely with the Friends. In recent times they supported the implementation of the woodland management plan carried out by Barnes Common Limited, designating Pollination Stations (longer grass areas managed to naturalise) in the dog free area, along the woodland boundary and around the orchard.

7.8.1 Parks Events

The Council encourages the hire of parks to appropriate organisations. The Friends of Palewell Park and ward councillors are consulted before permission is granted for any new event. An evaluation process is held after each event.

Events are held in accordance with the Parks and Open Spaces Events Policy found at: www.richmond.gov.uk

7.9 Marketing

Promotion and marketing of Palewell Common and Fields is carried out using a range of measures, including the Council’s website and publicity literature, to ensure that local people and visitors to the borough are aware of the facility.

Entrance Signage

A corporate style of signage for Richmond’s parks and open spaces was launched in 2007. It was designed to be attractive and informative.

Internet

Information about Palewell Common and Fields is available on the council’s website: www.richmond.gov.uk

Information on the Friends of Palewell Common can be found on the following link: <http://palewellcommon.org.uk/>. The Friends group can be contacted at: info@palewellcommon.org.uk

General Promotion

In order to create community awareness for all of its facilities, the Parks Service regularly produces articles and press releases about activities and facility development.

8. Achievements and Action Plan

8.1 Achievements

Changes and improvements made at Palewell Common & Fields during 2023-24 were:

- Implementation of the woodland management plan, carried out by Barnes Common Limited.
- Resurfacing of the pétanque piste
- Implementation of Pollination Stations around the Common
- Extra funding for renovations of sports pitches to ensure site is usable for all users.

8.2 Action Plan

The following action plan is divided into three sections:

Item of work and location	Year		Timing	Resources
	2024	2025		
Resurfacing of the play area where required following the annual inspection	Y		Summer 2024	Parks and Open Spaces
Explore the possibility of changing the pitch and putt facility to a managed mini golf site. This would create new space for a conservation area	Y	Y	Ongoing	Parks Team
Enforce dog control PSPOs through our enforcement contractor Parkguard Ltd	Y	Y	Ongoing	Parks Team & Parkguard Ltd
Additional tree planting	Y		Spring 2024	Parks Team & KPS Contractors Ltd
Work with the Friends Group to identify improvements to the site	Y	Y	Ongoing	Parks Team and Friends of Palewell Park

8.2.1 Development and renewal

As indicated previously, while the section is open to changing demands from the local community with regards to facilities within any of the borough’s parks, major changes to or developments of the parks’ facilities are not envisaged. The major challenge is to maintain high standards of maintenance and to plan for effective repair and renewal of the major elements of a park’s hard landscaping or infrastructure e.g. path system.

8.2.2 Community Engagement

The Parks team will continue to work with the Friends of Palewell Park and other stakeholders. We are committed to being receptive to concerns and suggestions voiced individually or through community groups.

8.3 Operational Commitments

This is presented in tabular form and includes the most important elements of the day to day maintenance of a park, grass cutting, trees and shrubs, litter collection and maintenance of parks furniture. Monitoring and inspection duties are included. Biodiversity management and initiatives are also included in this section.

Element	Action	Frequency
Grass Maintenance	Kept to a height of between 25mm & 70mm	10-day cycle
Tree maintenance	Inspection Replanting	Annual As necessary
Shrub Maintenance	Kept weed free Mulching Pruning	As required Annual As required, dependent on species
Litter collection	Collection and emptying	Daily
Graffiti	Removal of obscene/offensive Removal of other	Within 24 hours Within 5 working days
Parks furniture	Clean and paint Repair/replace	When necessary When necessary
Monitoring of contract	Monitoring	Every three months
Playground inspection	Visual inspection Detailed inspection ROSPA standard	Weekly Quarterly Annual
Infrastructure	Inspection Clearance of paths	Annual When necessary
Biodiversity opportunities and actions	Woodland Management Introduction of bird/bat boxes Selective thinning of the woodland	As per the woodland management plan We will work to the guidelines as set out in our Nature Conservation Policy Statement.

	Retain standing deadwood where possible	Ongoing
	Removal of areas of poorer quality, self sown, non native trees to create space for natural regeneration	Ongoing
	Removal of large areas of Holly and dense undergrowth	Ongoing
	Pond maintenance	Ongoing

8.4 Conclusion

This Management Plan is not ‘set in stone’. It provides a framework and guidelines that enable the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames to manage the site to a high standard in a sustainable way. The Council is open to the changing needs of local communities and will continue to work closely with the Friends of Palewell Park. The Plan will run from January 2024 to December 2025. An interim progress update will be undertaken in January 2025.