



North Sheen Recreation Ground Management Plan

January 2022 – December 2023

North Sheen Rec Management Plan 2022-23: Foreword

North Sheen Rec is an important space for local people and visitors. The London Borough of Richmond upon Thames will maintain and manage the park to the highest standards in accordance with our strategic principles and policies.

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 the Friends of North Sheen Rec and Kew Park Ranger Football Club. 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 the park. 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, North Sheen Rec is a long established local green space that is well maintained. 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 effect 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 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.

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1. Introduction

1.1 This Management Plan for North Sheen Rec provides guidance for the management and any relevant development of the park. 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 site.

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 North Sheen Rec and borough residents;
- Kew Park Rangers Football Club;
- 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 2022 to December 2023. An interim progress update will be undertaken in January 2023.

2. National Context

2.1 Parks are managed areas of the green environment providing 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)
- 17.99% of Greater London is designated Public Open Space; with 3.5% Local Parks and Open Spaces & 5.2% Metropolitan Parks (GiGL, 2019).

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:

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 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 biodiversity of the area

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 following plans and strategies. These can be found at: www.richmond.gov.uk

3.1 Richmond’s Community Plan 2016-2020

The Community Plan describes the Council’s vision for the borough and outlines the steps that will be taken, through partnership working, to achieve this vision. The vision is for a borough where:

- Local people are engaged and involved in their communities.
- A vibrant and sustainable community and voluntary sector helps residents play a full role in community life.

- The local character of the environment is protected and development is high quality and compatible with local character.
- Our towns and local centers are attractive, viable for businesses and contribute positively to the quality of life of residents and visitors.
- People can live as independently as possible in the local community with good health and wellbeing.

For further details of the Community Plan please visit: www.richmond.gov.uk

3.2 Parks and Open Spaces Strategy 2011

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.

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: https://habitatsandheritage.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Biodiversity-Action-Plan-Richmond_compressed.pdf

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:

https://www.richmond.gov.uk/services/parks_and_open_spaces/parks_improvements_and_conservation/latest_parks_updates

4 Site Description

4.1 Outline History of North Sheen Rec

In the early twentieth century, North Sheen was a mostly undeveloped area used to grow fruits and vegetables for market. Originally part of an orchard on land owned by the Popham family, whose family seat was at Littlecote House in Wiltshire, the Rec was first opened as a public recreation ground in June 1909, comprising what is now the southern half of the park.

It was further extended in 1923 by which time residential development was underway. This addition doubled the size of the Rec, extending it to the north and adding the entrance to Marksbury Avenue.

During the Second World War the recreation ground was used for allotments and there was an underground public shelter opposite the current pavilion.

In December 1963 it was renamed North Sheen Park but has since reverted to being called North Sheen Recreation Ground.

In 1991, the land which is now the dog exercise area was acquired.

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

North Sheen Rec is situated in Kew, in the north of Richmond-upon-Thames borough, close to the Royal Botanic Gardens. The park boundaries are shared with North Road and residential properties.

4.2.3 Access

North Sheen Rec has four entrances, all at the southern end of the park – west (North Road), east (Marksbury Avenue) and south (Dancer Road and Darell Road). The site is open between dawn and dusk, unlocked Monday to Saturday by 7.30am and by 9am on Sundays and Bank Holidays. Closing time varies according to sunset, from 4.30pm between October and January to 9.30pm in June and July.

The park is a free and open facility with fully inclusive access to local residents and visitors to the area.

4.2.4 Local Transport

Train: North Sheen rail station is a 9 minute (0.4 mile) walk from the North Road gate on the site’s western boundary.

The station is on the main line from London Waterloo to Reading in Travel card Zone 3. The station is typically served by eight South Western Railway services each hour, with additional services at peak times. Stopping routes include the Hounslow Loop or Twickenham / Richmond to London Waterloo services as well as trains between Waterloo and Wimbledon or Chiswick.

Bus: There are several bus stops near the park the park served by multiple services. The 190 (Richmond to West Brompton), 419 (Richmond to Hammersmith) and R68 (Hampton Court and Kew Retail Park) stop at the Marksbury Avenue bus stop which is 3 minutes’ walk from the Marksbury Avenue entrance. The 371, 493, H22, H37 and R70 bus routes stop at the Manor Circus bus stop which is approximately 8 minutes’ walk from the North Road entrance.

London Underground: Kew Gardens underground station is a 9 minute (0.4 mile) walk from the North Road gate on the site’s western boundary.

4.2.5 Landscape & Topography

The park’s landscape is very open and mostly amenity grassland / sports pitches. A tarmac path around the southern boundary links the four entrances, two play areas with facilities for all ages, paddling pool, outdoor gym and the large modern pavilion. Mature trees stud the boundary and the area around the North Road entrance.

On the north-west boundary is a basketball hoop and grassed dog exercise area.

4.2.6 Listed Historic Buildings

There are no listed buildings within the park.

4.2.7 Ecology

Mostly amenity greenspace, the site’s interest is mainly in the mature trees, shrubs and areas of long grass in the corners of the site.

Common garden and woodland birds can be found on site.

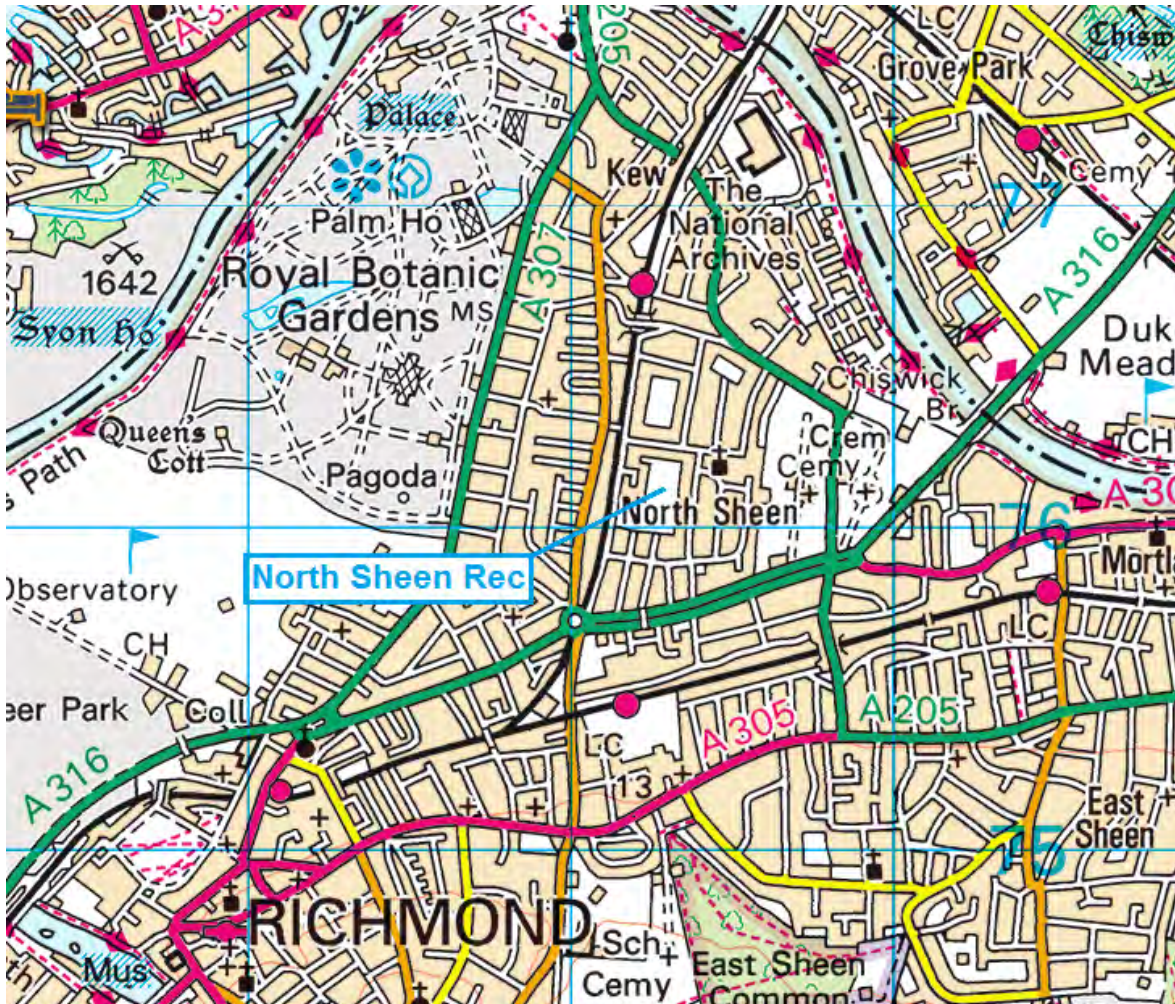
4.2.8 Facilities

North Sheen Rec contains the following facilities:

- Two children’s play areas including paddling pool, equipped and maintained in accordance to ROSPA guidelines.
- Four football pitches of various sizes.
- A pavilion with changing rooms, a large function room upstairs available for hire, toilets (open during café hours) and a café.
- A basketball hoop with rebound wall.
- Outdoor Gym equipment.
- Outdoor table tennis table
- Dog exercise area

4.2.9 Maps and Plans

Map 1: Location map of North Sheen Rec



Map 2: Plan map of North Sheen Rec



North Sheen Recreation Ground

Graphic Key and Quantity

	Site Boundary	32,970m ²
	Grass	29,517m ²
	Concrete/Tarmac	3,488m ²
	Shrub	539m ²
	Hedge	751m ²
	Safety Surface	380m ²
	Peddling Pool	182m ²
	Dog Bin	7
	Litter Bin	12
	Tree	87
	Cycle Rack	6
	Sign Post	8
	Water Point	1
	Man Hole	2
	Lamp Post	1
	Chain Link Fence	1,23m
	Metal Rail	543m
	Hard Edging	1,130m
	Vertical Edging	859m
	Bench	19

LONDON BOROUGH OF RICHMOND UPON THAMES PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

Map 3: aerial photo of North Sheen Rec



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 and London in Bloom.

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;
- Well-maintained and clean;
- Environmental management;
- Biodiversity, landscape and heritage;
- Community involvement;
- Marketing and communication; and
- 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 North Sheen Rec is from North Road. A low double gate opens onto a tarmac path.

5.3.2 Boundaries

The west boundary with North Road is traditional black iron railings, generally in a fair condition. The remainder of the western boundary is a mixture of private fencing and tall hedging.

The southern boundary is formed by several sections of evergreen hedging approximately 2m high in front of a 1.5m high brick wall. The pedestrian entrance from Dancer Road lies in the centre of the boundary.

The eastern and northern boundaries are high chainlink or gridweld fencing of varying ages, designed to keep footballs within the grounds. The eastern boundary in particular is studded with mature trees.

5.3.3 Roads, Paths, Cycleways and Access

The main path connects the three entrances along the southern boundary and links in the playgrounds and pavilion. The path to the eastern entrance on Marksbury Avenue is on a narrow arm between two houses.

The paths are used by pedestrians and cyclists as well as by occasional maintenance vehicles.

5.3.4 Parking

There is no parking within the site. There is resident parking only on North Road (zone KA), Dancer Road and Marksbury Avenue (both KB), controlled between 10am and noon Monday to Friday.

5.3.5 Gate Locking

The park is locked during the hours of darkness and details are displayed on site via posters. There is further information on our [website](#).

5.3.6 Information

Information relating to North Sheen Rec 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. The Friends group have a noticeboard provided by Richmond Council which the Friends maintain.

Friends have suggested a sign should be installed showing the minimum height requirement for the Outdoor Gym.

5.3.7 Cleanliness

Litter and dog fouling are not frequent problems on the site.

5.3.8 Planted Areas

The boundaries of the sites include sections of mature hedge and shrubs. Work to plant new areas is ongoing, assisted by the Friends.

Bulbs have been planted by the Friends in various areas and have established well.

Dead trees and shrubs are replaced with reference to the long term plan, which enshrines a wish to increase the flowering shrubs and trees. The establishment of a small group of around 3 small fruit trees in an appropriate site, designed to reflect the area's past link to market gardens has been agreed with the Council's Arboriculture Manager

5.3.9 Scenic Quality

North Sheen Rec's mature landscape gives it good local landscape value, especially through the mature trees along the fringes. It is designated as Other Open Land of Townscape Importance under the Local Plan and will be protected and enhanced as such.

5.3.10 Grass Areas

Most of the area is amenity grassland. This is in fair condition and fares well in winter considering the relatively heavy playing burden from football. The adult and 5x5 pitch were graded as 'Good' during the last Playing Pitch Strategy assessments in 2014-15 and the 9v9 and 7x7 pitches were graded as Standard, despite the adult and 9v9 pitches being judged to be overplayed.

5.3.11 Provision of Litter Bins

Provision of litter bins is sufficient, particularly in the areas along the main track around entrances, playgrounds and pavilion.

Dog waste can now be disposed of in normal litter bins and these bins are emptied daily by the Council's street cleansing contractor.

5.3.12 Seating

There is plenty of seating available in the park. There are 18 benches in total and these are found within the playground area, outside the pavilion and around the boundary path. A World War 1 remembrance bench was installed by the Friends through a Civic Pride grant.

5.3.13 Children's Play Space

Both playgrounds are in good condition and have appropriate signage. The junior play area in particular contains more equipment which is physically challenging to help introduce children to more controlled risk.

The play areas were refreshed in 2016, with new equipment installed and older but still viable equipment renovated.



5.3.14 Buildings, including toilets

A modern new pavilion building opened in 2011. This offers a large community hall, café, changing rooms, toilets with disabled access, a covered balcony terrace and outdoor seating.



The pavilion

5.3.15 Health and Safety

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

5.3.16 Nature Conservation Value

Areas around the northern, eastern and western boundaries have been left overgrown as informal conservation areas. 36 species of common garden and woodland birdshave been seen on the site and feed on tree / shrub berries and insects. 8 species of bumble bee and 10 species of butterfly have also been seen in the park by local naturalists.

5.3.17 Access for People with Disabilities

The tarmac paths are in good condition following re-surfacing in June 2018 around the Marksby Avenue entrance / junior playground; the paths by the Dancer Road entrance will need re-surfacing soon; no built facilities are inaccessible for those with mobility difficulties. There are no paths into the northern end of the site towards the football pitches.

6. Vision and Objectives for the park

6.1 Vision for North Sheen Rec

In line with the wishes of the local community, voiced through the Friends of North Sheen Rec, the future vision for the park is:

To be an excellent multi-use local park we are all proud of, playing a positive role for local users and the environment

6.2 Aims and Objectives for North Sheen Rec

- To be as good as the best multi-use local parks as evaluated by the Council’s Parks User surveys.
- To answer the varying needs of different user groups, with no single group dominating to the detriment of others.
- To appeal to users in the local vicinity, who live within walking distance.
- To ensure a positive, visible role for flowers and trees to enhance users’ well-being and support habitats for bees, butterflies and birds.
- To be an uplifting place to visit, improving the quality of local users’ lives and being a good neighbour to those who live near the Rec.
- To keep the park as good as it can be, somewhere we can be proud of.

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 three teams:

- The Operations team is responsible for liaising with contractors and monitoring the parks. The team includes a parks operations manager, a parks officer, an ecology officer and a support officer.
- The Development team which is responsible for consultation and the planning and initiation of projects. The team consists of a group of local expert consultants coordinated by the Service Manager and assisted by the parks 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, four tree officers and a 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 between 2012 and 2018.

7.1.2 Delivery Partners

The Council works and consults with the Friends of North Sheen Rec. This assists the Council to work in harmony with users’ and residents’ views and ensure direct local input into the management of the park.

For parks maintenance, a new Framework approach was introduced from April 2013, with services split into separate lots. The current contract started in February 2018 and is split into seven lots. In broad terms maintenance will be carried out by the contractors’ operatives who are specialist in the relevant areas, thus achieving 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 qualifying contractors to design excellent services using their knowledge and experience.

Relevance to North Sheen Rec

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.

7.2 A Welcoming Place

The following management regimes all play a part in ensuring that North Sheen Rec continues 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 park 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 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 defect monitoring throughout the year. Any necessary repairs will be carried out as promptly as possible.

7.3 Healthy, Safe and Secure

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

7.3.1 Community Safety

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

Parkguard regularly patrol the park between Thursday afternoon and Sunday evening. In addition the local Police Safer Neighbourhood team regularly visits the park.

The park is currently included in a Public Spaces Protection Order designed to reduce anti-social behavior in public places in the borough, effectively replacing the open space byelaws. For example, barbeques, fires and fireworks are prohibited; bicycles must not cause a hazard, nuisance or damage; drones are prohibited; and

smoking is prohibited in any enclosed play or sports area. More details can be found on the Council’s website.

The park is locked between dusk and early morning – this is with the support of local community groups and local residents.

7.3.2 Dogs

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.

The Council is currently in the process of phasing out dog bins and replacing these with multi-use bins. All general waste bins can be used to dispose of dog waste.

The Council has a Public Spaces Protection Order in place to regulate dog control. With regard to North Sheen Rec these prohibit fouling, limit an individual to walking a maximum of four dogs (unless in possession of a licence or permit issued separately) and require dog walkers to ensure their dog is under proper control and does not cause damage to the park.

7.4 Clean and well maintained

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

7.4.1 Horticulture

Grass surfaces within the park 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 20 and 60mm throughout the year with adjustments for sports pitches where required by the governing body. For football, pitches are maintained at between 20 and 50mm, increasing length slightly in winter if required to prevent excessive wear.

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. Pitches receive monthly spiking, harrowing and goal mouth forking / sanding during the season, fertiliser and herbicide application in April and renovation of pitches in May.

Grass edges, whether they are against paths, fences or walls will be cut at the same time as the rest of the grass using trimmers in most areas. Grassed areas by the park’s northern, eastern and western boundaries are left to grow long to provide habitat for wildlife.

Shrub areas receive at least monthly attention from the contractor to ensure a visually pleasing standard is delivered. Only operatives with a sound horticultural knowledge are involved in pruning to ensure a strong framework is established to maintain shrubs in an attractive, healthy and vigorous condition.

7.4.2 Trees

Trees within parks are subject to inspection by suitably qualified and experienced arboriculturalists 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.

Richmond Council encourages the Friends of North Sheen Rec 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.

A joint survey between the Council and Friends in July 2016 identified 98 trees of 23 species. Holly are most numerous, with twenty specimens in the park, followed by Cherry, Norway Maple and Lime.

7.4.3 Cleansing

The collection of litter is extremely important in maintaining the appearance of the park and has a direct effect upon how people treat and respect the site. Litter is collected on a daily basis before 10.30am each day by the park cleansing contractors.

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 park has high numbers of visitors and large amounts of litter are expected the cleansing contractors will carry out additional visits to empty the bins. 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.

The public toilets and drinking fountain are cleaned by the café leaseholder on a daily basis.

7.4.4 Park Furniture and Fittings

The grounds contractors ensure that all furniture is clean and will check benches, notice boards and bins on a regular basis. Items will be cleaned on a monthly basis or more frequently when heavily used. 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 once a week by the contractor and any hazards identified are dealt with accordingly. In addition, 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 fortnightly by the grounds maintenance team

Hard surfaces will be maintained in a weed free state (with spot treatment weed spraying only where absolutely needed 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 (in 2018 path repairs were carried out May – June).

Drains and gulleys will be inspected regularly by staff and contractors on site. Kerb edges are swept twice a week and cleared of all litter

7.5 Sports Facility Maintenance

All sports surfaces are maintained in accordance with the spec which includes quality measures designed for individual sports:

Football Pitches

- The public are able to book the football pitches from September to April.
- During the playing season, they are over-marked weekly, and spiked, chain harrowed and goal mouths forked / sanded monthly.
- Portable goalposts are used, which are stored by the pavilion when the pitches are not in use.
- The pitches are over seeded with a sports grass mixture, ensuring worn areas are cultivated to a friable tilth.

7.6 Environmental Sustainability

The following regimes are designed to ensure that the park is managed in a sustainable way.

7.6.1 Recycling green waste

The Council's ground maintenance contractor takes all green waste to Townmead recycling centre.

7.6.2 Pesticides

The use of pesticides will be minimised as much as possible in the interests of nature conservation and ecology. An Integrated Weed Management policy has been developed to assist decision-making.

7.6.3 Biodiversity

The Friends group, the Parks team and contractors are working together to diversify this amenity greenspace for wildlife.

It is intended to maintain tree lines, create areas of long grass, retain dead wood and create habitat within the park's edges and corners. Areas of long grass will encourage wildflowers to self-seed and to provide habitats and food for insects, including bees, butterflies and moths which in turn provide food for bats and birds.

Perennial flowers, flowering shrubs and Spring bulbs have been planted in new flowerbeds bordering North Road and on the south border near the Darell Road entrance.

Arisings from felling and pruning trees are also used to create habitat piles around the park boundaries and tree trunks are left standing where possible to provide habitat. Deadwood is essential habitat for insects, birds and bats. Some autumn leaves are to be left on borders to protect soil and provide cover for hedgehogs and invertebrates. The park is locked at night and so is dog free at night which is good for hedgehogs, bats and other wildlife.

Tree lines and hedges are important aids to navigation for bats and form dark tunnels where pipistrelles like to feed.

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

7.7 Community Involvement

This is crucial to the management of the Rec. Engagement with the local community is carried out by working with the Friends.

The Friends of North Sheen Rec have already done much work to improve and promote the park through regular meetings, events and their work to improve the planted and wild areas around the Rec. They have created a dedicated website <http://e-voice.org.uk/fonsr/>.

7.7.1 Parks Events

The Council encourages the hire of parks to appropriate organisations. The Friends and ward councilors 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

7.8 Marketing

Promotion and marketing of North Sheen Rec 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.

7.8.1 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.

7.8.2 Internet

Information about the park is available on the council’s website: www.richmond.gov.uk

Information on the Friends of North Sheen Rec can be found on the following link: <http://e-voice.org.uk/fonsr/>. The Friends group can be contacted at: FriendsNSR@gmail.com.

7.8.3 General Promotion

In order to create community awareness for all of its facilities, the Parks and Open Spaces 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 North Sheen Rec during 2020-21 were:

- Repairs carried out to the paddling pool surface

8.2 Action Plan

Item of work and location	Year		Timing	Resources
	2022	2023		
Continual establishment of landscaped areas	Y	Y	Continuous	Parks Team
Protect trees from dog damage and replace vandalised / dead trees (2 trees on north border)	Y	Y	Continuous	Parks Team
Upgrade benches as part of the memorial bench programme		Y	Ongoing	Parks Team
Gapping up of shrub borders	Y		Winter 2022	Parks Team & Continental Landscapes
Review condition of grass and carry out reinstatement works as appropriate.	Y		Summer 2022	Parks Team & Continental Landscapes.
Monitor for holes and re-fill as appropriate	Y	Y	Ongoing	Continental Landscapes

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 North Sheen Rec. 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 20mm & 60mm Designated long grass areas are to be unmown and left long all year.	As required to maintain length; average 16-18 cuts per year
Tree maintenance	Inspection Replanting	Every three years minimum As necessary
Shrub Maintenance	Kept weed free Mulching Pruning	Monthly Annual As required, dependent on species
Litter collection	Collection and emptying	Daily
Cleansing	Cleaning of public toilets and drinking fountain	Daily
	Sweeping of paths	Fortnightly
Graffiti	Removal of obscene/offensive	Within 24 hours
	Removal of other	Within 5 working days
Parks furniture	Clean and paint	When necessary
	Repair/replace	When necessary
Monitoring of contract	Monitoring	Every three months
Playground inspection	Visual inspection	Fortnightly as with ROSPA guidelines
	Detailed inspection	Monthly
	ROSPA standard	Annual
Infrastructure	Inspection	Annual
	Clearance of paths	When necessary
Biodiversity opportunities and actions	Installing bulbs, shrubs, plants, deadwood piles	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 North Sheen Rec. The Plan will run from January 2022 to December 2023, with an interim progress update in January 2023.