



Palewell Common and Fields Management Plan

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 the graffiti removed effectively and quickly? Do the facilities need improving or changing?

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 in the form of the Friends of Palewell Park will be consulted on any proposed changes or improvements to facilities.

We actively encourage suggestions both regarding the management and maintenance of the park and ideas about changes or possible improvements to elements of the park's infrastructure or its facilities.

Parks officers, working closely with colleagues in Veolia 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 for improving the facilities. It is hoped that the resulting observations and ideas will result in continually improving management and maintenance practises, as well as careful consideration of ideas to improve and maintain the park.

While the section 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 generally well maintained. The park has seen major capital investment of the last two years. With the exception of the redevelopment of the pavilion, 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 tightening of available budgets seems likely for the foreseeable future. The borough will continue to work closely with its partners, in this case Veolia 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.

Central to our determination to maintain and if possible improve the facilities and infrastructure of parks and open spaces across the borough is the ongoing review of the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy.

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1.0 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 over the next five years. 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

The Plan will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis.

Following this Introduction the Management Plan is set out in the following sections:

Section 2: Outlining the National Context.

Section 3: Describes the plan's relationship to the Council's aims and objectives.

Section 4: Site Description and audit of facilities.

Section 6: Vision and objectives for the site.

Section 7: Management principles and practices and includes the Action Plan.

2.0 The 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:

- In 1988 the Audit Commission estimated that local authorities in England and Wales maintained approximately 120,000 hectares of parks and open spaces - an area approximately the size of Berkshire.
- In 2000, the Heritage Lottery Fund estimated that there were approximately 30,000 urban green spaces in the UK, of which 5,000 are urban parks.

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 that are available to 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

3.0 Relationship to Council's Aims and Objectives

The London Borough of Richmond recognises that its parks and open spaces contribute to:

- To the overall Vision and Priorities of the Council
- To the quality of life of local people
- To the physical, social and economic regeneration of the borough
- To the 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

All Council's are now required to develop a Community Plan as part of their commitment to delivering more 'sustainable communities'. The Community Plan is a top tier strategy that sets out how the Council will target, manage and monitor its services for the benefit of all local people. The Community Plan has been created in partnership with residents and key local stakeholders and is reviewed on a regular basis. The vision of the plan is:

- Inclusive
- Puts protection of the environment at the core of its services and community life
- Delivers quality public services that truly reflect the needs of all its local people
- Addresses its challenges by harnessing the capacity of all its partners in the public private, voluntary and community sector

3.1.2 Parks and Open Spaces Strategy 2003

Vision

- 'to provide access to an exciting range of open space experiences for all'

Key Principles

- **Stewardship**
 - Protect visual and physical access to open land
 - Protect, enhance and promote the characteristic features of the Borough particularly the riverside, historic landscapes and features
 - Improve the maintenance infrastructure
- **Management and Use**

- Plan to provide for the needs of the community and visitors
 - Make the best use of public and private resources and maximise external funding
 - Work in partnership with the community and other local landscape agencies
 - Promote the use of open land for all
 - Reduce the fear of crime by providing healthy, safe environments and promoting activity
- **Environmental Protection**
 - Maintain and enhance the Borough's biodiversity
 - Provide high quality, sustainably managed open spaces

This strategy is currently under review.

3.1.3 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

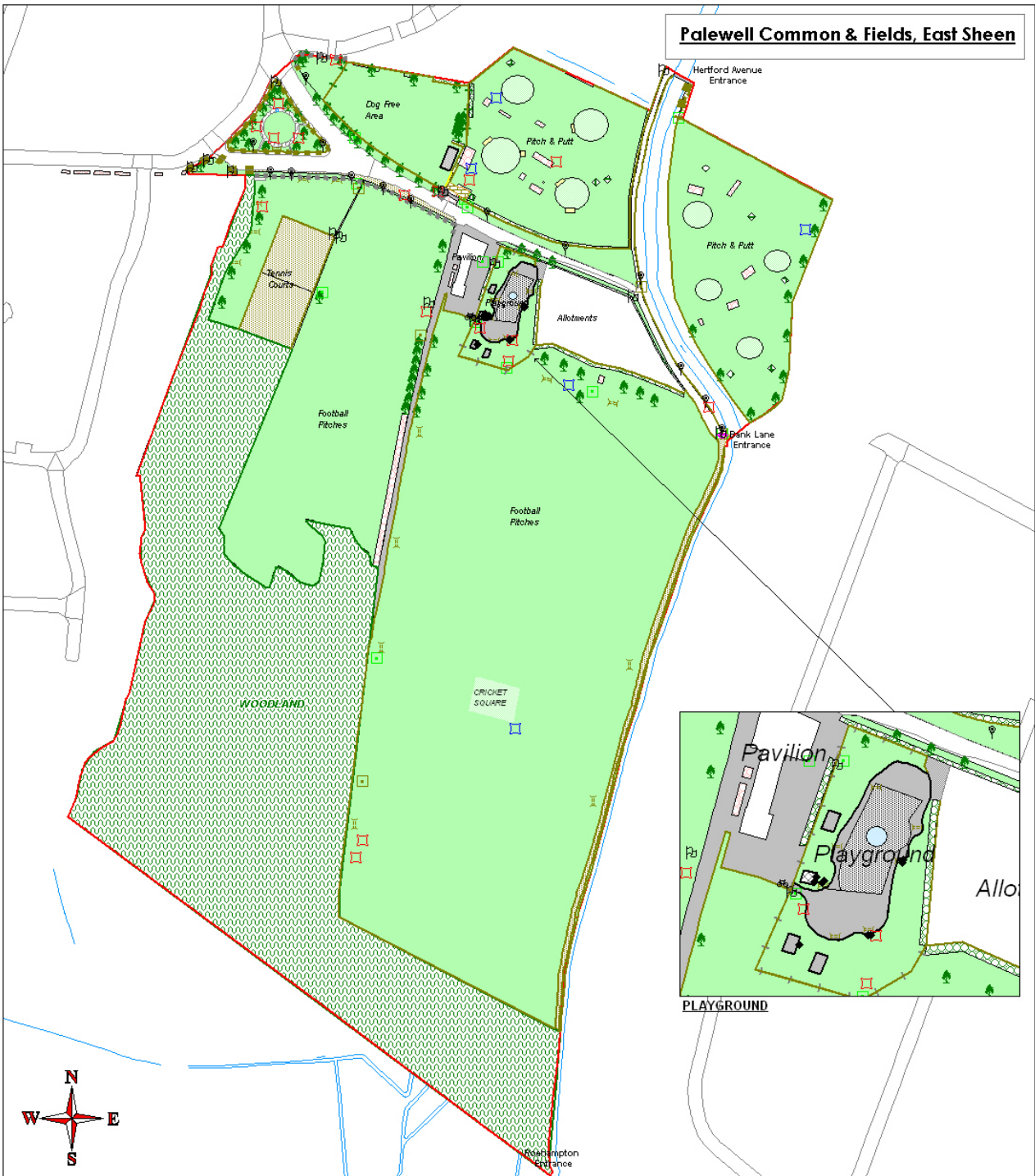
3.1.4 Other relevant council policies

The following policies can be found at www.richmond.gov.uk.

Printed versions of these policies are available on request:

- Community Safety Policy
- Equality and Diversity Plan
- Unitary Development Plan
- Local Agenda 21
- Cultural Strategy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Parks Byelaws
- Customer Service Standards
- Dog Control Orders
- Tree Strategy
- Events Policy

Palewell Common & Fields, East Sheen



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	Breendon 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

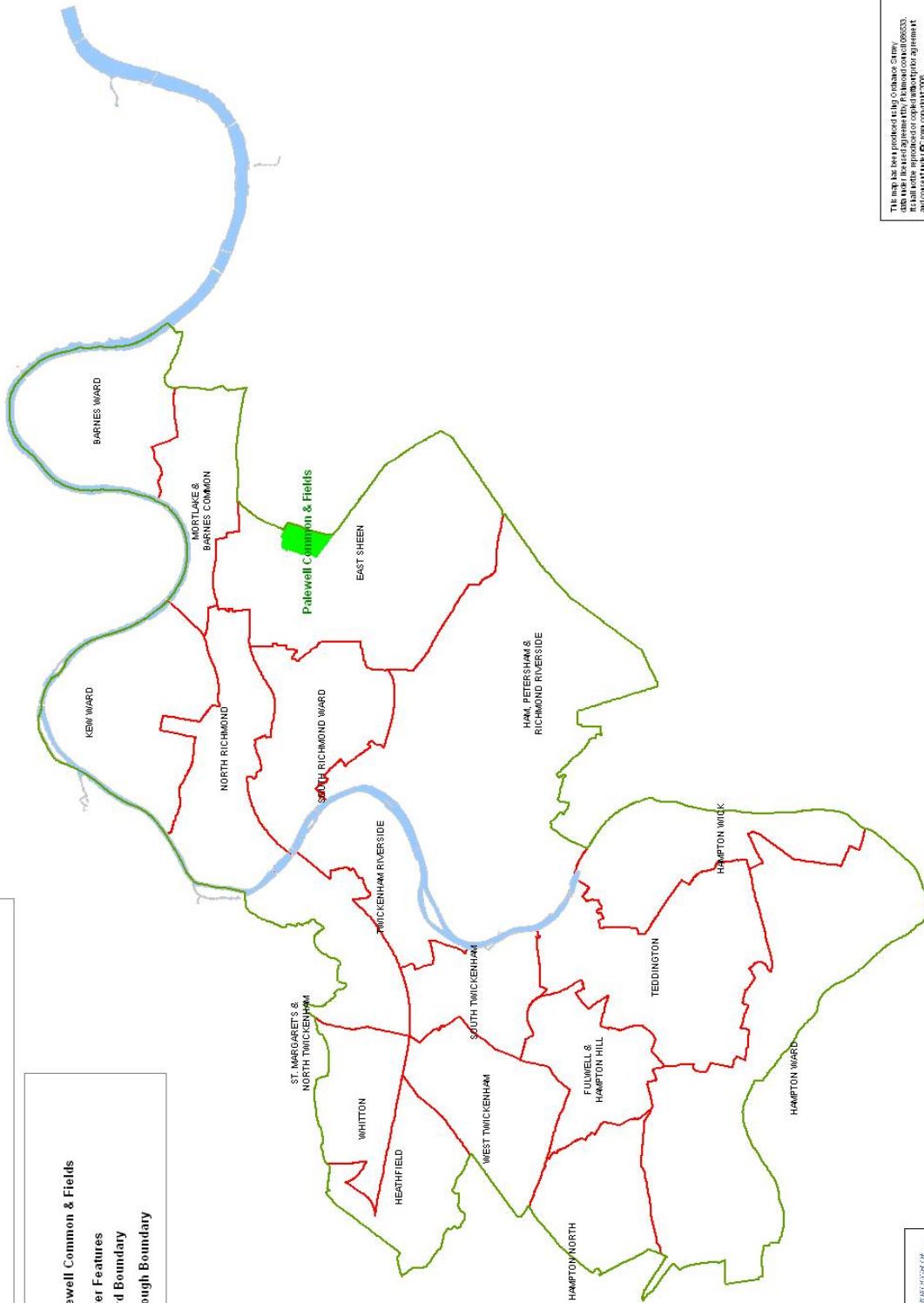


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London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames

Graphic:

- Palewell Common & Fields
- Water Features
- Ward Boundary
- Borough Boundary



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4.0 **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.

Enabling Acts: Local Government Act 1963, Parks and Open Spaces Order 1971
Open Spaces Act 1906
Town and Country Planning Act (S. 32)

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 three 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 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 within or adjacent to the park:

- A children's play area, including a paddling pool, equipped to LEAP standard
- A nine-hole pitch and putt course (operated under tender by a contractor)
- Football pitches (operated under tender by the contractor who runs the pitch and putt concession)
- Sports changing facilities currently being renovated

- A pavilion with café (opening in 2011)
- A cricket square
- Petanque Piste
- Tennis courts
- A Fitpoint (on trial)
- Dog free picnic area
- Dog Free Area within the children's play area

5.0 **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 PPG 17. These are:

- provision of accessible, high quality park space for sport and recreation that meet the 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
- Sustainability
- Conservation and heritage
- Community involvement
- Marketing
- Management
- Educational value

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
- Access for the disabled

5.3.1 Main Entrance

The main entrance to Palewell is down a spur road, 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. 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 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

Litter on the site is a concern particularly after weekend football matches in the area of the football pitches. There is evidence of dog fouling.

5.3.7 Planted Areas

There are virtually no formally planted areas on the Common and Fields. The exception to this is the area around the pavilion which has been fairly recently replanted. The planting is attractive and appears generally well maintained. This has temporarily been removed whilst the pavilion is refurbished.

5.3.8 Scenic Quality

Palewell Common and Fields has great scenic value sweeping down to its border with Richmond Park. This is enhanced by the extensive mature woodland.

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, maintained by Veolia Environmental Services, is in good condition considering the high usage it gets, particularly during the summer months.

There are significant signs of 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 playing fields area was verti-drained autumn 2010 to relieve soil compaction

5.3.10 Provision of Litter Bins

Provision of litter bins is adequate, particularly in the main area of the park.

Following consultation with the Friends in 2009 a further 3 dog bins and 3 litter bins have been installed in the park. These were placed in the playing field area of the park and the positioning was selected in consultation with the Friends.

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. Surfaces are even and safe.

5.3.13 Buildings, including toilets

There are two buildings on the site. The golf hut or kiosk is in reasonable condition but the main pavilion is in a dilapidated condition.

The Council has sold part of this building for private development and, with the money received, is renovating the pavilion area and providing a café area. The state of the building is an important issue for local people. Pending the sale, the toilets were redecorated and have been open to park users. The new café is set to be opened early in the summer of 2011.

- In November 2009 and subsequently local people and users of the park, along with the Friends of Palewell were consulted on proposals for the pavilion.

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. This means that the site provides a mosaic of habitats ideal for a thriving ecosystem.

5.3.16 Access for the Disabled

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.

5.3.17 Educational Value

Palewell Common & Fields provides great educational potential in relation its varied wildlife and ecology. There is some informal educational use by local schools, nurseries and playschemes.

6.0 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 The key objectives for the Common and Fields are to:

- 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 promote the educational value of the site and to encourage local schools to use the Common and Fields for a wide variety of educational purposes
- 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.

7.0 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.

Management needs to deliver high standards of maintenance of all aspects of the soft and hard landscaping of Palewell Common and Fields within existing revenue budgets. Developments have been funded by a major borough wide capital investment programme that began in 2005 and ended in 2010.

The parks section is headed up by the Head of Parks. It is made up of three sections.

- The Operations team is responsible for liaising with contractors and monitoring the parks. The team includes an ecology officer and a GIS mapping officer.
- The Service Development team which is responsible for consultation and the planning and initiation of projects.
- The Arboricultural team is responsible for all street trees and arboricultural work in council managed parks and open spaces.

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

The Council works and consults with the recently formed Friends of Palewell Park. This assists the Council to work in harmony with users' and residents' views.

The Council works in partnership with Veolia Environmental Services in a contract that began in 2003 and will end in 2013. In broad terms maintenance will be carried out by the contractor's operatives who have the necessary skills to achieve high and consistent standards.

Veolia Environmental Services has a contracts manager in overall control of the service. It is made up of grass cutting teams and mobile maintenance gangs who are managed by supervisors who monitor the work. The Parks Patrol Service is managed by Veolia Environmental Services. They play a community safety role patrolling the parks and also inspecting playgrounds on a daily basis. The patrol will attend incidents involving anti-social behavior and liaise directly with Police Safer Neighbourhood Teams.

Grounds Maintenance Staff - Health and Safety

All staff complete a company induction before they commence their employment. The induction includes relevant Health & Safety legislation and responsibilities along with environmental awareness training.

An assessment is carried out on each employee to ascertain their skill and competence levels. This includes manual handling training and driver assessment where applicable.

Following a 6 month probationary period for new employees, the new employee will complete a one to one personal development plan with their line manager which will set key targets for development and training needs. The information will entered on the staff training matrix and is reviewed and updated on an annual basis.

Throughout the year, a refresher programme of tool-box talks, including Health & Safety issues, new legislation and machinery training, is given to all employees.

All employees have the opportunity to raise any Health & Safety concerns at monthly meetings through their nominated Health & Safety representative who is invited to all contract Health & Safety meetings.

The maintenance works will be monitored effectively and regularly by parks officers who understand the nature and purpose of the works being carried out. Any points and actions arising from monitoring will be communicated to the parks contractors and officers will ensure that any necessary work is completed.

Client / Contractor jointly inspect 25 sites a month on a random basis. Comments are made at the time and the client will advise the contractor of any items below specification that need to be put right, before the site is passed. The inspections are recorded and are scored to provide a % satisfaction figure for that particular month.

The Client / contractor site inspections for Green Flag sites (and those parks that have received major investment) also include comments and proposals to protect the investment of both hard and soft landscaping and will form part of the revenue infrastructure and planting programmes.

The following management processes and regimes are listed below under the Green Flag standards listed in 5.2.2. Any new initiatives in the following sections will also be included in the action plan that follows.

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 site 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 Councils Street Scene Contractor Continental Landscapes to manage the removal of all graffiti within five working days. Where the graffiti is racist or 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 repairs will be carried out promptly.

7.2.3 Pathways

All paths will be inspected annually. Any necessary repairs will be carried out as promptly as possible. Pathways through the woodland area 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 operatives working at Palewell Common and Fields undertake an important role in terms of a visible staff presence in the park and structure their maintenance work accordingly. All staff are uniformed and wear highly visible clothing. The Parks Patrol regularly patrols the site.

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

7.3.2 Dog fouling

The Mobile Litter gang, Parks Patrol and the Parks Service make efforts to educate dog owners to be responsible, particularly close to areas where people are liable to be eating or children playing. Signage clearly indicates that dog mess should be picked up and disposed of by those walking their pets.

Dog bins are emptied on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays and more if required. Richmond has adopted the new dog control orders.

The level of dog fouling is of particular concern to local residents. The parks patrols have also increased patrolling of the Common and Fields.

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 will be 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

Woodland Area:

The area of woodland is located on the western boundary of Palewell Common and Fields, to the rear of properties on Enmore Gardens South West; and is approximately 5.3 Hectares in size. The area is flat and densely vegetated.

The woodland has clearly been growing for some time; however the exact age cannot be determined. It could however be estimated that it is in excess of 300 years old. The woodland appears to have suffered tree losses during the heavy gales of 1987 and 1991, as well as more recent storms. As a result the general age structure of the woodland is now quite young. Fallen trees and their stumps still lie in situ, which are undoubtedly from the aforementioned storms. It could be assumed that the poor vehicular access to the site played a role in this plight, in that these fallen specimens were not removed or replaced.

The area in discussion can be seen on the map on page 9.

Current Management:

The trees are all currently inspected on an annual basis and following periods of high wind, following which any dangerous trees or limbs are removed/pruned. Focus for these inspections are for those trees adjacent to footpaths, sports pitches and private gardens. Any removed trees are subsequently replaced with new specimens of the same species in the next planting season.

Frequent requests are received from neighbouring residents to the park, to prune trees overhanging property, or casting shade on private gardens. It is against the council's policy to prune, or remove trees for this reason, either within streets, or indeed within parks. It is understood that trees do cast shade, drop leaves and litter, however the majority of residents feel that this is a minor inconvenience, when considering the many benefits that trees provide in urban landscapes.

Over the past 5 years a minimalistic approach has been taken within the woodlands regarding management, working with the following objectives in mind:

General Objectives

- a) To increase / improve the woodlands overall amenity value
- b) To ensure the trees are retained in a "safe" and healthy condition, and plans are made for new planting where appropriate
- c) To improve the ecological value of the site

Future management:

The parks department has recently commissioned a woodland management survey to provide a strategic approach for the woodland (and all woodlands throughout the borough) to ensure the above objectives are met. The Arboricultural Manager and Ecology Officer are working closely with the appointed company, and results are to be obtained in May 2011, with the start of works in Winter 2011/12.

Management of the remainder of the individual trees throughout the park:

The individual trees on the site have been managed on a reactive basis. They are a prominent feature in both the local and wider landscape, and characterise the Park.

New trees have been planted on a reactive basis during the last 2-3 years to try and increase and diversify the tree stock following many requests from local residents; these new trees are growing well.

In December 2009, 9 fruit trees were planted by the Friends Group and BTCV near the playground in order to create a small community orchard area (3 Bramleys, 3 James Grieve's & 3 Plum Merryweather Damsons). Bulbs were also planted around the trees & all trees were staked in order to protect them from any damage. This orchard project was funded by the Parks Improvement Programme.

7.4.3 Cleansing

The collection of litter is extremely important in maintaining the appearance of the park and in the consequent respect with which people will treat and use it. Litter is collected on a daily basis with a litter pick of the park being carried out before 10.30am each day by a site based attendant.

The attendant carries out litter picking, emptying of litterbins and the sweeping/blowing of paths. The zone applies to all surfaces, paths lawns and beds.

To prevent bins overflowing on days when the park has high numbers of visitors, the site based attendant will carry out additional emptying with the litter bags 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 attendant and Parks Patrol ensure that all park 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 the attendant and Parks Patrol on a Defect Report and repairs will be carried out promptly. Any single replacement or repair will match the existing furniture so that the style of the seat remains consistent.

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. 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 needs of each sport.

Football Pitches & 7 A Side

- The general public books the football pitches from September to April.
- During the playing season they are over-marked weekly and spiked and chain harrowed monthly.
- At the end of the playing season the posts are removed and sockets covered.
- The pitches are over seeded with a rye grass mixture.

Cricket Table

- The general public books the cricket table from April to August.
- Our grounds maintenance contractor Veolia 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 Veolia and the Friends of Palewell Park.
- The edging and surface material was recently improved 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 Veolia maintains the course.
- All tickets and hiring of golf equipment is managed by a separate contractor Golfwise.
- 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.

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 green waste

From a number of points of view, sustainability, environmental considerations and to comply with Local Agenda 21, efforts should be made to recycle green waste. In doing so it is essential to ensure that the recycled waste only includes acceptable material, i.e.

- Grass clippings – these are left in situ in the park
- Grass edgings – reused to fill hollows and dips in the park
- Soft herbaceous cuttings (not woody)
- Broken turfs (after lifting and turfing operations)
- Shredded shrub pruning's – chipped along with tree waste

Wood chippings from Palewell Common and Fields are taken to the compound within Hatherop Park and left there for approx 1.5 years to mulch down. The mulch is then used on the flowerbeds around the borough as both compost and a weed control.

7.6.2 Pesticides

The use of pesticides on the Common and Fields will be minimised as much as possible in the interests of nature conservation and ecology.

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.

There is a patch of Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia 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.

The woodland is

Future Management/Proposals:

There is huge potential for ecological enhancement for this site ranging from simple management changes to establishing rotational coppicing programmes. An ecological survey would be hugely beneficial prior to implementation of any new enhancement projects.

Allowed to grow longer with an annual cut used to manage scrub encroachment; this could run along the woodland edge and act as a further buffer zone between the woodland edge and the formal amenity grassland. This would benefit invertebrates, which would then pass the benefits up to the top predators such as kestrels and owls (which have been seen in Palewell Common and Fields and Richmond Park respectively).

A wildflower meadow could be established if funding could be sourced. This could

incorporate bulb planting with flora such as snakeshead fritillary, wood anemone, wild garlic and snowdrops.

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. Richmond's Youth Offending team makes bird and bat boxes that are erected in other Richmond parks and open spaces.

The areas of scrub will also be maintained on a rotational basis so that there is enough habitat/cover for birds to nest and feed during the winter months.

The patches of Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia Japonica*) will be controlled for the next three years and then reviewed to see if further treatment is needed. The Himalayan balsam will also be managed on an annual basis.

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 recently established 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 and have created a dedicated website www.palewellcommon.org.uk .

- The council continues to work closely with the Friends. In recent times they have helped with the plans to create a small area of community orchard, new planting of fruit trees and flowers, the positioning of new bins, community safety issues, the build up to the opening of a café and the 2010 Parks Customer Satisfaction Survey.

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 in various ways to ensure that local people and visitors to the borough are aware of the facility.

Entrance Signage

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

Internet

Information about Palewell Common and Fields is available on the council's website and can be accessed from the Parks and Open Spaces link on www.richmond.gov.uk .

General Promotion

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

8.0 Achievements and Action Plan

The following action plan is divided into three sections:

8.1 Achievements

Changes and improvements made to the Common and Fields during 2010 are listed below:

Pavilion: The pavilion (and cottage) has been partly sold in order to provide for a café onsite (opening in summer 2011).

Fitpoint: A FitPoint was installed on a trial basis.

Planting: New trees and dozens of daffodil bulbs have been planted on Palewell Common and Fields.

Pitch and Putt. The renewal of four tee off mats and the provision of a wood chip surround to each tee began during the summer 2009. The last wood chip surrounds should be installed during early 2011.

Beach Whips: Beach whips were planted along the boundary of the Pitch and Putt course, a process begun in late 2009 and finished this year.

8.2 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 exception to this is the major refurbishment of the pavilion, which is being managed by the council's construction services team. 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.

Green Flag Priorities

1. Opening and full operation of the new Pavilion facility
2. Replanting drought tolerant plants adjacent to the pavilion.
3. Re-stake trees, replant hedge on gardens boundary with hawthorn, replace and repair park furniture as appropriate.

8.3 Community Engagement

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

An annual survey people using Palewell Common and Fields along with other park users across the borough was carried out in September 2010 with the help of the Park Friends. Overall results were strong, although some concerns were expressed with regard to the quality of catering facilities.

8.4 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 maximum height of 75mm.	10 day cycle
Tree maintenance	Inspection Replanting	Annual As necessary
Shrub Maintenance	Kept weed free Pruning	When needed
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	Inspection	Daily – park patrol Monthly – RSS contractors Annual – Rospa standard
Infrastructure	Inspection Clearance of paths	Annual When necessary
Biodiversity opportunities and actions	Woodland Management Remove all dead, dying and dangerous trees, near woodland edge, or adjacent to desire lines / footpaths: Bluebell planting in woodland Introduction of bird/bat boxes Selective thinning of the woodland Retain standing deadwood where possible Removal of areas of poorer	Ongoing Autumn 2011 Ongoing Autumn 2011 Ongoing Winter 2011/12

	quality, self sown, non native trees to create space for natural regeneration Removal of large areas of Holly and dense undergrowth	Winter 2011/12
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8.3 **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. This Management Plan will be reviewed annually.