

2020 - 2030



Leagrave Park Management Plan

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Luton

A. Foreword

Luton's greenspaces contribute to delivering our 2020-2040 vision for the town - to achieve a healthy, fair and sustainable town, where everyone can thrive and no-one has to live in poverty.

Luton 2020-2040 is a town-wide vision built around a single-unifying mission for everyone in Luton – to ensure that everyone in our town has the opportunity to thrive and no-one has to live in poverty. Poverty and inequality are at the heart of some of the most significant challenges in Luton.

The value of greenspace has been reinforced during the coronavirus pandemic with Luton's parks, children's play and countryside areas seeing a huge increase in use.

We know that well maintained parks attract people, business and investment to the town. They are socially inclusive spaces providing free access to opportunities for recreation, mental relaxation and just maintaining our health and well-being through being in the great outdoors.

Our greenspaces also contribute to the climate change agenda providing eco-system services to benefit the community. These range from large expanses of grassland that accommodate surface water run-off to trees and shrubs that capture carbon and remove pollutants from the air that we breathe.

The Stockwood Park landscape, its history and veteran trees provide a true sense of place to the local community and provides a place where friends and families can meet with the space required to take exercise in a natural setting while easily observing social distancing.

This management plan, produced with the help of our partners and the local community sets out the current vision for the park and includes information about the local context, history and make-up of the park. In pursuit of excellence, the Luton Parks and Countryside Service manage the park to meet standards set out in the Green Flag Award's Raising the Standard Manual - the nationally recognised quality indicator for parks and green space.

All this is why, as a council, we are committed to protecting and improving our high quality greenspaces.

I would like to thank everyone who has taken the time to contribute to consultations and park user surveys which have informed this management plan for Stockwood Park.

I hope that you continue to enjoy the park and all that it has to offer.

Mark Fowler
Chief Executive, Luton Council



B. Background



Legrave Park serves the community of Luton and in particular, residents of the Sundon, Legrave, Northwell and Bramingham Wards. It is situated in the west of the town and provides users with a variety of experiences including access to different habitats, nature conservation interest and links to the historic environment.

Legrave Park is designated as a District Park in the Luton hierarchy of parks and open space and provides a range of outdoor recreational pursuits which accommodates the following:-

- Contribution to landscape structure
- Sufficient level grassed areas to provide for informal recreational use
- Access to managed natural areas and woodland and the River Lea
- Equipped play provision
- Some youth provision.

Legrave Park is one of the largest District Parks in Luton comprising the main park area (24.02 ha) which incorporates a small woodland area known locally as 'Rotten Corner' and Legrave Common that includes Legrave Mark and Wauluds Bank (32.57 ha). In order to preserve the character and heritage value of this site, careful management of the conflicting uses is required to ensure an appropriate balance of provision.

Legrave Marsh is a County Wildlife Site and subject of a Countryside Stewardship Agreement.

In previous years, Sustrans worked closely with Luton Borough Council to develop a green corridor alongside the River Lea from Lewsey Farm to the town centre.

Project funders included the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (£200,000), Luton Borough Council (£912,315) and an award of £447.250 by the Big Lottery Fund and Sport England through their 'Active England' grants programme. The project provided local people with improved access to local places such as Legrave Park and encouraged more active lifestyles through better walking and cycling facilities.

C. The Purpose of the Plan

The Purpose of the Plan

Luton Borough Council's Parks and Countryside Service has prepared this plan to:-

- ✓ Ensure that a co-ordinated approach is taken to the development and management of the park in line with emerging needs.
- ✓ Identify and address who is responsible for certain aspects of management.
- ✓ Identify, discuss and resolve issues relating to park infrastructure, parks users and available resources.
- ✓ To ensure future development of the park preserves the heritage value and meets with the needs of the local community.
- ✓ Provide a benchmark against which delivery and performance of the identified objectives can be measured.
- ✓ To promote the application of the Green Flag standards across the borough and therefore raising the standards overall.
- ✓ To increase the number of green spaces suitable for a Green Flag Award application.
- ✓ Meets the requirements of a wide audience including the Friends Group, Parks maintenance teams, LBC Planners and Neighbourhood Services Officers, local residents and Green Flag judges.

This Management and Development Plan has been written as a 'working document' that brings together all the information relating to the park for use by those involved in its management. It is written in a manner to allow access for both the expert and non-expert. The Action Plan is revised on an annual basis and the Management Plan is subject of a re-write in 2023. It includes information about the history, nature and make-up of the park, standards of maintenance to be achieved and future development issues.

Luton Borough Council's Parks and Countryside Service is responsible for the management and maintenance of the park. The service is committed to achieving the Green Flag Standard as laid out in the Raising the Standard manual.

The Parks Management Team, Parks Officers and Chargehands have all received training in the Green Flag criteria similar to that provided to Green Flag Judges to ensure that they are familiar with the standards required.

D. A Brief History of the Site

The area of Leagrave Park was originally marshland which stretched from the Three Horseshoes/McDonald's site in an arc to Sundon Brook. This is also the source of the River Lea which rises at a point in the park known as 'Five Springs'. It is here that the river starts its 83 kilometer journey to the Thames, through the counties of Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire, Essex and Greater London.



The River Lea runs through Leagrave Marsh and was known as 'Blockers Seaside'.

There has been a long dispute about the spelling

of the river name. Some official government documents use the spelling 'Lee'. On old maps of Luton the river is referred to as Lea while closer to the Thames, the spelling 'Lee' is used.

Leagrave Park hosts the first settlement in the area which is known as Wauluds Bank and is a Neolithic D-shaped enclosure within the site and lies at the source of the River Lea. There is evidence to suggest that this was a Neolithic meeting place and ceremonial site and Luton Museum records refer to it as a henge. This is now a protected monument. Archaeological finds on the site have included Neolithic grooved ware and flint arrow heads.

A substantial area of the marsh was reclaimed and turned to playing fields to serve the local communities leaving the smaller Leagrave Marsh that can be seen in the park today.

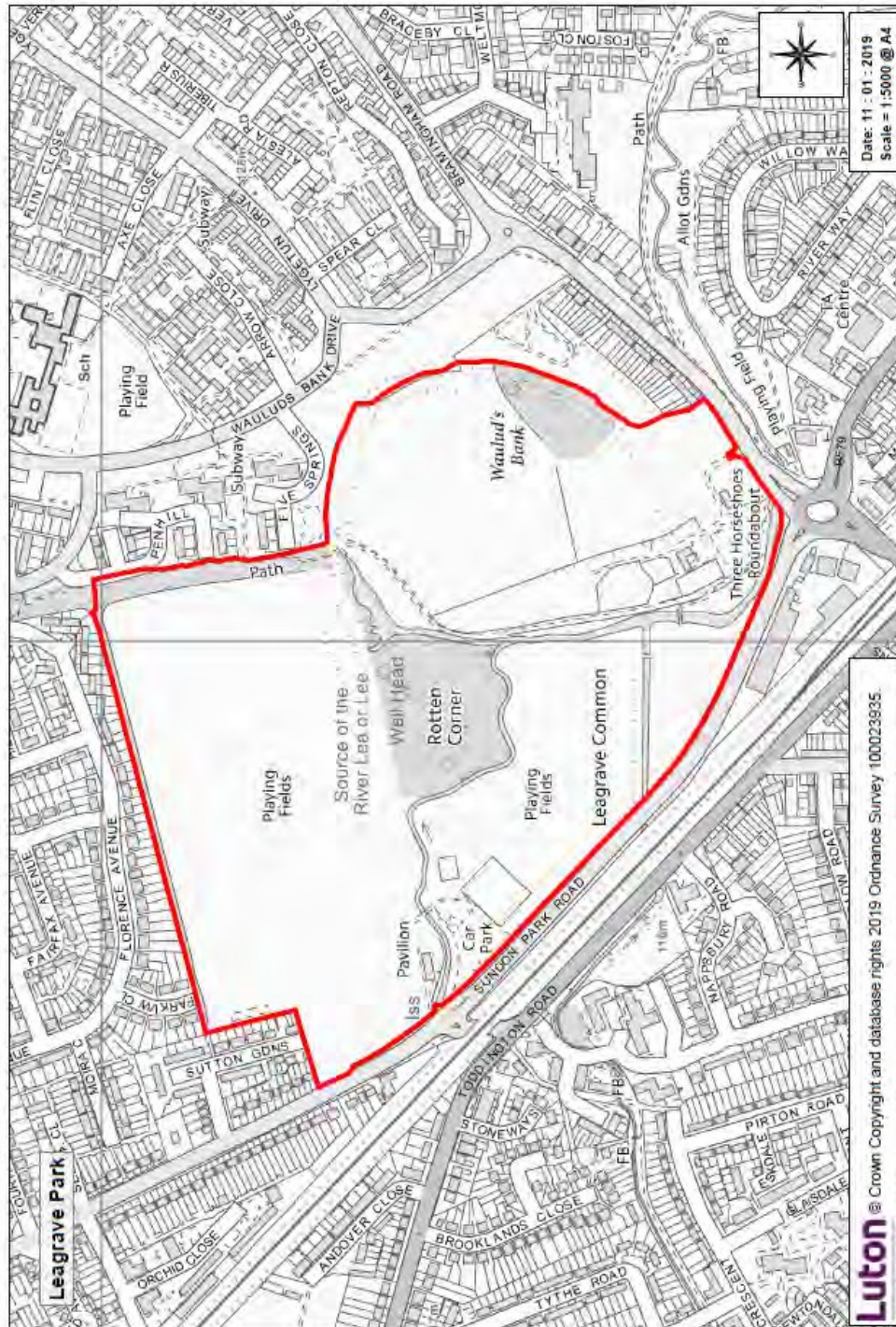
In the early 90's, the marsh suffered badly due to a drop in the water table and in 1994 a scrape was excavated and recolonised with wetland species.

Luton is well known for the hat making industry and Leagrave Marsh was a popular site for the workers to spend time with their friends and families on their (rare) days off. Consequently the area was known as 'Blockers Seaside'.

Leagrave village became part of the larger town in 1928 where many of the roads were renamed to avoid confusion. Much of the land around the old Marsh Farmhouse as well as Leagrave Common is now part of Leagrave Park.

The manor of Leagrave was held by the Lucy family from 1305 to 1455. They gave their name to the neighbouring suburbs of Lewsey, Lewsey Farm and Lewsey Park.

In 2012, Fields in Trust ran a flagship programme called The Queen Elizabeth II Fields Challenge in line with the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. The programme was aimed to protect outdoor recreational spaces across the UK to create a grassroots legacy where Leagrave Park was successful in this award in 2012. (Please see the appendices).



E. Site Location

Driving Directions from M1 to Leagrave Park

Leave the M1 at Junction 11. Turn left onto Stoneygate Road and follow it all the way down to meet Oakley Road and then Sundon Park Road. This will take you onto Sundon Park Road. Continue along Sundon Park Road where you will see an entrance to the park on your right hand side.

F. Vision Statement

Legrave Park should provide a high quality and well maintained open space which provides the facilities required of a District Park.

The vision is of a park with high levels of community involvement, through an active friends of the park group. A park highly regarded by the local community who recognise the benefits of the park in providing space for a range of healthy pursuits and appreciate the contribution of the park to local heritage

Future development of Legrave Park should ensure good access, spatial quality and design taking into consideration the character and heritage nature of the site. The site should be developed to encourage use for a range of healthy pursuits and to provide enjoyment for local people and visitors of all ages and abilities.

The vision includes the provision of a high quality play experience for a range of age groups, which should not extend to more than 10% of the total area in order to preserve the spatial quality and cultural heritage of the park and provision of an appropriate community building to accommodate changing facilities, toilets and refreshments.

G. Management of the Park

The Parks and Countryside Service which is part of Luton Borough Council's Inclusive Economy Directorate manage and maintain parks, open spaces and outdoor sports provision in Luton.

We maintain all of our parks and opens spaces to the standards laid out in the Green Space Quality Manual by the London Benchmarking Group (A copy of this can be provided upon request).

The manual provides easy to follow guidance on the quality standards to be achieved in our parks.

H. Mission Statement for the Parks and Countryside Service

The Parks and Countryside Service is committed to creating and maintaining a safe, healthy and clean environment within the parks, facilities and open space provision in Luton and to improving both the quality of the environment, the recreational amenities and the enhancement of the lives of those who live and work within the borough.

The service seeks to ensure that all its activities have regard and are referenced to Luton Borough Council's Corporate Objectives and Vision.

The aims of the Parks and Countryside Service are:

- Plan, develop and promote a diverse and balanced leisure use, achieving the maximum benefit for all parks and open space users.
- To conserve and enhance the natural environment and ecological balance in parks taking into account the sustainable needs of the environment and wider community.
- Provide excellent and best value services to all customers.
- To increase, broaden and encourage community involvement and participation in the planning and managing of parks facilities, increasing significantly public awareness of the value of parks.
- To understand and response to issues of public safety and community concern that relate to parks.
- To maximise support for park development and maintenance through external funding opportunities.
- To provide adequate levels and distribution of parks and open spaces.

I. Aims and Purposes of the Site

Leagrave Park provides the local community with an area of aesthetically pleasing open space which offers free access to opportunities for pursuit of a range of outdoor leisure and social activities. It provides a place for local people of all ages and levels of ability to meet, walk, sit, play, enjoy attractive landscaping and experience the natural environment.

The strategic plan for provision identifies that Leagrave Park should offer the following range of quality open space facilities to local households within a 300 metre radius:-

Large open area of grassland to accommodate informal recreation:

Children's play area

Bowling Green

Quiet areas for contemplation Seating

Circulation path Natural area

Car parking facilities



It is acknowledged that due to the nature conservation and historical interest of this site that visitors will come from outside of the immediate local area and therefore there will be a greater pressure on infrastructure compared with the majority of Luton's parks and open space.

1.0 A WELCOMING PLACE

Luton Borough Council takes pride in their parks and open spaces and strives to ensure Leagrave Park is a welcoming place for local people and visitors to the town. The park offers the opportunity to host large events throughout the year.

1.1 Welcome

Feedback from surveys suggests that the site is perceived to be a welcoming place. The survey also indicates that people are encouraged to return on a regular basis.

1.2 Good and Safe Access

Visitors confirm that they find it easy or very easy to get around. There were no negative comments about the park in relation to access.

1.3 Graffiti Removal

The Parks and Countryside Service are committed to removing graffiti as soon as practicable. If the graffiti is of a racist or offensive nature, this is removed within 24 hours of it being reported. If it is too large for our Play Area Technicians to deal with, the Street Cleansing Team will remove it.

Graffiti is removed without the use of chemicals to minimise impact on the environment.

1.4 Signage

Signage at the park highlights and interprets the heritage features of the park and are inspected periodically as part of our infrastructure remit to keep it clean and legible.

1.5 Pathways

Pathways are inspected on an annual basis and a programme of maintenance created to deal with repairs and defects.

1.6 Equal Access for All

Access to the recreation areas, play areas and woodland within Leagrave Park are generally good and the facilities provided make it popular for local people and visitors using the park.

2.0 HEALTHY, SAFE AND SECURE

Health and safety is a high priority when managing green space. We strive to ensure that all visitors to our parks feel safe and secure when using our facilities.

Council staff working in parks and green spaces are clearly identifiable by their council uniform. This helps with the perception of safety and security.

2.1 Child Protection

Luton Borough Council has a safeguarding policy and training programme that all staff are encouraged to attend.



All personnel likely to come into contact with children or vulnerable adults are DBS checked and a copy of their certificate is held on their personnel file.

For this group of employees, safeguarding training is mandatory.

2.2 Protection Against Unauthorised Encampments

There is a low level barrier at the entrance to the park on Sundon Park Road, a double entry height restriction barrier to the south of Sundon arch and another height restriction barrier to the entrance near Marsh House on Bramingham Road to protect the park from illegal traveller encampments. If contractors wish to gain access to carry out work, they have to obtain the key(s) from the Parks and Countryside Service prior to their attendance.

2.3 Health & Safety Policies

Luton Borough Council takes a proactive and comprehensive approach to the management of health and safety in parks including:-

- Every employee reads and signs the Council's Health and Safety Policy
- Training needs are identified via Personal Performance Assessments (Appraisal) and training implemented
- Employees undergo health checks including among other things, hand and arm vibration assessments and hearing tests.
- A Lone Working policy is in place to protect employees

2.4 Legislative Issues

The Parks and Countryside Service must take account of the requirement to ensure that a number of statutory duties are undertaken:-

- **The councils duty to ensure Health and Safety in relation to Parks and Open Spaces**
This includes tree inspections, play site inspections, inspection of grounds within the Parks responsibility.
- **The council as a principal litter authority has a statutory duty to undertake cleansing activities under Section 89 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.**

In addition there is a requirement to comply with the following LEGISLATIVE ISSUES:

- **COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health)**
- **Pesticide Legislation**
- **Planning Policy Guidance 17**
- **New European Playground Standards (BS EN 1176, BS EN 1177)**
- **Reduction in Green Waste Targets**
- **Disability Discrimination Act (DDA)**
- **Race Relations Amendments Act**

2.5 Appropriate Provision of Quality Facilities and Activities

A dedicated team of Play Area Technicians carry out regular play area inspections of play facilities which are recorded on our Down To Earth Play database.

Our play areas have signage which provides contact information to allow users to report any issues. All issues raised are recorded on the council's reporting system (APP also known as Flare) and the issues are assigned to the relevant officer for a response where the area is then either repaired or made safe.

Community led events are encouraged and supported with the risk Assessment procedures required.

2.6 Safe Equipment and Facilities

All of our play equipment meets the European Standard for play equipment (EN1176) and our play area surfaces meet the European Standard for play surfacing (EN1177).

- Members of the public can report issues with play or other equipment by contacting our Customer Services department on 01582 546000, via our mobile app (<http://environment.luton.gov.uk/reports/home>) or Twitter (@lutoncouncil) or (<https://twitter.com/lutoncouncil>)

We carry out regular inspections at parks buildings. Inspections include identifying repair issues, tests for Legionella and checking fire alarms.

2.7 Community & Personal Security

The Parks and Countryside Service staff provide a visible presence on site whilst carrying out their maintenance work.

In addition to this, Luton Borough Council have local Police Safer Neighbourhood Teams and Neighbourhood Enforcement Teams who have community safety accredited powers (the first in Bedfordshire).

Their role is to ensure residents and visitors respect the local environment including our parks and open spaces and provide additional support in areas where anti-social behaviour has been identified.

2.7.1 Local Problems

Although the park has a good level of natural surveillance, a number of local problems continue to affect the way in which the park is managed. A number of the park trees were vandalised by local youths, a situation which has reduced with the assistance of the local community police, Neighbourhood Enforcement Team and officers from the Parks and Countryside Service.

The local Dog Wardens offer assistance, providing an education and enforcement role in relation to dog fouling and the need to keep dogs under control. If there is an increase in dog fouling. The Dog Wardens increase their levels of visits to the park.



2.8 Control of Dogs/Dog Fouling

The Parks and Countryside Service has a dedicated litter crew who are also responsible for emptying dog waste bins. This task is carried out on a weekly basis and at the weekends during the summer months.



Park users are made aware of the fines for allowing their dog to foul and are increasingly proactive in terms of using the dog bins that are site. The council's Enforcement Officers utilise the Keep Britain Tidy campaign materials to reduce the number of incidents.

3.0 WELL MAINTAINED AND CLEAN

As a service we take pride in our parks and green spaces and strive to ensure they are well maintained and clean at all times.

3.1 Litter and Waste Management

Luton Borough Council has a Waste Management Strategy (2016-2026) which is adhered to by the Parks and Countryside Service. During the summer months, the Parks and Countryside Service has a dedicated litter team that empty park bins including at weekends.

Luton Borough Council is committed to recycling 100% of its green waste and are making efforts to reduce waste and energy consumption at Leagrave Park.

3.2 Horticultural Maintenance

Maintenance standards are carried out in accordance with the Green Space Quality manual (2024) published by the London Parks Benchmarking Group.

Results from the online survey show that visitors perceive the maintenance of flower beds and shrubs to be of a good standard.

3.3 Arboricultural Maintenance

The Parks and Countryside Service is responsible for the management and maintenance of the council's tree stock. The strategic approach to tree management is currently subject to review. It is policy that ALL trees on council owned property is deemed to be protected. The council's Arboricultural Officer only recommends removal where there is a health and safety concern.

The service utilises a computerised tree management system (Arbortrack) to assist in the management of the town's tree stock. The system is linked to a Graphical Information System (GIS) and works are programmed and

prioritised according to risk. Tree inspections are recorded on site via hand held tablets.

The Parks and Countryside Service are currently working closely with Treework Environmental to review the Luton Tree Strategy in order to align more closely with the Environment/Climate Change Strategy. A draft of this strategy is now complete.

3.4 Building and Infrastructure Maintenance

3.4.1 Building Maintenance - Buildings in Parks are managed on behalf of the service by the Property and Construction department.

Regular checks are carried out to ensure buildings are safe and secure and carries out regular testing of the water, heaters and other elements of the maintenance check.

3.4.2 Infrastructure Maintenance – The vision for the park includes improvement to the park infrastructure, protection of the natural environment and woodland and provision of appropriate facilities. Local community involvement is integral to achieving this through securing external funding.

A full and up to date list of play equipment and specifications is maintained by the Parks and Countryside Service Play Area Technicians. A copy of the play area inspection sheet is shown over the page.



Existing facilities and equipment at Leagrave Park include:-

- Paths
- Small Pavilion
- Seating
- 3 x Car Parking Areas
- 2 x Toilet Buildings
- Gaelic Football Pitch
- 2 x Bridges
- Marsh House
(Leased to Marsh Farm
Development Trust)
- Fencing
- 2 x Children's Play Areas
- Bowling Green (Fenced) – no
longer in use
- Football Pitches
- Cricket Square
- The Nissen Hut

Site Furniture Specifications

The following items have been specified for use in the park where replacement of existing equipment as required

The Play Inspection sheet below is part of the audited ISO9001-2018 Quality Management System and provides the asset list of play equipment for the park.

INSPECTION/ACTION SHEET FOR PLAY SITES LUTON BOROUGH COUNCIL		DATE TIME INSPECTOR SITE No: 27. Leagrave Park	
PLAY COMPONENT & SAFETY SURFACE	SAFE & SECURE	FAULT	IMMEDIATE ACTION TAKEN
1. Approach to Site			
2. Signs			
3. Fencing			
4. Surfacing Rubber Tiles			
5. Swings (1 x Set) – Flat			
6. Slide Unit Spiroglide			
7. Roundabout Honeycomb Whirl			
8. Spring Rockers (x2) a) Crazy Horse b) Crazy Nellie			
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VANDALISM COST	
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ITEM	Additional Comments

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INSPECTION/ACTION SHEET FOR PLAY SITES LUTON BOROUGH COUNCIL		DATE TIME INSPECTOR SITE No: 31. Marsh House (Toddlers)	
PLAY COMPONENT & SAFETY SURFACE	SAFE & SECURE	FAULT	IMMEDIATE ACTION TAKEN
1. Approach to Site			
2. Signs (x2)			
3. Gates (x2)			
4. Fencing			
5. Bins (x1)			
6. Seats (x2) Picnic			
7. Surfacing Tarmac Path			
8. Bark			
9. Rubber Tiles			
10. Swings (BSA) 9 2 x Sets) Cradle			
11. Slide (Stand Alone)			
12. See-Saw (Traditional) Rocker Play			
13. Roundabout Honeycomb Whirl			
14. Train (Metal) Wickstead Flyer			
15. Spring Rockers (x2) a) Dolphin (x 2)			
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**INSPECTION/ACTION SHEET
FOR PLAY SITES
LUTON BOROUGH COUNCIL**

DATE TIME
INSPECTOR
SITE No: 31B Marsh House (New)

	PLAY COMPONENT & SAFETY SURFACE	SAFE & SECURE	FAULT	IMMEDIATE ACTION TAKEN
1.	Approach to Site			
2.	Signs			
3.	Gates			
4.	Fencing (Bow Top)			
5a.	Seats Bench			
5b.	Seats Picnic Table			
6a.	Surfacing Carpet			
6b.	Tarmac			
7.	Swings – Boat Seat			
8.	Swings – Pendulum (Cocowave – Log)			
9.	Swings – Flat			
10.	Swing – Birds Nest			
11.	Musical Instrument Bongos			
12.	Musical Instrument Eco-Rain Wheel			
13.	Musical Instrument Pipes/Xylophone			
14.	See-Saw (Large) Ocean wave			
15a.	Springer Wide Dolphin			
16a.	Toddler Unit – Playship			
16b.	Attached Slide			
17.	Spinner Bowl			

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18.	Roundabout Tpi Carousel		
19.	Toddler Carousel (Basket Seats)		

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COST

ITEM	Additional Comments

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A full list of specifications for equipment to aid the Play Area Maintenance Team are held in a current location electronically on the DTE Play programme.

3.5 Equipment Maintenance

Well maintained equipment is critical to the health and safety of our operatives, users of the park.

- All staff are appropriately trained in the use and maintenance of equipment.
- Risk assessments are in place for all equipment and are updated where required. These are accessible to all personnel and are held in the head office.
- Machinery is only operated by trained staff.
- All staff wear the appropriate uniform and personal protective equipment whilst at work.
- Vehicles and machinery are maintained to a high standard by our Fleet Department in order to prevent inefficient running and potential leaks of harmful substances.
- Fuel and other materials are secured and stored in agreed storage containers/areas.

4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

Luton Borough Council's approach to the natural and built environment and meeting responsibilities in relation to minimising waste and pollution is as follows.

4.1 Managing Environmental Impact

Management and maintenance of the Parks and Countryside Service has regard to the council's Corporate Policy, their Environmental Strategy and to a number of other key documents including:-

- Bedfordshire and Luton Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP)
(www.bedscape.org.uk/BRMC/newsite/index.php?c=bedslife_bap)
- Stronger Communities in Luton (2019-2023)
<https://lutonbc.sharepoint.com/sites/chief-executive/Shared%20Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx?id=%2Fsites%2Fchief%2Dexecutive%2FShared%20Documents%2FSCS%2FStronger%2DCommunities%2DStrategy%2Epdf&parent=%2Fsites%2Fchief%2Dexecutive%2FShared%20Documents%2FSCS>

The Parks and Countryside Service continues to work to meet the requirements of these key documents by minimising the impact of the service on the environment. Where possible, parks vehicle use dual fuel using LPG and diesel products which have reduced levels of particulates. The service now uses battery powered machinery where practicable.

4.2 Chemical Use

The Parks and Countryside Service no longer uses herbicides and pesticides in the general park maintenance regime and where chemical application is required it is done so in strict accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations.

4.3 Peat Use

The Parks and Countryside Service avoids using peat or products containing peat wherever possible.

5.0 BIODIVERSITY, LANDSCAPE AND HERITAGE



Photograph provided by
Art UK

These photographs show Leagrave Marsh that lies within Leagrave Park at different times of the century. The landscape today is very similar but has been adapted to meet the needs of the local community.



Photograph provided by
WordPress

5.1 Management of Natural Features, Wild Fauna and Flora

The Parks and Countryside Service refers to the Greenspace Quality Manual which was developed by the London Benchmarking Group. It applies these standards to all areas of the park.

5.1.1 Wildlife

The park supports a wealth of wildlife with sighting reports to include:-

- Foxes
- Bats
- Blue Tits
- Great Tits
- Coal Tits
- Chaffinch
- Robins
- Long Tail Tits
- Owls
- Sparrow Hawk
- Woodpecker
- Green Woodpecker
- Pigeons
- Doves

The new marsh extension area will attempt to re-create this habitat as closely as possible and North Chilterns Trust and Dunstable and Luton Conservation Volunteers will be involved in transplanting species from the adjoining marsh.

5.2 Conservation of Landscape Features



The landscape of Leagrave Park includes the important scheduled monument of Wauluds Bank and partially screens the flats to the south. It is situated on higher ground which offers panoramic views; although high rise flats are built around the boundary of the park, these are rarely visible due to the sloping land form.

New developments have appeared around the boundary of the park but as these have been subject to these strict planning conditions, their appearance and architecture are suitable for the landscape such as the Bailey Hill Water Tower (Grade II listed building).

5.2.1 River Lea Catchment Project

This project began in October 2014 to restore and improve a wooded area around the source of the River Lea in Leagrave Park. It started with tree contractors felling and coppicing trees and carrying out some clearance work to open up the area closest to the Five Springs tower block.



Rotten Corner before work started

Over winter 2014/2015 volunteers continued to work through the conservation days, run by TCV Bedford and Groundwork. As well as clearing vegetation and picking up litter, they continued the wood chip path that was laid through Rotten Corner by the Green Skills project, all the way to the source of the River Lea.



Rotten Corner once the work was completed

This project was funded by a Biffa Award (Landfill Communities Fund) which included the installation of interpretation panels in order to help visitors become more informed about the environmental and historical importance of the site.

5.2.2 Nature Conservation Volunteer Work

As part of our weekly nature conservation volunteer programme, there have been 8 tasks in Leagrave Park in the past three years, focusing on access work in Rotten Corner, woodland management in the Spinney removing sycamore and scrub clearing on the interest-rich grassland. GoodGym and Friends of Leagrave Park have also undertaken works which we've supported in collecting green waste.

5.3 Conservation of Buildings and Structures

Within the grounds of Leagrave Park stands the original Victorian farmhouse which was built c.1900. Although this is currently unused, it used to be used regularly by the community but now stands empty. Other buildings associated with the farmhouse include a garage, an extension that used to be used as a music centre for recording studio and the Nissen Hut which was used for live music and other community events.

6.1.1 Community Projects

Luton Borough Council's Parks and Countryside Service always welcomes community projects and is dedicated to building relationships with voluntary sector organisations.

Leagrave Park offers an ideal space and location for community projects as described below.

6.1.2 Friends of Leagrave Park Monthly Litter Picks

The Friends of Leagrave Park have a weekly organised litter pick on the last Sunday of the month in conjunction with GoodGym.

6.1.3 In addition to the above, the group have also held organised Dog Walks for local residents, volunteers and the public. These days have also been well attended.

6.1.4 Friends of Leagrave Park – Your Say Your Way Bid

The Friends of Leagrave Park have made a bid to Your Say, Your Way for funding towards volunteer and community days in conjunction with the Conservation Volunteers and local residents in Sundon Park and Northwell. They are hoping to carry out some key work in the park and have liaising with Luton Borough Council's Ecologist, Dr Trevor Tween as well as the Parks and Countryside Service. This work will include coppicing and path clearing and will give local people a chance to learn new skills as well as do something positive in their local park.

7.0 MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION

7.1 Marketing and Promotion

The Parks & Countryside Service employs a market-driven approach to marketing. In order to find out what customers want from their local park, the council provides a range of online community channels that enables people to interact with each other and share information about events within the park, their experiences and provide feedback. We also have our own volunteer activities which we promote through various channels including physical posters and our parks newsletter.

Luton Council have a dedicated webpage for Leagrave Park which can be seen on our Parks and Open Spaces web page.

Our Parks are promoted in the Step Forward App. In addition, information is regularly updated on the noticeboards provided as well as the community channels described.

JOIN OUR PARKS & COUNTRYSIDE VOLUNTEERS



Sign up to our mailing list

Gardening and nature conservation volunteer opportunities. Tools and basic training provided.
Contact us for our full programme.

Mondays
10am - 3.30pm
Nature conservation work.
Location changes each week.
Contact us for more details.



Thursdays
10am - 12pm
Gardening at Wardown Park



Email parksvolunteers@luton.gov.uk
or text 07738 294258



7.2 Appropriate Information Channels

Luton Borough Council provides a range of appropriate information channels that can be accessed by the public. These include:-

Luton Borough Council webpage www.luton.gov.uk

- Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/lu-toncouncil/>
- Instagram www.instagram.com/lu-toncouncil/
- X(@lu-toncouncil) or <https://twitter.com/lu-toncouncil>
- Flickr www.flickr.com/lu-tonboroughcouncil
- YouTube www.youtube.com/user/lu-tonboroughcouncil

Each of the above sites are closely monitored by our Marketing and Communications team to ensure they are used appropriately and remove any contributions that break the rules or guidelines of the relevant community.

7.3 Events and Special Events

Local groups are encouraged to hold events within the park and organisations wishing to use this as their venue are supported to provide the required documents (i.e. insurance/risk assessments).

7.4 Appropriate Education and Interpretation Information

It is important that general information about the park is available to the public including its history, development and purpose of any works that take place on the site, interpretation of the park features and provision of details about the facilities. It is also critical that the public are consulted upon and involved in any future proposed changes to management, maintenance or development of the park. The Friends Group provides a useful forum for this. Non-users also need consulting and this is carried out through use of Luton's Area Committees structure where the local community are invited to local Area Committee meetings on a quarterly basis to raise issues and respond to consultations.

8.0 MANAGEMENT

The Luton Local Plan 2011-2031 highlights the importance of green spaces as well as setting appropriate standards of provisions to meet community needs.

The Parks and Countryside Service uses both the Green Flag criteria and customer feedback forms to inform the management planning process for the future improvement and development of the park.

8.1 Staffing Structure

The Parks and Countryside Service benefits from a dedicated team of grounds maintenance staff trained to carry out maintenance tasks required within the park. The Parks Staffing Structure can be found in the appendices.

8.2 Quality and Performance



The Parks and Countryside Service operates a quality management system (ISO 9001-2018) and benchmarks with other local authorities through the APSE (Association of Public Service Excellence) Performance Network.

The service is developing management and development plans for all of Luton's District and Neighbourhood parks. The plans set out the vision and purpose of each park and include an improvement action plan.

At an operational level, regular inspections are undertaken by the Parks and Countryside Service Area Supervisors who take action to resolve any maintenance issues and resolve problems.

8.3 Training & Qualifications

The Parks and Countryside Service is committed to ensuring their employees are competent in undertaking a range of horticultural, arboricultural, conservation and grounds maintenance tasks to meet the needs of the service. The service currently has 1 apprentice.

8.4 Financial Management

Procurement is monitored as part of the quality management system and a team monitor all spend above £5000. Orders are raised on the central system called Authority Financials Purchasing (AFP). This allows the service to monitor and track expenditure. Any orders above the £5000 threshold have to be raised via our in-house Procurement Team following a stringent process in line with the UK law by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.

9.0 Improving the Park

The service actively seeks funding to deliver the park Action Plan and encourage customers to contact the Friends Group so they can become actively involved in obtaining funding for projects identified.

Groundwork Luton and Bedfordshire undertook an access audit and consultation process of Leagrave Park in 2009 which identified a number of issues including accessibility and pathway improvements, These have since been addressed by the Parks and Countryside Service with assistance from Sustrans and Dr Trevor Tween,

Where possible, we encourage customers to contact the Friends Group so they can become actively involved in obtaining funding for projects they would like to see take place in the park.

Luton Borough Council has devised an application which anyone can download to their mobile phone/tablet which enables them to report issues directly to the correct department so that they can be dealt with in a timely manner (Love Clean Streets). From this, the Parks and Countryside Service can obtain information about all issues relating to Leagrave Park.

10.0 Linked Policies and Strategies

The future management and development of the park has to be considered within the context of the current policies and strategies, these include:-

- Luton Local Plan 2011-2031
- Luton Investment Framework 2015-2035
- Luton Borough Council Corporate Plan 2021-2023
- Luton Green Infrastructure Plan
- Green Space Strategy Review (2014)
- Luton Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2016-2031
- Equal Opportunities Policy and Strategy (Luton Borough Council)
- Luton Strategic Vision for Sport and Physical Activity
- Playing Pitch Strategy for Luton Borough Council 2014-2021
- Environment/Climate Change Strategy

Legrave Park Management Plan

Appendix 1

Continuous Improvement Action Plan

Leagrave Park Continuous Improvement Action Plan 2019-2029

✓ = Achieved ✓ = Planned

Action ID	Priorities 2019/2029	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	Who	Resources Required
1. A Welcoming Place															
1.1	Install new signage at the entrance to the park	✓												Greenspace & Operations Manager	Completed
1.2	Investigate solutions to resolve parking issues	✓												Operations Manager	Completed
1.3	Apply for a Traffic Regulation Order and mark out yellow lines on drive		✓											Operations Manager	Completed
1.4	Implement parking restrictions						✓	✓						Highways	Completed
1.5	Explore routes for funding new signage and interpretation review across the site								✓					Greenspace Manager	Planned
1.6	Return bowling green to paying field; remove old play area							✓						Greenspace Manager	Planned
2. Healthy, Safe & Secure															
		19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30		
2.1	Secure Capital Bid funding for play improvements	✓												Greenspace Manager	Completed
2.2	Install the new play facility		✓											Operations Manager	Completed
2.3	Seek funding to develop an Education Learning facility in the park										✓			Greenspace Manager	Exploring
2.4	Consultation for under-8s play facility; promote and update survey; update noticeboard.								✓					Greenspace Manager	Planned

2.5	Install new play area.								✓	✓				Greenspace Manager	Planned
2.6	Undertake a condition survey of the Nissen hut		✓											Operations Manager	Completed
2.7	Improve safety and sight-lines along the riverside walk.							✓						Parks and Grass-cutting supervisors	Being implemented
3. Well Maintained and Clean															
		19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29			
3.1	Relocate several shipping containers to hard standing and dispose of detritus materials							✓						Operations Manager	Within current resources
3.2	Create smaller compound and return bowling green to amenity grassland							✓						Greenspace Manager	Within current resources
4. Environmental Management															
		19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29			
4.1	Conduct feasibility study of weir		✓											Parks Service/ Environment Agency	Completed
4.2	Develop a Tree Management Plan for The Spinney					✓								Aboricultural Officer	Tree Strategy
4.3	Apply for funding for replacing the boardwalk in Rotten Corner								✓					Greenspace Manager	Planned
4.4	Upgrade boardwalk in Rotten Corner									✓				Greenspace Manager	Planned
5. Biodiversity, Heritage and Landscape															
		19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29			
5.1	Investigate opportunities to relax mowing regimes in the park		✓											Operations Manager	Completed - implemented
5.2	Update mowing regimes to expand conservation mowing					✓	✓	✓						Ecology and Landscape Officer & Greenspace Manager	Completed - implemented

5.3	Work in partnership with Chilterns National Landscape to achieve funding for the Beacons of the Past project to support further investigation of Waulud's Bank	✓													Ecology and Landscape Officer & Greenspace Manager	Funding Achieved
5.4	Support CNL, and Revoluton Arts to deliver Luton Henge work including volunteer engagement							✓							All	Completed
5.5	Deliver volunteer conservation work in the spinney to preserve secondary beech woodland					✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓	Ecology and Landscape Officer & Horticultural Coordinator	Completed and ongoing
5.6	Deliver scrub-clearing activities along banks of Waulud's bank and in high quality chalk grassland areas							✓	✓	✓		✓			Horticultural Coordinator	Completed and ongoing
5.7	Carry out annual white helleborine surveys					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Ecology and Landscape Officer & Horticultural Coordinator	Completed and ongoing
5.8	Explore options for funding hedge-laying from Five Springs car park alongside path								✓						Greenspace Manager	Ongoing
6. Community Involvement																
		19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29				
6.1	Facilitate small Peace Garden Initiative tree planting as a Covid Memorial					✓									Greenspace Manager & Horticultural Coordinator	Completed
6.2	Support Friends of Leagrave Park group with funding bid for community activities							✓							Greenspace Manager & Horticultural Coordinator	Ongoing
6.3	Work with Friends of Leagrave Park to carry out conservation activities and litter picks in the park.					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			Horticultural Coordinator	Ongoing
6.4	Support 'Nine Red' community projects in the pavilion.					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			Operations Manager	Ongoing
6.5	Support Revoluton Arts, Marsh Farm Outreach and Chilterns National Landscape with the 'Nature Calling' project including installing a 'Luton henge' in the park						✓	✓	✓	✓					Ecology and Landscape Officer & Greenspace Manager	Completed initial stages and ongoing

6.6	Finalise and agree management plan with Chilterns National Landscape								✓					Greenspace Manager	Being implemented
6.7	Build new pavilion.												✓	Parks and Countryside Team	Planned
7. Marketing and Communication															
		19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29			
7.1	Install noticeboard at Sundon Rd entrance and keep updated with Friends group					✓	✓	✓						Operations Manager	Completed and ongoing
7.2	Continue to promote activities and the Parks Survey and the Friends group through digital newsletter					✓	✓	✓						Horticultural Coordinator	Completed and ongoing
8. Management															
		19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29			
8.1	Application for Green Flag assessment	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		Project Officer	
8.2	Update Continuous Improvement Action Plan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		Project Officer	Ongoing
8.3	5 year review of Management Plan						✓							Greenspace Manager	
8.4	Create specialist 'Parks Team' to prioritise management of Green Flag Parks					✓								Greenspace Manager & Operations Manager	Completed and functioning

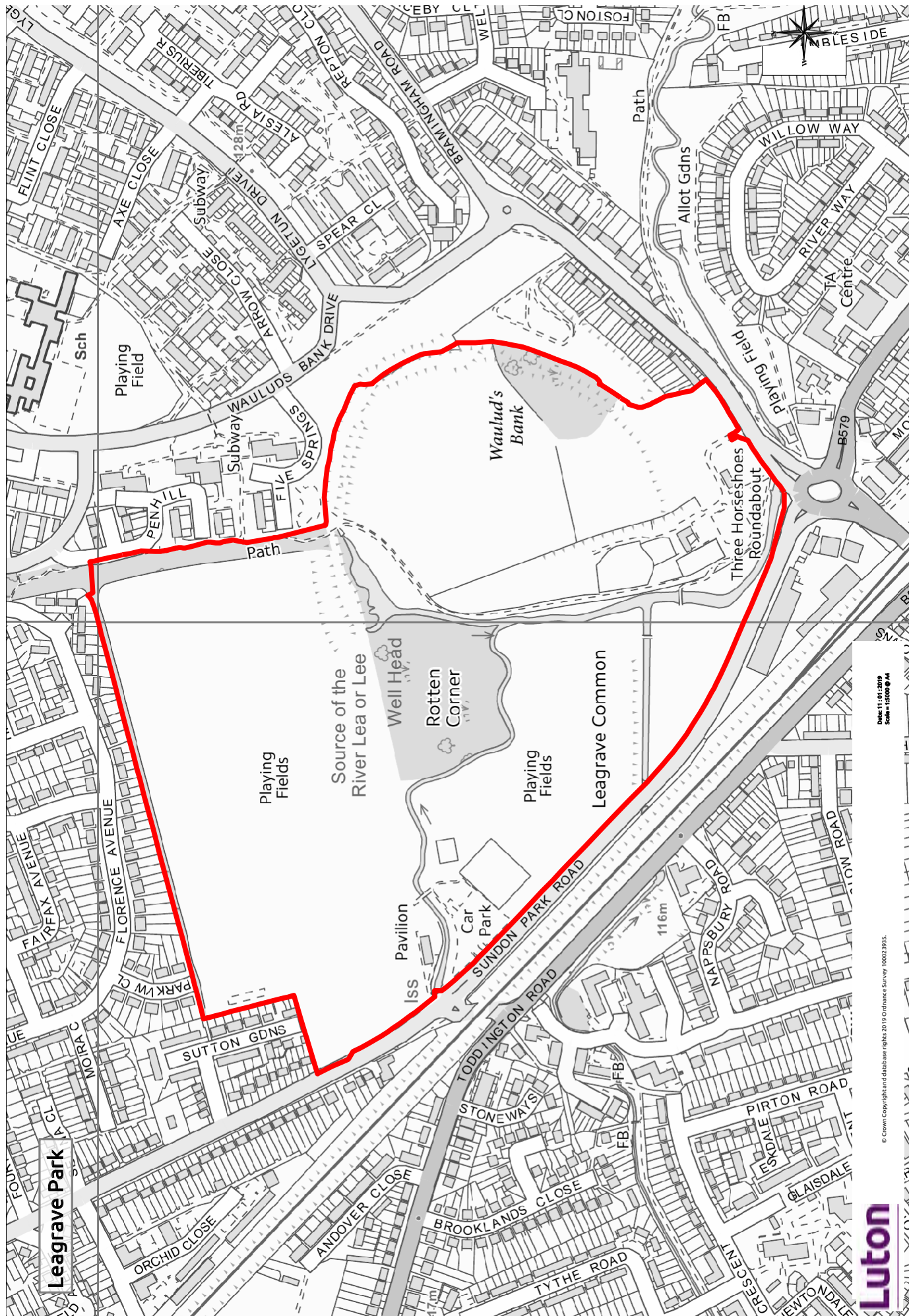
Leagrave Park Management Plan

Appendix 2

Site footprint

Mowing regimes

Site infrastructure map

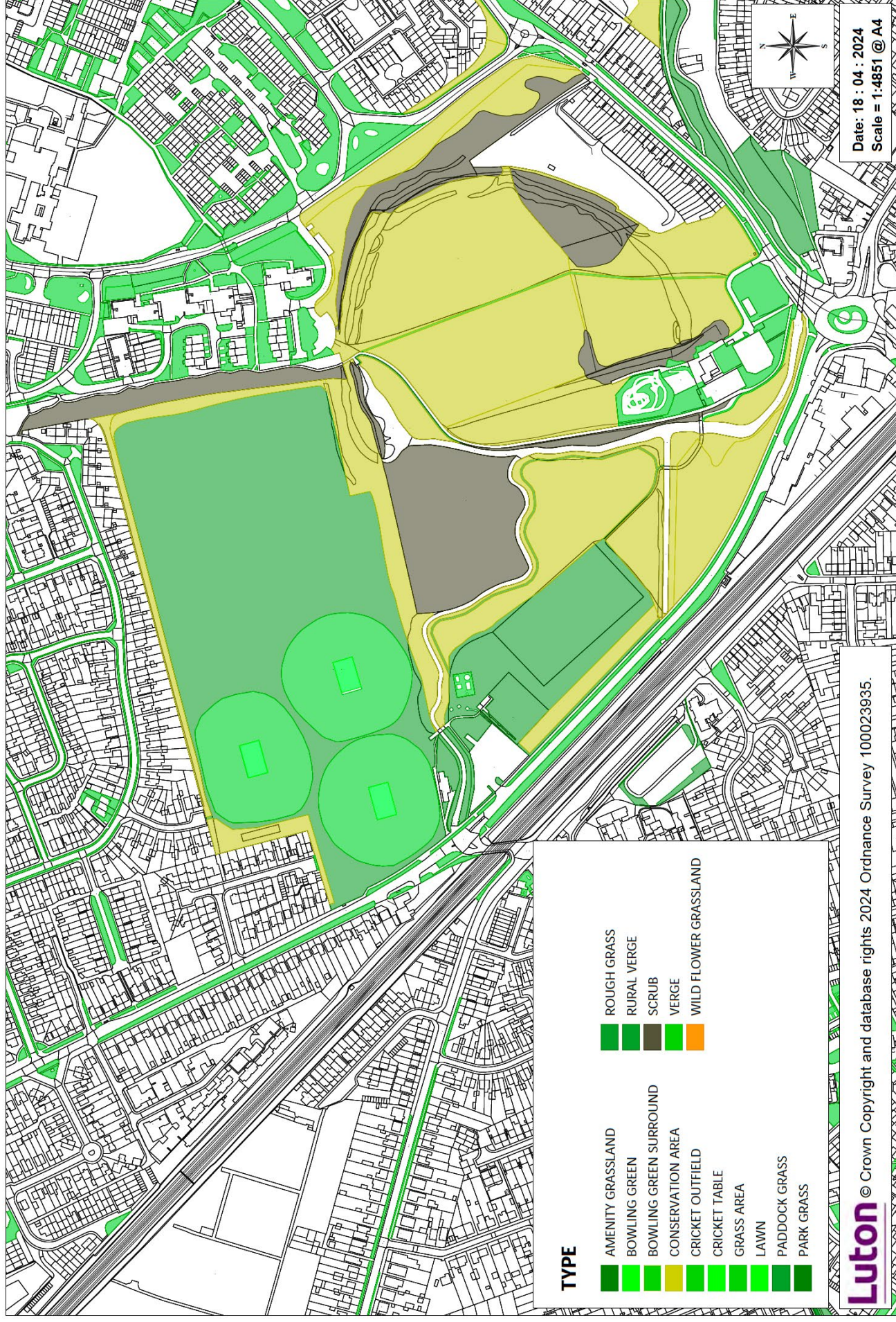


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Luton

LEAGRAVE PARK



LEAGRAVE PARK WITH ASSETS

Legend:

- MM Landline
- Grass Areas
- Horticulture
- Hard Surface
- Parks Play Areas
- Parks Assets (Litter Bins, Dog Bins etc)
- Bowls
- Cricket
- Football
- Wards

Map Labels: Sutton Gdns, Andover Close, Brooklands Close, Tythe Road, Montague Avenue, Leagrave, Nappesbury Road, Onslow Road, The Mount, Car Park, Station, Wiltmore Road, Bosmor, Ambleside, Verulam Gardens, Tiberius, Alesia Road, Spear Close, Drive, Playing Field, Sch, Waulud's Bank, Rotten Corner, Well Head, Pavillion, Car Park, Stonepenny Park, Toddington Road, Stoneways, Brooklands Close, Tythe Road, Montague Avenue, Leagrave, Nappesbury Road, Onslow Road, The Mount, Car Park, Station, Wiltmore Road, Bosmor, Ambleside, Verulam Gardens, Tiberius, Alesia Road, Spear Close, Drive, Playing Field, Sch.

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Date: 17:01:2019

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Luton Borough Council

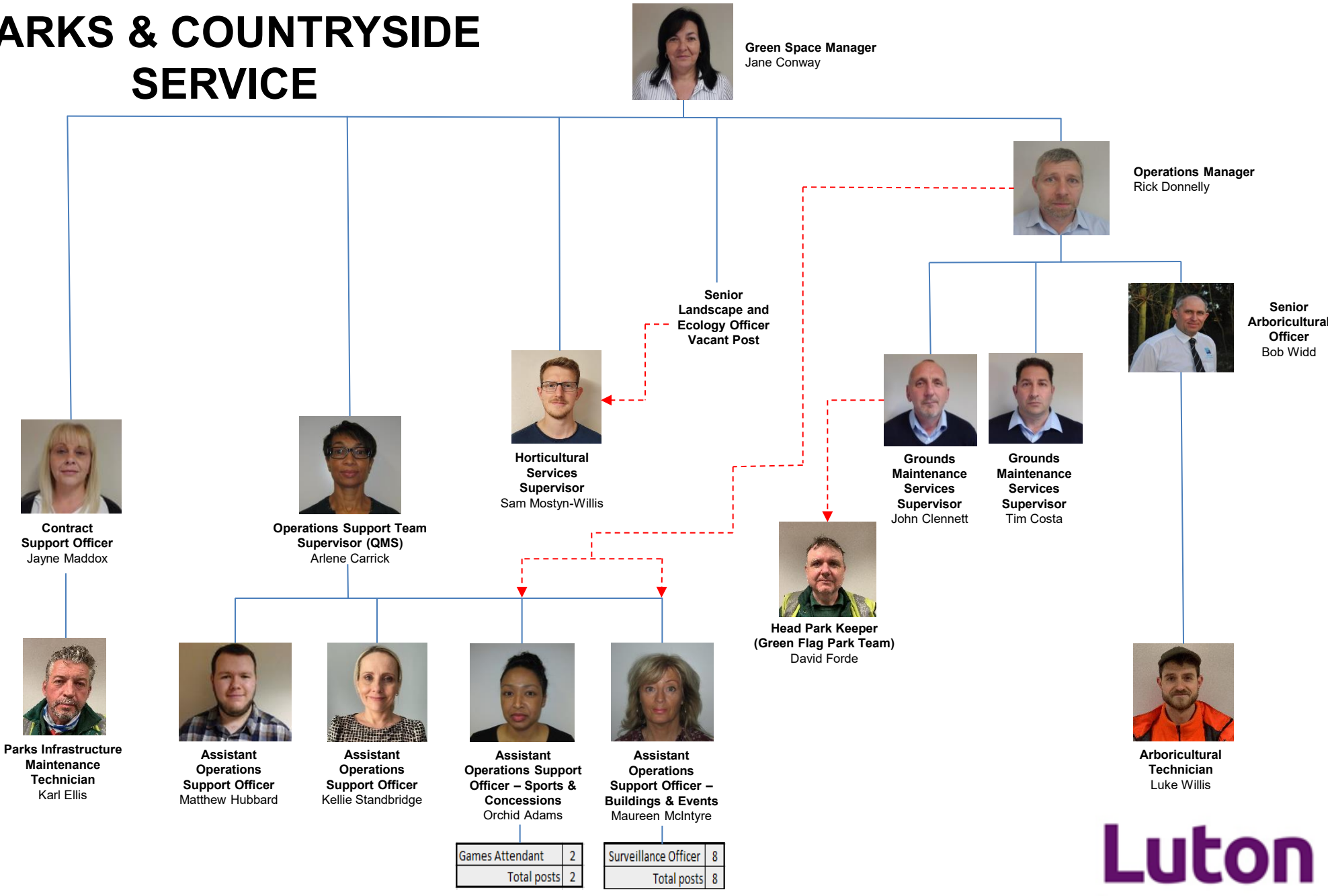
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Leagrave Park Management Plan

Appendix 3

Continuous Improvement Action Plan

PARKS & COUNTRYSIDE SERVICE



2020 - 2030



Leagrave Park Management Plan

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Luton